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SF PERUSALS

Popcorn

A play

Ben Elton

Samuel French — London
New York - Toronto - Hollywood



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ISBN 0 573 01869 3

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POPCORN

First presented in association with The West Yorkshire Playhouse at the Nottingham Playhouse in September, 1996 with the following cast:

Karl Brezner	David Leonard
Bruce Delamitri	Vincenzo Nicoli
Velvet Delamitri	Emily White
Farrah Delamitri	Melee Hutton
Wayne Hudson	Patrick O'Kane
Scout	Dena Davis
Brooke Daniels	Elizabeth Perry
Kirsten	Tamara Letendre
Bill	Bret Jones

Directed by Laurence Boswell
Designed by Neil Irish
Lighting by Jon Linstrum

Subsequently presented by Phil McIntyre at the Apollo Theatre, London, on 2nd April 1997 with the following cast:

Karl Brezner	William Armstrong
Bruce Delamitri	Danny Webb
Velvet Delamitri	Paula Bacon
Farrah Delamitri	Debora Weston
Wayne Hudson	Patrick O'Kane
Scout	Dena Davis
Brooke Daniels	Megan Dodds
Kirsten	Sarah Parish
Bill	Richard Laing

Directed by Laurence Boswell
Designed by Jane Clough
Lighting designed by Jon Linstrum

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CHARACTERS

Karl Brezner
Bruce Delamitri
Velvet Delamitri
Farrah Delamitri
Wayne Hudson
Scout
Brooke Daniels
Kirsten
Bill

The action of the play occurs principally at the Beverley Hills home of top film director Bruce Delamitri

Time — the present

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I
SCENE 1 — The day of the Oscar ceremony
SCENE 2 — The day of the Oscar ceremony
SCENE 3 — The Oscar ceremony
SCENE 4 — The night of the Oscar ceremony

ACT II
SCENE 1 — The morning after the Oscar ceremony

Other plays by Ben Elton published by Samuel French Ltd:
Gasping
Silly Cow

NOTE

Please note the following contemporary references:

Oprah — Oprah Winfrey — American agony aunt/chat show host
OJ — OJ Simpson — American star acquitted of the murder of his wife in a televized court case
Roseanne — popular TV comedienne

ACT I

SCENE 1

The lounge room of film director Bruce Delamitri's home in Beverley Hills. The day of the Oscar ceremony

The entry to the lounge and staircase to the bedroom are SL. *Two pillars stand each side of the* CS *patio doors overlooking the garden. The doors are covered with drapes and practical shutters which are operated by remote control. An intercom is also visible. There is a large glass coffee table* CS, *an ashtray, telephone, paper and pen, stereo, rug and two sofas with furry cushions. A large drinks cabinet* SL *is filled with bottles, glasses etc. including bourbon and crème de menthe. The back of a TV/video is visible to the audience*

Bruce Delamitri, an extremely famous and equally hip film director in his late thirties, and Karl Brezner, the producer of Bruce's films, have been watching a movie clip on the TV/video. Velvet, Bruce's teenage daughter, sits reading a magazine. As the scene opens Bruce has been watching the clip with Karl. The music ends and as Bruce zaps the TV off with a remote control, the TV is concealed (perhaps electronically)

Karl It's a great scene, Bruce. The clip'll play beautifully.

Bruce I know it's a great scene Karl! I made the damn movie! They're all great scenes, but the scene in the cellar is better. That's the clip they have to use.

Karl They don't have to use any scene, Bruce. They are the Academy and it is their party. Forget the clip, worry about your speech. Did you write it yet?

Bruce I'm not writing any speech, Karl, because I'm not going to win any damn Oscar. I'm too good a director. The Academy is there to celebrate anodyne mediocrity. Anyway it'll be a woman this year.

Karl Well whatever, they are not going to use the cellar clip.

Bruce Why the hell not, what is their problem?

Karl The Chair of the Academy says she feels it's overly gynaecological.

Bruce Gynaecological! Did she watch the movie? The girl's private parts are not shown, they are implied!

Karl Even a subliminal vagina is unacceptable on prime time, Bruce.

Bruce Karl! We do not see her snatch!

Karl Nonetheless, the character Errol stares up it.

Bruce Ironically.

Karl An Oscar telecast is not a medium suited to irony, Bruce. The committee are worried people will just think it's dirty.

Bruce Dirty! How can it be dirty! Errol stares up Conchita's private parts in a manner that clearly implies an ironic juxtaposition, didn't you get that?

Karl Bruce, I just produced the movie, who cares if I get stuff.

Bruce It's so obvious! The very next shot is the private parts' point of view!

Karl Christ Jesus, Bruce, get real. This show goes out to over a billion people the vast majority of whom would be surprised to hear that a vagina can even have a point of view, let alone get it aired on prime time …

Bruce Of course a vagina can have a point of view! Not intellectually, obviously but cinematically.

Karl Errol's leering mug.

Bruce Yes, except Errol's face is not leering, it's shrugging and that's the point. The character Errol is indifferent. This is all in a day's work for the guy. He's almost — bored! This is just a job. An American job.

Karl Bruce, be realistic! Shooting women in the guts then rummaging about inside them for hidden drugs is not a common occupation.

Bruce Killing is and that's the point I'm making! Being a killer is a career option in America, like teaching or dentistry.

Karl Maybe not quite as common. Bruce, be fair, the Academy are taking a lot of heat here. Yours has to be the most controversial nomination in history. "Ordinary Americans" was about a young couple out on a killing spree and as you are well aware there is currently a very similar young couple on a very similar …

Bruce Yeah I know, I know! The fucking Mall Murderers. My babies! Every time their crimes are reported the story gets illustrated with a still from my movie! So who's making the association? The psychos themselves? I don't think so. Copy-cat murders for Christ's sake! The lowest, cheapest shot of a hysterical media. Weren't there any sickos around before we had movies?

