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SF PERUSALS

H2O

Jane Martin

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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H2O was first produced by the Contemporary American Theatre Festival at Shepherd University in Shepherdstown, West Virginia on July 5, 2013. The performance was directed by Jon Jory, with sets by David M. Barber, costumes by Margaret A. McKowen, lighting by John Ambrosone, and sound by Christina Smith. The Production Stage Manager was Debre A. Acquavella. The cast was as follows:

DEBORAH . . . . . Diane Mair

JAKE . . . . . .Alex Podulke

CHARACTERS

DEBORAH

JAKE

SETTING

New York City.

TIME

The present.

For Ed Herendeen

ACT ONE

Scene One – Jake's Apartment

(The play takes place on an open stage against a cyc. Place is changed simply with furniture and light. Eight scene and costume changers are necessary for au vista work during the play. All the play's action takes place in New York City. The play begins with a bare stage. A young woman walks downstage to talk to us. She carries her shoulder bag.)

DEBORAH. Actually, Jesus doesn't have much to say about actresses. Early Christians were Simon and his brother, Andrew, were fisherman. John and James, son of Zebediah the same. Mathew was a tax collector. The rest of the disciples, who knows but I don't think they were in the arts. Jesus spoke to me and told me acting was my service and my way. I was in the New York Public Library looking at a first folio of Shakespeare's and…

(The stage is set with an air mattress, a duffel bag, a wooden chair, a rolling bathroom door, a rolling apartment door, and several resume photographs of actresses.)

God spoke to me…well…No, it wasn't a voice exactly but it was clear and decisive, "I am the Son of David and this work you must continue". Period, end. God's will, Wednesday, October Nineteenth, two ten p.m. 2008. So I do. I continue.

(She moves off. A man in his late 30's dressed in a shirt and jeans, barefooted moves down to address us.)

JAKE. A guy goes into a bar and orders three whiskies. Drinks all three. Does this day after day. Bartender says, "Listen pal, I can put all three shots in one glass for you." The guy says, "I have two brothers in Armenia, Dikran and Garabed, this way I can feel like I'm home, drinking with them." Couple months later he comes in, only orders two shots…

(Takes a knife out of a leather holster on the jeans)

Bartender looks up, says, "Whatsa matter, somethin' happen to one of your brothers?"

(Pulls the knife across one of his wrists. We see blood.)

Guy says, "No, they're fine…"

(Changes hands and cuts the other wrist)

I just quit drinking.

(Looks at audience)

Tough house.

(He exits. The woman, **DEBORAH***, enters. She knocks on downstage door.)*

DEBORAH. Mr. Abadjian?

(No answer. She knocks again.)

Mr. Abadjian? It's Deborah Elling. I'm your four o'clock.

JAKE. *(Offstage)* Fuck that burns.

DEBORAH. What? *(Opens door)* Mr. Abadjian?

(Steps in)

Your four o'clock audition.

(He enters from bathroom. Blood on his chest and heavily on his arms and hands.)

JAKE. Who are you?

DEBORAH. Dear Jesus.

JAKE. Can't see.

(He falls to the floor unconscious. She throws her shoulder bag on the floor and paws through it looking for her phone.)

DEBORAH. Mr. Abadjian?

(Finds phone)

Oh my Lord. Ok…

(Calls 911)

Yes, ummmm…there's a…a man badly injured at… Blood on his arms and chest he…wrists…ummm, I don't think so…I can't find a pulse but…yes…I'm sorry…4 4… I'm sorry…I'm a blank…

(Finds paper)

Here…it's 448 W. 124th Street, Apartment 4C…48… you better…wait…

(Hands on his chest)

Breathing, yes… he uh…I'm pretty sure he… Oh God, cut his wrist…no… Mr. Abadjian…no…not talking… not responding…Deborah Elling…Elling…Not a friend just…How would I do that?

(Looking back)

A strap thing… blood flow. Right. Yes. I can let you in. Yes.

