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SF PERUSALS

3C

David Adjmi

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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3C was first produced by Snug Harbor Productions/Steven Chaikelson and Kendra Bator, and presented by Piece by Piece Productions, Rising Phoenix Repertory (Daniel Talbott, artisitic director) and the Rattlestick Playwrights Theater (David Van Asselt, artistic director; Brian Long, managing director) at the Rattlestick Playwrights Theater in New York City on June 24, 2012. The performance was directed by Jackson Gay, with sets by John McDermott, costumes by Dana Botez, lights by Tyler Micoleau, sound by Matt Tierney, choreography by Deney Terrio, and hair and makeup design. The Production Manager was Tom Taylor and the General Manager was Eugenia Furneaux. The cast was as follows:

BRAD . . . . . Jake Silbermann
LINDA . . . . . Hannah Cabell
CONNIE . . . . . Anna Chlumsky
MR. WICKER . . . . . Bill Buell
MRS. WICKER . . . . . Kate Buddeke
TERRY . . . . . Eddie Cahill

CHARACTERS

BRAD – (M, late 20s/early 30s)
LINDA – (F, late 20s/early 30s)
CONNIE – (F, late 20's/early 30s)
MR. WICKER – (M, late 50s/late 60s)
MRS. WICKER – (F, late 50s/late 60s)
TERRY – (M, late 20s/late 30s)

SETTING

An apartment complex in Santa Monica, California.

TIME

1978

AUTHOR'S NOTES

I write for the musicality of the line, not grammatical correctness.

The rhythms of the play are not naturalistic. Please don't naturalize them. The play has a honed instability, like Romantic music, a kind of rubato.

A double slash (//) indicates either an overlap or a jump – i.e., no break between the end of one character's speech and the beginning of the following speech.

Speech in parentheses indicates either a sidetracked thought or footnote within a conversation, or a shift in emphasis with NO transition.

A STOP is a pause followed by either a marked shift in tone or tempo (like a cinematic jumpcut or a quantum leap) or no change in tempo whatsoever – somewhat like putting a movie on pause and then pressing play. These moments in the play are less psychological than energetic. They have a kind of focused yet unpredictable stillness, something akin to Martial Arts, where there is preparedness in the silence. Where a lunge or a swift kick can be delivered from seemingly out of nowhere – quickly, invisibly.

Sometimes sentences will abut with no period or punctuation This means you just keep talking without taking a beat for a period a comma.

SOME THOUGHTS ON *3C*

TONE

The tone of *3C* is a little tricky. Though it explores and samples tropes from sitcoms and farce (and can be at points pretty funny) the play is not exactly a comedy. And it's not really a drama, though it is in many ways an exploration of human anguish. The play – like the characters – is so flipped out by the human condition that it doesn't quite know how to feel about itself. It has a short-circuited, convulsive, somewhat manic-depressive quality. To this end there are mercurial shifts in tone that happen scene by scene, within scenes and between beats. The shifts are often abrupt and happen with no transition.

I've tried to delineate in the text as best as I could. Please use the text as a guide. It isn't a terribly good idea to cross out stage directions in this play – they offer a useful roadmap to its often very twisty terrain.

SPEED

3C is so much about panic and existential terror in the face of a profoundly toxic world. On the surface it seems kind of flat and lowbrow; but it's a reverse *trompe l'oeil* – the flatness is illusion. And for the play to work in production this tension between the surface banality and this underlying anxiety/horror must be present.

To this end, it is important to follow the rhythms of the play that way I've scored it out in the text. The anxiety gets shunted into a sort of a wild hydroplaning speed in the dialogue that is punctuated with abrupt shifts, and increasingly frightening gaps and silences. Please do attend to the very specific scoring in the text and do not cross out the stage directions.

A double slash (//) indicates either an overlap or a jump – i.e., no break between the end of one character's speech and the beginning of the following speech. I recommend learning the lines and the interruptions indicated by slashes at the same time. Please be very specific with the slashes. They inform the play's meaning and very specific sensibility.

Speech in parentheses indicates either a sidetracked thought within a conversation, or a shift in tone or emphasis.

Please do not add pauses or silences or beats where they aren't indicated in the script. The style of the play isn't naturalistic and there shouldn't be a lot of air inside sentences unless the script indicates it.

THREE'S COMPANY

Though the play is largely premised on the 1970s series *Three's Company*, please don't comment on the sitcom aspects of the play, or telegraph them in a goofy, broad way. The play borrows tropes from that series to subvert them, but it has its own life and its own idiom.

Don't feel compelled to recreate or pastiche the performances from *Three's Company*: Connie need not be 'jiggly'; Linda need not be 'sensible', etc. The characters in *3C* are drawy very differently; they are specific to this play and this particular world.

CONFUSIONS

No matter how ridiculous or absurd some of the "confusions" are they've got to be played completely straight – like Chekhov or Bergman – there needs to be that level of anguish, that sort of gravity. It should feel disorienting.

THE 'SCENE'

Mr. Wicker's scene with Linda near the end of Act One is – and is meant to be – jarring and disturbing. But it need not be sensationalized or played up for shock value in the staging. For the Rattlestick production it happened upstage, semi-concealed and it was still terribly (but for the play, appropriately) cringeworthy and awful. Use your judgment.

THANK YOUS (IN NO ORDER)

MCC Playwrights Coalition, Stephen Willems, New Dramatists, Polly Carl, Clubbed Thumb, Maria Striar, Playwrights Horizons, Jackson Gay, Judith Ivey, Josh Hamilton, Marin Ireland, Deney Terrio, Anna Chlumsky, Eddie Cahill, Laura Heisler, Hannah Cabell, Colleen Werthmann, Kate Buddeke, Jake Silbermann, Greg Keller, Laura Esterman, Marylouise Burke, Keith Reddin, Lisa Joyce, Bill Buell, Gary Wilmes, Darren Goldstein, Paul Rusconi, Heidi Schreck, and my ur-assistant Philip Gates. Special thank you to Kip Fagan for his incisive, dedicated work on this play over the course of several workshops. And to Adam Greenfield for rescuing an abandoned draft from my desk drawer. And to all the actors who participated in countless readings, workshops, etc. of this play who aren't mentioned here.

1.

(It's late morning. The place is a mess, half empty wine glasses, cigarette butts, vestiges of a party from the previous night. A "Bon Voyage Beverly" banner hangs above the door. **CONNIE** *is wearing a teddy, reads "Cosmo."* **LINDA** *is wearing a long T-shirt, a sports-type thing.* **LINDA** *is siphoning un-drunk wine from various glasses back into a half empty bottle.)*

LINDA. I'm so hung over.