Karl Society is more violent that it used to be Bruce, that's a fact.

Bruce Exactly, and someone has to get blamed. The politicians won't take the heat! So who gets it? Us, the messengers, the artists. Well, artists don't create society, they reflect it and what's more I'm going to tell them that if I win tonight, which I won't, but if I do and I won't, I will.

Velvet Yeah, and you'll sound like a totally pompous jerk.

Bruce Hey, principles may not mean much to you and your brain-dead pals young lady but I come from the generation that dared to care.

Velvet Please, Dad, I just ate lunch.

Bruce Didn't your mother pick you up yet?

Velvet Yeah, I'm a hologram.

Bruce Your mother is supposed to pick you up.
Velvet Well, I'm so sorry to be still infesting your environment, Dad! Jesus, the stuff I'm going to be telling Oprah one of these days.
Karl Why don't you take Velvet to the Oscars tonight, Bruce? Father and daughter, best pals despite nasty, messy divorce. Nice family image. Respectable. Could play well in the press.
Bruce I don't want to look respectable, I'm a maverick.
Velvet He wants a free hand to pick up some slutlet at the Governor's ball.
Bruce (*to Karl*) Fifteen years old, do you like that?
Karl Generation X, Bruce.
Bruce Generation ex-tremely fucking irritating. I'm working here, Velvet.
Karl If you win an Oscar tonight — —
Bruce Which I won't.
Velvet I think you will.
Bruce Well, I should honey, which is why I won't.
Karl No, but if you do — —
Bruce I won't.
Karl Well, whatever, if you do you have to be nice. Smile, maybe cry a little, whatever, above all don't mention the Mall Murderers. Hollywood does not forgive a party pooper.
Bruce Which is why the intro clip is so important. It's got to have balls.
Karl So now this vagina has balls as well as a point of view, quite some pussy.
Velvet You're disgusting Karl.
Karl Look, they are not going to use the cellar clip; I tried, I failed.
Bruce Well, did you suggest the shoot-out in the bank?
Karl I did, yeah. And they have problems with that too.
Velvet I like that scene, it's cool.
Bruce What kind of problems?
Karl A woman sticking a broken bottle in a guy's dick type problems.
Velvet Great scene, she just totally perforates that rapist asshole.
Bruce Exactly! The female protagonist is clearly depicted in a befittingly empowering light.
Karl After we have seen her befittingly roughed up and taken a long look at her befittingly beautiful tits.
Bruce Her revenge means nothing, unless we see her vulnerability...
Karl *Her tits, Bruce, you can't show tits on network TV!*

Farrah enters. Bruce's nearly divorced wife. A Hollywood survivor in her late thirties

Farrah (*to Velvet*) Hiya baby...
Karl Farrah...
Farrah Oh please Karl. Big night tonight, Bruce. I hope you got a new

tuxedo. Remember I cut your Armani into little pieces after I caught you stroking Pussy Woman at the last *Batman* première.

Velvet Cat Woman, Mom.

Farrah I know what I'm saying.

Bruce Noon, Farrah, the deal was noon.

Farrah What? It's such a pain to have your own daughter in the house an extra couple of hours.

Bruce We were supposed to discuss the damn divorce.

Farrah I'll stop by tomorrow.

Bruce What was wrong with today?

Farrah I saw my hypnotherapist. It's an inexact science, Bruce. You can't put deep trauma on hold. When the truth emerges you need to be there.

Velvet Mom's uncovered memories of childhood emotional abuse. She was deprived of attention.

Bruce No, you mean people didn't like her.

Velvet Maybe that's why you and Dad didn't make it, Mom, maybe you're a paranoid dysfunctional incapable of sustaining relationships.

Farrah The reason I can't sustain a relationship with your father, Velvet, is because he is an asshole.

Velvet You used to love him.

Farrah I used to love the Osmonds.

Bruce Hey, if I'm an asshole at least I got that way without any help. Childhood emotional abuse? Jesus, Farrah!

Farrah (*to Velvet*) Can you believe your father? I tell him I've been emotionally abused, what does he do? Emotionally abuse me.

Bruce That's right! We should be celebrating. Farrah just got her self indulgence licence. Now you can drink, you can take drugs, you can fuck up your life completely and none of it will be your fault.

Velvet You two make me want to puke.

Bruce Beautiful, Velvet, I get so proud when you talk that way.

Velvet Well, you raised me, if you can call it that.

Bruce So now I've got bitches in stereo. You hear that, Farrah! So now she's off the hook too, you blame your parents, Velvet blames us, how many generations before the buck stops?

Karl Hey, Bruce, Farrah, you know I hate to break up this …

Farrah Well don't, Karl. I'll go when I want to. This is California, remember. Half this house is mine. (*To Velvet*) Get me a drink, honey.

Velvet Mom you said you weren't going to drink today …

Farrah Hey, give me a break, will you? Can I help it if I have an addictive personality?

Velvet goes to the drinks cabinet and pours Farrah's drink

Bruce You hear that, baby, it's not your mother's fault, her personality's to blame. Nothing is anybody's fault. We're all victims, alcoholics, sexaholics, shopaholics ...

Velvet Hey leave me out of it.

Bruce We are losing more kids a year to violence than we did in the Vietnam war and what are they blaming! My fucking movies!

Velvet hands the drink to Farrah

Farrah Well, surprise surprise, what does he finally get back to? His movies of course. We start off talking about my trauma but in the end we get back to Bruce Delamitri's movies. The only thing on earth that matters. Well the best thing about divorcing you, honey, is that I get not to have to hear about your movies ever again. Forget the drink. (*She puts the glass on the table*) Come on Velvet.

Velvet Good luck tonight Dad. Even if you don't win — —

Bruce Which I won't.

