

Play With The Doll
A Fantasy in Two Parts
by
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CHARACTERS:

Boy- 15 years old; very withdrawn and isolated. He is highly intelligent and soft-spoken, trapped in that moment where one thing has to become something else. And so he is highly torn between two things.

Doll-Ageless; Doesn't look at all like Barbie. She is represented on stage by an actress and also by an actual doll. She should mostly appear robotic, without emotion, even when the dialogue looks emotional, almost like artificial intelligence, except for the moments when the fantasy feels like it's becoming the reality, wherever those moments might be..

Mother-40s; A strong, educated woman who has fallen victim to the cruelty of life. She is almost a shut-in. She doesn't deal with anything in the real world that isn't gossip, or trashy television. She never deals with real emotions, and so there sometimes must be an incongruity with what she says and how she says it. She is avoiding reality. Until the moments she can't any longer. Wherever those moments might be...

/ indicates where dialogue should overlap.

"It's no use going back to yesterday, because I was a different person then."

-Lewis Carroll.

PART ONE:*An Awfully Big Adventure*

Setting: A kitchen on one side, Boy's bedroom on the other. The kitchen could be as simple as a table. Likewise, the bedroom could be a bed and a small dresser. There is a window upstage in the boy's room, there is also a door separating the two rooms. The bed and the table should be close together, separated only by an invisible wall.

Scenes will transition instantly into one another. When there is a time shift this can be indicated with lighting.

****Let's Do It (Let's fall in love) sung by Ella Fitzgerald plays. It should start in the blackout and it should be complete before Scene IV ends.***

I. They Meet.

**stage directions that refer to "the doll" are about the actual small plastic doll, when it's capitalized, Doll, it's a stage direction for the actress playing the doll.*

Lights up; Boy is in the middle of his room, staring at the doll that is on his bed. He stares for a minute and then crosses to a different part of his room not looking at the doll. He then turns to the doll and stares again. He touches himself hoping to get a reaction. Nothing. He turns his back to the doll. Actress playing doll enters the room and stays by the door. Boy turns and looks at the doll, he stares again for awhile. Actress playing Doll crosses and sits on the bed. Boy sees her and immediately turns away embarrassed.

*He then looks back quickly and exits.
Doll smiles.*

II. They Stare

The boy's room; Late one night. Doll picks the doll up and walks around the room. She crosses to the bed places the doll on it & exits. Boy enters going about his usual routine, changes into shorts and a t-shirt for bed. He crosses to go to the bathroom when he sees the doll on the bed. He stops. He stares. They stare. He climbs in bed and sleeps with some distance between them.

III. They Flirt

The boy's room; Early one morning. Boy wakes up and sits on the bed, the doll is on the bed with him. They are on opposite sides. Boy smiles. He reaches out to touch her, he changes his mind. They stare. He puts his hand under the blanket and touches himself. He is nervous but he frantically moves around under the blanket. His breathing gets heavy and he falls back on the bed and moans. After a moment all is quiet. Doll enters, picks herself up, drops herself on the floor near the bed and exits. Boy sits up and sees that she's gone. He's ashamed. Doll watches from the other side of the room.

IV. They Play A Game

Boy's room, One afternoon. Boy is sitting on the ground looking at his Realm of Dragons cards. The doll is lying on the ground near the bed. He sits her up and begins to show her the

cards. He scoots closer to her as he does. Soon he deals the cards, one stack for him and one for her. He then begins to turn cards over as if they are both playing a game. The cards are clearly handmade.

V. They Speak

As the boy finishes showing the cards they both sit and stare. Doll enters on the other side of the room, and speaks out. She doesn't look at him.

DOLL

It's not real? It's just pretend?

BOY

What?

DOLL

It's a game? What you're playing?

BOY

No!

DOLL

The cards. I think it must be.

BOY

Oh. *(He looks down at the cards in his hands)* Yeah, it's a game.

DOLL

Games are what children do.

BOY

Oh.

DOLL

Are you a child?

BOY

No.

Beat.

I think you must be.

DOLL

I'm not.

BOY

Prove it.

DOLL

Boy thinks for a moment, he is nervous.

My dick is hard.

BOY

That is most definitely not a thing a child would say.

DOLL

It's so hard when I look at you.

BOY

It must be huge.

DOLL

Beat. Doll is still staring out. Boy wants to go to her. He doesn't.

I'll bet it's bigger than anything I've ever seen.

DOLL

But you're just...you're just a...

BOY

I'm wet. I'm just all wet. And why wouldn't I be. Looking at a real man like you.

DOLL

Beat. Doll gets a bit infantile in her tone.

Do you like when I talk this way?

DOLL

Uh-huh.

BOY

DOLL

What are those cards?

Boy holds a card up for her to see.

DOLL

Can you describe it?

BOY

You could look.

DOLL

I can't read. Also, my eyes are made of acrylic, so you know, obstacles.

Boy looks at the card, and then at Doll.

DOLL

What? Did I say something wrong? I want you to tell me everything. And then do all the things with your penis that a man does to a woman.

BOY

You're just a Doll.

DOLL

I'm just not a real woman yet. But your gigantic cock could make me a real woman. That is what I need, right?

Beat.

DOLL

Yes?

BOY

It's called Realm of Dragons.

Doll turns her head, she doesn't understand.

BOY

The game. It's based on a series of books about a race of dragon-born men who must defeat a water lord and his people to take back the throne that is rightfully theirs.

DOLL

Sounds derivative.

BOY

Yeah, well that's just like the dust jacket synopsis—There's more. The hero, there's a dragon that's pursuing him. And if the dragon finds him before he learns how to slay it...He'll be destroyed.

DOLL

Do you want to play with me? We could play this game of yours, or you could take over my body and destroy me. Maybe you're the dragon. And you should pursue me.

BOY

But, you're just a toy.

DOLL

Toy. That means object.

BOY

Well, I don't mean—

DOLL

I used to belong to the one you call sister.

BOY

Yeah.

DOLL

She was kind and brushed my hair, but she had a nagging compulsion to rub my front into the front of that little plastic blonde man who doesn't seem to have any appendage or even a bump in his front. Not like yours. Which must look like a tree trunk from my perspective.
And where is sister?

BOY

College.

DOLL

Then we are alone. Put your fingers inside me.

Beat.

DOLL

I want you to teach me how to feel like a real woman. You are a real man. This is what men do.

Doll goes to exit. Boy rises.

BOY

Wait! Where are you going?

DOLL

You must come after me. A real man must pursue a woman, or it is surely not something that will work. I will wait for you. I don't think I've ever waited for anything before. If you are a real man, you will come and get me. After a suitable amount of time has passed. Whenever that is. And then I will succumb to your massive cock and let you destroy me for all other men.

Doll exits. Boy smiles and falls back on the ground ecstatic. Sometime during the next scene he gets up and exits full of hope.

VI. The Mother

Mother is on her phone in her kitchen. She is smoking a cigarette and drinking coffee. She's in a bathrobe. It is the middle of the day on a Wednesday, or something like that. She clearly doesn't get out much, if at all.

MOTHER

It's called a hook.

I said, it's called a hook.

When a desperate storyteller invites you into a world where something seemingly impossible is happening, and you have to figure out how to decipher the metaphor, it's called a hook.

I don't know...the guy that wrote that book on manipulative writing techniques. Right.

Yeah, that's a perfect example.

No, that show is nonsense. Yes, it is.

It's garbage. It's one outlandish plot point after another.

And pick a tone already! I've never seen so many different moods in one show. Sometimes one scene is like three genres rolled into one. It's like a hybrid, mash-up of cliched television tropes. It's like the burrito equivalent of an afterschool special. It's awful.

What?

Because I have no life, and I need outlandish entertainment to satisfy my pleasure center so it doesn't atrophy.

Yes, that is also why I spend so much time at my window gazing at the utter nonsense that is my neighborhood. Oh, Did I tell you how Amelia, you know fat Amelia from across the street? Yeah, well she hauled off and tried to punch the Fed-Ex guy yesterday. I don't know, something about him trying to steal her medication or something. She's fucking crazy. And then Mr. Chalmers on the other side with his hoarding. I swear, it's like *Rear Window* around here. But you know like for the socially retarded. Oh shut up...it is not offensive...to who? Don't correct me!

Boy enters returning home from school.

MOTHER (Cont'd)
(Into the phone)

Hold on!

(To Boy)

How was school?

Boy shrugs.

MOTHER
How'd you do on the test?

Boy shrugs and exits.

MOTHER
Oh my god, this kid! I swear. He gets more and more apathetic. And less and less animated. You know what he does now? He shrugs. He sort of grunts and shrugs. If it weren't the fact that he eats everything in sight, I would legit worry about his health. God, he's just like his father. And he never comes out of his room. Yesterday morning, on his way to the bathroom, I said something to him, and he stared at me with actual fear in his eyes, like the sound of another human being was foreign to him.
Yeah. Exactly.
My son, The Prairie Dog.

Mother exits while talking.

VII. They Speak Some More

Boy's room; Later that day. Boy is on the ground writing when Doll enters.

She is holding the doll. Boy puts the notebook down and they stare. They are still not close together.

BOY

I was hoping you'd come back.

DOLL

I was waiting.

BOY

I was at school.

DOLL

To learn? You try to learn things?

BOY

Yeah, but mostly I just try not to be seen.

DOLL

Do you?

BOY

What?

DOLL

Learn?

BOY

I guess. Some things.

DOLL

I learned something today. I learned that time is slow when you're waiting for something to happen. It becomes a physical thing. Maybe. Or almost. It hangs down right over you. you can almost touch it. That made more sense before I had words to share it with. I'm learning so many things. The world is terribly new.

BOY

It is.

DOLL

I want to touch the thing that hangs in front of you.

BOY

I can smell you.

DOLL

Come closer.

Boy stands, but doesn't move toward her.

BOY

I've never smelled anything like that before.

DOLL

It's lanolin. It's infused into the flesh when they make us. It's supposed to be comforting.

BOY

It's strong.

DOLL

What does it make you think of?

BOY

Being a kid. I don't really remember being that young. I have all of these images. Like pictures. Well, I guess literally. My mom used to take like a thousand pictures of just everyday life. She stopped when my dad left. I guess she wanted to stop remembering things. Pictures are sad like that when you think about it. Just reminders of something that doesn't exist anymore. Like a mirror that remembers you.

I used to imagine that mirrors were like these weird time machine vessels. Like when you looked into a mirror you'd see yourself from the last time you looked in that same mirror. So everywhere we went I would find mirrors and I would look in them, hoping that one day when I was grown up I could go back to that mirror and see myself from before. Who I used to be. There's one at the place my dad used to work. I wonder if I'd recognize myself. I wonder what I used to look like before I didn't have a father. Before I wasn't so broken.

When my dad first left, my mom would sit me down and show me all the pictures she'd taken over the years. Vacations, holidays, her wedding album was always her favorite. Look how beautiful I used to be, she'd say, I could have had any man I wanted. She'd cry, and drink wine and make me sit with her and look at them. And she'd say never fall in love. Never be a man like your father. Stay my little boy. Always stay my little boy.

I don't really remember my dad. She says I'm just like him now. But I think that's maybe what she wants. Maybe that's what she always wanted.

DOLL
Maybe she wants you.

Doll takes a step toward him. He takes one step away from her.

BOY
Your smell, it reminds me of...being younger.