CONNIE. *(encouraging)* You look splotchy.

LINDA. *(slightly stung)* So do you.

*(***LINDA** *doesn't look over at her;* **CONNIE***'s offended.)*

CONNIE. You're not even looking.

LINDA. What are you reading?

CONNIE. *(reads, traumatized)* This lady was disfigured cause she burnt her bra. The whole house burned down, now the insurance people are after her. *(flips a page, anxious)* People lead such interesting lives. *(turns to* **LINDA***, re: the funnel)* What's that //

LINDA. It's called saving money.

CONNIE. *(yikes)* You're so innovative.

*(***CONNIE** *goes back to reading.)*

LINDA. Necessity is the mother of invention //

CONNIE. *(confused, oddly hurt)* I thought that was god the father. *(shrugs it off)* But I'm *fallen* What do I know. My dad used to say that to me all the time He was a minister //

LINDA. I didn't know that.

CONNIE. We're all fallen //

LINDA. I mean about your dad being a minister! //

CONNIE. He was good at sermons. *(uncanny moment)* You remind me of him. *(casual)* We need a vacation; I heard about this place on the news Love Canal It sounds romantic; maybe you can find a boyfriend.

LINDA. We can't afford a vacation; we can barely make rent.

CONNIE. *(hopeful)* Now that Beverly's gone maybe we can spend more time together. I've always wanted us to be close.

LINDA. *(warming up to it)* That sounds good.

CONNIE. *(losing focus)* It sounds ok.

LINDA. What should we do?

CONNIE. *(hopeful)* Maybe we can go double dating.

LINDA. I need to lose weight first.

CONNIE. You always say that.

LINDA. I can't date anyone looking like this.

CONNIE. You look great. You just need to get out and mingle.

LINDA. I know. I'm not as social as you are. *(beat)* How do you meet all these guys?

CONNIE. Well I used to go to this drug store and wait around in the parking lot; *(disappointed)* then they put up a no loitering sign.

*(***CONNIE** *contemplates this, nonplussed.)*

LINDA. *(reacts)* Don't you think it's dangerous to date strange men?

CONNIE. *(matter-of-fact)* If you flirt you flirt with danger, I learned that the hard way.

LINDA. *(mild rebuke)* Connie, you have to be responsible //

CONNIE. My gramma used to say that.

LINDA. Hey did you pay the electricity bill?

CONNIE. I had to buy that coat.

LINDA. What *coat?*

CONNIE. With the zippers? that coat that was on sale?

LINDA. Connie, you don't even have a *job*.

CONNIE. *(hurt)* I had to quit, my boss was hitting on me!

LINDA. Well I just spent all that money on Beverly //

CONNIE. *(concerned)* I'll // chip in

LINDA. And we're two weeks behind on // rent!

CONNIE. *(mollifying)* We're not as behind as some people – 3F is behind two months and 6G I don't even know how long.

LINDA. (Who's in 6G //

CONNIE. That guy with the girlfriend But I think she left him //

LINDA. How do you know? //

CONNIE. Because he was having sex with me but she walked in) *Hey* you wanna go to the beach today?

*(***LINDA** *gives her a look.)*

LINDA. I hate this apartment.

*(***LINDA** *does an impromptu flower arrangement,* **CONNIE** *watches, quietly fascinated.)*

CONNIE. The flowers are all dying.

LINDA. I'll get new ones from the shop.

CONNIE. My grandma used to press flowers and put them in a book.

LINDA. We're getting zebra orchids in later today.

CONNIE. *(absorbed)* What are these?

LINDA. Delphiniums. They were gonna die so I brought them home.

CONNIE. Aren't they already dead once you cut them?

LINDA. Flowers don't die like that, they die more slowly.

CONNIE. *(concerned)* Like slow torture? Like China?

LINDA. The line between life and death isn't so clearcut for a flower //

CONNIE. Like *India*?

LINDA. *I don't know about India*!!

*(**CONNIE** watches her arrange the flowers.)*

CONNIE. *(contemplative)* Can they feel pain?

LINDA. What?

CONNIE. When you cut a flower does it hurt?

LINDA. They don't have developed nerve centers.

CONNIE. So?

LINDA. They're just stalks with petals //

CONNIE. *(horrified)* "Stalks with // *petals*"?

LINDA. Connie they don't have advanced cortical functions, they just do photosynthesis //

CONNIE. *(hurt)* Maybe flowers don't have a means to communicate pain – that doesn't mean they don't feel things. They're living beings, all living creatures feel things //

LINDA. I //

CONNIE. *(increasing hurt and indignation)* It's like what happened to Helen Keller //

LINDA. I don't // want to

CONNIE. I was in *Miracle Worker* in eighth grade. The whole society thought // she was –

LINDA. Helen Keller had a developed nervous system! //

CONNIE. So? //

LINDA. Flowers don't, they can live when you cut them, they // can

CONNIE. *(sarcasm)* Well you're just // soooo

LINDA. I just sat on gum //

CONNIE. EW! //

LINDA. *(holds up a condom)* (Oh no it's a used condom) //

CONNIE. *(private recollection)* (Aww) //

LINDA. *We have got to clean // this shit up!*

CONNIE. *(mimicking broadly) bleh bleh // bleh*

LINDA. *(pulls down the banner)* And when are we going to get a new roommate? Did you at least put an ad in the chronicle like I told you?

CONNIE. No one wants to live in Santa Monica, it's too far from West Hollywood.

LINDA. *(throws banner in the trash)* What's in West Hollywood?

CONNIE. *(matter of fact)* Shops.

LINDA. *(opening up)* I like shops.

CONNIE. *(brightening) Do you want to see my new coat?*

LINDA. I'm still mad at you How are we gonna make rent? //

CONNIE. (Here you want a triscuit?)

LINDA. I don't like the way I look today.

CONNIE. You're not fat //

LINDA. I *didn't say fat* //

CONNIE. *(appeasing)* That's what you always say I'm fat I don't like the way I look today //

LINDA. I'm gonna cut my hair //

CONNIE. Yeah you // should

LINDA. *What's wrong with my hair? //*

CONNIE. *(180 switch)* Nothing I love your hair!

LINDA. Should I cut it, do you think I should grow it out? //

CONNIE. No, yes –

LINDA. I think it looks good with my belt.

CONNIE. *(a terrified beat)* What //

LINDA. *My hair!*

CONNIE. *I miss Beverly!*

(STOP)

LINDA. There's gum embedded in the carpet.

CONNIE. Use goo gone.

LINDA. I'm not cleaning it.

CONNIE. We'll do it // together.