(Disconnects. Grabs an elastic strap from her stuff and starts to do a *tourniquet.)*

Heavenly Father, First by virtue of creation, Second by virtue of regeneration, third by virtue of your person…

(Lights fade. **DEBORAH** *moves down to audience, Stage is cleared. A stool is placed downstage for her.)*

Scene Two – Hospital

DEBORAH. *(Speaks to audience.)* World ministries or Covenant of Christ Alive that's my church, My Father's Church in Fayette, Missouri…sometimes in New York. Back and forth like the old mule ministries. Ummm… if you were interested…in joining…we uh… We would only ask two questions: do you confess Jesus Christ as your savior and promise to follow him as Lord? That would be one…the other: Do you accept the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, as the word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine and conduct? Just those. No, what I do is not in conflict with my faith. That's a misunderstanding. Yes, I could play a prostitute but I would not…would not remove my… Yes, I could swear if the character were in some way… redeemed, or if her frailty… if it was…

(The stool is struck and a hospital bed set. **JAKE** *is in the bed with a hospital gown on. Chair is placed by bed. Lights up on* **JAKE** *in the hospital bed sleeping. His wrists are bandaged.* **DEBORAH** *kneels and prays quietly near the bed. He wakes and props himself up to look at her.)*

Thou, Lord, art my Redeemer and my strength. I ask of you, oh, Lord, allow me Lord to heal those who have been torn…

JAKE. Well, this is fucked.

DEBORAH. *(Startled)* Oh.

JAKE. Yeah, 'Oh.'

DEBORAH. I'm…

JAKE. You weren't…I… Wait…You're the one, right? You?

DEBORAH. The one who…

JAKE. Yeah. Yeah, you.

DEBORAH. I…

JAKE. And now you're…

DEBORAH. I had the…

JAKE. Here.

DEBORAH. Four o'clock…

JAKE. Unfucking believable.

DEBORAH. I was supposed to…

JAKE. Wait.

DEBORAH. Audition for…

JAKE. Shut up.

DEBORAH. Ophelia.

(He lies back down. A pause. She comes and tentatively sits in the chair by his bed.)

JAKE. Were you praying?

DEBORAH. Mr. Abadjian…

JAKE. Over there…

DEBORAH. I was…

JAKE. On the floor. Were you praying?

DEBORAH. I was, yes.

JAKE. *(He laughs.)* Ow. Shit, that hurts.

DEBORAH. I should go, I…

JAKE. No. All right… This is actually…

DEBORAH. I just came by…

JAKE. You came by?

DEBORAH. Yes.

JAKE. What the hell is your name?

DEBORAH. Deborah Elling.

JAKE. You came by for what?

DEBORAH. To see if…

JAKE. To pray on the floor?

DEBORAH. No, I…

JAKE. You called 911, right?

DEBORAH. You were…bleeding…and I…

JAKE. Yeah, I know that.

DEBORAH. I should…

JAKE. Sit the fuck down!

DEBORAH. *(Not moving)* Watch your mouth.

JAKE. Oh. Okay Ellen…

DEBORAH. Deborah.

JAKE. DEBORAH. I certainly wouldn't want to fucking offend you.

(She starts out.)

I wanted to die is that clear? That was not, Deborah, a 'cry for help', okay? You know, all those phrases, I hate shit like that. I like to be taken at face value. I am not complex. I cut my wrists to get this over with. So as to be nothing. So, for one thing, I would not wake up in a hospital and find someone praying for me. But you, who knew me not at all, who understood nothing…wait…you had seen me in the movies, right? Dawnwalker. The super hero who only saves humanity from first light to sunrise… You're a fan, right Deborah?

DEBORAH. No.

JAKE. And on this basis you decided to save the one thing I didn't want, my fucking life and then worse, worse, to show up here to what? Receive my gratitude, is that it? Well, okay, you don't have my gratitude, Deborah, you and your praying and the fact you decided to show up here…you and who? Your Christ? Unbelievable. Hey, Deborah, take your fairy tales and your charmless, gullible nature and get the hell out of my room.

DEBORAH. No.

JAKE. No??

DEBORAH. I'll sit with you for a while.

JAKE. I don't want you to sit with me.

DEBORAH. We don't always get what we want.

JAKE. Are you a stalker, Deborah?

DEBORAH. No, I don't find you attractive.

JAKE. But you find me what?

DEBORAH. Touching.

JAKE. Really? Why am I touching?

DEBORAH. Because you are drained of meaning.