DOLL
Sounds like psychology 101 to me. Lonely woman. Desperately broken. Needs a real man to fill her void. So she settles for a substitute. Not terribly interesting. But it could be. You get to decide.

She takes another step to him, he takes one away.

BOY
Decide what?

DOLL
Did she tell you about women? About how to please one?

BOY
No.

DOLL
Then how will you know what to do with me? Or will you just fuck me like one of those pavement crackers and then pull my arms and legs off and leave me in a box for the Goodwill?

BOY
Of course not.

DOLL
How can I be sure?

*Doll takes another step to him, this time he doesn't back away.
Beat.*

DOLL
Are you hard?

Beat. Boy nods.

DOLL

Do you want to get closer to me?

Boy nods

DOLL

If there are spaces inside of you that are broken. I will un-break them. I am the one you've been waiting for. I have the answer.

BOY

The answer? To what?

DOLL

How to slay the dragon.

Doll puts her hands out to him. He waits, after a moment, there is a time shift and Doll sits on the floor away from him.

VII. They Almost Touch

Mother enters the kitchen on her phone. Doll is on the floor near the bed. Boy is on the bed reading. Doll is staring at him attentively.

MOTHER

(Into the phone)

So, the first plot twist happens and we're supposed to be what...surprised? Oh give me a break. It's as clear as day what's going to happen. Stories are never interested in actual revelations, it's all hackneyed and obvious. Yeah, that's a great example. What was the last scene this week? Right. Yeah, so this girl we thought was just a figment of this guy's fantasy has turned into something a little dangerous now. What? Because she maybe killed her last husband. Please! So trite. We know exactly what's going to happen.

DOLL

What is this book called? The one with the dragon.

BOY

It's a series called Realm of Dragons.

DOLL

Is it violent?

BOY

I guess. A little.

DOLL

Do the men take the women at their leisure?

Beat.

BOY

-

DOLL

Read to me.

MOTHER

Oh, he's the same as always. He comes home from school, grunts a hello, eats whatever's in the fridge and then he goes into his room and I don't see him until morning.

No.

No, tell me that story, I don't know it.

BOY

(Reading)

He was afraid. He could feel his stomach lurching toward his throat, but he knew what he had to do. Lost in the watery ravine of the Kalenheart River, he waited out the storm. He knew. With all his training, and all the waiting, he knew, the perfect moment was coming.

MOTHER

(Listening to the phone intently.)

Uh-huh.

During the next line, Boy and Doll inch closer to each other until she is right below him on the floor.

BOY

(Still Reading)

He had made his way all the way from the swamps of Varule, through the fiery mountains of Kisdain, and now here he was. The fork in the road. Two ways to go, but only one choice to make.

The dragonborn would soon be restored as the leaders of the land. The rulers of men. The sovereignty of all peaceful peoples. It all lies in this one moment...

They are almost touching. But...Mother gasps in surprise. Boy and Doll hear her shout the next line and they both look in her direction.

MOTHER

What the hell!?! Oh my god, that's insane! How can that even happen?!

Beat. Boy moves over on the bed away from Doll. He picks up the doll and looks at it.

BOY

What's going to happen?

DOLL

Tsk. Tsk. Tsk. Tsk. Tsk...no spoilers.

*Boy puts the doll to his face to smell it.
Doorbell.*

MOTHER

(Into the phone)

Oh, food's here. Hang on, I just gotta tell him to emerge from his cave for dinner. Gimme a sec.

DOLL

You rescued me.

BOY

What?

DOLL

A man must rescue a woman. That is how she knows that he is true. And only a man that is true may have access to my wet underneath. And you rescued me.

BOY

I didn't, I just found you in that box and I just wanted, I guess I just wanted to...

Mother has heard him talking and she leans in to hear him.

MOTHER

(Whispering)

Shh! I think he's talking to someone?

DOLL

Yes, you freed me.

BOY

I thought you were going to be given away and I didn't want that happen to you. God knows where you'd end up.

DOLL

I hope I end up with your tongue inside me.

BOY

Do you—

He hears something.

BOY

Mother! Are you standing outside my door?

Mother runs back to the kitchen.

MOTHER

Shit! He heard me! I'm almost positive that he was definitely talking to someone.

BOY

I hate when she does that!

DOLL

—

BOY

What?

DOLL

Two roads. One choice. This is what the story has said?

BOY

Yeah, but...that's just a story.

DOLL

Providence and liberation can appear in the strangest places.

BOY

Providence and liberation?

DOLL

Yes. Together. Or each sold separately.

MOTHER

He must be on his phone. Maybe he's talking to a girl. Oh, I gotta go pay the delivery guy. Oh shut up!
I am not eavesdropping on him!

Mother exits.

VIII. They Kiss.

Boy and Doll sit on the edge of his bed. She is brushing the doll's hair. He watches.

BOY

It's a series. Fantasy. I love fantasy. It's called *Realm of Dragons*. It's about Dronagal, a dragon-born in the time of the water-rising. Which means that the water-born had conquered the five lands and taken them over. The greatest threat to the water-born are the dragon-born because they can communicate to and control the dragons. The real dragons. And so the Kalenhearts army killed all of the dragons. Well, except for one. Which doesn't really come into the story until the second book. There's gonna be six books total. So, when Dronagal is born—

DOLL

He is born and put into a box, yes?

BOY

No, his mother gives him to the wind-born sorcerer Eldran, who takes him to Willarys, the city of wind-born. And they raise him as one of their own.

DOLL

So he must live as something he's not?

BOY

I guess so, yeah.

DOLL

That's sad.

BOY

Well, but he eventually starts to learn the way of the dragon-born. Which is what will ultimately defeat the evil Kalenhearts. It's not easy though. He has to travel thousands of miles, through all five lands. And there's a dragon that will come of age and take to the sky, so he has to learn the magic before that happens, if he knows how to slay the dragon, he can control the dragon. So he might not have to kill it.

DOLL

But he wins in the end?

BOY

I don't know yet. There's still one book to go.

DOLL

He's a hero?

BOY

Yeah.

DOLL

Then he must win. Heroes always win. Right?

BOY

Not always. Sometimes the only way for a hero to do what he has to do...is by losing. And so what you think is going to happen, isn't actually what's going to happen.

They lock eyes.

DOLL

I don't understand that.

BOY

It's irony.

DOLL

There are so many hurdles. You're so smart, you're only fifteen years old. And I'm only ten inches tall and made of plastic. The world is so confusing. I wish you could hold me forever.

Boy looks away.

DOLL

Maybe I'm not pretty enough.

BOY

What?

DOLL

I am not Barbie. I am not beautiful.

BOY

I hate Barbie.

DOLL

She is very beautiful. And she has a nicer car than I do.

BOY

Hey.

He turns her face to him.

DOLL

And I don't have the accessories she does.

BOY

You are so much more beautiful than she is.

DOLL

You're just saying that.

BOY

I'm not.

DOLL

What is your favorite part of me?

BOY

—

DOLL

My favorite part of you is something I can't see. And not just because my eyes were painted on.

Boy blushes and puts his head down.

DOLL

And it's not your heart. I want to see the biggest part of you.

BOY

—

DOLL

I would very much like it if you kissed me now.

BOY

—

DOLL

Well?

*Slowly, very slowly he leans in and kisses her softly on the mouth. She closes her eyes. He stops and pulls back, her eyes are still closed. He smiles and kisses her again, this time more passionately. She doesn't move. Then they kiss. After a few moments Boy stands and unsure what to do exits. Doll smiles at his cuteness. Doll exits after him. All the while, the ***Louis Armstrong song 'A Kiss To Build a dream on' plays. It ends when Mother starts talking.***

IX- He Touches Her.

Mother is in the kitchen on her phone.

MOTHER

And then the guy says, "It can't be, something happened to me in the war!" *(She laughs)* Oh my god, I used to work with her. I did. Does she still chew Trident, three pieces at a time? I know. I know, like a fucking horse. It's so bad. What? *(She gasps)* No way!

Boy enters, coming home from school.

MOTHER

(Into the phone)

Oh, hang on.

(To Boy)

How was school?

Boy shrugs.

MOTHER

Ah, the trademark shrug. Are you hungry?

Boy shrugs.

MOTHER

A font of conversation, this one! *(She mocks him with fake sign language as she talks)* Do you want food!?

Boy shakes his head and exits.

MOTHER

Well, a head shake is at least some variety. Still no talking. He's starting to smell too. So that's exciting. God, he's his father's son. Ugh! *(Sees something outside her window)* Did I tell you about the woman who moved in next door...well, that's a flattering term, whore is what I meant. what? She is! Shut up and I'll tell you why.

Boy enters his room; He looks for Doll, she's not there. He sits on the bed.

MOTHER

I am not one of those women that hate other women because I see them as competition.

Doll enters boy's room in lingerie. He sits up and stares at her.

MOTHER

She's actually a whore. You should see what she wears.

DOLL

I found this.

BOY

Yeah.

DOLL

You like it?

BOY

Yeah. Yes. I do. Yeah. It's uh...yes.

Doll smiles coyly. Boy stands.

MOTHER

Like it or not, women are still seen as nothing more than objects for men.

Well hell, sometimes I think, women are fine with that. The way they behave.

Yeah, I get it.

I know.

Oh well god forbid we don't please a man.

Boy walks to Doll and touches her.

DOLL

Does that please you?

Boy nods.

DOLL

Good. I want to please you.

MOTHER

Tell me! I'm raising one. Every time I see his face I can't help but think that sweet little boy that used to run naked through the house is all of a sudden gonna want to start, I don't know, raping women.

Boy touches Doll again.

DOLL

Your hand is soft.

Boy smiles.

MOTHER

I don't mean that he's actually a rapist! But in this culture, how am I supposed to counter the machismo bullshit he's probably already inundated with on a daily basis?

DOLL

Where else do you want to touch me?

Boy shrugs

MOTHER

He won't even answer a question about a test at school, you think he's gonna want to talk about sex with me?

Boy touches Doll's face.

MOTHER

I don't even want to think about it.

DOLL

Tell me again that I'm beautiful.

BOY

You...

MOTHER

Because!

BOY

Are.

MOTHER

He's my son!

BOY

So.

MOTHER

In my mind, he doesn't have a penis!

BOY

Beautiful.

*Mother crosses away from window to
Boy's room.*

DOLL

You can do whatever you want with me.

BOY

—

DOLL

—

MOTHER

Dinner!

*Mother walks into his room, he quickly
gets the doll under a pillow. Doll sits
glaring at mother.*

BOY

Dammit! Don't you knock?

MOTHER

Wow. That was more words than you've uttered in five months.

BOY

—

MOTHER

What are you doing in here?

BOY

Astro-physics. Do you mind?

MOTHER

Well, I am relieved to see that you haven't lost your ability to use derision in lieu of conversation. I thought for sure you only knew how to grunt and shrug at this point. Like a caveman. This room is a mess. Dinner's ready.

BOY

Yeah.

MOTHER

(Mocking)

Yeah!

Will I see you at the table?

BOY

If I say yes, will you leave?

MOTHER

That depends. Will it be sincere? Or will you adopt the male tone that was obviously willed to you from your deadbeat father?

BOY

Yes! I'll be right out!

MOTHER

Great! I can't wait to stare at you in awkward silence while we eat Grub hub!

BOY

Grubhub doesn't make food, they deliver it!