LINDA. I'm not cleaning it, I had to set the whole thing up practically by myself.

CONNIE. No one asked you to do that.

LINDA. I did it without having to be asked because I'm actually a responsible person.

(beat)

CONNIE. Maybe you need to experience more *things*. You need to experience life – *You should go dancing, you love to dance.*

LINDA. Will you stop putting your things on me!?

CONNIE. *(taking this literally)* I'm not putting my things on you //

LINDA. *And I'm not going out with anyone until I lose twenty pounds*!! *LEAVE ME ALONE.*

(pause)

CONNIE. *(tentative)* Are you sure you don't wanna see my new coat?

LINDA. *(holds her head)* I feel like shit.

CONNIE. Your face is all blue. *(sad)* I hope you don't have alcohol poisoning. They might have to give you a transfusion. I used to do that for my grandmother.

*(***LINDA** *looks over at* **CONNIE***; she doesn't know how to take this.)*

LINDA. You gave your grandmother a *transfusion?*

CONNIE. I gave her shots and things, she had diabetes. But then my mother refused to take care of her and we put her in a home. She died a few months later. I *never* forgave my mother. *(pause)* Well I forgave her but only years later, but we *never* spoke again.

*(***CONNIE** *is lugubrious.)*

LINDA. I'm sorry //

CONNIE. Well I mean we speak but only on special occasions, you know, like on holidays and birthdays, but *that's it.*

LINDA. Oh.

(beat)

CONNIE. *(turns a page in her magazine)* Also we get our nails done every week //

LINDA. *(holding up her hand)* Do you like this shade It's iridescent.

*(***CONNIE** *looks at her nails.)*

CONNIE. That's not for me.

LINDA. *(hurt)* The manicurist said it's the new style.

CONNIE. *(oddly disgusted)* I have learned to smell a rat when it comes to manicurists. *(***LINDA** *reacts, frightened)* But maybe Todd Stengler will like it.

LINDA. *(this upsets her)* I don't care if he does or if he doesn't.

CONNIE. Maybe he'll get turned on by it.

LINDA. Why do you keep mentioning Todd Stengler?

CONNIE. Because he has red pubes.

LINDA. I think you want him for yourself!

CONNIE. I think it's the other way around!

LINDA. I don't like *Todd*!

CONNIE. You always mention him.

LINDA. And what If I do? I have no chance with you around.

CONNIE. You do too.

LINDA. I'm ugly and I look like a dyke!

CONNIE. You are *not* a dyke.

(pause)

LINDA. I know what people say about me //

CONNIE. *What*? People // don't –

LINDA. *(hurt)* I know what people say.

(long pause)

CONNIE. You remind me of this friend I had, Tammy. She was traumatized. Then she realized she had to heal.

LINDA. How did she do it?

*(***CONNIE** *stares blankly for a beat.)*

CONNIE. All I know is the anecdote.

*(***CONNIE** *shrugs.)*

LINDA. I'm in a bad mood.

CONNIE. *(strained)* You're in a great mood.

LINDA. I get this way when I drink //

CONNIE. You can always cut // down

LINDA. I hope I don't have blood poisoning //

CONNIE. Do you want me to check your blood? I used to do that for my grandmother –

LINDA. My grandmother was sick too She had leukemia //

CONNIE. *(sadly)* My cat had leukemia //

LINDA. *My cat had cancer //*

CONNIE. *(excited by the coincidence)* My friend Nancy had // cancer!

LINDA. My cat's name was // Nancy!

CONNIE. *(nonsequitur)* Anyways I used to give her insulin shots //

LINDA. Your cat? //

CONNIE. No my grandma. She'd writhe around. She'd get really mad at me when I punctured the vein. I would say GRANDMA IT'S TIME FOR YOUR SHOT the way I saw Jack Lemmon do it on Quincy //

LINDA. Klugman //

*(***LINDA** *grabs a bottle of liquor.)*

CONNIE. And then she died Did yours die?

LINDA. Mine lives in Larchmont //

CONNIE. (Larchmont is that like a time share?) //

LINDA. I need a scotch //

(Doorbell rings. **LINDA** *pours herself a drink.* **CONNIE** *sighs, answers door.* **MR WICKER** *enters.)*

CONNIE. *(glum)* Hey Mr Wicker.

WICKER. You girls are gonna pay the rent or what, it's the fourteenth //

CONNIE. We paid some of it.

WICKER. You've been late for the past three months.

LINDA. *(swilling liquor)* What about our faucet, do tenants not have rights?!

WICKER. I fixed that //

CONNIE. *(has a meltdown) It's still leaking!*

LINDA. We'll get the rent //

WICKER. I want it by the end of the // week!

*(***CONNIE** *slams the door on* **WICKER, LINDA** *forages for more alcohol.)*

CONNIE. Well I don't know what the fuck we're // gonna do

LINDA. (Where's the Noilly // Pratt)

CONNIE. *(resentment)* I mean maybe I should have stayed at my job with my boss // groping at me

LINDA. *(swigs from the bottle)* And I'm sure you'll leave soon Just like Beverly left //

CONNIE. That's not // true!

LINDA. You have like a hundred boyfriends.

CONNIE. So? //

LINDA. So you'll marry one and I'll be left to rot and feed on my // own putrefaction!!

CONNIE. (I hurt my back playing limbo last night) //

LINDA. You'll get married and leave and I'll have to put another fuckin ad in the newspaper!

CONNIE. *(excited)* We could live here with you!

LINDA. *(confused) Who?*

CONNIE. *(annoyed)* Me and my *husband*!

LINDA. I don't want to live with you and your // husband.

CONNIE. *(clapping)* You could babysit! //

LINDA. *(offended)* I'm not gonna *babysit //*

CONNIE. *(hurt and angry) What, you wanna free ride? That's bullshit!*

LINDA. I want to live *alone!*

CONNIE. *(sweetly)* If flowers can be uprooted and live, so can *you*: live with *us //*

LINDA. I'm not a flower, I'm like Jo from little women // I'm independent

(**BRAD** *enters from the kitchen, naked but for a sock on his left foot.)*

CONNIE. *(delighted)* You're like Maria von Trapp: she made // playclothes out of

BRAD. Ow my *head* –

(The girls scream "oh my god" "help"etc etc – terrified – which terrifies **BRAD***, who screams and runs back into the kitchen, banging his head on the door on his way back in.)*

(STOP)

LINDA. *(frightened) Who* are you?!

CONNIE. *(confused)* What are you doing in our kitchen?

BRAD. *(os; hungover)* I was at the party last night.

CONNIE. *(testing him) What party*?