(The lights change. Hospital bed and chair struck. **JAKE** *speaks to audience taking off his hospital gown.* **JAKE***'s apartment door, wooden chair, mattress are set.)*

Scene Three – Jake's Apartment

JAKE. Dude, in New York City they arrest you for attempted suicide. Really. Anyway they're taking me out to Rikers in the ambulance and the EMS guy says, "Damn man you're Dawnwalker, right? Louis, this guys a fuckin' movie star! Yo, gimme your autograph, okay?" So I ask him does he have a pen? and he says "Fuck that, man, dip your fingers in your blood and write it on my whites, dude." Then these guys laugh like lunatics. Dip your finger in your blood, right?

(He is back in his apartment. He exercises. Deborah knocks.)

JAKE. Yeah.

DEBORAH. Deborah Elling.

(A pause)

JAKE. It's unlocked.

DEBORAH. Hi.

JAKE. Hi.

DEBORAH. I think there's a misunderstanding.

JAKE. What would that be?

DEBORAH. I received a phone call from Alexander Basy.

JAKE. *(Back to exercising)* Yeah, he's producing Hamlet.

DEBORAH. Would you mind not doing that?

JAKE. Finishing a set. *(He does.)* What?

DEBORAH. He says I'm cast as Ophelia in your production of Hamlet.

JAKE. *(Swigging from a quart water bottle)* Yeah? And?

DEBORAH. You are a…

JAKE. *(Nodding)* Right…

DEBORAH. I don't think it…

JAKE. *(Kicking the one chair towards her)* Take a pew.

DEBORAH. happens without you.

JAKE. Alex is the producer ok?

DEBORAH. *(About the chair)* No thank you.

JAKE. Sit.

DEBORAH. I didn't audition for Ophelia.

JAKE. Microwaved coffee?

DEBORAH. We didn't get that far.

JAKE. How far is that?

DEBORAH. An audition…

JAKE. As if I really wanted to know…

DEBORAH. because you…

JAKE. Just sit, okay?!

(Puts her in chair)

DEBORAH. Please don't touch me.

JAKE. Yeah, right.

DEBORAH. So I could not possibly.

JAKE. Relax, Deborah, or I will kill myself.

DEBORAH. That is not funny in the least.

JAKE. We have a substantially different sense of humor.

DEBORAH. I don't…

JAKE. Shhh. Breathe.

DEBORAH. I…

JAKE. Breathe.

(A pause. They breathe.)

Good, more.

(Silence)

DEBORAH. I should have asked if you're feeling better.

JAKE. And I should have…Okay, I owe you…you mind if I have *coffee?*

DEBORAH. You don't have to…

JAKE. I do. Yeah. I want to…All right, for this moment, now it seems better, or ummm, useful, not to be dead. Why? I have no idea, Deborah, I can't…umm, The 911 call, thank you for that. Ummm.

DEBORAH. It was…This is…

JAKE. Fucking awkward.

DEBORAH. Please…

JAKE. Sorry. Awkward, no modifier.

DEBORAH. It's not my business but…

JAKE. No, it's not your business.

DEBORAH. I shouldn't have…

JAKE. Shhh.

DEBORAH. I…

JAKE. I'm a fucking mess, Deborah. This might have occurred to you. Assfuckistan, my girlfriend gets a double mastectomy and those were my favorite parts, my father fucks up his brother… I'm an alcoholic and my dog dies. Wait. These are just the funny stuff… Just events. I get out of jail, which had something to do with throwing no left turn-signs set in buckets of concrete through store windows. I catch a ride to LA with some buddies, play music, work for an escort service, roll a couple of drunks and two months later I'm Dawnwalker, the super hero who never speaks, do two sequels and make thirty million dollars, sleep with three hundred women and I am so ridiculous, such a joke, I kill myself and you screw it up. Even talking about it is ridiculous.

DEBORAH. I didn't ask.

JAKE. You mean I brought it up?

DEBORAH. You did.

JAKE. Now I wish I was dead.

DEBORAH. Mr. Abadjian…

JAKE. Jake.

DEBORAH. Mr. Abadjian…

JAKE. Jake.

DEBORAH. I don't want Ophelia, Jake, if it's just…

JAKE. A mercy fuck?

DEBORAH. I have asked you not to… yes. I have to go.

JAKE. You want to earn it, deserve it?

DEBORAH. I do, yes.

(She starts to go.)

