

SPRUCEHAVEN B
Three dark tales
by
Mark Cornell

2/12/16

Mark Cornell
714 Williams Circle
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
919-942-7398
markcornell53@yahoo.com

SPRUCEHAVEN B

Three dark tales

By Mark Cornell

Tell Me You Love Me

Characters: ISABEL, 30; TOMMY, 30

Time: Late October, 1995

A Thousand Shades of Black

Characters: FIST, 38; ANSEL, 26; NOAH, 26; ISABEL, 45

Time: Spring, 2011

Lemon Drop

Characters: JOHN, 51; ISABEL, 13; OFFICER SNODGRASS, 38

Time: August, 1978

Notes on the play:

All three plays take place in the B cottage at the Sprucehaven Lodge on Bailey Island, Maine.

The actor playing FIST should also play OFFICER SNODGRASS. The actor playing TOMMY should also play NOAH. ISABEL in the first two plays should be played by the same actor. ISABEL at 13 should be played by a teenager. The play, then, requires four men and two women.

This play has interludes between plays one and two, and two and three. The stage crew should come on as "the maid service," and dress and behave as those characters.

This play should have intermissions during the two interludes between plays one and two, and two and three.

Tell Me You Love Me

Dusk. 1995. A remote cottage. Everything is quiet except for the presence of a low, heavy wind. Car lights flash through a large window upstage. The low rumble of a car quiets. A car door opens and closes. Into the cottage comes ISABEL in a heavy coat. In one hand is the cottage key; the other has a traveling bag. She is young, about 30, and still quite beautiful, but time and experience have taken from her the hope and carelessness of youth. She closes the door behind her quickly, to shut out the wind. She shivers. She pulls from her coat a flashlight and takes a moment to look around. She puts the key in her coat. Looking out the window, she closes the curtains. From the bag, she pulls two lanterns and a set of pom-poms. She lights the lanterns, illuminating the room. The cottage is rustic. Simple. Clean. Dim. There is a wood-burning stove (surrounded by stone), queen bed, dresser, small couch, kitchenette, plain bathroom (which the audience can see through the fourth wall) with a toilet, sink, and tub (with a foggy shower glass obscuring the toilet) off left. The front door is right. The main room has a huge area rug. On one wall is a clock (that says 5:42), a broom, and an ax. ISABEL puts the lanterns around the room. She stuffs the pom-poms in the dresser. She picks up the phone, listens, then rips the cord from the wall. She goes into the kitchenette and gets a glass of water. From her coat she gets a vile of pills and takes one with the water. She removes her coat, revealing a tight, buttoned blouse and a calf-length skirt slit up the side. She tosses the coat on the bed. Cold, she rubs her arms. Then: car lights again. She steps towards the door, tosses her hair, and stands in the middle of the room and waits. The sound of a car door opening and closing. Then, the cottage door bursts open. TOMMY enters.

He is also 30 and imposing, but clearly not the man he used to be. He wears a jacket that says "Down East Painting Co." His clothes are stained with red paint. His hands, too. He sees ISABEL. He closes the door. Slowly. The moaning wind begs off a bit. After a moment, TOMMY rushes to ISABEL and aggressively kisses her. She responds. He backs her hard up against a wall, lifting her slightly, shoving his hands up and under her open skirt. A lamp gets knocked over. They go at each other, like animals. He grabs her hair. She claws at him. The violence escalates. He swings her towards the dresser. Items get swept away. He begins to overpower her. Under her skirt, his hands find her panties and rip them away. They move towards the bed as he rips at her blouse. He shoves her down on the bed, her skirt falls open. He takes off his jacket and pounces on her. They kiss. Hard. He tries to control her, pinning her arms down, but she fights him. His aggressiveness increases as they continue. He strips away her shoes, then his. He lifts her up and tosses her further up the bed. He falls on her. She groans at his weight. He kisses her. Bites her. She winces. This is no longer fun for her. He slings the pillows away and pins her arms over her head, mauling her face, neck, and breasts. He kisses her all over, bites her. He then fumbles with his belt, gets it free, jerks at his pants. But before he can enter her, he bites her one last time. On the neck. Way too hard. She screams.

ISABEL

Jesus, Tommy! Stop!

She puts two hands to his chest, pushing him away. He slows, but does not stop.

TOMMY

What's the matter? Come on, baby. I'm almost in.

ISABEL

I'm hurt!

She hits him in the chest. He stops.

TOMMY

Oh. But we can keep goin', right?

ISABEL

I'm bleedin'!

TOMMY

How bad?

ISABEL

Get offa me!

She shoves him off her and hurries into the bathroom, half-closing the door. He sits up on the bed. Calms.

TOMMY

Fuck.

(calling out to Isabel)

You OK?

Buttoning his pants, and fastening his belt, he goes to the bathroom door.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Izzy? (beat) Want me to call down to the lodge an' see if they got first aid stuff?

ISABEL

The phones are busted!

TOMMY

I could walk down to the lodge.

ISABEL

I don't want you to do nothin' except feel totally shitty!

Defeated, he sighs, and goes to the wall light switch and flips it. Nothing. Returning from the bathroom, she brushes past him, a wad of toilet paper covering the side of her neck.

ISABEL (cont'd)

What is wrong with you, Tommy? Asshole. You bit me. Like a crazy Rottweiler.

She sits on the bed. He sits next to her.

TOMMY

Aren't you a dog person? (beat) OK, OK, let me see.

She shows him.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Hey, you can see my teeth marks. Wanna go again?

He tries to start something. She pushes him away.