BRAD. *(os)* I must've blacked out.

LINDA. Where are your clothes?

BRAD. *(os)* Um. I don't know exactly.

LINDA. Hold on.

(**LINDA** *hurriedly produces a towel, squeezes her eyes shut, hands it to him around the kitchen door.)*

BRAD. *(os)* I hope Terry's playing a joke on me //

LINDA. Terry in 4C We know Terry! //

CONNIE. Did we play limbo last night Was that you I was so wasted //

(**BRAD** *enters wearing the towel.)*

BRAD. Can I use your phone?

LINDA. Sure //

(He picks up the phone, dials.)

CONNIE. *(sings)* "LIMBO LIMBO" //

LINDA. *(random socializing)* Do you know Denny Tucker Were you at that party? //

CONNIE. Gosh Linda –

LINDA. I can't believe there was a naked man in our kitchen this whole time!

(Beat, **CONNIE** *contemplates the situation.)*

CONNIE. America has a lot of opportunities if you know where to look.

BRAD. Thanks for letting me use your phone.

*(***CONNIE** *smiles at* **BRAD**.*)*

CONNIE. *(judgmental)* I don't know if I like his manners.

LINDA. He looks nice.

CONNIE. Appearances can be deceiving. On the other hand you can't judge a book by its cover.

LINDA. Connie that's the same thing.

BRAD. *(hangs up)* No answer.

CONNIE. He's not home? Maybe he's just passed // out

LINDA. He's probably just playing a joke on you //

CONNIE. Terry's a total joker.

BRAD. I just hope I wasn't mugged //

CONNIE. *(an aside)* I was mugged once and I'm still traumatized //

LINDA. Hey we don't even know your name //

BRAD. I'm Brad //

LINDA. I'm Linda and this is Connie.

CONNIE. *(correcting her) Con-nie.*

LINDA. That's what I said.

(beat)

CONNIE. You said *Com-mie.*

(A beat as **CONNIE** *rolls her eyes.* **LINDA** *looks confused.)*

BRAD. Thanks for the towel.

LINDA. So how do you know Terry?

BRAD. I met him when I got to town, I was down at the Rolley Pony // and

CONNIE. We call it The Pony.

BRAD. Well I was playing pool // and

CONNIE. We call it billiards //

BRAD. Huh? //

CONNIE. I'm just kidding. Look at your skin It's like the color of the sofa – I love when I match the furniture it gives me a sense of belonging.

BRAD. You two have a lot of energy.

LINDA. We get excited having company over.

CONNIE. Unless they're rapists.

LINDA. Do you have a girlfriend? //

CONNIE. You smell like jojoba.

BRAD. I don't know what // that is.

LINDA. What's your sign, I'm a Cancer //

BRAD. I //

CONNIE. Hey, let's put on music!

LINDA. Do you mind, or will that make your head hurt?

BRAD. Huh? Oh – no I'm ok.

*(***LINDA** *puts on "In the Bush" by Musique.)*

CONNIE. Are you a good dancer?

BRAD. *(shy)* I don't know.

CONNIE. What's your favorite dance?

BRAD. The Hustle.

LINDA. I like the funky chicken. *(self punishing)* I mean I used to like it when it was in style, now it's out of date.

CONNIE. *(following* **LINDA***'s lead)* Yeah.

(The music plays – it has that scratchy album quality.)

LINDA. Do you like this? It isn't new – it's an old song. I like their old songs, do you like the Bee Gees?

CONNIE. I didn't know you liked them, you never tell me anything, what's the big secret.

LINDA. There's no secret, I have all their albums.

CONNIE. *(low grade despair)* Why don't you ever teach me new dances?

LINDA. What? I don't know any new dances.

CONNIE. You were doing new dances last night at the party. *(to* **BRAD***)* She's a great dancer.

BRAD. *(being polite)* I'd love to see your moves.

CONNIE. You were dancing with everyone, and you were doing these moves and you were all:

(She gets up and approximates the dance **LINDA** *did. It's old school disco.)*

LINDA. Oh

No it goes

(She does it.)

CONNIE. Oh

*(***LINDA** *continues to demonstrate.)*

Oh right

LINDA. And then

*(***LINDA** *does another move.)*

CONNIE. And there was something like…

*(***CONNIE** *tries to do a move.)*

LINDA. You mean this?

*(***LINDA** *shows her,* **CONNIE** *tries to do it.)*

*(***BRAD** *watches for a while.)*

BRAD. *(shy)* Do you know this?

(He shows them a new dance.)

(They try it.)

You have to swing it like this.

*(***CONNIE***'s doing it wrong.)*

No no, you go like this.

*(***CONNIE** *keeps trying.)*

No, look:

*(**CONNIE** gives up and just does her own version. **LINDA**'s doing it.)*

LINDA. That's so cute. You know what this reminds me of? *(she starts doing another move)* You know what I'm talking about?

BRAD. Yeah yeah yeah *(he cracks up)*

*(**BRAD** and **LINDA** are doing **LINDA**'s moves. **CONNIE** is getting frustrated but keeps trying.)*

*(**CONNIE** starts freestyling. They laugh. They all take turns freestyling. The moves get more elaborate and intense. It escalates until it is almost a competition, a bacchanal. It's both enjoyable and a little insane.)*

(Eventually they're worn out – they laugh and clap and stop dancing. **LINDA** *takes the needle off the record.)*

(to **LINDA***)* That was fun. You're pretty good

LINDA. *(smiles politely)* No I'm not

BRAD. Well I // thought –

LINDA. *(smile drops)* I don't care what you think, I don't know you.

CONNIE. She hates men.

BRAD. Oh, so //

LINDA. I'M NOT A DYKE *(smiles politely)* I'm sorry – I'm – *(to* **CONNIE***) And you're the one who hates men Connie //*

CONNIE. I like them but as pawns.

LINDA. I just don't like cruelty of any kind that's all //

CONNIE. Then you don't like men of any kind //

LINDA. That's not a *sine qua non* Connie //

CONNIE. *(dancing)* Hooa hooa

BRAD. I hope you don't think I was being cruel just now // I was just

CONNIE. *(inventing things)* You're looking at my breasts.

BRAD. What?

LINDA. She's –

CONNIE. Am I just breasts to you?

BRAD. I // didn't

CONNIE. *(sublimated anger)* Just forget it Do you want a black coffee or something? //

LINDA. Are you from around here? Or //

BRAD. I'm from Kansas. I got out of Vietnam about a year ago.

LINDA. *(delicately)* Oh…

BRAD. I've been floating around a little bit.

CONNIE. *(cheerful)* I've never been to Vietnam, was it nice?