JAKE. That is so fucked up. I'm supposed to listen to your ninety seconds of Shakespeare and then you would deserve it? Acting's a farce, Deborah, a shuck, a shell game, so lighten up a little and get down in the mud with the rest of us.

(She slings her shoulder bag at him.)

DEBORAH. Excuse me…

JAKE. Whoa, Whoa, Whoa.

DEBORAH. I'm not in a farce, Jake. Sorry. I am in my life in God's service. I've been in New York for four years and I have done eleven Shakespeare's in parks, and parking lots and prisons and an abandoned hospital and I have never gotten more than bus fare, so my story is a little different than yours. Until two months ago I lived with seventeen women in the dormitory of a Christian hostel. I have seventy dollars in checking and nine dollars in my bag. You think you're a joke? I won't do plays that don't enable God's handiwork, now let's see you make a career out of that? Oh, and I don't take handouts. You want an argument for the existence of God, try Shakespeare.

JAKE. Yeah, got it.

DEBORAH. He transcends man while showing what man could be. Which by the way, Mr. Abadjian, you don't. So despite the fact I would commit…sins…to play opposite Dawnwalker, because everybody who is anybody will come to gawk at you, and I will blow them away and have an actual career that I can use to fill my heart and bring people to Christ. But I'm not going to demean my talent and purpose so you can feel better about your infinite confusion and wasteful life.

JAKE. What sins would you commit?

DEBORAH. You are unbelievable. *(She starts to exit apartment.)*

JAKE. Very poetic, very heart felt, the perils of being Christian, right?

DEBORAH. *(Returns)* Go on.

JAKE. Look, I need help, okay and you seem… I don't know…addicted to helping, plus you seem like a complete victim…

DEBORAH. I am not a…

JAKE. And what could be better for Ophelia? So help me out and do the play, alright? I've never done a play.

DEBORAH. So you're starting with Hamlet?

JAKE. Nice instinct for the jugular. I am, yes, because…

DEBORAH. You can.

JAKE. Yes. No.

DEBORAH. Yes.

JAKE. *(Deadly serious)* Deborah, I'm nothing…like you said in the hospital and nothing, Deborah, kills itself. Hamlet is like a…a massive something, right? Plus he starts out suicidal and ends up…

DEBORAH. Dead.

JAKE. For something.

DEBORAH. Honor.

JAKE. I could be down with that. Help 'nobody' out here.

DEBORAH. A recent poll shows that you have better name recognition than Buddha, Vishnu and Ghandi.

JAKE. But I lose to Christ, right?

DEBORAH. You do, yes.

JAKE. Look, I have casting approval for Ophelia and Gertrude.

DEBORAH. Because of the above.

JAKE. No, because that's where all the emotion lives for him. With the guys it's just anger and confusion. I can, believe me, do that.

DEBORAH. And I could help you how?

JAKE. Language, for one. I'm scared of the language, and…

DEBORAH. And?

JAKE. You fuckin' wind me up.

DEBORAH. And?

JAKE. You would know me.

DEBORAH. I don't know you.

JAKE. It just matters that I think you do. I came from a town of four hundred people. Anything I did I did with people who knew me. They are bringing in big time British actor-elephants for this. I need to know somebody.

(A pause)

DEBORAH. May I call you Jake?

JAKE. No. I'm kidding.

DEBORAH. You're a little old for a babysitter, Jake.

JAKE. Nice.

DEBORAH. May I tell you what I know about you?

JAKE. Maybe.

DEBORAH. Because what I know about you I don't much like.

JAKE. Okay.

DEBORAH. You're a masochist and a narcissist.

JAKE. But I'm cute, right?

DEBORAH. *(Not giving an inch)* Yes, you're cute.

JAKE. Your categories?

DEBORAH. Yes.

JAKE. Who wants me to be anything else? Conceive this, okay, I get anything I want. I'm filming in Witches Nipple, Utah and I want fresh blowfish sushi for lunch that gets flown in. Women? I'm a tourist destination, Deborah. I shop they don't ask me to pay. Money, okay, is completely devalued. Any impulse I have is rewarded. I am clearly the center of the universe. And the joke is, if you have no boundaries you don't exist. And you know what? Fuck that.

DEBORAH. That's a really sad story.

JAKE. That's a really cheap response.