ISABEL

Dirt bag. I'll probably need stitches. When did you become such a maniac?

TOMMY

You used to like all that bitin' shit.

ISABEL

In your dreams.

TOMMY

What can I say? I got carried away. It's your skirt. I ain't never been able to resist it.

ISABEL

It's lycra. A man should be able to resist lycra.

TOMMY

Remember that weekend we borrowed my uncle's catboat an' went out on the water? Over to Westport. You wore the skirt then, too. Remember?

ISABEL

No.

TOMMY

Seriously? You bought those old handcuffs an' 10 minutes out you cuffed me around the mast, I sang you that dirty song, an' then you straddled me until I was as raw as a fuckin' rope burn.

He looks down at his hands, his clothes, covered in red paint.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Sorry I didn't get a chance to clean up. Came straight from this job in Topsham.

ISABEL

I don't mind.

TOMMY

Christ. Looks like someone killed me.

She shivers, pulls the bed blankets around her.

ISABEL

It's some cold in here.

TOMMY

Supposed to snow tonight.

ISABEL

Why don't you get a fire goin'?

TOMMY

What am I, Paul fuckin' Bunyan? Fine. But I can't really stay too long.

He rises from the bed.

ISABEL

Samantha got you on a short leash like a little poochy-poo?

TOMMY

Gimme a break, will you, Izzy?

He opens the wood-burning stove.

TOMMY (cont'd)

An' stop callin' her an' hangin' up. I know it's you.

He notices something inside the stove.

TOMMY (cont'd)

That's weird. The damper is closed.

He opens it.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Let me check on some wood.

The wind rises and falls as he goes outside. She looks out the window for him, and then hurries to her coat. She takes out her pills. Takes one without water. He returns. The wind howls again.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Man, it's getting wicked harsh out there. An' there ain't no wood.

He goes to the window, pulling open the curtains.

TOMMY (cont'd)

See how much the spruce has grown? God, it's a fuckin' monster now. Like 75 feet I'll bet. Look at it.

She joins him at the window.

ISABEL

Big.

TOMMY

(scanning the grounds)

Not too many guests today. In fact, no guests. Place is totally dark. Where is everyone?

ISABEL

It's Tuesday. It's the middle of the week.

TOMMY

Yeah, but there ain't a light on nowhere. Power out?

ISABEL

Oh...uh...yeah. Guy down at the lodge said it was the wind.

TOMMY

Who said? The mute? That freak still here? He give you the lanterns?

ISABEL

Yeah.

TOMMY

When were we last here? Five years ago?

ISABEL

Four. July 4th weekend.

TOMMY

God, the fuckin' traffic. Everything jammed up.

ISABEL

One road in, one road out.

TOMMY

I hate the summer people. Like they own the place. (beat) Forget how awesome the view is. Even on a grey day like today.

(pointing)

That's South Harpswell, ain't it?

ISABEL

Yeah. Sea smoke is pretty, huh?

Beat. He shivers.

TOMMY

Really cold in here. Let me get your coat.

He gets it for her. She closes the curtains. He puts the coat over her shoulders.

ISABEL

Thanks.

They look at each other.

ISABEL (cont'd)

It's good to see you.

TOMMY

Yeah. It is. (beat) How is everything?

ISABEL

You mean, now that I'm outta the nut house?

TOMMY

Don't say that.

ISABEL

I'd forgotten how much I hated livin' with my mother. All we talk about is pottery. It's pure hell. The only plus is with my brother bein' in prison, she got other people to rag on besides me.

TOMMY

You workin'?

ISABEL

Part-time over at Bowdoin. Financial aid stuff. Beyond boring. (beat) Hey, I saw that Cuddy's had closed down.

TOMMY

Yeah. Last spring. Everyone started goin' to O'Hara's instead.

ISABEL

Went by the Project. They still gettin' good bands?

He moves away from the window.

TOMMY

What're we doin', Isabel? I mean, what're we doin' here?

ISABEL

What'ya mean?

TOMMY

I ain't never cheated on Samantha.

ISABEL

Technically, you been cheatin' on me. With her. We are still married after all.

TOMMY

Only 'cause I can't get you to sign the fuckin' paperwork. Like today. Only reason we met today at O'Hara's was to-

ISABEL

Hey, I can't help it if you can't resist lycra. (beat) You never brought her here, have you?

TOMMY

Samantha? No. No. She don't even know this place exists.

ISABEL

She don't know about Sprucehaven B?

TOMMY

No. This place got way too much fuckin' history.

ISABEL

Hey, look!

She rushes to the stone around the stove.

ISABEL (cont'd)

It's still here!

She touches a finger to a place in one of the stones.

ISABEL (cont'd)

Look! "IT." Isabel Tommy. I-T. "IT."

She looks around the room.

ISABEL (cont'd)

This place has so many memories, doesn't it?

She giggles at the thought of it all.

TOMMY

I don't miss you with that fuckin' camcorder I can tell you that.

ISABEL

(with a sly grin)

No? Maybe you'd feel differently if you looked at the old tapes. I still have them.

He notices something else.

TOMMY

Ah, shit, we broke the wooden moose.

He inspects, then looks around the room.

TOMMY (cont'd)

You know what? I'm gonna straighten up a bit. Don't wanna look like total assholes, do we? Piss off the maids? Those three sisters would break us both in half. They still work here, don't they?

TOMMY cleans up, rights the lamp, corrals the pillows, etc. ISABEL doesn't help.

ISABEL

Remember the first time we came here?

TOMMY

Sure. Right after the homecomin' game.