LINDA. Connie, he was in a *war*!

CONNIE. *(grumpy)* You're always so *negative*!

LINDA. *(ignoring her)* What made you come to LA, Brad?

BRAD. I'm thinking more about my future.

LINDA. Future's important.

BRAD. I don't want to focus on anything but my career.

LINDA. Do you have a girlfriend?

BRAD. I just want to focus on my career.

CONNIE. What do you do?

BRAD. I'm a chef.

LINDA. Really?

BRAD. Well I'm in training, I'm at the French institute.

CONNIE. The French institute That's like a really good school // right?

LINDA. I like *coq au vin* Can you make // that?

CONNIE. I like rich foods //

LINDA. Me too, creams // butters

CONNIE. (But sometimes I like a plain plate of steamed kale) //

LINDA. I like to eat, sometimes I eat compulsively, no I'm kidding HA HA HA HA (no but I do) *I used to be bone thin* //

CONNIE. *You're not fat!*

LINDA. *(slightly hysterical)* Connie you have to remember to put the ad in the // chronicle

CONNIE. *I told you I put the article in already I put it in a hundred times*! //

LINDA. *(anxious)* Why isn't anyone responding? How are we gonna make rent?

BRAD. Are you looking for a roommate ?

LINDA. *(excited)* Why, do you know anyone?

BRAD. Well – I might be looking for a place.

CONNIE. You're a guy!

LINDA. He could have his own room.

CONNIE. Why can't you just stay at Terry's, his pad is blazin!

BRAD. He – he asked me to move. He needs more space.

LINDA. *(eye roll)* Terry's such a Casanova, he's always on the make.

BRAD. Anyway it was just temporary //

LINDA. *(manic, defensive) This is only temporary too* I'll probably be getting my own place soon, or if I'm in a relationship we'll move in together //

CONNIE. *(worried)* You're not gonna try to get it on with me are you? because I was almost raped in Venice Beach once //

BRAD. *(surprised)* Oh my god – //

CONNIE. Stop staring at my breasts //

LINDA. *(mollifying)* Connie, I get a good vibe off him.

CONNIE. *(to* **BRAD***, a threat)* I took classes in La Jolla, I could knife you.

BRAD. I guess I could look for a place in West Hollywood.

LINDA. *(to* **CONNIE***)* See, everyone wants to live in West Hollywood!

CONNIE. *(to* **BRAD***)* Alright you can live here but I might knife you maybe.

BRAD. So…we're *roommates*?

LINDA. That's your room There's a bed and a dresser //

CONNIE. We're not giving you a blanket or sheets You need your own.

BRAD. How much is rent? //

CONNIE. Eighty one dollars and you owe from last month too so can you pay that?

BRAD. Do you think you could lend me some clothes //

CONNIE. "LIMBO, LIMBO" //

LINDA. *(pointing to her nightshirt)* Something like this?

BRAD. Uhhhh ha ha, no, I – I // can't

LINDA. Well you can't wear a towel!

(The doorbell rings.)

BRAD. Maybe that's Terry!

*(***LINDA** *crosses to the door, looks through the peephole.)*

LINDA. *(loud whisper)* It's Mrs. *Wicker!*

BRAD. Who? //

(Doorbell rings.)

CONNIE. Get in here and put something on!

(She rushes **BRAD** *into the bedroom and slams the door.)*

I'm gonna climb down the fire escape and find Terry!

LINDA. Just go out the front door!

CONNIE. *(dizzy)* I thought that would be conspicuous!

(She exits hurriedly through the kitchen door.)

LINDA. *(exasperated) Connie, where are you going!?*

(She returns, attempting to rush but unsure where. She vaguely bops around in circles.)

CONNIE. *(worried) I don't know where to go!!*

*(***BRAD** *opens the bedroom door:)*

BRAD. *(whisper)* Come in here with me!!

(Doorbell rings a bunch of times.)

*(***CONNIE** *rushes towards the bedroom, but then stops short and goes back into the kitchen.)*

LINDA. *Connie!!!*

*(**CONNIE** rushes back instantly with a large knife. She enters the bedroom. **LINDA** answers the door, **MRS. WICKER** makes a beeline for the sofa.)*

MRS. WICKER. There's gum on that.

LINDA. Oh that – that's // just

MRS. WICKER. Watch it You might lose your security deposit //

LINDA. Do you want a cup of coffee?

MRS. WICKER. *(prickly)* Coffee is too acidulous for my stomach.

LINDA. Tea? //

MRS. WICKER. You're late with rent //

LINDA. So how's everything goin?

MRS. WICKER. Fine I don't know How are you ?

LINDA. I //

MRS. WICKER. *(anxious)* I have to throw a shower for my niece!

LINDA. That's nice.

MRS. WICKER. Maybe you give parties but I don't so I'm having a hard time!

LINDA. It's not that // hard.

MRS. WICKER. I feel like I do everything wrong //

LINDA. *(trying to brighten things)* What's your niece's name //

MRS. WICKER. *(suspicious) Why do you need to know that!?*

(STOP)

LINDA. What do you mean? //

MRS. WICKER. *(softening)* I'm sorry It's Betty //

LINDA. Betty: Is she that newscaster you // were

MRS. WICKER. No that's my other niece Her name is Tania She won a Peabody award. *(beat)* I'm sorry for yelling at you before //

LINDA. You didn't // yell

MRS. WICKER. *(yelling) YES-I-DID! (penitent)* I'm just anxious //

LINDA. Why are you // anxious

MRS. WICKER. *(hostile) I told you I'm giving a party for my NIECE!*

LINDA. *(a beat)* I could – help you // if you

MRS. WICKER. Thank you but I don't want people to treat me like an invalid.

LINDA. You're not an // invalid

MRS. WICKER. But people treat me that way //

LINDA. I've never seen people treat you // that way

MRS. WICKER. Are you the measure of all things?

LINDA. *(beat)* I'm sure you'd make a very nice party // for your

MRS. WICKER. It's a *shower* not a *party*.

LINDA. Uh… Do you want some tea? //

MRS. WICKER. *(a bit hysterical) I'd love some!*

LINDA. We have Lapsang Souchon //

MRS. WICKER. *That's my favorite tea*!

LINDA. *(jolted)* I. I got it, as. A gift // from

MRS. WICKER. *(as* **LINDA** *pours tea)* It's my favorite that tea Lapsang Souchon Oh thank you Linda Oh I love the balls I didn't know you had these Anyways I'm sorry for yelling //

LINDA. You // didn't

MRS. WICKER. OW DAMMIT IT'S HOT //

LINDA. Blow on it //

MRS. WICKER. *(casual at first, then increasingly terrified and real)*: It's just I'm anxious *all* the time not just about my niece's party although I'm scared to call the person to do the calligraphy for the invitations?