DEBORAH. Maybe you can hear this. I'm not the center of the known universe. I made seven hundred dollars as an actress last year. I play High Schools, scummy parks, ninety seat theatres and I'm really good and I don't allow it to be demeaned…

JAKE. Yeah, fine.

DEBORAH. And the fact, as far as you let me see, that you allow everything to be demeaned is what my Dad calls 'soul-sickness' and I can tell you the spiritual answer is Christ and the Temporal answer, for me, is Shakespeare- the beauty he makes out of the mess we're in. So I find it infuriating that you offer me the one thing I truly want but you make it meaningless. And that, laugh at this one, is the devil's handiwork.

(She exits. He moves downstage. **JAKE***'s apartment door, wooden chair, and mattress are struck.* **DEBORAH***'s apartment door is set.)*

Scene Four – Outside Deborah's Apartment

JAKE. Me? I come from three generations of depressives. Just part of life like haircuts. But I combine that with unreasoning fear, crippling self-doubt, unmanageable ego, passionate substance abuse, violent tendencies, pleasure from pain and an addiction to In And Out Burgers which is the perfect resume for LA. *(A pause)* Not kidding.

(He walks over and gets into a sleeping bag outside **DEBORAH***'s apartment, she walks out her door dressed for an audition. He sits up just as she turns from locking her door. She lets out an involuntary scream.)*

JAKE. Just me.

DEBORAH. What the hell are you doing?

JAKE. You said 'hell'.

DEBORAH. How did you know where I live?

JAKE. I hired somebody.

DEBORAH. What!

JAKE. Look, could we just go inside for a minute?

DEBORAH. No, we couldn't, you…

JAKE. Listen…

DEBORAH. Did you sleep out here?

JAKE. Not much. I want…

DEBORAH. I have an audition.

JAKE. I want you to audition but…

DEBORAH. Move out of my way.

JAKE. But first I want to apologize.

DEBORAH. For which part of this?

JAKE. For all of it, but particularly for saying 'Fuck'.

*(***DEBORAH**, *startled into laughter, puts her head in her hands.)*

And if you will accept my apology, I would be honored if you would audition for Ophelia.

DEBORAH. You would be honored?

JAKE. Yeah.

DEBORAH. You would be honored?

JAKE. Yeah.

DEBORAH. An actual audition?

JAKE. Yeah.

DEBORAH. Where?

JAKE. I don't know. Here.

DEBORAH. In the stairwell?

JAKE. Yeah, or…

(He gestures toward her apartment.)

DEBORAH. We're not going in there.

JAKE. Look, we go into rehearsal in two weeks. There is NO Ophelia. I've seen… two hundred women.

DEBORAH. What's wrong with them?

JAKE. They're disposable. They make Ophelia noises. She can't be disposable to

me. To get out of this alive, I have to believe this stuff.

DEBORAH. And I don't strike you as disposable?

JAKE. No. No you don't.

(A pause. She reaches into her purse.)

DEBORAH. Here's my resume. I don't have an agent so it has my answering service. Have the casting agent call with an appointment. Did people see you out here?

JAKE. A couple.

DEBORAH. *(Pause)* You're in my way, Mr. Abadjian. *(He steps aside.)* I look forward to the audition. But, but do not ever…ever…ever…set foot in my building again. Really.

JAKE. Copasetic.

DEBORAH. Bye.

(She exits. He does the world's tiniest victory dance. She moves downstage. **DEBORAH***'s apartment door is struck.*

JAKE*'s apartment door [doubled as audition door], audition table and chair are set.)*

DEBORAH. It took me…a long time…to understand why Christians are mocked and dismissed and even found offensive…and crucified. Particularly Renewalist Christians like myself, which means I have an interactive sense of God's presence. That's right, I talk to God, in a manner of speaking. But let's not go there. And it's fear, this christophobia…for obvious reasons, because if hedonism, and selfrealization and materialism aren't it, then we're talking wasted lives. If there's no Santa Claus there can't be the Christ, right? But there is, he speaks to me. He does.

Scene Five – Audition

(She moves through a door and sees **JAKE** *sitting at a small table with a single chair.)*

DEBORAH. Hi.

JAKE. Hi.

DEBORAH. The director? The producer?

JAKE. Told them I'd take care of it.

DEBORAH. Please tell me it's not just you seeing me?