Velvet — and even if you are a pompous jerk — —

Bruce Which I'm not.

Velvet — you're still emotionally relevant to me.

Bruce Thanks, baby.

Farrah Come on, Velvet.

Farrah and Velvet exit

Bruce Velvet's a good kid.

Karl She should be, the money you've spent on her.

Bruce Hey, love has no budget.

Karl Beautiful Bruce.

Bruce OK. So they won't use the cellar clip or the bar room. How about the shoot-out in the bank? That's a nice punchy scene.

Karl Maybe. We can only ask. I'll make the call.

Karl picks up his mobile phone

Black-out

Bruce and Karl disappear

Instantly, through the darkness we hear a screaming shout ...

Wayne (*off*) You are one dead mutha!

Scene 2

The shout is followed by the sound of gun fire and screams in the darkness. Wayne and Scout appear, carrying machine guns, hysterically elated

Wayne (*shouting*) I love you, sugar pie!
Scout I love you too honey.
Wayne Oh my God, shooting people makes me so horny! I want to do it to you sugar, I want to screw you till your teeth rattle.

Wayne pulls Scout's dress up round her waist

Scout We are in a bank, Wayne! This is a public place! There are people here!
Wayne No problem, baby doll.

Wayne fires his machine gun this way and that, out into the darkness. We hear screams and sobs. Wayne stops firing; the screaming subsides to a few sobs

Scout Oh Wayne, I surely do love you.

Black-out

Wayne and Scout exit. The scene disappears

Scene 3

On another part of the stage a light comes up. Bruce, wearing a tuxedo, stands at a podium in a single spotlight, an Oscar in his hand

Bruce I stand here on legs of fire — I want to thank you all. Your indomitable spirit has nourished me and helped me to touch the stars. Helped me be better than I had any right to be. Better than the best which is what you all are. Wonderful people. Wonderful Americans, whose extraordinary, awesome, monumental, heaven-sent talent has made me the artist I am. You are the wind beneath my wings — and I flap for you.

God bless you all, God bless America, God bless the world as well.

Thank you.

Huge applause. Bruce disappears. Cut spotlight

Scene 4

Wayne and Scout appear out of the darkness. Wayne carries a large bag. The Lights begin to fade up

Wayne Ain't nothing like killing, Scout. I done it all in my time, stock cars, broncos, gambling, stealing and I am here to tell you that there ain't nothing to touch the thrill of killing. Yee ha!

The full lights have faded up and we realize that we are in Bruce's lounge room. Clearly this must be a telling moment for the audience as they realize that Wayne and Scout are real and are in Bruce's home. Scout is staring about in child-like wonder

Scout Don't shout so, Wayne. I was just enjoying the early morning peace. Wasn't it a beautiful dawn? Isn't this a beautiful home?

Wayne Sure it's beautiful, sugar pie. The man who owns it is a king in this town. Why I guess he's damn near as famous as we are!

Scout Ain't it something? Don't you just love the furry cushions and glass coffee tables and all?

Wayne You know why they have those glass coffee tables, precious? You want to know why they have them?

Scout So's they can put their coffee down.

Wayne No it ain't, baby. It's so they can get underneath and watch each other take a dump, yes it is honey, I read that, it sure is.

Scout That is not so Wayne! It is just not so and I do not want to hear about it. Just when everything is nice you have to start on about people going to the bathroom on their coffee tables.

Wayne That's the real world honey, it's weird. People are weird, they ain't all nice like you and me. I feel good baby doll, do you feel good?

Scout Yeah, I feel good Wayne.

Wayne I always feel good after I kill a whole bunch of muthas. You know what Dr Kissinger said, baby.

Scout You didn't tell me you'd seen no doctor, honey.

Wayne sits on a sofa and puts his feet up on the cushions

Wayne He wasn't no real doctor, he was the Secretary of State. A powerful man, killed a whole lot more people than you and me ever will and he said power was an aphrodisiac, which means it gets you horny.

Scout I know what an aphrodisiac is, honey.

Wayne Well you ain't never going to get more power over a person than when you kill them so I guess killing is an aphrodisiac too.

Scout I guess so honey — you get your dirty boots off that couch and mind out for all that blood on your pants. This is a nice house and I'll bet the people who own it are real nice people and we don't want to get no blood on their couch.

Wayne They ain't necessarily so nice, pussycat. Besides the blood is dry. Blood dries real quick on account of it congeals. You know what honey? If your blood didn't congeal you could die from just one little pin prick.

Scout I know that Wayne.

Wayne And you would be what is known as a homophobic.

Scout Honey, a homophobic is a person who does not approve of carnal knowledge between a man and a person of the same sex. I believe you're thinking of a haemophiliac.

Wayne gets up; suddenly he is sullen, sinister

Wayne Is that so?

Scout Yes, honey, it is.

Wayne Is that so?

Scout I believe so, honey.

Wayne grabs her in sudden fury, his fist clenched, ready to strike

Wayne And what d'you call a woman whose mouth is too damn smart, huh? A woman with a busted fucking lip, that's what.

He pushes her to the ground. Scout screams

Scout No! Please, Wayne, don't!

Wayne drops to his knees, straddled across her and grabs her throat, fist raised

Wayne You think I'm dumb, sugar? Is that it? Huh! Maybe we'd better see if your blood congeals!

Scout screams in terror. For a moment it seems that Wayne will beat her. Instead he kisses her passionately. After a moment, Scout returns the kiss and embraces him

Scout Oh, honey, you scared me.

Wayne I know that, cotton candy. I love to scare you because you're just like a little bird when you're scared.

They are both still on the floor. Wayne is beginning to kiss his way down Scout's body

You like to live in a house like this, cotton candy?

Scout Oh yeah, sure. Like I'm ever going to get the chance.

Wayne We're living in it now, ain't we, honey? I'll bet they've got a real big old bed up them stairs. Stairway to heaven. How about it, cherry pie? How about we go upstairs and make some noise?