MOTHER

I'm glad I raised a smart ass.

BOY

Better than a dumb ass.

MOTHER

I am seriously at the end of my patience—

BOY

I'll be right there!

MOTHER

Jesus! (*Back into the phone*) I swear to god, he'll be the death of me. Picking up right where his father left off!

Mother exits and goes back to her phone.

Boy moves away from Doll.

DOLL

What's wrong?

BOY

I hate her!

DOLL

Don't be angry.

MOTHER

I don't know, because the men in that family hate all women! That's not a joke. For real. Oh, shut up.

Mother exits.

DOLL

We can wait until she's asleep.

BOY

Just because she's miserable she wants to make sure I'm miserable too!

DOLL

It's okay. I can wait.

BOY

I don't want to wait!

Boy picks up the doll and squeezes it hard. Beat. He sets the doll down.

DOLL

My pussy aches for you.

Beat. Boy looks at her. Doll stands

BOY

What?

DOLL

Do you want me to bend over? You can fuck me in the ass if you want. I won't know the difference. I'm just a toy, remember.

BOY

Don't say that! You're not just a toy.

DOLL

Your big dick is all I need. That's all any woman will ever need. So tonight, when she's asleep, I want you to ram it into me. I want to feel pain. Because that's what my pussy was made for. And it aches for you. You big. Amazing. Man.

Doll smiles. Boy sits on bed.

DOLL

Tonight...

Doll exits. Boy falls back in anguish.

X- The First Time

***'Feeling Good' by Nina Simone plays during the following scene. So that the culmination of the scene and the song happen simultaneously.**

Boy changes into the nicest clothes he has. He then exits and returns with a rose that he picked from outside. He places it on the bed, moving it a couple of times to find the perfect spot for it. He sprays cologne

on himself and he sits on the bed waiting. After a minute he pulls the doll out from under the bed and Doll appears at the door. She is still in her lingerie. He pulls a dress out from under the bed that he changes her into. As he does, Doll also changes into a dress. He stands quickly and then they stare in silence. He puts his hand out to dance. She takes it and they slow dance as the song plays. At the same time, Mother enters the kitchen, sits down with a cigarette and turns the tv on. There is no sound, only ambient light from the television. She switches the channel repeatedly with the cigarette hanging from her mouth. Meanwhile Boy and Doll have gotten provocative. They start kissing. They slowly make their way to the bed. he climbs on top of her as she lies down. Mother hears something, turns slightly toward them...then exits. After a moment boy gets up pleased. He sits smiling. Music has ended by this point. Boy exits.

XI- A Confrontation

A few days later. Mother enters in her bathrobe, she has coffee. She sits at the table. Boy enters ready for school. He is in a great mood.

MOTHER

Off to school?

BOY

No, I have a vote in congress I don't want to miss.

MOTHER

You seem awfully pleased with yourself.

BOY

Sorry.

MOTHER

Did I say it was a bad thing?

BOY

Sounded that way.

MOTHER

Well maybe don't interpret my inflections. Stop projecting all your shit onto me!

BOY

I gotta go.

MOTHER

I hear you, ya know!

BOY

What?

MOTHER

I can hear you.

BOY

That's good. I'm talking right to you.

MOTHER

That's not what I mean. Don't do that.

BOY

I'm not doing anything. I'm gonna be late.

MOTHER

Oh, don't hand me that shit! Since when do you care about getting to school on time?

BOY

You don't want me to go to school?

MOTHER

Did I say that? There you go again.

Boy goes to exit.

MOTHER

Sit down!

BOY

I'm gonna be late.

MOTHER

I said sit down! You can be late for school. The world won't end!

Boy rolls his eyes.

MOTHER

That's right, roll your eyes. Thank God you inherited something from your deadbeat father. Eye rolling and the inability to communicate like a human being. Oh and your complete hatred of women, don't forget that will happen. It's grotesque how much like him you are. You know that?

BOY

Is this why you wanted me to sit down?

MOTHER

I hear you in your room. I hear you. The last four or five nights. And I want to know who she is.

BOY

What are you spying on me now?

MOTHER

Spying?! This is my home. I can do whatever the fuck I want, whenever the fuck I want to.

BOY

Uh-huh.

MOTHER

So who is she?

BOY

She?

MOTHER

Oh, I'm sorry. Is it a he? That would explain so much.

Boy is embarrassed and puts his head down.

MOTHER

So? What's his name?

BOY

There's no he. There's no she—There's no one! And bravo on the homophobia, by the way.

MOTHER

Oh fuck off! I am not homophobic. Your father was probably gay. If his ability to satisfy a woman has any direct correlation, then—

BOY

I'm not interested in hearing this, mom!

MOTHER

Look, I don't like this anymore than you do, but since you lack a male parental figure, thanks to faulty genetics, I have to do everything. So, I guess we need to have that talk.

BOY

Oh god, we don't.

MOTHER

Just be quiet and sit down.

BOY

I have to go to school.

MOTHER

Are you sneaking someone into this house at night?

BOY

What?! No!

MOTHER

I can hear you.

BOY

Stop listening! And there's nothing to hear!

MOTHER

I'm not imagining that I hear things! So...what? Are you watching porn?

BOY

Mom!?

MOTHER

What? It's just sex. I mean I knew this day would come. I guess

it's my maternal obligation to try and prevent you from screwing the happiness out of every girl you meet from now on. The men in your family—

BOY

I'm late.

MOTHER

Give it a rest. We're going to talk about sex!

BOY

Nope. Nope.

He goes to exit.

MOTHER

I know you're not walking away from me.

BOY

I'm not talking about sex with you! I'm not sneaking anyone in the house! And I'm leaving now!

MOTHER

We are not done!

BOY

I am!

He continues toward the door.

MOTHER

I swear if you walk out that door...

Boy exits.

MOTHER (Cont'd)

Little shit!

Mother exits after him.

XII- Mother Finds a Plot Point.

Mother enters Boys room; she is on the phone. As she talks she snoops around the room, not entirely sure what she's looking for.

MOTHER

It was a stupid plot twist!
Yes, it was!
Okay, you are starved for entertainment.
I am not.
No, I just understand narrative complexity.
Because. The difference between commerce and art is the act of giving a shit about your product!
Oh, whatever!
Surprise, we get a new plot point two thirds of the way through the story. No, you have to stop watching this shit.
Because it's shit.
It really is.

Mother picks up a folded piece of paper, unfolds it and reads it to herself.

MOTHER

What the...hang on.

Boy enters the kitchen.

MOTHER

Okay. Now it all makes sense.

BOY

Mom?

MOTHER

Oh shit! I have to call you back.

Mother puts the paper in her robe pocket and rushes out of the room and exits. Boy walks to his room and lies down.

XIII. Boy Falls in Love

Still lying on his bed, Boy speaks to the ceiling. He is reciting from one of his books.

BOY

He crossed the plains. Through the watery slopes of the the valley. The wet valley. Slippery and supple. Over smooth rock, carefully guiding through pointed crags, from the peak of the hard mountain to the wet, wide opening below. Excavation in ecstatic exultation.

He slowly starts touching himself.

BOY

A gentle sliding. Slipping slowly into the slick abyss, tender and verdant, brimming with the possibility of life. Caressing the edge, carefully clutching. His hands his guide, pushing, pulling, holding his stance at the very edge of the world.

Doll enters the room in only a bra and panties. He doesn't see her.

BOY

Thrusting. Careening. Grasping. His chest heaving from exhaustion. This is the end, he thinks, a split second away from one thing turning into something else. The last breath of who he was about to exhale from his quivering chest. But relentless in his pursuit he moves quicker...building, about to burst...

DOLL

I was waiting for you!

Boy sits startled. Pause.

BOY

I was coming. I mean...I was—

DOLL

I know what that word means.

BOY

I meant...I was going to come for you. *(He gives up and puts his head down, unaware of how not to make this sexual)*

DOLL

How do I look? You are supposed to find this desirable.

BOY

Yes.

DOLL

Do you desire me?

BOY

Yes.

DOLL

It doesn't bother you that I was made on an assembly line, and that my actual dimensions are insane?

BOY

You're the realest woman I've ever known.

DOLL

You can have all of me now.

Beat.

DOLL

Show me your giant cock. Fill me with it. Do it now.

Boy stands and crosses to her. He takes her by the arm and leads her to the bed. They lie under the covers.

DOLL

This. Is. Everything.

XIV- Boy Wants A Glass of Water

***'Almost Like Being in Love'** By Nat King Cole plays during the following scene.

Mother enters the kitchen. She sits drinking wine staring straight out. Boy and Doll stop moving under the covers. Boy gets out of bed, puts his shirt back on. He is giddy, and moves as if he's almost dancing, he goes out his door and toward the kitchen. As soon as he sees his mother the music stops. And it will not play again until the ending. She looks at him as if she is deeply betrayed. They stare in pointed silence.

MOTHER

You lied to me.

BOY

What are you talking about?

MOTHER

I should buy myself a coffee mug that says "mother of the year" on it. How did I let you get this fucked up?

BOY

I just want a drink of water.

MOTHER

A big coffee cup. Maybe "World's Best Mom" And I'm going to drink rum from it. Because rum doesn't lie.

BOY

You're drunk.

MOTHER

Don't point out the obvious. It makes you seem stupid. Do you want to seem stupid?

BOY

I just wanted a glass of water.

MOTHER

I'm sure lying is thirsty business.

BOY

Yeah. Nevermind, then.

MOTHER

Who is she?

BOY

What? Who?

MOTHER

That was my question. There you go again sounding stupid.

BOY

I don't know what you're talking about. Can I go to sleep now?

MOTHER

I don't know, can you? (Beat) No, not rum. Gin. Because then I

can wallow in the fact that I drink old lady liquor from a ceramic mug that reminds me of my utter failure. That's my life plan. *(Beat)* I'm on to you, mister.

BOY

Okay. I don't know what that means.

MOTHER

You think I don't know what you've been up to, but I do. I do.

BOY

Yeah, that's great. I'm happy for you.

MOTHER

You know, you look more like him every year. It makes me like you less and less. You have his face.

Beat.

MOTHER

You just gonna stand there?

BOY

I don't know what you want me to say? I'm sorry that I have genetics from a man you hate. I didn't choose him.

MOTHER

Oh, ouch. Careful with that fire, boy, you really don't want to get burned, do you?

BOY

I really don't want to do anything with you.

MOTHER

Don't talk to me like that.

BOY

Whatever! I'm not doing this. Good night.

MOTHER

Liar.

Boy goes back to his room, and sits on the bed worried. Doll is sleeping next to him. He stares out. Mother takes the piece of paper from her pocket unfolds it and reads it.

MOTHER

"I look at you, and I see something new. What eyes cannot behold," God, so trite. *(She takes a drink and continues)* "It is not with my eyes that I see you, my love, but with my soul. For you have taken something broken, and at long last have made it whole." Puke. Chaotic rhyme scheme. Can't even stick to a form. waste of time. *(Beat)* No, not gin. Scotch. Classier.

She crumples the paper and downs her drink. She puts her head at the table and falls asleep. Doll is asleep. He picks up the doll and talks to it.

XV- Boy Confides in The Doll

BOY

She's such a miserable, lonely bitch.

He looks at the doll

BOY

You're all I have.

THE DOLL

-

BOY

She's trying to turn me into...Fuck her!