JAKE. Yeah, but…

DEBORAH. You can't seem to understand…

JAKE. And you don't understand…

DEBORAH. Wait…

JAKE. What I need.

DEBORAH. I am not here on your behalf, Mr. Abadjian, I am here on my behalf. My family, my friends, my community believe my work is to save souls and that this 'acting' is a corruption of that great purpose but they dare not condemn me because Jesus Christ tells me, no, demands of me, that I do this- and you mock me, sinner.

JAKE. Godamnit! In every audition you have ever done, there is somebody at this table who has the power to hire you. Sometimes they are very, very wise and sometimes they don't know jackshit. This time I am at the table, I have the power, so do your audition or shut up!

(She starts *to go and then circles around and ends up in front of him about eight feet away.)*

DEBORAH. I am Deborah Elling and… *(A pause)* I will be doing Cordelia from Lear.

JAKE. Thank you.

DEBORAH. Oh my dear Father, restoration hang thy medicine on my lips and let the kiss repair those violent harms that my two sisters have in thy reverence made.

Was this a face to be exposed against the warring wind to stand against the deep dread – bolted thunder, in the most terrible and nimble stroke of quick cross lightening to watch with this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog though he had bit me, should have stood that night against my fire. And wast thou fain, poor father, to hovel thee with swine and rogues, forlorn in short and musty straw? Alack, alack, 'tis wonder that thy life and wits at once had not concluded all! He wakes. Speak to him.

(She finishes and stands simply in front of **JAKE.** *He picks up* a *script of Hamlet, opens it at a bookmark and reads almost without emphasis.)*

JAKE. Nymph in thy orisons, be all my sins remembered.

DEBORAH. *(She answers as Ophelia. She knows the scene.)* Good my Lord, How does your honor for this many a day?

JAKE. I humbly thank you, well, well, well.

DEBORAH. My Lord, I have remembrances of yours that I have longed long to redeliver I pray you, now receive them.

JAKE. I Never gave you ought.

DEBORAH. My honored Lord, you know right well you did. And with them words of so sweet breath composed as made the things more rich. Their perfume lost. Take these again.

JAKE. *(He holds up a hand to stop her. A pause. He throws the book at her. She steps back startled.)* Thanks.

(He walks out. She picks up the book and exits. Lights change. **JAKE***'s apartment door, audition table and chair are struck. One chair is set for* **DEBORAH.** **JAKE** *is on one side of the stage,* **DEBORAH** *on the other. He finishes dialing his cell phone. Hers rings. She looks at it and then takes the call.)*

Scene Six – Phone Call

DEBORAH. Hello.

JAKE. Hello.

DEBORAH. Who is this?

JAKE. Jake.

(She cuts off the call. He dials back, her phone rings. She cuts it off. He dials back. She answers.)

DEBORAH. What do you want, Jake?

JAKE. I'm scared.

DEBORAH. I have to protect myself, Jake.

JAKE. Look, I'm a jerk, I behaved like a jerk.

DEBORAH. Yes.

(She cuts off the call. He redials. It rings. She doesn't answer. We hear her recorded voice.)

(Recording: You've reached Deborah Elling. Please leave a message.)

JAKE. *(Leaving the message)* It was so easy for you. How can I…

(He cuts off the call. Lights change. The chair is struck. **DEBORAH** *exits.)*

*(***JAKE** *moves down and talks to the audience. He's drinking* a *beer.)*

JAKE. Man that tastes good. I haven't had a beer in eight months. I was a good guy when I drank. I liked everybody… Really. This guy panhandled me in a grocery parking lot. Ex-Serviceman, clean clothes, crutches. I took him to a bank and gave him $8,000 in cash. He hit me up again yesterday, I gave him a dollar. You ever feel like parts of you sloughing off, you know, like paint peeling? It's not good. It's not good.

Scene Seven – Outside Deborah's Apartment

(He is handed wild flowers. **DEBORAH***'s door is set. He goes and knocks on her door. He knocks again and she enters pulling on a robe over a nightgown.)*

DEBORAH. Who is it?

JAKE. You know who it is.

DEBORAH. It's three o'clock in the morning.

JAKE. You know the only thing I was good at? Cows. I could drive cattle like a son of a bitch…gun.And my Dad, Dad the rancher…I lost six head once…six cows…it's hard to lose cows actually. He told me to undress down to my shorts and then ran me into a barb-wire fence and he never brought it up again. You feel sorry for me?