Scout I ain't doing no nasty in no strangers' bed Wayne — could be we'd catch AIDS or something.

Wayne You can't catch AIDS offa no sheets …

Scout If they're dirty sheets, if they're stained.

Wayne Honey plum, these people are millionaires, billionaires even. They ain't going to have no stained sheets. Besides which even if they did you couldn't catch no AIDS off them unless you put them in the liquidizer and injected them directly into your body! Now I bet these people have satin and silk and I do not often get the chance to fuck my little girl on satin and silk.

Scout We do not… (*she checks herself and spells it out*) F-U-C-K, we make love and I don't care if you're coming at me from behind in the rest room of a greasy spoon, it's still making love and if it ain't making love we ain't doing it no more because I do not fuck.

Wayne You're right honey, I stand corrected. And right now I'm just about ready to make love your brains out. So come on honey — let's have us a party. I'll bet they've got a water bed and a mirror on the ceiling and everything — you know something, baby girl? When I get a hold of your ass, I guess I wouldn't let go of it to pick up a hundred dollar bill and a case of cold beer.

Scout Oh Wayne, you know I can't resist your sweet talking.

Wayne Well you don't have to, honey. Get your juicy sex muffins up here.

Scout Don't call it a muffin… (*and improv lines*)

They exit up the stairs. Wayne takes his bag with him

The lights stay up. There is a long pause after which — —

Bruce and Brooke enter. They are still in their evening dress from the Oscar ceremony. Brooke carries a bag, Bruce his Oscar which he places on the coffee table

Bruce I still can't believe my luck. I win an Oscar, and I get to meet Brooke Daniels all on the same night.

Brooke Oh please, Bruce, get real.

Bruce No, I mean it. I'm a fan. I've wanted to meet you ever since I saw the *Playboy* spread, it was wonderful.
Brooke Thanks — again. I don't seem to be able to get away from that. I do acting too, you know.
Bruce (*unconsciously dismissive*). Yeah yeah, you said — so what can I get you? More champagne? The night is young.
Brooke You certainly know how to party, Bruce, it's nearly seven a.m.
Bruce What! Jesus! My wife will be here at ten.
Brooke Your wife? I thought you were divorced.
Bruce Practically. That's why she's coming round, business stuff.
Brooke Oscar at night, alimony in the morning, life in the Hollywood fast lane.
Bruce She enjoys making my life uncomfortable.
Brooke Oh well — I guess we still have a couple of hours …

There is a significant pause

Bruce I wasn't planning on going to bed — to sleep I mean.
Brooke Nice table.
Bruce I like it.
Brooke I can think of a good use for it.
Bruce Help yourself.

Brooke takes some cocaine out of her bag and begins to chop it up on the table, on which now stands the famous statuette

Brooke Just to keep you bright and cheery for your wife. First time I ever did drugs with Oscar looking on; I hope he doesn't disapprove.
Bruce Hey, who cares if he does, that little eunuch is mine now. I own him.
Brooke You sure do. (*She snorts a big line of cocaine*)
Bruce OK, so we're partying! (*He closes the shutters and turns the stereo on*) I'll get some glasses.
Brooke You know the one thing I didn't like about "Ordinary Americans"?
Bruce What?
Brooke The sex scene.
Bruce What are you, a nun? That was the sexiest scene I ever made. I edited it with a permanent hard-on.
Brooke Sure it was sexy — but it wasn't true, everything else in the movie was so real. The guns, the attitude, the blood all over everything — why couldn't the sex be real too? The only place over-acting is still encouraged is in sex scenes. Did you ever see *Nine and a Half Weeks*? Jesus you only had to tap that woman on the shoulder and she had an orgasm. Why can't the sex be convincing? Convincing is sexy. Girls wear pantihose, you

know, not stockings, when they get laid they have to take off their pantihose. I never saw a girl take off pantihose in a movie.

Bruce That, I'm afraid, is because pantihose is not sexy. It is impossible to remove pantihose in a sexy manner.

Brooke You think so?

Bruce I know so, it cannot be done.

Brooke snorts up the last of the lines and stares at Bruce for a moment. She stands before him and begins to dance

Brooke You want to bet?

Bruce What are the stakes?

Brooke I'll tell you if I win.

The music plays

Brooke's hands are on her thighs now, massaging the material of her dress, working it up her legs. She contrives to collect the folds of the dress about her hips in a bouquet-like cluster, almost as if she is wearing a rather flamboyant tutu. In one quick movement, almost a jerk, Brooke pulls the handfuls of cloth right up high, pulling the folds of skirt to just under her breasts revealing all of her pantihose and some of her bare midriff besides. Her hose is of course of exquisite quality. High-waisted, covering Brooke's whole stomach, ending a few inches below her ribs in a wide, black, delicately-embroidered waistband. Brooke's whole lower body is now on show, from diaphragm down to the stilettos she wears. All encased in sheer black nylon. Above it all she holds her dress in great silky folds. Bruce is very impressed so far

She hooks her thumbs under the waistband of her hose and pulls the material slightly away from her skin. Whilst still contriving to hold up her dress she begins slowly to pull the hose downwards, until her arms are fully extended. She raises one leg and places her foot on the glass table. The hose which is now pulled down to a few inches below the gusset of her knickers stretches out taut between her thighs, lending the tiniest suggestion of bondage and constraint to her sultry pose

Bruce leans forward and undoes her shoe. Brooke brings her leg back to the ground and with equal balance and elegance raises the other one. Bruce undoes the shoe. Brooke kicks off her shoes and stands for a moment on the rug, holding her dress above the half-descended top of her pantihose

In one movement she lowers herself to the floor whilst simultaneously pulling the tights down to her knees. She rolls backwards on to her back, whilst

bringing her knees up to her chest. Lying on her back and keeping her knees close to her chest, she rolls the tights right down to her ankles and along her feet until they cover only her toes which point seductively at Bruce. One final push on the tights and they fall down. She raises herself, picks up the tights, and gets to her feet. She steps towards Bruce and drops the pantihose into his lap. She switches off the music

So?