ISABEL

Some game. Your big pass. Then, after. You an' me. King an' Queen. You were so hot.

TOMMY

Were. Now I'm just pudgy.

ISABEL

Got here 'bout midnight. That first time was so...wild.

TOMMY

You were a little hell-cat. 'course you were always a hell-cat.

ISABEL

(demure)

Me?

TOMMY

You always made me feel a little...you know, wicked nervous.

ISABEL

Oh, please.

TOMMY

Izzy, I'd never been with but one other girl when we hooked up.

ISABEL

Huh?

TOMMY

I was never what everybody made me out to be. Why're we talkin' about all this anyway? The past is the past. The cheerin' has stopped. I paint houses now. I don't throw touchdowns.

ISABEL

Samantha has cast some spell. She a witch or somethin'?

TOMMY

Look, what happened then is over. I don't wanna be one of those people who peaked at 17. I only just turned 30. It's all still in front of me.

ISABEL

But nothin's ever gonna be as good as it was back then.

TOMMY

Are we talkin' about me? Or you?

ISABEL

Not a day goes by that somebody doesn't mention the state title an' that game against Mount Blue when we were losin', like, 35-0 at half an' you almost single-handedly-

TOMMY

So what? No colleges lined up to get me. Not even Bowdoin.

ISABEL

Yeah, but-

TOMMY

Just stop, OK? Stop. I'm nobody, Izzy. The newspapers don't call me no more. OK? I don't get high-fives on the street. Guys like me get replaced. Forget football. An' forget our old friends. Because I know you. You're gonna start in like we're all still best pals. They're gone. Randy's up in The County an' Lisa is a teacher down in Portland an' Mike got religious an' is off in Africa convertin' the natives. We ain't in high school no more.

ISABEL

I know.

TOMMY

Then move on, Izzy. From all of it. This is you. This is me. We are where we are. I'm with Sam. An' you...you should go out an' find someone. Right?

ISABEL

That's a terrible thing to say to me.

TOMMY

No, it isn't. It isn't, Izzy.

Finished cleaning, he goes into the kitchenette and opens the fridge.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Moxie an' red hot dogs. How perfectly Maine. Jesus fuckin' Christ. Like this shit the only thing we got in the whole fuckin' state.

He closes the fridge. The wind howls outside, shakes the cabin.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Man, it's blowin' a gale, ain't it?

ISABEL

So who was the one?

TOMMY

One? One what?

ISABEL

The one other girl you'd been with. You said you'd only been with one other girl before me. Who was she?

TOMMY

Come on, Izzy. What'd I just say? It's pointless livin' in the past.

ISABEL

We been married for 10 years, together for 13. Today I get the news that there weren't a bunch of girls before me...you could at least tell me who-

TOMMY

It was Samantha.

Beat. She is surprised.

ISABEL

Samantha? I thought you told me she's from up near Lewiston.

TOMMY

She is. Sophomore year I went with my parents up there for some regional sports awards supper thing. She worked in the kitchen. (beat) I'm sorry. I should go.

He looks at the clock on the wall.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Jesus, is that really what time it is?

He goes for his things.

ISABEL

Don't go, please.

TOMMY

I have to. Got the papers in my coat. I want you to sign them.

He gets his shoes, puts them on.

ISABEL

Tommy...

TOMMY

I gotta go, Izzy. I'm serious. Ain't got a lotta time.

ISABEL

You just got here.

TOMMY

So? I'm leavin'.

ISABEL

Don't.

TOMMY

I have to.

ISABEL

I'm sayin' *don't*.

TOMMY

I want you to sign the papers.
(looking)
Where's my jacket?

ISABEL

Tommy.

TOMMY

I'm fuckin' goin'!

ISABEL

NO!!

In a rage, she grabs two fistfuls of her own hair and yanks them out.

TOMMY

Jesus, Izzy.

She looks down at the clumps of hair in her hands. He goes to her. She cries a little.

Fuck.

TOMMY (cont'd)

He inspects her head.

ISABEL

I'm sorry.

TOMMY

You're scarin' me here. Pullin' your fuckin' hair out?

ISABEL

Oh, well.

(laughing it off)

Crazy me. Is it bad?

TOMMY

It ain't great.

She just looks at him. Sad.

ISABEL

Samantha enjoyin' the house?

TOMMY

Izzy...

ISABEL

Has she changed much of it?

TOMMY

You wanna talk about the house? You just pulled clumps of hair outta your head.

ISABEL

Has she changed it?

TOMMY

Ah, shit. You tell me. See you sittin' outside in your car half the time starin' at it like you're doin' a fuckin' appraisal.

ISABEL

What? I don't do that-

TOMMY

We're gonna get a new place. OK?

ISABEL

You are?

TOMMY

She knows there's a story in everything. Yesterday she was rootin' around in the kitchen an' went totally gloomy over that stupid piece of honeycomb we got from that beekeeper up in Brewer.

ISABEL

What'd you tell her?

TOMMY

She didn't ask. An' I didn't want to tell her nothin'.

ISABEL

You don't talk about me?

TOMMY

Come on, Izzy. Would that be smart?

ISABEL

She don't know about Crawley Manor?

TOMMY

Everybody knows about that, Izzy.

ISABEL

She must wonder why you stopped comin' to see me.

TOMMY

I came to see you for three years. You know how many times they'd tell me you didn't wanna come outta your room? You pushed me away. What was I supposed to-

ISABEL

I had a breakdown!

Outside, night has set in. It begins to snow.

ISABEL (cont'd)

I miss you, Tommy. I miss us. It gets lonely with my mother.