LINDA. Oh but that's ridiculous // I'll

MRS. WICKER. Well maybe to you its ridiculous to me it's a nightmare, but that's a whole other thing, I'm just anxious Ha ha ha OH this is delicious It's very hot //

LINDA. Why are you // so anxious

MRS. WICKER. OW I burnt my tongue! Ha ha ha *(austere)* but no I'm just *anxious* all the time *(jovial)* hey did you guys paint in here?

LINDA. No //

MRS. WICKER. It looks great //

LINDA. It's the same stucco //

MRS. WICKER. Stucco is so practical isn't it? And it brings the room into three dimensions //

LINDA. The room is *in* three // dimensions

MRS. WICKER. Some people think there are four dimensions or five or an infinite amount of dimensions And some people think we live inside a hologram *That makes me anxious*!

LINDA. Have you ever considered medication? //

MRS. WICKER. No.

LINDA. My friend says it helps //

MRS. WICKER. Well I'm on medication and it doesn't.

LINDA. You just said you weren't on //it

MRS. WICKER. *(simmering)* No-I-said-I-never-*considered*-it-which-is-true-because-it-was-prescribed-for-me-and-I-don't-TAKE-IT!

(STOP)

LINDA. My friend Faye // says

MRS. WICKER. *(curious)* Who's-Faye?

LINDA. She's my // friend

MRS. WICKER. *(resentful) I don't know Faye!*

LINDA. She works with me in the flower shop //

MRS. WICKER. *(indictment) You don't work in a flower shop!*

LINDA. No, I – I *do.*

MRS. WICKER. Really So why aren't there any flowers around?

LINDA. We have these:

(produces flowers)

MRS. WICKER. These are fake! See: *(She pulls off a petal)* oh Sorry.

LINDA. Those were expensive.

MRS. WICKER. *(ashamed, mortified)* Oh. I – I didn't //

LINDA. Well it's sort of dying anyways // so

MRS. WICKER. *(defensive)* THEN HERE, JUST TAKE TEN BUCKS!!!!

(She rushes to her purse.)

Sometimes I mistake real things for fake things. *(she looks* **LINDA** *up and down)* And vice versa.

(Hands her some dough.)

LINDA. I can't take your money //

MRS. WICKER. Why not I can take yours Except you never pay your *rent* so I *DON'T*.

LINDA. Sometimes we get behind // but

MRS. WICKER. Yes I told Henry that but his patience is wearing thin //

LINDA. But we're planning // to

MRS. WICKER. *(gets up to go)* Anyway I have to go hook a rug now Bye //

LINDA. Mrs. Wicker I'm – *worried* about you.

(pause)

MRS. WICKER. You don't even like me.

LINDA. I like you.

(She turns to **LINDA**.*)*

MRS. WICKER. *(still slightly suspicious)* Well…that's very sweet of you.

(short pause)

LINDA. My friend Faye // has

MRS. WICKER. *(excited) How's Faye*?!?

LINDA. She's fine, she has a problem similar to yours //

MRS. WICKER. *(bitter recrimination) I don't have a problem!*

LINDA. Her medication helps her. She used to get anxious but // she's

MRS. WICKER. *(nervous)* Ok but don't talk about it because that brings on the panic attack!

LINDA. Do you have the medication on you?

MRS. WICKER. *(beseeching)* No I'm scared to take it I don't know what's in those pills!!

LINDA. What's the // matter?

MRS. WICKER. I-can't-breathe //

LINDA. Sit down Let me get you // a glass of

MRS. WICKER. *(real fear)* My doctor says if I don't take my pills I'll have a complete *breakdown*.

LINDA. Well...can't you just – take them?

MRS. WICKER: *(rage) No I can't "just take them"!*

(We hear **BRAD** *and* **CONNIE** *arguing from OS, loud stage whispers:)*

CONNIE. *(os)* Brad, we *have* to get it on.

BRAD. *(os)* But it's so tiny…

CONNIE. *(os)* Really? It's too big for me. But I guess for a man it's different.

BRAD. *(os)* Can we get it to fit?

(A few small, strange noises. **MRS WICKER***'s eyes widen.)*

MRS. WICKER. Who's *that?*

LINDA. *(shrugs)* I don't hear anything.

BRAD. *(os)* Connie it's too *tight*. We'll never get it on.

CONNIE. *(os)* I'm trying to stretch it out.

MRS. WICKER. You don't hear that?

LINDA. I can't hear anything. But I'm half deaf.

MRS. WICKER. What do you mean?

LINDA. I'm deaf in my left ear I had scarlet fever as a child //

MRS. WICKER. I had scarlet fever too but my mother gave me a milk bath Did your mother give you a milk bath? //

LINDA. I think Michael Jackson gives himself milk baths //

MRS. WICKER. I think he's a better dancer than Fred Astaire! //

CONNIE. *(os)* JUST HOLD STILL! I AM TRYING TO STRETCH IT OVER // YOU.

LINDA. I love "Off the Wall," it's a great // album!

BRAD. *(os)* It's all puffy now! Does it look weird?

CONNIE. *(os)* Forget about how it looks, how does it *feel*??

*(***MRS. WICKER** *stands, horrified.)*

BRAD. *(os)* Silky!

*(***MRS. WICKER** *looks around trying to ascertain where the voices are coming from, walks slowly to bedroom.)*

LINDA. Mrs. Wicker!!

CONNIE. *(os)* See? I knew we could get it on!

*(***MRS. WICKER** *opens the door to the bedroom.)*

*(***BRAD** *is standing in the doorway in a frilly nightgown, caught.)*

BRAD. *(sheepish)* Hiee.

LINDA. *("acting natural")* This is my friend Brad.

*(***CONNIE** *enters, casually holding the kitchen knife.)*

MRS. WICKER. Nice getup. You girls are really cookin with gas. //

CONNIE. *(nonchalant)* Hey Mrs Wicker.

LINDA. *(to* **MRS. WICKER***)* Brad is a transvestite.

CONNIE. We want him to be our new roommate.

BRAD. I'm not a // transvestite.

MRS. WICKER. *(to* **BRAD***)* I read about you in magazines, I mean about people who share your lifestyle.

BRAD. I'm not a *transvestite.*

LINDA. *(eyeballing* **BRAD***)* Yes you *are.*

MRS. WICKER. Transvestites are always pretending to be something they're not, they pretend to be women and they pretend to be not-transvestites and they just live in a world of pretend!