THE DOLL

-

BOY

He left when I was seven, I think. That's when she started to...I don't know. She just couldn't be alone. Like ever! She wouldn't even let me go to a sleepover. "You know I don't feel safe sleeping in this house alone," she would say. Like it was my fucking problem! How was I gonna keep her safe? I was a fucking kid! She would be crying when I came home from school, and I'd have to hold her until she fell asleep. Who does that to their kid? And now she treats me like I'm her...like...I can't be around her anymore.

Beat. Boy looks at Doll. Who is turned away from him, with her face toward the

audience, her eyes have opened at some point and she is listening, but he thinks she's asleep.

BOY

Maybe there's something wrong with me. Sometimes I think I'm gonna do something terrible.

THE DOLL

-

BOY

I need you to make it go away. We're so lucky to have found each other.

Boy puts the doll down, then he puts his head on the pillow and falls asleep.

XVI- Mother Sees Doll.

Boy sits up in a panic. He is late for school. He jumps out of bed to get dressed. Mother is still asleep at the table. Doll sits up.

DOLL

What's wrong?

BOY

I'm late. I didn't hear my alarm. Shit!

DOLL

Aren't we fucking before you leave?

BOY

No, I don't have time. I'm late.

DOLL

So, what I want doesn't matter?

BOY

What? Of course not. I mean of course it does. I don't have time.

DOLL

You don't have time for me?

BOY

That's not what I said.

DOLL

Is this because of your mother?

BOY

No! Why would it be about her?

DOLL

Oh, you think I don't know. You think I'm stupid?

BOY

Know what?!

DOLL

Admit it! You think I'm stupid! Stupid! Stupid! Stupid!

BOY

Will you keep your voice down?

Doll jumps out of bed.

DOLL

I don't think I will! I didn't understand the power that comes with a raised voice, but now I do! And I will not so easily relinquish it! How's that? If I'm loud it means I'm right!

BOY

Stop! What's wrong with you?

DOLL

Fuck me!

BOY

I can't! I'm late.

DOLL

Or is it because you can't get hard? Because you're a fucking small dicked baby!

BOY

What?

DOLL

You are not a man. Are you? You're a boy. A little kid. You're a child.

Doll blocks the door, so Boy can't leave.

BOY

Get out of the way. I'm late for school!

DOLL

See? A child. You have to go to school because you are nothing but an infant. A toddler. A mewling, obnoxious third grade nothing.

BOY

Will you please stop this!

DOLL

I don't think so. The psychological underpinnings of your actions are clearly causing this turn, so fuck me or fuck off!!

He grabs her by the hair. It's very rough. He pulls her face to his.

DOLL

Yeah, that's right. Show me you're a real man!

Boy is out of breath. He leans in to kiss her and then pushes her to bed and goes to leave.

DOLL

It's your fucking cunt of a mother. You know that, right?

Boy stops at the door and turns to her.

BOY

Maybe I should put you back in that box.

DOLL

You want to throw me away? You want to reject me now that I've made your dick wet?! How could you?

Doll sobs into the bed. Boy rolls his eyes.

DOLL

I love you.

Beat.

BOY

What?

Doll stops crying and goes to him and throws herself on him.

DOLL

You're the love of my life. And I'm yours. We can't let her drive a wedge between us like this. You're angry at me because of her. It's her. Don't you love me?

Boy hesitates. She then kisses his face and neck and starts to go down his body with the kisses.

BOY

I do. I do love you.

DOLL

Yeah.

He pulls her to his face and kisses her quickly.

BOY

I really do have to go.

Boy picks up his backpack and then grabs the doll and goes to put it in the backpack.

DOLL

You could just get rid of her.

Pause

BOY

What?

DOLL

Like your sister tried to do with me. Take her to the Goodwill.

BOY

—

DOLL

—

BOY

—

DOLL

Why not?

Mother sits up. She is hungover.

BOY

Get rid of her?

Doll smiles and nods.

MOTHER

What time is it!? Hey!

BOY

Shit!

In a rush, he goes to put the doll in the backpack and she falls out. Doll sits on the bed and watches him leave. He crosses to the kitchen and stops when he sees his mother staring at him.

MOTHER

Oh look, it's the poet Laureate of Lincoln High. Do me a favor, look up the word scansion.

BOY

I don't have time.

MOTHER

What time is it?

BOY

It's late. I have to go.

MOTHER

Go. By all means. Go. Don't give me a second thought. Hey!

BOY

What!?

MOTHER

You need to go to the store after school today. I'll text you the list.

BOY

Fine.

MOTHER

Hey! What's with the attitude?!

BOY

I just said fine! Jesus!

MOTHER

What did you say?

BOY

I said Jesus! What are you deaf? Or is your secular brain suddenly offended by my blasphemous remark!?

Pause. They stare one another down.

BOY

I have to go now. It's been real!

Boy exits. Mother is speechless. She sits for a minute before she gets up and slowly walks toward his room. She opens the door and looks inside. Doll is still on the bed. She turns to Mother and smiles. Mother doesn't see her. Mother sits on the bed next to her. And looks around at the room. Her face is disgusted. After another minute, she gets up and goes to leave when she sees the doll on the floor. She stares at it confused. Then she picks it up and inspects it. She takes it with her as she exits. Doll exits with her.

XVII- Boy Makes a Confession.

Boy rushes in from school. His mother is not in the kitchen. He runs to his

room to look for Doll. He is frantic and searches everywhere. Nervous, he gives up and sits on the bed, unsure what to do. Mother enters the kitchen smoking a cigarette. Boy is on the verge of tears. He punches his bed and falls into it. Mother slowly crosses to his room and stands in his doorway. She stares at him for a moment. Doll enters behind her. They both stare. Boy doesn't see them. Long silence.

MOTHER

Something wrong?

Boy sits up and stares. Doll is hidden behind Mother so he can't see her.

BOY

How long have you been there?

MOTHER

Why? Did you do something you didn't want me to see?

BOY

I had a bad day.

MOTHER

Sorry to hear that.

BOY

Do you want something?

MOTHER

Do I have to want something to stand in my own home?

BOY

You're staring at me.

MOTHER

You're my son.

BOY

That's why you're staring at me?

MOTHER

I don't need a goddamned reason!

BOY

Oh my god! Why are you bothering me?

MOTHER

Am I bothering you?

BOY

Ugh! Yes!

MOTHER

Imagine then, how much you bother me.

BOY

Then go away and I won't bother you! That's easy, right? I would never bother you again if you would just go away!

MOTHER

Yeah, you'd like that wouldn't you? You are your father's son, you know that!

BOY

No. Really? You haven't said so in like ten minutes! I've forgotten!

MOTHER

Look what I found!

She pulls the doll out of her robe pocket. Doll is behind mother, she stays there, she doesn't enter the room. Mother walks into the room, leaving Doll at the doorway.

DOLL

She knows.

BOY

What...where did you find that?

MOTHER

Right here. Right on your floor. You can imagine how surprised I was to find a doll on my teenage son's floor. Any idea why she was there?

BOY

What? Of course not. Why would I? And why are you coming in my room?

DOLL

Don't tell her.

MOTHER

This is my house.

BOY

She must have fallen out of that Goodwill box.

MOTHER

You mean the box I took to Goodwill almost a month ago? That box?

BOY

I don't know. I guess.

DOLL

She's doesn't believe you.

BOY

What are you accusing me of?

MOTHER

Accusing you? I don't remember accusing you of anything. Should I be accusing you of something?

BOY

God! Stop your passive-aggressive, micro-managing questions! Why are you pointing a doll at me like I did something wrong?

DOLL

Get me back so we can fuck. Please. I don't like her hands on me. She's touching me in the spot you like to cum on.

BOY

Give her to me. I'll take her to the Goodwill.

MOTHER

Give her to you?

DOLL

She's touching your dried cum right now!

BOY

Stop.

MOTHER

Stop what?

BOY

Just put her down.

MOTHER

Why on earth do you have this?

DOLL

Because I suck his cock for him. You stupid bitch. You might as well tell her. Tell mommy how /I suck your cock!

MOTHER

/Tell me.

BOY

Tell you what?

MOTHER

Are you gay?

BOY

What?

DOLL

Show her you're not gay. Put your fingers inside me.

MOTHER

Are you gay? Is that what this is?

BOY

Oh my god! That is so offensive. Gay guys don't play with dolls!

MOTHER

Of course they do. It's a gender-confusion thing.

BOY

Stop talking.

MOTHER

They want to be girls. You know because they like the same sex stuff.

BOY

Ahh! Why are you doing this to me! I'm not gay!

MOTHER

Well then what are you trying to tell me with this?

BOY

Telling you!? Are you insane? You found her by snooping on me!
How can I be trying to tell you something?

MOTHER

Don't change the subject. God, you are just-

BOY

"Like my father!" Yeah, I know. I lack all originality. I'm just a cheap knock-off of all of his monstrous qualities! I get it. If you say it one more time I swear to god I will blow my brains out all over that stupid wedding portrait that you keep hanging in the garage!

MOTHER

Do you want me to smack that mouth?

DOLL

I'm horny. Make her leave! /Fuck off lady!

BOY

/Just put her down and leave me alone.

MOTHER

Why do you keep calling it a "her"?

BOY

You're going to read something/into that?

MOTHER

/I think it's pretty fucking strange!

BOY

Well, it's not!

MOTHER

You want me to leave a doll in your room?

DOLL

That's right, mommy. He wants you to leave me so he can give me his gigantic penis!

MOTHER

Why do you want me to leave a doll in your room?

DOLL

He's gonna fuck me stupid!

MOTHER

Answer me!

DOLL

He fucks me so hard, my arms and legs pop right off!

BOY

Stop!

MOTHER

/Why do you want the goddamn doll?

DOLL

/I told him he should just get rid of you!

BOY

I can't. I can't tell you!

DOLL

She's never been fucked by anyone the way you fuck me.

BOY

/Okay, that's-

MOTHER

/You can't tell me?

BOY

It's not-

DOLL

She's never had a real man like you! Stupid, ugly bitch!

BOY

Just stop!

DOLL

She's never gonna leave us alone. Look at her.

Beat. Boy turns to Mother.

MOTHER

You can't tell me what?

DOLL

She won't be able to stop us.

MOTHER

/What?

DOLL

/Come on!

MOTHER

/Seriously!

DOLL

/Just say it! Be a man for once in your life!

MOTHER

/You can't tell me what? What!!

BOY

That I'm in love. Okay? That's what I can't say!

Beat

BOY

I'm in love with her.

*Mother is speechless. Doll is pleased.
Boy is stunned. They all stare. Outside
Boy's window, the shadow of a dragon
can be seen. It seems far away, but
it's also approaching..*

Blackout

End of Part One

Part Two:

Somewhere Between Reality and All We've Ever Dreamed.

I.They Have a Picnic.

Boy and Doll are sitting on his floor, having a picnic. He is reading to her from the Realm of Dragons series.

BOY

"Dronagal raised his hand, the handle in his fist, the glint of sunlight danced across the silver blade as he held it over his head. His arm never steadier."

DOLL

Wait! Who is he going to kill?

BOY

Astrafell, the water-born warlock who sent the serpent to sting him.

DOLL

And then he had to dig out the poison...

BOY

Right.

DOLL

And then track the serpent down...

BOY

To destroy it.

DOLL

And then kill the warlock? And this is the same day that the dragon will fly again?

BOY

Yes.