TOMMY

What happened, Izzy? I'm up at St. Charles paintin' the rectory an' I get a call that my wife is in jail for climbin' up to the top of the Swingin' Bridge an' the next thing I know you're out in a fuckin' sanitarium.

ISABEL

Everything I knew was slippin' through my fingers. You sent me down to New York for some culinary school. I hated it there. An' you made me stick it out.

TOMMY

It was six lousy months.

ISABEL

Felt like an eternity.

TOMMY

I just wanted you to want somethin'. Somethin' beyond prom.

ISABEL

You know I always wanted to do movie stuff.

TOMMY

Movie stuff? Us gettin' busy with a fuckin' camcorder rollin' ain't movie stuff.

ISABEL

It was very artful. An' you know goddamn well I did more than that.

TOMMY

New York could've been somethin' real for you.

ISABEL

I got so lonely there. An' this girl was cruel to me. My small town Maine life. How simple I was to them. How *stupid*. I was at a low point an' her insults were just too much.

TOMMY

You broke her nose. Blinded her in one eye.

They look at each other. Sad.
Suddenly, she gets a spark in her eyes.

ISABEL

Hey, look what I brought! I almost forgot!

She goes to the dresser and gets out the pom-poms. He looks at her, pitifully.

TOMMY

Where'd you get those things?

ISABEL

I kept them. Watch this.

Swinging the pom-poms, she does a cheer. It's of a highly sexual nature.

ISABEL (cont'd)

Grab it
Steal it

Take it away
 We want that ball
 To go the other way
 Poke it
 Slap it
 Take it away
 We want that ball
 To go the other way

TOMMY

You just can't do it, can you?

ISABEL

(crushed)

What?

TOMMY

Do yourself a favor, Izzy. Get outta the past. Get outta your mother's house. Get outta this town. I am.

ISABEL

What does that mean?

TOMMY

Nothin'.

ISABEL

Yeah, it does-

TOMMY

Sam an' me are movin' to Boston.

ISABEL

Boston? Like Boston, Massachusetts?

TOMMY

No, the Boston up in Nova Scotia. Yeah, Boston, Massachusetts. OK? *The Boston.*

She sits. Discards the pom-poms.

ISABEL

Oh. So this new place you're talkin' about gettin' ain't in Brunswick?

She starts chewing her fingernails.

TOMMY

My cousin's got a paintin' company down there. He's been buggin' me to come down. There's no work here, Izzy. Brunswick is dead. This job in Topsham is the first time I've worked since August.

ISABEL
When're you gonna do this?

TOMMY
I don't know. Soon. Couple months.

ISABEL
That *is* soon. You even gonna tell me?

TOMMY
Of course.

ISABEL
When? After you got there? You can't do this to me, Tommy.

TOMMY
Sam's got family down there, too. OK? They said they'd help us get a house. A bigger house. She wants kids.

ISABEL
Oh.

TOMMY
I ain't gonna feel bad about this. I'm leavin'. I got the papers here in my jacket.

He finds his jacket, gets out the papers.

TOMMY (cont'd)
I want you to sign. Now don't do nothin' crazy, OK? (beat) Izzy?

ISABEL
Look, it's dark, it's startin' to snow. It won't be safe. Road back'll be slick.

TOMMY
I'll risk it. I don't got a lotta time.

ISABEL
Where you gotta be so badly? You meetin' Samantha someplace?

TOMMY
At The Pelican. For supper.

Beat. She gets especially somber.

ISABEL
You're celebratin'.

TOMMY
Don't put it like that.

Your freedom.
ISABEL

He puts the papers down on the table.
Slaps a pen down.

TOMMY
I want you to sign, Izzy. I don't wanna hound you about this
no more.

ISABEL
Hound me? I've only been out of Crawley two months.

TOMMY
Izzy. Please! I'm beggin' you!

ISABEL
I just want to matter. That's all. Every person should
matter. I am here. Do you understand me? I am here, too.

TOMMY
I wanna get out of here, Izzy! You've had this sick love
affair with this place for years! I never liked it here,
Izzy! I never did! It creep me the fuck out!

He grabs the pen and holds it out.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Now sign the goddamn papers!

She looks at him coldly, then:

ISABEL
Fine. (beat) On one condition.

TOMMY
Ah, Jesus. What?

She backs up towards the bed.

TOMMY (cont'd)
What're you doin'?

She removes her coat and puts it on the
bed.

ISABEL
One last time.

TOMMY
You kiddin'? I can't. It's too late. I gotta go.

ISABEL
You came here for it, didn'cha?

She sits down on the bed. Scoots up towards the pillows.

TOMMY

Yeah, but-...*I want you to sign the papers, Izzy!*

ISABEL

Fuck me an' I'll sign. (beat) I'll let you do to me whatever you want. (beat) Any sick thing you want. (beat) *Anything.*

She lies down on the bed. She gently spreads her skirt.

ISABEL (cont'd)

Come.

TOMMY

You fuckin' bitch.

Slinging his jacket aside, he goes to her. She grabs him, pulls him down on her. They go at it. Fast. Reckless. This time, she shoves him around. She gets on top of him and rips open his shirt. They kiss violently.

ISABEL

Slap me.

TOMMY

What?

ISABEL

Slap me!

He does. She kisses him harder.

ISABEL (cont'd)

Pull my hair.

TOMMY

No, I-

ISABEL

Pull my fuckin' hair!!

He does. Hard. She cries out. Then kisses him again.

ISABEL (cont'd)

Bite me.

He does.

Harder.