Bruce So I hope you don't expect me to be that good with my socks. You win. What were the stakes?

Brooke Come here.

They embrace, but Brooke breaks away

Just let me get some protection.

Bruce You know what, I think I love you.

Bruce frantically undresses. Brooke reaches down to her bag which is by her feet. Suddenly Brooke produces a gun from her bag and swings round and pushes it into Bruce's face

Brooke Touch me you bastard and I'll blow your brains out!

Bruce What the fuck is going on!

Brooke You think just because I've done nude modelling I'm some kind of whore!

Bruce No, I — —

Brooke You looked at me and you saw sex, right? From the first second I've just been a piece of meat as far as you're concerned. Well, now you're going to pay!

Bruce Listen Brooke, this is not necessary — —

Brooke Get on your knees and kiss my feet!

Bruce What!

Brooke You heard. Kiss my feet!

Brooke is levelling the gun at Bruce; he is terrified. He drops to his knees on the floor and tentatively kisses her feet

I said kiss them don't wipe your nose on them.

Terrified, Bruce kisses with more vigour

Bruce Look — Brooke, I'm sorry — clearly I misunderstood the situation — now if I've offended — —

Brooke Are you scared?
Bruce Yes I'm scared.
Brooke How scared?
Bruce Very fucking — What do you want?
Brooke I — want — a part in your next movie. (*She lowers the gun*)

It takes a moment for Bruce to realize what's happened

Bruce What …?
Brooke I'm an actress, I want a part — that was the stake.
Bruce Put away your gun.

Brooke puts the gun back in her handbag

(*Furiously*) You mad crazy fucking bitch!

Brooke quickly argues her point

Brooke Your movies make people horny and scared. What did I just do to you! Come on, be honest!
Bruce Pamela Anderson makes me horny, Saddam Hussein makes me scared. I'm not going to put either of them in my movie — you made me kiss your feet! At gun point! I ought to call the cops!
Brooke I've sent you fifty letters! Fifty! Did you see them? Did you read them!
Bruce Have you any idea how many actresses and models write to me! I don't see any of that stuff. I have people.
Brooke I guessed you didn't, that's why I decided to do what I did.
Bruce Have you been planning this all along?
Brooke Yes.
Bruce You're fucking insane. I ought to call the cops.
Brooke I made you horny and I made you scared — be fair, I did; you've got to give me a chance.
Bruce Supposing I said it depended on you sleeping with me?
Brooke (*after a pause*) No. I don't screw on a professional basis.

Again a pause

Bruce Pity — OK, I'll give you a screen test, you crazy bitch. Have your agent call me next week. Believe me, there is no chance that I will forget you.
Brooke Thank you, Bruce, thank you very much. I promise I won't disappoint you.

Bruce You can't disappoint me any more than you already did.
Brooke Hey, I said I didn't screw on a professional basis. I already got my screen test.

After a pause they embrace. Within moments the pent-up frustration bursts and they are writhing together on the couch

They are too absorbed to notice Wayne enter, carrying his machine gun and bag. Wayne crosses to the sofa. Brooke has had her face buried in Bruce's neck, she comes out and sees Wayne. Obviously she is pretty freaked

Bruce — Bruce — for Christ's sake Bruce, behind you!

Bruce looks behind him, sees Wayne and falls off the sofa in fear, trying to pull up his trousers as he does so

Wayne Morning folks.
Bruce Who are you? — Brooke, do you know this guy? Is this part of your joke thing?
Brooke I do not know this man, Bruce.

There is a very tense stand-off. Wayne stares at Bruce, then walks over to him while still covering Brooke with his gun. He stares hard at Bruce, putting his face right up close

Wayne I don't believe this. I do not be-fucking-lieve this. I'm actually here, I'm actually meeting Bruce Delamitri. I can't tell you what a pleasure it is to meet you sir. I've been planning this a long time. Scout! C'mon in here and say "Hi". Oh yes, this is a real thrill, sir. This is awesome. Scout, get your dumb ass in here right now!

Scout enters rather sheepishly. She is, like Wayne, heavily armed

Scout Hi.

But Bruce and Brooke can only stare in reply

We messed up your sheets some — but you know, with modern detergents there shouldn't be any problem.
Wayne It don't matter about no sheets, sugar. We can buy more sheets. This is Bruce Delamitri. You are looking at the man here. The man. I told you we'd get to meet him, baby, and here we are.

Wayne gestures at Bruce. He is holding a machine gun so it is rather alarming

Scout How d'you do, Mr Delamitri. Wayne's a real big fan of your pictures, sir, he's seen them dozens of times -- me too, I like them too but Wayne, he loves them.

Wayne But I guess you get real tired of people telling you all that stuff.

There is a pause. Wayne and Scout are acting like embarrassed fans, except that they are so heavily armed

Bruce Do you want money? I have money, about two thousand dollars in cash, and there's some jewellery...

Wayne Mr Delamitri — may I call you Bruce? We don't want no money. We got money, we got more money than we can spend and we don't spend nothing anyway because we steal all our stuff. We just came around to visit with you. Is that OK? How about we sit down? Maybe we could have us a drink? Would that be OK? I like Bourbon and Scout here'll take anything sweet.

Bruce gets the drinks. The others sit, there is a nervous tension. Obviously Bruce and Brooke are pretty scared. Scout turns to Brooke in an effort to make polite conversation

Scout You're Brooke Daniels, aren't you? Yes, you are, I'd know you anytime from all the magazines you've been in -- *Vogue* and *Esquire* and *Vanity Fair* — I love all that stuff it's so glamorous and nice — I've been in a magazine too...