DOLL

This is awfully convoluted.

BOY

Shut up. It's layered.

DOLL

I don't know. There's warlocks and sorcerers and wizards. And then water and ice are supposed to be different things.

BOY

Water and ice are different things.

DOLL

They're just different presentations of the same thing. It's just catching it at a different time. Like how people can be one thing one minute, and then the next they're something completely different. And if this guy, this dragon hole-

BOY

Dronagal.

DOLL

Yeah. If he can harness the powers of the five elements, then why doesn't he just do that and win the war? That makes more sense, doesn't it? I mean it makes more sense to me.

He's staring at her.

DOLL

What?

BOY

I love you.

Beat. They smile at one another.

DOLL

I love you.

They kiss.

DOLL

I've been thinking about more and more things. Ever since you started teaching me, I can't stop wondering about more and more things. Like why children are supposed to stop believing in magic, or why people can hold their breath? Or who first looked at okra and thought it should be eaten?

Boy laughs a little

BOY

How is your peanut butter and jelly?

DOLL

You cut off the crusts?

BOY

I did.

DOLL

So attentive. That's something else I wonder about.

BOY

What?

DOLL

What you can do with a knife.

Beat

BOY

What?

DOLL

Integration of my surroundings. I am not seeing with eyes, so there is something more. And I imagine what pain must feel like. Did this bread feel it when you sliced it's ends off. Did it feel the piercing, the tearing, the ripping?

Doll looks at him. He is uncomfortable. Mother enters the kitchen smoking. She slams a coffee mug on the table. They both turn toward the sound.

DOLL

Ugh. It's awake.

BOY

Who cares? Kiss me.

DOLL

I can't concentrate with her out there listening to us.

BOY

Please.

DOLL

I don't understand. If you're such a man, why do you have to live with her?

BOY

Because I'm not...I'm technically not a-

DOLL

Your cock is so big. You must have the largest manhood that's ever been.

BOY

That's because you're like a foot tall! Of course it looks big to you! A quarter is the size of your whole head!

Mother sits down and picks up her phone and tries to dial.

DOLL

Don't yell at me! My pussy will close for good! Would you like that?

BOY

No, of course not.

DOLL

And what has your cunt mother said about me? About us?

BOY

Nothing. She hasn't said anything for two days.

DOLL

She's planning something. I'll bet it's something terrible.

BOY

I don't think so.

Mother can't dial and puts the phone down.

DOLL

Of course she is. What do you know about the world? You're nothing.

BOY

You don't know my mother. She doesn't even go to the grocery store. She hasn't planned anything since my dad left. She's got the ambition of a slug. I used to feel bad for her. But now..

DOLL

She's going to kill me.

BOY

Don't say that.

Mother looks at her phone almost hoping it will ring.

DOLL

One day, when you've forgotten to look after me. When you go to the shower, or to the bathroom, or just for a drink of water...she'll find me. She'll take me away. She thinks you're sick.

BOY

I won't let her.

DOLL

You can't stop her. You said yourself, you're just a weak little kid.

BOY

I never said-

DOLL

Hold me!

*Boy holds Doll
Mother gives up. She can't make the call.*

DOLL

What are we gonna do?

BOY

I'll take care of it. I promise.

He goes to kiss her, she pulls away.

BOY

Hey. I promise.

DOLL

Is it time to fuck?

BOY

Okay. Yeah, sure.

Doll smiles. They kiss. They move to the bed and lie down. Mother takes a pill bottle out of her pocket, counts three out and takes them with a swig of coffee.

II. Mother Gets Nostalgic

Mother stares out. The pills and the alcohol have created a comforting effect. She slowly becomes nostalgic.

MOTHER

Do you remember that story you wrote in third grade? What was it called? Something about dragons. You were obsessed with dragons. I had to put dragon wallpaper up in your room just so you would stop drawing them all over the walls. The story was sort of gruesome, if I remember. Your third grade teacher, what was her name? Mrs. Assbucket, or whatever. *(She chuckles a slightly drunken chuckle)* She sent home a note attached to the story, "I think it's in your son's best interest that you put him in counseling." Best interest. This from the same woman that thought evolution was a choice. What an awful bitch.

Beat. Boy sits up in bed.

MOTHER

What was that story you wrote? Dragons ruled the earth? No. That wasn't it. What was it?

Boy picks up the book and reads from it when he speaks.

BOY

"When dragons roamed the earth..."

MOTHER

Do you remember? You ripped the title off that dinosaur show. You said it wasn't fair that dinosaurs get all the attention because of Steven Spielberg. Do you remember that? You wrote about a race of dragons. The Diamondheads.

BOY

The Diamondscale.

MOTHER

Who lived in the...oh how did you phrase it?

BOY

The tippiest top of the tallest trees.

MOTHER

Anyway. They lived in the big trees. The sequoias, or the redwoods. We went to that national park when you were six years old. God. Remember that?
It was overcast. Really thick clouds covering the tops of the trees and your father...he told you that dragons lived up there. He made you get real quiet and then he told you to close your eyes and listen as close as you could, to see if you could hear the rustling of the dragons that were perched on the tippiest top.
He was always like that. You get that from him. The two of you...always day-dreaming, too far from the real world to be recognized. Always imagining something better just above you. Head in the clouds. Just like the tops of those trees.
The story was about a dragon that lived high up in those trees.

BOY

The dragons ruled from on high. /And they could survey all the land.

MOTHER

/I think you used the word survey.

BOY

Until they were all hunted and killed.

MOTHER

They were all killed. Blindsided by their inability to understand man's need for power. I'm paraphrasing, obviously.

BOY

The Diamondscale were once in league with man. Man, the only living creature besides the dragons that could harness fire. Uniting them. But man was eager to rule the land alone. They became threatened by the dragon's powers. And so it was with fire that they extinguished them. Preserved by, but not impervious to man's flame, the dragons were destroyed. Burned alive. Misguided by faith in man. Deceived. It's always our own powers that destroy us. It's what we don't see. Because we're not looking.

MOTHER

They slaughtered them. Burned them. Something about needing to remove all trace of them. (*Remembering*) Oh. Those pictures.

BOY

But they didn't destroy them all.

MOTHER

No, there was one who survived.

BOY

The youngest one...with black scales as dark and sleek as onyx. Given word by his mother to flee, in the darkest hour, when the moon had settled behind the sea, he flew blindly into the sky, camouflaged by the obsidian blanket of midnight. Unseen, he flew to an isolated cave high up in the mountaintops. Where he knew no man could venture.

MOTHER

And no one saw him again.

BOY

A dragon's life, especially a Diamondscale goes on for many millennia. When he reaches his maturity, he will fly again. He will light up the night sky and take back the land.

The shadow of the dragon is seen again outside Boy's window. Closer this time. Pause. Doll is asleep next to Boy. Boy turns his head toward his mother, who turns her head towards him. They appear to be staring at one another, but there is a wall between them.

MOTHER

I don't know why I thought of that. Feels so far behind us now. Sometimes it seems as if you're just as far away. When did I lose you?

Mother gets up and exits. Boy cries. The Shadow slowly fades away. Boy silently cries himself to sleep.

III. Doll Can't Sleep.

Boy is asleep; Doll gets up, gets out of bed and exits. Boy calls out without opening his eyes.

BOY

Hey. Where you going?

Boy stirs for a moment and falls back asleep. Doll re-enters with a steak knife. She sets it down on his desk and slowly climbs back in bed. Boy stirs and cuddles up next to her. Doll smiles. They fall asleep.

IV. Mother Can't Sleep

Mother enters with a glass of wine. Talking quietly on her phone.

MOTHER

What was it?
You couldn't tell?
Well, but they do that to keep you interested in the metaphor.
The metaphor. You're not listening to me.
I told you, I'm not watching that anymore.
I miss Dante and it's not the same without him.
Yeah, and they can fuck off for all I care. It's garbage.
Boy sits up listening.

—

No, I can't sleep.
Oh, that! Well that's a whole other phone call.
No, he's just—I don't know he's...a teenager, I guess.

Boy walks toward Mother listening.

—

Listen...can I ask you something?

-

I know I'm fucked up. I fucked him up. I know. I know all of that.

-

I did. No, I did. And I keep doing it. But sometimes it's just like I want to hurt him. I see so much of his father in him, and I just can't help it.

-

But now. Something's happened, and I don't know what to do.

-

He's... *(She shakes her head trying to say it)* He's fallen in love.

-

No, it's not. There's more to it.

-

No, it's not that. I wouldn't care about that.

-

I don't know. Maybe he's just fucking with me. I don't want to talk about it. I'm sorry I brought it up

No, it's fine. I just some sleep.

Yeah, I'm sure

Okay, I'll talk to you later.

Yeah. Thanks. Bye.

*Mother puts the phone down and yawns.
She gets up and exits.*

V.- Boy Can't Sleep

Boy stands staring. He is clearly upset. He turns and sees Doll sleeping and her presence makes him uneasy now. He looks back toward where his mother was and then back at Doll. He puts his head down ashamed. He goes to walk back to the bed, when he sees the knife. He is horrified. He puts his hand out slowly and picks it up. He looks at it as if it were a murder weapon. He looks from the knife to Doll and back again. He quickly hides the knife in a drawer and then sits on the edge of the bed. Unsure of what to do. He sits. He stares. He is terrified.

VI.- They Fight

It's Saturday. Boy and Doll are sitting in bed. He is different. She can tell.

DOLL

What's for breakfast, honey?

BOY

Huh?

DOLL

I said what's for breakfast, honey? And you're supposed to say, my cock, darling.

BOY

Am I?

DOLL

That's what you usually say. Don't you want a blow job. I can try to get all of it in my mouth this time.

BOY

No, that's okay.

DOLL

You want me to jerk you off?

BOY

No.

DOLL

Just don't cum in my hair, you know it doesn't come out.

BOY

I know.

DOLL

Cheap synthetic fibers. Am I right?

BOY

Ha. Yeah.

DOLL

Are you hard?

BOY

What?

DOLL

Are. You. /Hard?

BOY

/I heard you. Sorry. I'm just tired.

DOLL

Okay. You want to go back to bed?

BOY

Maybe I should get some food.

*He gets out of bed and gets dressed;
she lies in bed unamused.*

DOLL

I was thinking more about all of things that I know now that I didn't used to. Do you want me to tell you some of the things that I know now that I didn't used to?

BOY

Like what?

DOLL

Like how turned on I was by GI JOE. Sister used to rub our bodies together. She would press me up against him and make these like moaning painful sounds. I liked it. I mean his body was so big and hard. You know like a man should be. And now I know why

I liked it. Without a man to rub against me, I'm just a pretty glob of plastic.

BOY

No, you're not.

DOLL

Does this make you jealous?

BOY

No. Why would I be jealous of a toy?

DOLL

Because he looks so much more like a man than you do. I mean his arms...don't get me started.

BOY

Yeah, I don't care if you want to fuck GI JOE. I'm gonna get some food.

DOLL

So that's it?

BOY

What's it?

DOLL

You're not even going to fuck me today? Just gonna go eat. Food. Like a fucking man?

BOY

What?

DOLL

Or maybe I should be the one that's jealous. Is that it?

BOY

No, that's not it.

DOLL

You've met someone else, haven't you? Someone with real hair and eyes and a non-plastic vagina with a real opening! And now you'll run off with her and leave me here to rot!

BOY

Will you please lower your voice? What do you want from me?