BRAD. But // I'm

MRS. WICKER. *(reverie)* But I like to pretend When I was a girl I used to pretend all the time but then my reality would shatter and that's how my anxiety attacks started!

CONNIE. You have anxiety attacks? //

MRS. WICKER. *(innocently)* No.

CONNIE. But you just // said

MRS. WICKER. *(unfettered rage)* BUT I WAS PRETENDING DIDN'T YOU HEAR A GODDAM WORD I SAID *(conversational to* **BRAD***)* Do you feel trapped in your body because I feel trapped in my body Is that how you feel? //

BRAD. Uh //

MRS. WICKER. A lot of the ancient philosophers believed that the body is a prison for the soul //

CONNIE. I don't believe in souls!

LINDA. Mrs. Wicker: we would like Brad to be our roommate.

MRS. WICKER. But he's a man! *(eyeing him)* Well sort of.

CONNIE. He's gay. That's practically a woman!

MRS. WICKER. *(a fun caper.)* Well I guess that's alright but you have to ask Henry. But I like fags My hairdresser is a faggot. *(to* **BRAD***)* Do you tell any good jokes because my hairdresser is quite a joker He should be on television that's how funny he is. HA HA HA. *(to* **LINDA***)* I'm starting to feel relaxed, I think gays relax me.

*(***BRAD** *trips on the rug on his way to sitting down.)*

BRAD. Whoops –

CONNIE. Brad! //

MRS. WICKER. You're a crack-up!

LINDA. Are you ok?

BRAD. *(rubbing his jaw)* Just a nick //

MRS. WICKER. I saw a movie where a kid kept falling down, I think he was in Russia, I think he was in a gulag, I like all these weird kind of movies, I have very esoteric tastes.

LINDA. Brad is going to sleep in Beverly's old room.

MRS. WICKER. Oh, old Bev, what happened to her?

LINDA. She got married.

MRS. WICKER. Oh the poor bitch HA HA HA. Did she move out?

CONNIE. Just yesterday, she went on her honeymoon.

MRS. WICKER. Where, San Quentin? HA HA HA HA. I don't know why I'm laughing. HA HA HA HA HA. *(to* **BRAD***)* Do you like Russian movies?

CONNIE. I don't like foreign films.

MRS. WICKER. They play them over at that art house theatre on Fairfax. *(she eats a triscuit, happier now)* I feel very relaxed by gays.

(doorbell rings)

CONNIE. I'll get it.

(She opens the door and **TERRY** *enters.)*

Terry where the hell've // you been

BRAD. Where are my *clothes*?

TERRY. *(to* **BRAD***)* Dude what happened to you, I figured you passed out "Oh hey Mrs. Wicker" //

MRS. WICKER. Who are you? //

*(***TERRY** *produces wallet.)*

TERRY. I'm // in –

MRS. WICKER. Did you pay your rent //

BRAD. My wallet! //

TERRY. And the money's all there you can count it *(*Except for ten bucks I ran outta gas*)* Nice nightie by the way //

BRAD. *(to* **TERRY***) Where are my clothes?*

TERRY. You played a game of strip poker You must've been really hammered.

BRAD. *(to* **TERRY***)* Do me a solid and bring my suitcase down?

TERRY. Down where?

LINDA. Brad's moving in.

TERRY. He's *what?*

CONNIE. He's our new roommate! //

TERRY. You *dog* //

MRS. WICKER. *(correcting)* He's not a dog He's a faggot.

TERRY. *(laughing)* He's *what?*

*(***CONNIE** *whispers furtively in* **TERRY***'s ear.)*

BRAD. Listen I'm gonna take a shower is that okay? *(to* **TERRY***)* Would you mind bringing down // my

TERRY. Alright alright –

*(***BRAD** *exits for the shower)*

LINDA. You can use my body bar //

CONNIE. The showerhead isn't working you have to twist it //

LINDA. I thought Wicker fixed it //

CONNIE. (He-did-and-then-it-broke)

BRAD. *(to* **MRS. WICKER***)* Nice meeting you.

*(***MRS. WICKER** *just looks at him.* **BRAD** *exits to bathroom.* **TERRY** *opens the door,* **MR. WICKER** *enters as he's leaving.)*

WICKER. You kids wanted me to fix that faucet //

TERRY. *(*Hi-mr-Wicker-bye-mr-Wicker*)* //

MRS. WICKER. Henry, oh, sing "my way" //

WICKER. She likes my pipes.

CONNIE. Are you a good singer //

WICKER. *(sings, holding his toolbelt)* "Regrets –

MRS. WICKER. (That's-enough-I-have-a-headache)

CONNIE. *(to* **MR. WICKER***)* Are // you

MRS. WICKER. (You kids have any Aspirin?)

WICKER. *(to* **MRS. WICKER***)* One day I'll be dead and I won't be able to sing to you.

MRS. WICKER. *(weirdly flirtatious)* Don't tease! and anyways, I plan on committing suicide in a few days, so I'll be dead first. Ha ha ha. *LADIES FIRST. No seriously, I want to die.* NO I'M KIDDING. *(her smile disintegrating here) No it's not funny.* I know I'm naughty *(she yawns)* Ok bye.

(She exits. It's just **LINDA, CONNIE** *and* **WICKER**. *It's awkward. We hear the shower starting up in the bathroom, very faint.)*

CONNIE. *(bolts up)* Well

I have to go

WICKER. To – //

CONNIE. *(improvising)* The-beach-I-have-to-surf.

*(***CONNIE** *produces a large surfboard, exits.* **WICKER** *and* **LINDA** *have a moment.)*

LINDA. I'm. Uh…going too.

WICKER. Where are you off to?

LINDA. I'm gonna read my book.

(beat)

WICKER. Book huh? You're a regular librarian.

LINDA. *(casual)* I'm researching new apartment options for myself.

WICKER. New apartment? Hey, you got a contract, you're not goin anywhere!

LINDA. Not right now, but soon. I can't stay here forever! I'm still young. I have a whole future ahead of me.

WICKER. Oh yeah?

LINDA. This was always just temporary, I'll need my own place soon.

WICKER. Where you gonna move?

LINDA. West Hollywood. There's a lot of shops there //

WICKER. Yeah and there's a lot of *fags* there!

LINDA. *(momentarily thwarted)* Well I'll just ignore them! *(softening)* Or I might just move in with my boyfriend, I have to see.

WICKER. I didn't know you had a boyfriend.

(beat)

LINDA. Well, I do. He's – I mean it's still very new // but

WICKER. *Hey*, how do you fit four fags on a barstool? //

LINDA. What – I – I don't // know.