ISABEL (cont'd)

He does.

Harder!!

ISABEL (cont'd)

He does. She screams. Then she pulls back, sitting up.

What? What?! WHAT?!

TOMMY

She reaches into her coat, which is still on the bed, and pulls out two pairs of handcuffs.

You're a freak.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Sing me a song, sailor. Maybe that one you sang on your uncle's catboat.

ISABEL

As he sings, she handcuffs both of his wrists to the headboard.

TOMMY

All comin' back to you, ain't it?
(singing)

*In Portland town there was a maid
Her name was Katerina
She loved me so, she liked to blow
Me docked in the marina
Out on the sea...*

She puts a finger to his mouth:
"Shhhhhhhhhhhhh."

Tell me I'm pretty.

ISABEL

You're beautiful.

TOMMY

Tell me I'm irresistible.

ISABEL

Oh, wicked, yeah. Yeah.

TOMMY

Tell me you wanna be inside me.

ISABEL

TOMMY
Oh. So bad. I wanna fuck you silly.

ISABEL
Tell me you love me.

TOMMY
Izzy.

ISABEL
Tell me you love me.

TOMMY
You're drivin' me insane.

ISABEL
Tell me you love me, Tommy.

TOMMY
Come on, Izzy. I'm dyin' here.

ISABEL
Tell me you love me.

TOMMY
What? Why? Can't we just...Jesus! I ain't got time for
this shit!

ISABEL
Tell me you love me.

TOMMY
Why?

ISABEL
I wanna hear it.

TOMMY
But, I...*please*.

ISABEL
Tell me you love me.

TOMMY
No.

ISABEL
Tell me you love me, Tommy.

TOMMY
No, Izzy. No. I ain't gonna do that.

She gets off him.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Oh, come on, Izzy. Where you goin'?

She gets her coat and takes out the pills. Takes one.

TOMMY
Thought they took you off that stuff?

She grabs a pillow and hits him with it.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Hey!

She beats him hard.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Stop it!

She stops.

TOMMY (cont'd)
What's the matter with you?

ISABEL
Tell me you love me.

TOMMY
No.

She tosses the pillow aside and grabs the stove broom.

TOMMY (cont'd)
What're you doin'?

She strikes him in the leg.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Ow! What the fuck?!

ISABEL
Tell me you love me.

TOMMY
No!

She hits him many times.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Stop!!

ISABEL
Tell me you love me!

TOMMY
This is crazy!

Putting the broom down, she goes into the kitchenette, opens a drawer and snatches a knife. She comes at him with it.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Izzy?!

She stabs him in the side. Once.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Ahhhhhh! (beat) Holy fuck...

ISABEL
Tell me you love me.

TOMMY
(wincing)
You stabbed me.

ISABEL
Tell me you love me.

TOMMY
Izzy. I'm fuckin' bleedin'.

She slings the knife away and grabs a decorative ax from the wall.

TOMMY (cont'd)
You've gotta be fuckin' kiddin' me!

As she comes towards him, he struggles to get free.

TOMMY (cont'd)
OK, OK! Fuck! I love you! I love you! Jesus Christ!

ISABEL
I don't believe you.

She raises the ax.

TOMMY
(hysterical)
Holy fuckin' shit, Isabel! Please, please! Don't! For God's sake, don't...

She lowers the ax.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Have you fuckin' totally lost it?

ISABEL
Is that really how you wanna talk to me right now?

TOMMY
No. No. (beat) Honey, what're you doin' to me? There's blood all over. Get me outta these handcuffs. Now.

ISABEL
No.

TOMMY
Put down the ax, Izzy. Please.

She does.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Izzy, this ain't funny.

ISABEL
Who's laughin'?

TOMMY
I'm fuckin' hurt! Unlock the fuckin' handcuffs!

He moans in pain.

ISABEL
No.

TOMMY
I don't think the maid service is gonna appreciate findin' the bed sheets all bloody like this in the mornin'.

ISABEL
There ain't no maid service.

TOMMY
What? 'course there is. They still got those sisters, right? They've been here like 20 years, ain't they?

ISABEL
Yeah, but they ain't comin' in the mornin'. No one is.

TOMMY
What does that mean? The mute tell you that when you checked in?

ISABEL
I didn't check in.

TOMMY

How'd you get in here? How'd you get a key?

ISABEL

I stole one. Couple of weeks ago.

TOMMY

Why?

ISABEL

Because I knew, by today, they'd be closed.

TOMMY

What?

ISABEL

Sprucehaven is closed for the winter.

TOMMY

It's closed? Then what the fuck are we doin' here? We're alone?

ISABEL

You didn't see no other guests, did you?

TOMMY

No. (beat) That's why the damper was closed.

ISABEL

Yeah.

TOMMY

An' the lights. Ain't 'cause of the wind. They shut the place up. An' no one knows we're here.

ISABEL

No. No one.

TOMMY

(panicking)

What is this, Isabel? What is all this?

She turns away from him, she finds her coat, puts it on.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Izzy...Izzy?! Where are you going?!

ISABEL

Home.

TOMMY

What're you talkin' about? You can't leave! Sprucehaven is closed for the winter! *No one is gonna come this far down the island until spring!*

ISABEL

I know.

TOMMY

You leave me here an'...

He has a morbid realization.

ISABEL

(grinning)

I know.

She finds her panties and stuffs them in her coat pocket.

TOMMY

Izzy, Jesus fuckin' Christ. Unlock these handcuffs.

ISABEL

No. I wanna give you time to think about what you've done.

TOMMY

What I've done? I've moved on! So should you!