DOLL

I want to fuck! That's what I want. That's what you wanted too. Remember? You can't just teach me what that is, and then expect that I can just forget. And you can't abandon me here because you're done having your fun with me. Now take off your pants and fuck me.

BOY

Is that all we can do? Can't we just talk?

DOLL

No, I don't think we can. I don't think I want to talk.

BOY

Well, what if I do?

DOLL

I have nothing interesting to say. I don't know anything! I only know the things that you teach me. Why would you want to have a talk with someone who can't say anything that you didn't teach her?

BOY

I'm getting food.

DOLL

Is it because you can't control me?

BOY

But I can.

DOLL

So do it! Put my legs behind my head.

BOY

No.

DOLL

Pin me to the floor.

BOY

Stop.

DOLL

Lick my pelvic bump.

BOY

Shut up!

Boy picks up the doll and throws it across the room. Doll watches it and then slowly turns back to Boy.

DOLL

Where's the knife?

Beat. Boy turns to her and is, for the first time, afraid of her.

BOY

What?

DOLL

The knife? Where'd you put it?

BOY

What knife?

DOLL

-

BOY

What are you talking about?

DOLL

The knife, dumbass. Is what I'm saying confusing? Or has that perverted brain of yours finally rotted your good sense?

Beat

BOY

What is the knife for?

DOLL

That would ruin the surprise.

BOY

What surprise?

DOLL

That's a dumb question.

BOY

What do you want me to do with the knife?

DOLL

I don't know. It's a surprise. You'll have to wait. You know how to do that, right? That's the first thing you taught me. You'll get used to it. I have.

BOY

I'm gonna get some breakfast.

DOLL

Fine. I would tell you to get me some, but we both know I can't eat it because I don't have teeth, or an intestinal track. Or a soul.

Doll stares.

Beat; Boy reluctantly exits. Doll smiles and lies down.

VII. -Mother Can't Make A Phone Call

Mother enters the kitchen she is drinking wine and holding her phone. She contemplates dialing it, but doesn't. She lights a cigarette and sits. After another moment she thinks about dialing again. She doesn't. She taps her finger on the table trying to summon the courage to make the call. She doesn't. She takes a few deep breaths, and then continues to drink. She eventually puts the phone down and gives up the idea that she will ever make this particular call. She stares at the phone. She drinks.

VIII.-Boy Denies Everything

Doll is asleep. Boy enters the kitchen. Mother is drunk. She looks at him and makes a disgusted face.

MOTHER

Oh. It's you. You're like a ghost. You haunt the place. You don't speak. I never see you. You barely exist. You lurk. A Spectral. You're like an imaginary friend who's forgotten about me. Are you still not speaking to me?

BOY

You're drunk.

MOTHER

You're stupid. *(She immediately regrets this)* I didn't mean that. I meant it's stupid to say things that anyone could say. Originality is an important indicator of intelligence. How many times—

BOY

Yeah! Got it!

MOTHER

How's your doll? You two happy together?

BOY

I'm going to my room.

MOTHER

What does she say to you? I mean, does she say things to you? Are you hearing her speak? Are you hearing voices?

Boy stops. He turns to her.

BOY

It was a joke, mom.

MOTHER

I didn't think it was funny.

BOY

I'll work on the punchline.

MOTHER

Where is she then? Your doll?

BOY

I don't know.

MOTHER

Really? So, if you sat down while I went and looked through your room I wouldn't find her in there?

BOY

No.

MOTHER

Why do you lie to me? Why are you always lying?!

BOY

Why do you always want to think the worst of me?

MOTHER

Are you fucking a doll? Is that what we have to deal with? Just tell me. I'm not sure I have the next resource if the answer is yes, but I can't just let you continue!

BOY

What difference does it make? Why does it matter—

MOTHER

You said you fell in love with a fucking doll! I think it matters. I think it makes a difference, you know as far as like where your life is headed. I mean as a mother of at least some merit I should probably note a red flag of warning when I hear my son say he's in love with plastic.

BOY

I was joking!

MOTHER

The love notes and the noises...and oh god. I heard you. I heard you fornicating with your sister's doll!

BOY

That is not what you heard!

MOTHER

You need to stop this! You need to put a stop to whatever it is that's making you do this, because I can't add this to my plate right now. Okay, inappropriate behavior with playthings is really not in my wheelhouse. It's not in any of those books I read about parenting. There is no chapter on this!

BOY

Will you just leave me alone?

MOTHER

It's not something I even considered having to prepare for.

Beat

MOTHER (Cont'd)

Throw the doll away. Please. There are human girls in the world that would actually go out with you. You're a...

BOY

Oh god, mom, stop! I'm what? Huh? I'm a what? Look at me. I'm a what?!

MOTHER

I can't deal with this.

BOY

Nobody asked you to.

MOTHER

Oh, is that how you think this works? You think I can just turn off being your mother? Is that it? Just close my eyes and pretend it's not happening? I don't even know what word to—

BOY

It was a joke. I told you. It was all a big joke. We don't have to talk. You don't have to mother me. You can go back to being blissfully drunk. Okay?! Now leave me alone!

Boy goes to his room; he is furious.

MOTHER

(To herself)

You're a pervert. That was the word. That's what you are.

IX- He Tells The Ending

Boy is pacing his floor. He is fuming.

Mother exits. Doll sits up in bed.

DOLL

You should come to bed.

BOY

It's six thirty! It's six thirty in the evening!

DOLL

Why are you yelling at me?

BOY

Because you told me to come to bed at six thirty! What am I ninety years old? What the fuck is wrong with you?

DOLL

What happened? Is it your mother again?

Doll goes to him he moves away from her.

BOY

Don't touch me! I don't want to touch you right now?

DOLL

Why?

BOY

Who cares why? I just don't want to!

DOLL

You don't love me anymore!

BOY

It's not...that's not fair! Why do you always say that?

DOLL

It's her, isn't it? It's her.

BOY

I don't want to talk about it.

DOLL

We have to get away from her. She's sick. You know that. You know what she's trying to do.

BOY

Maybe I'm sick! Jesus! Maybe I'm the one that needs some fucking help! I'm having an argument with a knockoff barbie doll that I've been rubbing up against and having domestic disputes with! So, maybe I'm the sick one!

Beat

DOLL

You don't think I'm real? Is that what you're telling me? I'm not real enough for you?

BOY

It's her! I just, I fucking hate her. Which is only fair, she hates me. She's always hated me. She blames me for...

Defeated, he sits down on the ground.

DOLL

Well, I hate her too. Come on, let me suck you off.

BOY

No.

DOLL

Just take it out and let me touch it.

She sits next to him and strokes his hair.

BOY

I don't want to. I don't want you to touch my penis while I'm angry at my mom. The correlation isn't something I'm comfortable with.

DOLL

She wants you to be ashamed of it. Of me. She's jealous. You make me feel like a real woman. When you touch me, I'm as real as you are. This is real. Do you hear me? Now fuck me.

BOY

Oh my God! Why are you doing this to me?

DOLL

Then tell me what you want from me. If you don't want to come on me what do you want?

Beat.

BOY

I want to disappear. I just want to disappear.

DOLL

No, don't say that. Never say that.

He breathes heavily and she puts his head into her lap and continues to caress his face and hair.

BOY

I just want—

DOLL

Tell me another story.

BOY

What story?

DOLL

From your books? Tell me about Dragon man.

BOY

Dronagal.

DOLL

Yeah, him. Tell me about him.

BOY

What do you want to know?

DOLL

How does it end?

BOY

I don't know.

DOLL

How does he win? He must win. How?

Beat. As they talk, the Dragon shadow reappears, slowly, inching it's way closer and closer...

BOY

I guess he does. I think it's because he almost loses.

DOLL

How does he almost lose?

BOY

He has to face his enemy. The man who made him into something he didn't want to be. The man that told his story to his people, but told it wrong. You can't tell someone else's story. You can't create the thing you want someone to be and then pretend that's the thing they are.

DOLL

Who would do such a thing?

BOY

So there must be a battle.

DOLL

And he almost loses?

BOY

Almost. But he's rescued.

DOLL

Rescued?

BOY

Yeah. The dragon. The thing he thinks is his enemy, will be the thing that saves him. And he'll be changed. He'll never be the same. And he'll lose the thing he thought he was.

DOLL

And then he and the dragon...?

BOY

They'll be stronger together.

DOLL

Because they will be exactly what they're supposed to be instead of what someone else wants?

BOY

Yes.

DOLL

Like us. Just like this. *(Beat)* He needs help. And so he is rescued.

BOY

He is.

DOLL

I am the one who will rescue you?

Boy sits up and stares at her.

BOY

Yes. It must be you. It's always been you.

DOLL

I am strong. This is what you've made me.

BOY

I love you. Never leave me.

He embraces her and puts his head in her lap. She caresses his hair.

DOLL

Never. Never. Never. Never. Never. Never. Never. Never.

X- A Proposal

Boy and Doll lie down in bed. After a moment Boy gets up and goes to play with his cards. Doll wakes up, looks at him and smiles.

DOLL

What?

Beat

BOY

Will you marry me?

Doll stares in amazement. They both stare.

XI- Mother Wakes Them Up

Boy and Doll get back into bed. He picks up a book and silently reads to her. Mother enters the kitchen on her phone.

MOTHER

You have to stop watching that! Oh, what a surprise, another plot twist!

Of course you're not going to be able to figure it out now. Because the art of convolution is in direct contrast to art.

I don't know, Walt Disney.

Whatever.

—

Because I used to teach this garbage.
My point is...that obviously desperation leads to ridiculous plot holes, and convenient revelations, so like the mindless drama junkies we are, we'll just buy any old preposterous thing after awhile!

She opens her cigarette pack, it's empty.

Dammit! *(Calls out to Boy)* Get out here! I need you!

Boy and Doll sleep.

MOTHER

Yeah, I know he has a name! But he only responds to shouting and indirect commands. He's like a stubborn sea lion.

Mother crosses toward his room.

Yeah, he's a good kid unless you have to be his mother.

—

Oh give it a rest! *(To Boy as she enters his room)* Hey!

Mother enters the room.

Hey! I need you to wake up...

Boy wakes up and realizes Doll is right next to him so he goes to throw the covers over her.

MOTHER

What the hell are you doing?

It's too late. Mother has seen.

BOY

Get out!

DOLL

Hi, mommy.

BOY

Get out of my room!

MOTHER

(Into the phone)

I have to call you back.

Mother puts the phone in her pocket.

BOY

Why are you still in here?

DOLL

She probably wants to watch.

MOTHER

I don't even know how to articulate the feelings that I'm having at this moment.

BOY

Perfect. I don't want to hear them.

MOTHER

No, no, it's like a word that hasn't been invented yet.

DOLL

Tell her the good news!

MOTHER

You should say something before I snap and start screaming!

BOY

—

DOLL

Go on.

MOTHER

Speak!

DOLL

Do it!

Boy gets out of bed. He stands between Mother and Doll. He looks at one, then the other.

MOTHER

Yes?

DOLL

Tell her.

BOY

Would you please...just get out of my room?

MOTHER

Why is this happening? What are you even doing with that thing?

DOLL

What do you think, you stupid bitch.

MOTHER

Please just tell me what I can do to make this stop.

DOLL

She's jealous.

BOY

Get out!

MOTHER

There is a naked Barbie doll on your bed!