Wayne Sure Scout, "America's Most Wanted".

Scout It's a magazine! Isn't it, Brooke? — Brooke? It's a magazine isn't it? "America's Most Wanted" is a magazine, isn't it?

Brooke Yes, it's a magazine.

Bruce gives Wayne his drink

Bruce Look — if you don't want cash I have a customized Lamborghini parked right outside that...

Wayne Bruce, I just told you we're here to visit. I don't want your damn car. I got a car. An American fucking car, made with sweat and steel, not some wop faggot-built pile of tin shit. A Lamborghini! Bruce I am surprised at you. When you drive a foreign car you are driving over American jobs.

Bruce backs off, scared. He gives Scout her drink

Bruce This is *crème de menthe.*
Scout I love cocktails.
Wayne (*turning to Brooke*) Why'd you do that *Playboy* spread, Brooke? I mean I ain't saying it wasn't beautiful because it was but hell I would never let Scout do a thing like that.
Scout Oh, c'mon Wayne, as if anyone would ever want to see me in *Playboy* magazine!
Wayne Sure they would honey, excepting I wouldn't let you do it on account of the fact that my rule is that if a man looks at you with lust in his eyes, I kill him. So if you was to be in *Playboy* I'd just about have to kill half the men in the United States.
Scout You're getting there anyway, honey!
Wayne Scout's exaggerating, Bruce. So why'd you do it, Brooke?

Brooke is too scared to answer. Scout knows the answer, she had read it in a magazine

Scout She did it, Wayne, because being an in-control woman does not mean denying one's sensuality. Isn't that what you said, Brooke? I read that. She didn't do it for men, Wayne. She did it for herself because she is beautiful and there is nothing wrong in celebrating that. It's called Girl Power.

But Brooke is still not up to replying, she can only nod, there is another pause. Again it is down to Wayne and Scout to keep the conversation going

Wayne Well I guess that makes me feel a whole lot better about jerking off in the john over it, Brooke. I confess I never realized I was doing such a fine and empowering thing...
Scout Wayne!
Wayne I want to ask Brooke something now, Scout, and I don't want you getting mad at me. OK?
Scout Well it depends on what you ask her, Wayne.
Wayne What I want to ask is how'd those girls in *Playboy* magazine get their hair the way they do? It always looks so damn perfect.

Brooke finally finds a voice

Brooke Well — you know, I guess it's just a question of hairdressing really. They use a lot of mousse and they back light it and sometimes they put in extensions...
Wayne Brooke, I do not mean that kind of hair.
Scout Wayne!

Wayne Well I want to know! I mean we tried shaving it, sugar, and you just ended up like some kind of damn Mohican with a rash!

Scout turns to Brooke, mortified with embarrassment

But in *Playboy* magazine those girls just have a little tuft like that was all that ever grew. It don't look shaved or nothing. These are adult women! Not little girls, but all they got's a little tuft. How'd they do that?

Brooke Well, Wayne — one has a stylist.

Wayne (*hugely amused*) A stylist! A pussy hair stylist! Now that would be one hell of an occupation. Yes sir, I guess I could get to like that kind of work.

Scout Wayne, that is enough!

Wayne (*delighted with his comic thought*) Yes sir! I'd work weekends and all the overtime the boss'd give me. I'd be saying "Can I shampoo that for you madam?" I'd work hard and get me my own salon — there'd be a whole row of women sitting reading magazines with little hair dryers on …! (*He cries with laughter*)

Scout is furious

Scout That is enough, Wayne!

Bruce has found some courage. He picks up an intercom phone

Bruce OK, now I've buzzed down to my security guard. He's in the lodge at the gate. If you leave now, he won't hurt you but if you harm us, he'll kill you.

Wayne *He'll* kill me? Well ho, fuckn' ho. (*He cocks his gun at Bruce*)

Bruce stands frozen, holding the intercom phone

Bang — Just kidding you, Bruce. You give that guard a call. If it makes you feel better you give that old boy a call.

Scout, still mortified over Wayne's comments, turns to Brooke

Scout Brooke, I am so sorry that Wayne has gotten to prying into your personal stuff. He does not understand that a woman likes to keep her special private places special and private.

Wayne is watching Bruce on the phone. Bruce is clearly getting no reply

Wayne He ain't answering you, Mr Delamitri. Maybe he can't hear you …Here, let's see if we can't get his ear a little closer to the phone.

Wayne takes a knife from his belt and reaches into his bag. He clearly cuts something and then produces a severed ear. Brooke screams, Bruce is equally horrified. Wayne carries the gory ear over to Bruce, takes the intercom phone and holds it to the ear

(*Shouting*) Hallo! Hallo! Mr Security Guard! — He don't hear so good does he. (*He holds the ear up to his own lips and shouts at it*) Hey! You hear me! The guy who pays your wages is calling you, you fucking jerk! (*To Bruce*) How much did you pay the guy, Mr Delamitri? Was he expensive? Because if he was you are being ripped off, Bruce. He wasn't worth shit as a guard. He just sat there in his hut with his big dog and we crept up behind him and killed him.

Scout We didn't kill the dog.

Wayne That's what's wrong with this country! People just don't do the damn jobs they're paid for. No wonder we can't get ahead of the Japs. (*He casually drops the ear into the ash tray*)

Bruce Listen, I don't know who you are but…

Wayne Just no count white trash Bruce. We ain't nothing. The only memorable thing I ever did in my life was killing people.

Scout (*proudly*) We're the Mall Murderers. I'm Scout and this is Wayne. We're the Mall Murderers.

Wayne Scout, I tell people that — we're the Mall Murderers.

Brooke Oh God, are you going to kill us?

Wayne Now what kind of question is that? Me and Scout here never know who we're going to kill till we done it.