DEBORAH. Yes.

JAKE. So will you let me in?

DEBORAH. No.

JAKE. You sing?

DEBORAH. Yes. Why?

JAKE. I don't know. When I came back from Pakistan…

DEBORAH. Pakistan?

JAKE. I didn't mean Pakistan…

DEBORAH. You were…

JAKE. Yeah. Yeah. Listen, I have flowers for you out here. You want 'em?

DEBORAH. *(Getting him back on track)* Back from where?

JAKE. Yeah, I was…not well. No job. I started playing some music with these guys…we had a garage band when we were kids. So, uh, we got some gigs and managed a three week tour in California. You play?

DEBORAH. Music wasn't allowed in the house.

JAKE. No music?

DEBORAH. Sacred music. Not a lot of sacred music garage bands.

JAKE. I had a brother and two sisters, everybody played. *(Pause.)* You want a beer?

DEBORAH. I've never had a beer.

JAKE. Are you shitting me? *(No answer.)* Wow. Jesus says no beer?

DEBORAH. Stop.

JAKE. So we did the California dates and at Venice Beach this guy gives me his card and two weeks later I test for Dawnwalker. You see those films?

DEBORAH. I'm sorry, I didn't.

JAKE. He doesn't talk.

DEBORAH. You said.

JAKE. Look, can I come in there and give you these flowers and get you to taste a beer?

DEBORAH. No, you can't.

JAKE. I'm not with anybody. The last woman I was with she…

DEBORAH. I read that, I'm very sorry. She…

JAKE. Now I just fuck people. They come, they go. Look…

DEBORAH. You should go home, Jake, I have to get up early and help my dad.

JAKE. Help him how?

DEBORAH. Get the snakes ready for the service.

JAKE. What?!

DEBORAH. Go on, Jake.

JAKE. I am really sorry about the audition.

DEBORAH. Yeah, well, I was mortified. I cried all the way back on the subway.

JAKE. Yeah. Well how good you were mortified me.

DEBORAH. Jake, you can't…

JAKE. May I please give you these flowers? Please.

DEBORAH. I don't…

JAKE. Just hand them through the door. *(A pause. She opens the door.)* Hey.

DEBORAH. Hey. *(Obviously not store bought.)* Where did you get those?

JAKE. I grabbed a train out of the city and got off where I saw flowers.

DEBORAH. Thank you.

JAKE. I like trains.

DEBORAH. I like flowers.

JAKE. Would you…

DEBORAH. No

JAKE. Let me…

DEBORAH. No to whatever.

JAKE. Have a picnic…

DEBORAH. NO.

JAKE. with me…

DEBORAH. NO.

JAKE. On your stairs.

DEBORAH. *(Laughing in spite of herself)* On the stairs?

JAKE. Yeah, out here…

DEBORAH. Jake…

JAKE. Tomorrow. Twelve o'clock.

DEBORAH. What is this?

JAKE. It's a picnic.

DEBORAH. What-is-this?

JAKE. I like you, shoot me.

DEBORAH. You've been behaving as if you like me?

JAKE. Ummm…maybe not all the time. Please. I would like very much a picnic with you. I have a guy has the best pastrami.

DEBORAH. I don't eat pastrami.

JAKE. You eat what?

DEBORAH. Vegetables.

JAKE. When I was a kid I would scrape the vegetables off my plate, put them in my pocket, and throw them in the incinerator.

DEBORAH. We have our differences.

JAKE. Twelve o'clock on the stairs with vegetables.

(A pause)

DEBORAH. Deal. *(Closes him out. Through door.)* I'm assuming this isn't formal.

JAKE. Fine. Formal.

(He exits. She closes the door and moves down to the audience. Her door is moved upstage and a picnic blanket is set downstage.)

DEBORAH. Men, I think are… drawn to me because I'm… impossible…the sex. I'm twenty-six and I'm…saving myself, which always gets a good laugh; I have a friend who says, 'Careful you'll get stale.' We are sexual beings. I am…profoundly…a sexual being. As are nuns, for instance, they just don't act on it. Christianity is profoundly relational, as sex should be. The gospel is abundant. I want the power of sexuality to find release in Christian marriage. Why am I talking abut this?!

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