ISABEL

All you had to do was say you loved me.

TOMMY

Oh, bullshit! I tell you I love you an' then you'll wanna get back together, move back into the house, go to all the old haunts, relive the old days until we're fuckin' dead an' buried!

He coughs hard, winces.

ISABEL

All I want is for you to love me.

She turns off the first lantern.

TOMMY

You planned this whole thing. Stealin' the key. Wearin' that skirt. You played me. You knew when I saw you I'd want you. An' you'd be able to handcuff me again. Like you did on the catboat.

By now he is shivering and weakening from the blood loss.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Izzy, for the love of God, let me go...

ISABEL
Chew your arms off.

TOMMY
(his teeth chatter)
You bitch. You fuckin' cunt.

She spits on him. Again. Three times.
He fights to free himself. He screams
in pain, coughs, gasps, moans.

TOMMY (cont'd)
You're a fuckin' psycho, Isabel. You've always been a
fuckin' psycho.

ISABEL
How can you say that to me? Your wife.

TOMMY
It's over, Isabel! It's been over! You're not my wife
anymore! We met today to sign the papers to end this
marriage! You knew that!

ISABEL
(devastated)
What about me? What's to become of me? Everything I ever
knew is gone. All gone. I'm so lonely. I love you, Tommy.

She breaks. Weeping.

TOMMY
Is this love?!

ISABEL
(brokenhearted)
We were king an' queen.

TOMMY
So what?! So fuckin' what?!

ISABEL
There's nothin' more horrible than to be left behind. You'll
come to understand this very soon.

She stares at him. Evil.

ISABEL (cont'd)
You ain't gonna be with her anymore. Never. Never. Never.
NEVER!

Interlude

Lights rise. The maid service (played by the stage crew) of three women - all tough; real Mainers - enters through the front door. They bring dirty dishes, which one of them puts in the kitchenette. They bring traveling bags, which one of them puts along one wall. They bring in a new telephone, which one of them plugs in (they take away the old one). As they do what they need to do, a New England Patriots football game plays on a radio. One of them throws towels on the bathroom floor. When they leave, they take the ax and the broom. The lights, and the game, fade out.

A Thousand Shades of Black

Spring. 15 years later. It's now 2011. At rise, it is afternoon. And raining. Most everything is eerily similar to the very end of the previous play. A body is on the bed covered in a sheet. One decomposed arm comes up out of the sheet and is handcuffed to the headboard. Two men, FIST, 38, rough and bedraggled, tattooed, with an eye patch and severe limp, and ANSEL, 26, clean cut, are in old black trench coats with Maine police badges clipped on them. They are standing over the body. FIST speaks stiffly - comically so - but with a perfect Maine accent. ANSEL speaks more naturally, but without an accent.

FIST

Local kid, Jensen?

ANSEL

Yeah.

FIST

Do we gotta time of death?

ANSEL

Ain't easy to determine right now, but I'd say he's been here two months, maybe longer.

FIST

I'm gonna to need to talk to the woman who found him.

ANSEL

Ms. Treadwell. She's one of the cleaning staff.

FIST

Where is she?

ANSEL

Down in the main lodge. I'll warn you now, Snodgrass. She's a bit of a bull. An' she don't like cops.

FIST takes a long look at ANSEL and then lifts the bed sheet to look at the body.

FIST

Anyone contact the family?

ANSEL

Yeah. Gotta fiance in Brunswick. She's on her way. An' he has an ex, but we ain't located her. There's no one else we know of.

FIST peers in to take a slightly closer look.

FIST

Jesus Christ, someone really had it in for this guy.

ANSEL

Sure did, Snodgrass.

FIST

Look what they did to his testicles.

ANSEL

Huh?

FIST

(reaching)

Here, Jensen, let me slice 'em off with my switch blade an' show 'em to you-

The body, played by NOAH, 26, whips back the sheet with his free arm.

NOAH

This shit is not funny, dude!

FIST

(dropping the accent)

You're awfully fuckin' touchy for a dead man.

NOAH

Stay with the script! She didn't do anything to his nuts!

FIST

(intimidating)

That's your fuckin' interpretation, Noah. I say she did. And more.

NOAH backs off.

ANSEL

Listen, Fist...uh, is that really what you want us to call you? Fist?

FIST

You got a fuckin' problem with that?

ANSEL

No! No, not at all. Fist it is. But, hey, don't take this the wrong way, but, I think, in order for us to get this scene right, you kind of, sort of have to rehearse the lines as written. If you don't mind.

FIST

You know, Ansel, there was this guy in San Quentin who liked to tell me what to do. One day I ripped his fuckin' nose right off his face. He stopped telling me what to do.

Bursting into the room, camera and tripod in hand, is ISABEL, now 42.

FIST (cont'd)

Whoa, it's Isabel, our big shot writer-director gracing us with her fuckin' presence!

ISABEL

There was an accident on the only bridge over. Tommy, Officer Jensen. Everyone introduce themselves?

ANSEL

We've been here since last night.

ISABEL starts setting up the camera and tripod.

ISABEL

(to Ansel and Fist)

What're you two wearin'? I told you guys exactly where to go to get real Maine police uniforms. The thrift shop in Brunswick. Right there offa Cedar.

ANSEL

Claire's Closet. Yes. They got rid of the uniforms. They said they've gone green.

ISABEL

So this is what you got? You guys look like drug dealers.

FIST

I like looking like a fuckin' drug dealer.

NOAH

How can we shoot this scene now, Isabel? And the Tommy and Isabel scene? It's almost noon.