Scout It just happens. This is so great isn't it? — I mean us all here together, just sitting talking. Because like, Bruce here is Wayne's hero and I've always admired girls like you Brooke, so beautiful and all. 'Cept I can't deny I think it's a shame about all this cosmetic surgery you girls get done. Cause these days you don't know who's really beautiful and who's just a cut-up sucked-out balloon-boobed bitch.

Wayne So what we all going to talk about now?

After an embarrassed pause, Bruce has a go

Bruce Well uhm — why don't you tell us something about yourself, Wayne…

Wayne Now why the hell would a famous man like you want to know about any of my stuff, Bruce?

Bruce Well — I guess, to be frank, from what I know of your — uhm, work,

it seems to me that you kill people whom you do not know. — So, I suppose I thought it might be kind of nice to — get to know you.

Wayne Well, OK Bruce. What can I tell you?

Bruce Well — how about you tell me what it's like to kill someone.

Wayne You want to kill someone? Hell man, do it, it's easy, do it.

Wayne takes his pistol from his belt and opens the chamber, he removes all but one bullet from the drum and offers the weapon to Bruce

Five, four, three, two, and one left for you. Here take it. Come on. One bullet can do a lot of damage.

Bruce grabs the gun and points it at Wayne

That's right, you could kill me, or Scout here, 'cepting of course if you did, vengeance would not be a long time a'comin' — well Bruce, you going to kill someone?

There is a pause while Bruce decides whether to kill Wayne or not. Bruce puts the gun down

Bruce I don't want to kill anyone, Wayne. I just wanted to know what it's like.

Wayne Well, hell, man, you might as well say what's it like to make a movie. It depends, on the circumstances, on the victim. I'll tell you what it ain't like, it ain't witty.

Bruce Witty?

Wayne Yeah, like in "Ordinary Americans", when Mr Chop Chop and the other guy get the guy's hand and stick it in the food processor. You remember that scene?

Wayne takes Bruce's hand and mimes the food processor scene from the movie

Bruce Yes, I do.

Wayne It whizzed up blood and chopped onions and stuff all over their suits and the one guy looks at the other and says, "Shit, this suit's Italian". It got a big laugh. But we knew they have to go to this real swanky hotel to waste this dude, there ain't no way they're gonna get into no real swanky hotel with all blood and chopped onions all over 'em. So they have to go to the launderette and strip off to their shorts and sit with their big guns on their laps reading women's magazines...

Scout That's my favourite bit when they talk about hormone replacement therapy...

Wayne But they don't know how to work the machines, so when they get to the real swanky hotel to waste the dude, their suits is all tiny like a little kid's suit, 'cause they shrunk. Man, that was one classy scene.

Bruce Thank you.

Scout I don't know how many times Wayne watched that movie.

Wayne They said it was ironic and subversive in the *New York Times*; I just thought it was a classic, the way they kept on wasting people.

A buzzer sounds

Now who's that coming calling? You ain't pushed no alarm button or nothing have you, Bruce? I'd kill you inside of two seconds.

The buzzer goes again

Bruce I think it's my wife, my ex — we have a settlement to discuss — she's very erratic about time keeping.

Scout Farrah Delamitri! My God I would love to meet her. Didn't I read somewhere you wished she was dead?

Bruce I was quoted out of context.

The buzzer goes again

So I leave it, right?

Wayne You've made an appointment, you keep it. I guess she can see your big old Italian Lambor-fucking-homosexual parked out in the drive and I don't want her getting suspicious about nothing.

A buzzer goes again

Bruce Look, surely we don't need to drag my wife into this. I mean — —

Wayne Ain't going to drag nobody into nothing, Bruce, you just have her come on up here, do your business like you would anyhow and then she can go.

A buzzer goes again. Bruce picks up the intercom

Bruce Hallo? ... Karl! What the Hell are you...? Listen Karl, it's the morning after the Oscars for Christ's sake...

Wayne Who is it, Bruce?

Bruce It's my producer, he's — —

Wayne Tell him you're sending someone down.

Bruce is about to protest but Scout points the gun at his head

Bruce OK Karl, I'll get someone to let you in.

Wayne puts the guns away in his bag. He also takes Scout's bullet belt. Scout is left with her handgun

Wayne I'm going to take a nice stroll down to the gate and let Karl in so we can visit with him for a while. Now he don't have to see no guns or nothing but Scout and me are going to be ready and anybody who tries to mess around with us is going to be one dead mutha, you hear? Now you just sit tight till I get back. Scout, honey, you're in charge.

Wayne exits

Scout Sit down, Mr Delamitri. I don't want to have to kill you but I will.

Bruce sits on the floor. Again there is an uncomfortable pause. Brooke, terrified but strong, starts to try and get through to Scout

Brooke You know Scout, I think I saw that picture of you. The one in "America's Most Wanted". I remember — I remember it was pretty amazing. You're very photogenic.

Scout Yeah?

Brooke Sure, you're a pretty girl, you know that? Real pretty.

Scout (*coyly*) Oh, I don't think so.

Brooke Of course you are Scout, and I think you know it too. Except you don't make as much of yourself as you could. Like for instance you have beautiful hair, but you haven't done anything with it.

Scout Well, all blood and bits of brain and stuff got in it when Wayne pumped this guy who was serving me a soda so I had to rinse it through and now it's a mess.

Brooke Well, I could help you with that Scout. Maybe we could do some make up. I bet you'd look like a movie star. Don't you think so, Bruce?

Bruce Yes, Scout is very pretty.

Brooke I bet any agent would love to have a cute little girl like you to work with.

Scout Why would they notice me? I mean I ain't saying I ain't pretty. Wayne says I could have any man I wanted, 'cepting only for as long as it took him to shoot the guy. But there's a heap of pretty girls in this town.