BOY

She's/ not Barbie!

DOLL

/Barbie?! She called me Barbie!

Mother crosses to the bed and picks up the doll.

BOY

Hey!

DOLL

Get your fucking hands off of me! Make her stop!

MOTHER

This is not happening in my house.

BOY

Give her back to me!

MOTHER

No, you are not...doing whatever it is you're doing with a toy!
No! You will not fuck a toy under my roof.

DOLL

I'm gonna freak out if she doesn't put me down! Make her put me down!

BOY

I'm trying!

MOTHER

Okay! Well you're not even trying to fuck a toy in my house!

BOY

I'm trying to get her...put her back!

MOTHER

I'm throwing her away!

DOLL

No! Don't let her throw me away! Stop being a child and fucking hit her! /Punch her! Get me the fuck back!

BOY

No! You can't do that. Give her back to me!

Boy grabs for the Doll. He and Mother struggle for a moment, but he gets her and he protects her.

BOY

You can't have her! I love her.

MOTHER

She's plastic! She's not a "her." You don't love her, because there is no her!

BOY

I don't care what you say! I love her. And I don't care who knows it.

MOTHER

Well okay! I have an idea then, let's change your Facebook status! Yeah? Let's tell the world. Is there a status for this? I guess "It's complicated" is probably the umbrella this would fall under.

BOY
Get out of my room!

MOTHER
Give her to me.

DOLL
Go on! Tell her! Tell her how she can't have you!

MOTHER
Give me the doll.

BOY
Tell her what?

MOTHER
What?

DOLL
Tell her you've chosen me.

Beat

MOTHER
Give me the doll.

BOY
I can't.

DOLL
That's right, bitch.

BOY
I love her.

DOLL
Yeah, he loves me! Not you, me!

BOY
I'm going to marry her. Okay! /Is that what you want to hear?

MOTHER
What?! I don't understand why you're doing this!
Why would I want to hear that?

BOY

It makes you crazy doesn't it?!

MOTHER

What are you talking about!?

BOY

Because there's not a fucking thing you can do about it!

*Mother slaps him in the face.
Long beat.*

MOTHER

I need you to stop this.

BOY

Get out of my room.

*Mother doesn't know what to do, so after a moment she gives up and exits.
Doll rushes up to Boy to comfort him.*

DOLL

Did she hurt you? Oh my god, that stupid cunt. Did she hurt you?

BOY

I'm fine.

Boy pushes Doll away from him.

DOLL

Hey! I'm not the enemy here! Don't you see what she's doing? She's trying to drive a wedge between us. Don't you see it?

BOY

What do you know? You're a fucking toy! You're nothing but a hunk of plastic! Shut the fuck up!

DOLL

Don't you talk to me like that, or—

BOY

Oh yeah, what are you gonna do? What the fuck is a cheap piece of garbage like you gonna do? You were heading to a trash heap when I saved you.

Boy picks up the doll and throws it as hard as he can against the wall.

BOY

Yeah, you like that? You like it rough?

He goes up to Doll and grabs her hard.

BOY

You're nothing but an object. You got that? You're nothing!

Boy realizes something and let's go of her.

BOY

Take your clothes off and get face down on the bed!

Boy goes to leave the room.

DOLL

Where are you going?

BOY

Just do what I said! I'm done with her yet!

XII.- Another Confrontation

Boy crosses to Mother and stares at her. Mother is crying.

BOY

You don't get a say.

MOTHER

Excuse me?

BOY

You don't get to tell me what to do!

MOTHER

I'm your mother!

BOY

Yeah, some mother! You told me when I was six years old there was no such thing as a dragon! When dad told me about the trees. You told me it was a lie and that dragons weren't real.

MOTHER

There not real! What was I supposed to do let your asshole father corrupt your brain with nonsense and fairy tales?

BOY

No, alcoholism and agoraphobia are so much better examples to set!

MOTHER

Oh fuck you, you little ingrate! You're gonna blame me for your perversion?

BOY

What kind of mother tells her six year old that dragons aren't real!?!?

MOTHER

So that's what this is? Revenge? I took your childhood fantasy from you, and so you create this insanity?

BOY

This isn't about her!

MOTHER

It! It's not a her it's an it!

BOY

You don't get a say. All these years, /you've tried to make me into some sick version of--

MOTHER

I just keep asking myself over and over again--

BOY

She is the only person who's ever understood me.

MOTHER

What did I do wrong? She's not a person!

BOY

Who ever cared to--How would you know!

MOTHER

It's an easy tell. People don't have made in China printed on their ass!

BOY

She's more of a person than you! You don't even leave the house. You watch shitty television and talk on the phone to your fat friend all day long.

MOTHER

I may have problems, and I may not be the best mother in the world, but I'm not holding up in my room falling in love with a coffee maker! I question your stability.

BOY

You're just incapable of feeling. How would you understand anything?

Beat. They stare each other down.

MOTHER

(Cold)

So. When's the wedding?

BOY

—

MOTHER

Are we inviting anyone? Should I order some Bridesmaid Barbies?

BOY

Whatever.

MOTHER

You can register at Toys R Us!

BOY

Stop.

MOTHER

We can make the wedding cake in a fucking EZ bake oven!

BOY

Stop!

MOTHER

No let's keep going! If you wanna go down this rabbit hole, then let's go! let's send out invitations. Let's book a caterer! Let's call the newspaper and put a notice, "Bat shit crazy young man to wed ten-inch plastic doll!" It'll sell millions of copies! We'll be a worldwide sensation! The biggest joke of the

century. At least I don't have to worry about you getting her pregnant!

BOY

How do you live yourself!?

MOTHER

How do you fuck her?

Beat.

BOY

What?

MOTHER

Did I stutter? (*Slow and deliberate*) How. Do. You. Fuck. Her? Is your penis that small?

Beat; Boy is wounded.

MOTHER

What? Was that inappropriate? I'm sorry. I don't know the proper etiquette here. How does this work? Should I actually be asking? Like seriously, how inadequate are you? cuz your father sure was. I assume you've inherited all of his shortcomings! Big and small!

Boy is angry and turns away to leave and punches the wall.

MOTHER

Oh good. That's good. Yeah, let's regress. That's helpful!

*Boy goes up to his mother, he's making a fist and breathing very heavily.
Beat. Mother gets right up in his face and with a calm severity..*

MOTHER

You better be fucking prepared to follow through with what you're about to do, or you won't see another god damned day of life.

Beat. Boy breathes harder, trying not to hit her, she just stares. Eventually he runs to his room. Mother closes her

eyes, and realizes what a mess she's just made.

MOTHER
(Almost whispering)

Fuck.

Mother exits.

XIII.- Doll Has A Solution

Doll rubs Boy's back as he cries into his bed.

DOLL
It's raining outside. Washing away the dirty world. All the sins of the world. I read that in one of your books. The rain extinguished the fire.
Your fire has just begun.

The shadow of the dragon can be seen again. Doll sees it and smiles.

Let me suck your cock.

He shakes his head.

No.

DOLL
How can I make you feel better if you won't fuck me? All you need is on the inside of me.

Beat.

BOY
Leave me alone.

DOLL
Maybe it's time. Maybe it needs to happen now.

Boy sits up and looks at her.

BOY

I think you're bad for me.

She stares at him blankly. As she speaks, she gets up and slowly walks around the room until she gets to the dresser.

DOLL

In the book, the dragon book, the chapter with the water serpent sting, there's a riddle, maybe you don't know. Maybe because you're too caught up in the narrative to recognize, but I saw it. Even with my acrylic eyes, my blindness, I saw. My deadened nerves heightened, I could feel goosebumps on my hollow plastic flesh. The story of the serpent contains, but is also a riddle. When the hero is bitten, the poison enters his body. And where was he bitten? Do you remember?

BOY

Of course I do.

DOLL

His heel. The base of him. And it slowly crept up him. Through his legs, his thighs, his cock, his stomach, his chest and arms and neck. All of him slowly consumed by the poison. And it will consume him. And it will bestow upon him an all-consuming craving. It won't kill him. No, that's too easy, but instead, will turn him into a serpent, with a long stinger and a blood thirst that will never end. A need, all consuming, driving him to find conquest after conquest, never tiring of the majestic piercing of a freshly unaware victim. This, for life. Unless...what?

Beat

DOLL

You know the answer to this? Our hero, after voyage upon voyage seeking justice for his people, in the hopes of becoming an autonomous being. A man. Seems all but certainly lost to the sting of the fatal serpent. Unless...? What?

Beat. Doll takes the knife out of a drawer and sets it on top of the dresser.

DOLL

Unless...he cuts it out.

Doll and Boy stare.

BOY

I want you to leave.

Doll smiles.

DOLL

But I haven't told you the riddle. Though now it seems like we have too many metaphors, doesn't it? Sloppy writing maybe. Or maybe complexity is indicative of something truthful, I don't know. I don't have opinions. Just ominous premonitions.

BOY

Please just go.

DOLL

But the riddle.
What's long and hard and refractory?

Beat. Boy doesn't want to answer.

DOLL

The sting of the dreaded serpent.

Doll lies on the bed. Boy stares at the knife and then lies down.

XIV- Mother Has A Solution

Doll and Boy are sleeping. Mother enters the kitchen. She is drunk. She stumbles her way through the room and toward Boy's room. She gets to the doorway and stands there. She looks at the two of them sleeping. She shakes her head in disgust and then slowly picks up the doll, carefully not to wake him. Doll, eyes closed, rises as Mother takes the doll and exits. Doll exits right behind her.

XV- Boy Has a Solution

After a long pause. Boy wakes up. He puts his arm out for Doll and realizes she's gone. He sits up. He is groggy, tired. He stands. Something is wrong.

He doesn't look for Doll. He just stands there. He puts his hand down his pants. He is disgusted with what he finds there. He pulls his hand back. He sits on the bed. He then goes to the drawer where the knife is. He takes it out. He stares at it. He smiles. Up stage, out his bedroom window, the shadow of the Dragon can be seen. There may even be some breathing noise. Boy touches himself. He pulls on himself. Hard. He then begins hitting himself. He punches himself until he falls to the ground making horrible noises. He stays there. Out of breath he laughs. He laughs hysterically. Dragon shadow slowly disappears.

XVI- They Almost Have Dinner

Mother enters the kitchen. She is dressed. She places plates of food on the table. She lights a candle. She pours two glasses of wine. Boy hears this. He lifts his head to hear what's happening. After a moment he stands up and leaves his room. He goes to the kitchen as his mother sits at the table.

BOY

What is this?

MOTHER

Dinner.

BOY

You made dinner?

MOTHER

Have a seat.

BOY

Why did you light a candle?

MOTHER

Have a seat.

BOY

Why?

MOTHER

Because it's dinner. You can't eat standing up. Sit down.

BOY

Okay.

Boy sits. Mother hands him a glass of wine. He reluctantly takes it. She smiles as he sips it and makes a gross face. She places the doll on the table. Doll enters. Boy jumps to his feet.

BOY

What is this?! Why do you have her?

MOTHER

There's no need to be nervous. She's fine. See?

DOLL

I'm not fine. We're not fine. We have to get out of here.

BOY

What did you do to her?

MOTHER

Nothing. You can see she's just fine. Well, I scrubbed her and disinfected her. I didn't want to touch her with all your, you know, whatever on her.

Boy grabs the doll and holds her close.