ANSEL

Why don't we just shoot night for day?

ISABEL

I wrote dusk, it's dusk. I wrote the cop scene as a day scene, so we're shootin' it in the day. I want it to be authentic to the story. We ain't manufacturin' nothin'.

ANSEL

(condescending)

We're making a movie. The whole thing is fake.

ISABEL

Boy, they teachin' you an' Noah a lot at B.U., ain't they?

NOAH

Where's the crew? And Caitlin? What about Caitlin?

ISABEL

I couldn't reach 'em on the cell, but they'll be here. Accident was almost cleared off when I got over.

ANSEL

When's the DP getting here?

ISABEL

He quit. I'm doin' it. I mean, how hard can it be? Point an' shoot, right?

ANSEL

You're doing it?

ISABEL

I've waited all my life to make a movie, Ansel. Nothin's gonna stop me from doin' it. OK? Why don't you guys help me out an' unload the van?

ANSEL exits wordlessly.

ISABEL (cont'd)

Fist?

FIST

Yeah, right.

(leaning towards her,
whispering)

I call the fuckin' shots here, Isabel. Remember?

(announcing...)

I'm going to take a big shit.

FIST exits into the bathroom.

ISABEL

You're supposed to be cuffed with two hands, Noah, not one.

Looking off at the bathroom, NOAH half
whispers:

NOAH

Isabel, I want to talk to you about Fist.

ISABEL

Yeah?

NOAH

The guy is meshugeh. Like mentally unhinged. Talking about prison and beating the shit out of people. And all the craziness he's been into out in LA, being a bodyguard to a bunch of insane B-list celebs. Last night he brought a woman in here. They got totally shit-faced. She was here until four a.m. Fist kept calling her "Noah," like it was a riot. He knows I'm gay and he almost seems to revel in it.

ISABEL

Wait. You're gay? Tommy isn't gay.

NOAH

I have to be straight to play straight? Tell that to Tom Cruise.

ISABEL

Tom Cruise is gay?

NOAH

As they get. Never mind that. You have to get someone to replace Fist. He is dangerous, Isabel. Plus, he can't act at all. He sounds like he's reading the phone book.

ISABEL

He can do the accent. An' he understands cops. He'll bring a certain truthfulness to the role.

NOAH

I don't give a shit. He's going to kill one of us. Probably me.

ISABEL

He ain't gonna kill you. Just don't call him Michael. Or ask him about his eye or his limp.

NOAH

OK. And if I do?

ISABEL

He'll kill you.

She finishes attaching the camera.

ISABEL (cont'd)

I should know. He's my brother. We grew up 25 minutes from here.

She starts out, then stops, looks around.

ISABEL (cont'd)

I can't believe they gave us Sprucehaven B.

She exits. NOAH is alone. On the bed. Handcuffed.

NOAH

This is so not going to end well. (beat) Hello?! Is anyone going to unlock me?!

Silence. The toilet flushes. A moment later, it flushes again. Another moment later, it flushes a third time. ISABEL and ANSEL enter with gear.

ISABEL

No, Ansel, I told you, they don't know we're makin' a movie in here, so don't leave nothin' outside the door. We're bringin' everything inside. An', besides, it's rainin'.

ANSEL

Wait. They don't know?

ISABEL

No, they don't know. I've worked every shit job at Bowdoin, an' let me tell you what I learned - it's easier to apologize than to ask for permission.

They drop the equipment and exit again.

NOAH

What the fuck?! Hey!! (beat) Hey!! (beat)
HEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEYYYYYYYYYYYYYY!!

As FIST comes out of the bathroom, ISABEL and ANSEL enter.

ISABEL

(annoyed)

Noah, Jesus, what?

NOAH

I'm still attached to the bed, Isabel!

ISABEL removes her cell from her pocket, dialing.

ISABEL

Would one of you unlock him?

FIST
 (pretending)
 I don't have the key. You got the key, Ansel?

ANSEL
 (obliviously not playing along)
 No, Fist. You have it.

FIST goes cold.

FIST
 Turning state's, eh, Ansel?

ANSEL
 (confused)
 What?

FIST
 I'd grow eyes in the back of my fuckin' head if I were you.

FIST unlocks NOAH. NOAH gets off the bed quickly, rubbing his wrists.

NOAH (cont'd)
 Oy. Handcuffs were really cutting my wrists.

FIST
 Aww, you're really fuckin' sweet, Noah. I just might have to make you my bitch.

ISABEL
 Goddamn cell phone.

She goes to the landline. Picks it up.

ISABEL
 Ansel, there're new scripts in my backpack by the c-stands. Can you get 'em?

He does. She dials the phone.

ISABEL (cont'd)
 Take one an' give one to Noah an' one to Fist.

He does.

ANSEL
 New title?

NOAH
 (reading title off cover)
A Thousand Shades of Black. (beat) No idea what that means.

ISABEL

It's symbolic.

ANSEL

Of what? I thought this movie was about lost youth, being left behind by life, that sort of thing.

ISABEL hangs up the phone.

ISABEL

Shit. I still can't reach the crew.

ANSEL

They're probably lost. You take a wrong turn in this state and all you see are trees and maniacs for miles.

FIST

You got a fuckin' problem with Maine?

ANSEL

Well, it's not the end of the Earth or anything, but you can see it from here.

FIST stares at ANSEL.

ANSEL (cont'd)

I mean, no, I don't have a problem with Maine.

NOAH

(to Isabel)

Have you heard from Caitlin?

ISABEL

She's with the crew.