WICKER. Flip it over! Ha ha ha ha.

*(***LINDA** *smiles politely, maybe forces a tiny chuckle.* **WICKER** *looks at her, his smile fades. Pause. He fidgets nervously with his toolbelt.)*

I'll miss ya. You know, when you go.

LINDA. *(smiling sadly)* Yeah, right. Nobody misses me.

(a beat)

*(***LINDA** *looks at him.)*

I told you I'm not doing this anymore.

(He sticks his hand down her pants.)

I told you // I

(She quietly has an orgasm. It sounds a little like crying. He takes his hand out of her pants. **LINDA** *stands there, tears well up in her eyes.)*

(He kisses her paternally on the head. He means well. We hear the shower turn off in the bathroom.)

(vulnerable) Do you think I'm… *(pause; affectless)* Forget it.

(Doorbell rings. Awkward pause. Doorbell rings.)

WICKER. You gonna get that?

(doorbell rings)

*(***WICKER** *opens the door.)*

(It's **TERRY**. *He brings a suitcase in with him.)*

(re: suitcase) What the hell is that, you movin in?

TERRY. I just brought Brad's stuff – *hey* Linda –

*(***LINDA** *shakily goes to her room. She quietly shuts the door and locks it – loudly.)*

(to **WICKER***)* Like this.

(He twists two fingers together, indicating his tight relationship with **LINDA***.)*

WICKER. Who's Brad?

TERRY. Linda and Connie's new roommate – didn't // they

WICKER. Linda and Connie's WHAT???!

TERRY. Well – he's –

*(***BRAD** *enters from the bathroom, wearing that frilly thing* **CONNIE** *has lent him.)*

BRAD. Hey, Ter, thanks a ton –

TERRY. Brad –

BRAD. Oh and you must be Mr. Wicker, good to meet you, I'm Brad.

*(***BRAD** *extends a hand to shake* **WICKER***'s.* **WICKER** *stares at him.)*

WICKER. *(eyeing him)* Oh.
I see.
Heh heh heh.

*(***WICKER** *cruelly extends a limp wrist, smiling.* **BRAD** *retracts his hand.)*

So you're the new *(makes quotation marks with his finger)* "roommate"

BRAD. Yeah // I'm

WICKER. Uh-huh.

(beat)

Uh-huh

(beat)

ah ha ha ha ha,

(beat)

AH AHA HA HA HA

(He eyeballs **BRAD***, looks him up and down, shakes his head, smiling impishly.)*

And what do you. uh. "do" – for a "living"?

BRAD. I'm a cook.

WICKER. A *cook.*

BRAD. Well I'm training.

WICKER. That's not code for hustler is it?

BRAD. No – oh, no, me? no I'm //

TERRY. Brad's a good guy.

WICKER. How do you know?

TERRY. Brad was in Nam, he's a serviceman.

BRAD. I was a cook.

WICKER. A cook huh? You two ever "cook" together?

HA HA HA HA HA

Maybe you could teach my wife to "cook".

*(***TERRY** *rifles few a through albums over the following – he puts a record on.)*

BRAD. Well. Okay. I –

WICKER. If you could only get pregnant I'd have you barefoot and in my kitchen in no time.

BRAD. [*not knowing how to take any of this*] Uh.

WICKER. [*private joke that no one understands*] Heh heh heh heh

TERRY. Brad can't *get* pregnant!

WICKER. *(to* **TERRY***)* And I'm sure you tried.

(He bats his eyelashes at **TERRY***.)*

Anyways see you pussies later I got a date with a shower nozzle.

*(***WICKER** *exits to bathroom with his toolkit. Music starts: Giorgio Moroder's "Knights in White Satin.")*

BRAD. What a jerk.

TERRY. Wicker, nah, he's ok.

*(***TERRY** *checks out the album cover, feeling the funk. This goes on for a bit.)*

Y'know Brad, I'm kinda mad at you.

BRAD. What?

TERRY. I dunno. I thought you and me were gonna be roomies. I mean I don't wanna get all pussy about it but I thought it was going pretty good with us.

*(***BRAD** *gets a little stolid, a little chilly.)*

BRAD. Yeah well… This is just cheaper – with school and everything. I could use the extra bread.

TERRY. Well you couldda said something…gimme some kinda "advanced notice" over here.

BRAD. *(softening)* I guess I felt like I was getting in the way… with all your chicks and everything.

TERRY. *(hurt)* Gettin in the way? Dude, you're like my best friend.

*(***BRAD** *looks at him, tries to determine if he's being teased.)*

BRAD. *(macho, joking)* Shut the fuck up.

TERRY. What, I'm serious!

BRAD. *(overcompensating)* Don't be such a girl.

TERRY. *Whoa*, I'm not the one wearing ladies underpants you fuckin freak!

*(***TERRY** *pushes him,* **BRAD** *hits* **TERRY** *back.)*

(almost a come on) You gonna start with me? Huh?

BRAD. Get the fuck off me.

TERRY. Make me, faggot.

*(**TERRY** straddles him, **BRAD** is laughing hysterically, his arms pinned to the sofa. It's rough but still playful.)*

BRAD. *(laughing)* Fuck you! Get off me!

*(He slaps **BRAD** lightly in the face. **BRAD** laughs hysterically. **TERRY** imitates him laughing.)*

*(**TERRY** thrusts a few times to the music, fake-moaning. **BRAD** looks at him, trying not to give anything away. **TERRY** bolts up, distracted.)*

TERRY. *Shit*, it was Felicia right? She kept you up? That's what this is about //

BRAD. Who?

TERRY. The screamer.

BRAD. *(cockblocked)* Oh – yeah //

TERRY. I stuffed a sock in her mouth to shut her up but then she got it all foamy and had some kinda seizure. *(sad)* Skank. That was my good sock too. *(pause)* Dude, what's a matter?

BRAD. What?

(pause)

TERRY. You look like you're gonna cry.

BRAD. *(defensive smile)* Shut the fuck up…

TERRY. Don't tell me you're getting all sensitive on me, witcha new "lifestyle"? Huh faggot? HA HA HA.

BRAD. Your mama!

*(**BRAD** smacks **TERRY** on the ass. **TERRY** smacks him back. Smack, smack, back and forth. **TERRY** dances a little, sidles up to **BRAD**, kinda homoerotic.)*

TERRY. *(mock eroticism)* Yeah you like that you little faggot huh? You like it when I slap your ass? HEH HEH HEH

*(**TERRY** examines his cuticles, drops the game.)*

(contemplative) Dude: I burst a blood vessel in my penis last night. Karen has an overbite. Bitch.

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