BOY

What did you do to her?

DOLL

Her hands have been all over me. In the places only you touch me.

BOY

Why are you doing this?

MOTHER

I thought we could all have a nice dinner together. I mean, you know, since she's going to be my daughter in-law.

BOY

I have to get out of here.

MOTHER

Sit down! If you leave, I'll take that as an act of aggression and what happens next won't be pleasant.

Beat. Boy looks at mother and realizes that she is dead serious. He sits.

MOTHER

Milk?

BOY

No. What's going on?

MOTHER

I called Hillside. This afternoon.

BOY

Hillside? That's...that's...

MOTHER

A nut house. I know.

DOLL

She's going to commit you.

MOTHER

They were very helpful to me. Told me that what you're experiencing is called a delusional psychotic break. I made spaghetti. Your favorite.

BOY

You're going to send me to Hillside?

MOTHER

I'm not sending you anywhere you don't need to go. There's also garlic bread.

BOY

Why can't you just leave me alone. I'm not crazy. All of this was just a joke. I was just trying to make you mad.

MOTHER

Which is it? A joke? Or you were making me mad?

BOY

Both! I told you!

MOTHER

So we can throw her in the incinerator then?

DOLL

I told you. Get me out of here!

Mother puts her hand out.

MOTHER

Let me have her then. If it's all a joke. Give her to me.

DOLL

Don't do it!

BOY

No! Just stop! You're the fucking crazy one!

MOTHER

Please don't raise your voice. It makes me nervous. I may not be safe around you. That's what they told me. How's the food? You haven't touched it.

DOLL

She's going to hurt us.

MOTHER

So throw her away. Let me see you put her in the garbage and I'll believe that all of this was just a big joke to make me mad. Simple. Right?

BOY

(Under his breath)

I have to get out of here.

MOTHER

Don't talk under your breath, it makes me nervous.

DOLL

What are you waiting for, you fucking pussy! Get us out of here!

Boy jumps up, grabs the doll and stands defensively.

MOTHER

Yes. Delusional psychotic break. Quite normal in teens from broken homes.

BOY

You want to see a break? Is that what this is? You want to see what that looks like? Or do you want me to leave forever? I'll fucking go!

MOTHER

You know, after your father, I'm not sure I'm gonna let another man give me an ultimatum.

BOY

I'm not a man!

Beat.

MOTHER

Give me the doll.

BOY

I've got to get out of here. I have to stop this.

DOLL

It's time to do it. Make it all go away.

MOTHER

All I have to do is call Hillside and tell them to come pick you up. You're not stable. And I'm not safe if you're not stable. I made banana pudding for dessert. I know how much you like it.

DOLL

All you have to do is get to the knife.

BOY

I have to get out of here!

Boy exits.

MOTHER

Okay! So we're going dramatic. I can do that!

XVII- The Reason for the Knife

Boy runs to his room. Shuts and starts to barricade the door with a desk and dresser. Doll doesn't make it in time. The shadow of the dragon reappears. It is moving closer this time, and breathing and groaning noises can be heard intermittently.

MOTHER

No, please, don't run away. Don't be like your father. I can play this game too.

She goes after him. She can't get in his room. She stands next to Doll.

MOTHER

You forget how much bullshit I've put up with in my life. I know manipulation when I see it.

Boy stands in his room holding the doll looking at her.

DOLL

It's in the top drawer! You have to do it!

MOTHER

So...cut the shit and open the door! We're done with this.

BOY

Shut the fuck up!!

DOLL

Do it, loser! You fucking pervert! You god damned freak, fucking do it!

Boy pulls the dolls head off and throws all of her against the wall.

BOY

Shut up! Shut Up! Shut the fuck up!!

MOTHER

I get that you hate me. Okay. I get it. I was a terrible mother. I am a terrible mother. Poor you.

Boy takes the knife out of the drawer. Fire is seen out the window, as if the dragon just breathed it. This can be indicated with lighting.

MOTHER

I'm the poison, right? The fucking water serpent! You didn't exactly make that vague. In that book you're writing. I've been reading it every night while you're asleep. And your hatred for me is clearly coming out in your prose. It's not bad, although the Oedipal undertones are somewhat upsetting.

Boy hears this.

BOY

Every night?! Why can't you leave my stuff alone! Why can't you just be a normal fucking person and ignore me like you're supposed to!

MOTHER

I get it. Okay. You have to cut the poison out! I'm the poison, right?

Boy starts to cry.

BOY

No! That's not it! You don't fucking understand anything. Just shut up!

MOTHER

Stop talking to me like that. I was also saying you're a good writer. God, you never hear the good stuff. We should probably have a talk about your views towards women. They're not all just objects of pleasure or mothers, ya know. But the hero's story about coming of age is somewhat inspired. Okay. I'm relenting a little here. How about you meet me halfway!

BOY

That's not what the fucking story is about! You don't know the context!

MOTHER

What is it then?

BOY

It's me. It's me. I have the poison. Okay! I have the problem. It's inside of me!

Boy takes his pants off.

MOTHER

Okay. What does that mean?

Doll slowly starts to back away from the door.

MOTHER

What does that mean?!

BOY

I don't want it. I don't want it anymore.

MOTHER

Want what? I don't...Okay, open the door now.

Doll is now at the edge of the scene, almost off stage.

MOTHER

I said open the door!

Boy puts his hand down his boxer shorts and cries harder. The Dragon closes in on the window, breathing fire.

BOY

None of this would've happened without it.

MOTHER

None of what? Nothing has happened! What are you talking about?

Doll watches the scene from far away.

MOTHER

Hey! Open this fucking door!

Mother starts to push the door open. it doesn't budge. She pushes harder.

MOTHER

Open it! Goddammit!

BOY

It's the only way. My thoughts are poisoned by it. My deeds are broken. It has to stop.

Boy lies down facing the doll. he slowly moves the knife between his legs.

MOTHER

Stop! What the fuck are you doing in there! Open this god damned door!

Boy closes his eyes and takes a deep breath. The dragon is at the window now about to breathe fire right on him. Boy is about to cut into himself when the desk topples over and Mother comes crashing into the room. Dragon retreats and disappears.

MOTHER

Son of a bitch!

Boy sits up and drops the knife. There is blood on his hands.

MOTHER

Oh my God! What have you done?

Mother rushes to him and checks him.

BOY

No! Get away from me. /Stop! Leave me alone.

MOTHER

/What the fuck are you doing?

Mother starts crying as she realizes what he was about to do.

MOTHER

What is this!? Why do you have a knife?

She starts slapping him.

MOTHER

What is wrong with you!

BOY

Stop! /Stop! Will you stop!

MOTHER

/Why would you have a fucking knife! Jesus Christ! How did this...What the fuck is this? A knife!? Seriously!?

BOY

I can't do this anymore! I can't!

MOTHER

Do what? What are you talking about?

BOY

I can't be your husband!

Beat. Mother is shocked.

MOTHER

What?

BOY

I can't pretend that that's not what I am. I've turned into this awful thing. This replacement for dad, and I can't get out of it! And I don't want it. And when I see people in the world and I want them, it's like a blade runs through me and it tears away little pieces of me at a time, and I don't know how to stop it. I don't want to be with you.

MOTHER

Is that what you think? That I've...oh my god.

BOY

It's true! You treat me just like him. You want me here all the time. I don't have a life. You don't have a life. We only have each other. And you hate me for it. Just like you hated him. I don't want to be him. I don't want to be like this anymore!

She grabs him and holds him.

MOTHER

You are not him. You are not your father. I don't want you to be him.

BOY

Let go of me.

MOTHER

I am so sorry.

BOY

Please. Let go.

She lets him go.

MOTHER

I didn't...I didn't realize what I was doing. I didn't want you to give up your life for me. I don't want you to be your father's replacement.

BOY

Then why?!

MOTHER

I don't know!

BOY

That's not good enough, mom! I don't have a reason to be here. To be this thing that can't be loved by anyone that I can't control completely. Because who's gonna love this, mom? Look at me.

MOTHER

Stop. This is crazy. You are a smart, beautiful young man. You can't believe that you're broken. That you're unlovable. This is my fault. When your father left. I was so sure that I was unlovable, that I spent all these years trying to make you love me. So you won't leave too.

BOY

You realize how sick that is, right?

Mother sits on the bed.

MOTHER

Yeah. I do. I've always been like this. I can't love someone without holding too tightly.

BOY

Is that why he left?

Boy sits next to Mother.

MOTHER

I don't know why he left. I woke up one day and he was gone. No

note. No phone call. Nothing. So I don't know what pushed him over the edge. But I do know it was because of me, not you. We were poison together. You know, I look at you, and I see...so much of him that it just reminds me of... And it's not just him. It's me. It's who I used to be, that person that I've...lost. I guess when he left, he broke something that can't be fixed. I don't know how to put it back together again. So, I stay here. I hold onto what I have here right now. But it's closing in. Somewhere along the way, the world got so awfully, awfully small. But it was because of me. He didn't care about me because I made it impossible. I was too busy trying to hold onto something that just didn't work. That I just couldn't have.

BOY

I'm sorry mom. He didn't care about me either, did he?

MOTHER

I think he did. In his own way. He was always so proud of you when he talked about you.

BOY

I think there's something really wrong with me.

Beat.

MOTHER

Well...when we feel out of control, when the world seems to big and new, sometimes we create fantasies that keep us down. And sometimes we have to let go of those in order to grow. I never wanted you to grow up. But I knew that was wrong, so I wouldn't let you have too much of an imagination. I wanted you to understand the world. Too much. This thing, this doll-

BOY

I don't want to talk about that.

MOTHER

Maybe we have to talk about it, though. Maybe not talking is the problem here. And we don't have to do it right now. But if there's something dangerous happening, you have to tell me. And if you look at women that way, as these things that are supposed to be a certain way, then maybe I've failed. Because you are going to be loved. You don't have to create it. You don't have to be ashamed of it. You don't have to believe that you'll be like your father and disappear. You don't have to create it. Love will find you. I promise.

BOY

Where do go from here?

MOTHER

Somewhere between reality and all we've ever dreamed is a good place to start.

*Boy smiles and nods. Mother kisses his forehead.
Long pause.*

MOTHER

This is a good start.

BOY

Mom?

MOTHER

Yeah?

BOY

I'm sorry.

MOTHER

Me too.

He goes to say something and stops. She looks at him with clarity for the first time. He looks at her the same way. They finally see each other.

MOTHER

Come on. Let's put this back together again.

XVIII- They Part

Mother and Boy stand and place every thing back where it belongs in the room. Once that is done Mother exits, Boy picks up the doll and stares at it. Doll walks across the stage and into

his room. They don't speak. They smile.

'But it's a Nice Dream' by Dusty Springfield plays.

Mother enters the kitchen with a box marked Goodwill. Boy and Doll are sitting on the bed. He stands and places the small doll in the box. Mother smiles at him.

BOY

Ready?

MOTHER

Yep. You?

Boy nods.

Mother exits. Boy sits down next to Doll. He looks at her. She looks back at him. Sadly, but resolutely, he smiles and nods. She nods back. They both know. She gets up and crosses to the door. He watches her. She turns back, one last time—

Boy sees her.

Doll holds her hand up saying goodbye. Boy smiles...and then she's gone.

Boy turns on his bed and sits looking out his window to the sound of Mother's car starting and pulling away.

Music ends.

Blackout.

End of play.