Brooke OK Scout, I'll be straight, you're a celebrity. You're a killer's girl...

Scout I'm a killer too.
Brooke Well, sure, but the world is going to know that he made you do it and in the meantime if I make you as pretty as can be…
Scout You really think I could be a star? — You mean you'd help me?
Brooke Of course I'd help you Scout, I like you. We could be friends.
Scout That's easy for you to say while Wayne's threatening to kill you.
Brooke Maybe so, but it seems to me that Wayne is always going to be threatening to kill someone so how are you ever going to make any friends?
Scout I don't know. Sometimes I wonder about that.
Brooke Listen to me, Scout. If ever a person needed friends it's you. We could help you, but you have to help us. Don't you want friends?
Scout Sure I want friends.

Wayne enters with Karl

Wayne Bruce, this here's Karl.
Karl Hi Bruce, having a party?
Bruce Yeah, kind of. This is Brooke Daniels…
Karl Brooke Daniels. Well well well. Miss February, I didn't recognize you with your clothes on. That was a great spread by the way.
Brooke Thank you.
Karl I'll bet the nozzle of that gas pump was cold, am I right?

Wayne laughs

Who're these two, Bruce, or will the answer make me blush?
Bruce A couple of — actors. I saw them in an improv' night out at Malibu — thought I'd talk to them. Might be right for "Killer Angels".
Karl Seeing actors on the morning after Oscar night? That is dedication. No offence to you guys, but for me talking to actors is only one step away from slamming my dick in a door.
Bruce I just thought they had, you know, maybe they had the right look.
Karl For "Killer Angels"?
Bruce Maybe.
Karl Well, I'm just the schmuck who finds the money, but these kids look about as much like psychopaths as Scooby Doo.
Wayne Would you like me to fix a drink, Mr Brezner?
Karl Water.
Wayne Water? — Well OK, Scout, go get a glass from the bathroom.
Karl Not tap water! Christ Jesus! When I drink water there has to have been at least twenty thousand feet of Alpine granite between me and the last person who pissed it. Get me an Evian.
Bruce I don't have any Evian. Karl, what do you want?

Karl Maybe we could talk down by the pool.

Wayne coughs uneasily

Bruce We'll talk here. I am busy.
Karl Well, excuse me. I forgot for one moment that you just won an Oscar and therefore are professionally obliged to treat with contempt those whom formerly you have loved and respected.
Bruce Karl, I didn't sleep either. Could we do this another time?
Karl Maybe you didn't see the papers today.
Bruce No I didn't see the papers.
Karl Well, I hate to be the shit delivery boy here, but as predicted, yours is not a popular Oscar choice. Frankly the editorials would be kinder if they'd given it retrospectively to "Attack of The Ninety-Foot Booby Woman".
Bruce Who gives a fuck what those parasites think?
Karl We give a fuck, Bruce. It's the violence thing. The *issue du jour*. Newt Gingrich was on the "Today Show" this morning. he says you're a pornographer and you should not get honoured for glamorizing murderers.
Bruce Can we do this another time, Karl?
Karl *Another time*! If being called a murderer by the entire right wing of American politics doesn't worry you perhaps would like to recall that we are severely *financially* exposed here...

Scout is bored with this conversation

Scout Brooke, will you put my hair up like you said you would?
Brooke Uhm yeah, sure, OK...

Rather nervously Brooke takes her handbag and goes over to start doing Scout's hair. Karl is a little disconcerted but carries on

Karl Clearly the Republicans want to make a mid-term election issue out of it. They think they've got a live one and we need to make a plan.
Scout You know what I love, I love the way mousse comes out of the can. How do they get it all in there?
Wayne It expands, honey.
Scout I know it expands, dummy, because it's bigger when it gets out! But I don't know how it happens, it's the same with cans of whipped cream. How do they *do* that! I mean cream is cream, you can't crush it up.

Karl is astonished at these rough-looking people who are so confidently ignoring him

Karl Excuse me, did I become invisible? I'm talking here.
Scout Sorry.
Karl Well, you are very far from welcome. We can kiss goodbye to a fifteen on the video release. That's half our rental gone to say nothing of actual bans, particularly in the South. This damn Oscar could kill us. Can you believe that?
Bruce Yeah, sounds bad Karl, let me think about it a while…

Karl still can't believe a man as powerful as he is being interrupted

Karl It's these fucking Mall Murderers, Bruce. Christ, what kind of pointless sickos are those people.
Bruce (*quickly*) Well you know — I mean, you have to try and see things from their point of view.
Karl What, you mean the point of view of a socially inadequate jerk-off?

Brooke is still nervously working on Scout's hair

Brooke I really don't think that you can dismiss them that easily.
Karl Pardon me, miss, for appearing rude, but that I should give a fuck what you think. Wayne Hudson and that weird, scrawny little bitch he drags around are fucked-up trailer-park white trash nobodies who have mashed potato instead of brains. The sooner they get fried, the better. I would gladly take them out myself.

There is a pause. Bruce and Brooke are terrified at this outburst

Bruce (*laughing*) Ha ha. Nice speech. You talk big Karl, but you'd never do it, you always end up on the side of the underdog.
Karl Underdog? Those scum? Like I would waste my tears on such maggots. I would piss on their graves and that of their mothers who no doubt were whores.
Wayne You think the Mall Murderers are fucked-up white trash, Mr Brezner?
Bruce He does not think that…
Brooke You can't just dismiss them…
Scout (*to herself*) Weird, scrawny little bitch?
Bruce He did not mean that! You should hear the way he talks about his wife.
Karl Excuse me! What is this right now? Oprah? Are we having some kind of debate about these filth? Of course they're fucked-up trash.
Bruce Karl! What do you want! I'm busy here, I have stuff to do and you are getting in my face.
Karl What do *I want*! What do you think I want! Look you have to fight this,

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