ANSEL

Why do you keep asking about Caitlin? She's *my* girlfriend.

NOAH

Getting a little possessive with your shiksa, aren't you?

ANSEL

Shiksa?

FIST

Ansel, Noah ain't a threat. Noah's a fuckin' rocket man, right No-no?

ISABEL unloads film stock.

ISABEL

You Jewish, Noah?

NOAH

My name is Noah Greenberg. What do you think?

ISABEL

Tommy isn't Jewish.

NOAH

I have to be Gentile to play Gentile? Tell that to Tom Cruise.

ISABEL looks at him like "what does that mean?"

ANSEL

Tell me we have more film stock than that.

ISABEL

It's all the 16mm I could get, Ansel. Three 800 ft. spools. Or 96 minutes.

ISABEL loads the film into the camera.

NOAH

96 minutes?

(checking)

But the script is only...92 pages.

ISABEL

I know that, Noah. I wrote the screenplay. 96 minutes of film, 92 pages of script, that means it's one take an' we're out. So no fuck ups.

ANSEL

(looking at script)

Why is Fist's character suddenly on every other page?

ISABEL

There's been some changes.

NOAH

The movie is about me.

ISABEL

The movie is about Isabel. An' now Snodgrass.

NOAH

How? He's a secondary character.

FIST

Not anymore, sweetie. I'm going to get nasty with Caitlin now.

ANSEL

What?

FIST

Yeah. Some real hardcore shit, too. Home movie shit.

ANSEL

When did we decide this?

FIST

We didn't. I did. Last night. When I was rubbing your mother's tits.

ANSEL looks at FIST like "what the fuck?"

FIST (cont'd)

I said, "Momma Ansel, what this movie needs is a lot of fuckin'. Straight fuckin', gay fuckin', horse fuckin'." I'm gonna turn this cabin into a fuck shack.

ANSEL

A fuck shack?

FIST

Movies need fuckin'. You don't think *The King's Speech* could've used some fuckin'? All that talk, talk, talk, and not even good talk. Take out all that stuttering and replace it with some fuckin' and now you got a movie. Call it *The King's Fuckin'*.

NOAH

(looking at script)

There are some things added at the end, too.

ISABEL

Yeah. Isabel goes home an' tries to shoot herself.

NOAH

What, like her old man did?

ISABEL

Yeah. But unlike him, she lives. An' ends up back in Crawley Manor.

ANSEL

What a fuckin' loon.

ISABEL

(defensive)

She ain't a loon, asshole.

ANSEL

OK, Isabel, take it easy. I'm not trying to step on the toes of your precious characters, especially the one you gave your name to. But that character is nuts, I'm sorry.

ISABEL

Fuck you, Officer Jensen.

ANSEL

Officer Jensen is a character, Isabel. He doesn't exist, OK? Neither does Snodgrass. Or this Isabel. These people aren't real.

FIST laughs like he knows full well they are real.

NOAH

(reading script)

Hey, you put a big spruce in the script just like they have here.

ISABEL

It's always been in the script.

FIST unloads food out of a bag and onto the counter of the kitchenette. Bagels, cream cheese, fruit, etc.

FIST

Fruit? Cream cheese? Bagels? What are we all fuckin' faggots? What is this movie? *A Thousand Shades of Gay*? Where's the fuckin' pork rinds?

ISABEL

You wanted pork rinds, you shoulda asked for pork rinds.

ISABEL tosses NOAH some clothes covered in red paint.

ISABEL (cont'd)

Noah, your costume.

NOAH goes into the bathroom.

NOAH

Ah, Jesus Christ, what died in here?

FIST

Welcome to the world of men, Noah.

In the bathroom, NOAH tries to get the window open, but can't.

NOAH

At least open a...the window's stuck. The goddamn window is...

He grabs the door handle.

NOAH (cont'd)

(sarcastic)

It was nice working with you all. Shalom.

He closes the door and dresses. ISABEL redresses the set. FIST opens the fridge.

FIST

Moxie? You got to be shittin' me. Now I know I asked for fuckin' beer, Izzy.

ISABEL

I got beer, Fist. Try one-a the other bags.

He does. Finds it. Opens one.

FIST

Warm. *Fuck*. This is no way to treat the talent.

He drinks anyway, puts the rest of the beer in the fridge. ANSEL goes through the drawers.

ANSEL

You get utensils? They don't have any silverware here. Well, no knives anyway.

FIST trips over something on the floor. He reaches for it.

FIST

Look at this glued-together, piece-of-shit wooden moose. It's great to be back home.

NOAH

(from the bathroom)

There's a busted wooden moose in the script, too.

They all look off towards the bathroom.

ANSEL

Did someone bring props?

NOAH

(from the bathroom)

I don't think so.

ANSEL

You write this story based on this place, Isabel?

ISABEL

I came up here, yeah. I put things I saw in the script. Can we do a quick walk through?

NOAH comes out of the bathroom. He has a jacket on that says "Down East Painting Co." His clothes are splotched in red paint.

NOAH
Smells like somebody pissed all over this jacket. How do I look?

FIST
Like *Brokeback Mountain* gone bad.

ISABEL
You ain't gonna need the jacket in this scene, Tommy. But for now just get on the bed. We're doin' a walk through.

He gets on the bed.

ISABEL (cont'd)
Officer Jensen. Snodgrass.

ANSEL and FIST take their places.

ISABEL (cont'd)
Just do it like I said over the phone. I just need to see it so I can light it. Tommy, go ahead'n grab the bed posts.

He does.

ISABEL (cont'd)
All right. Action.

FIST
(very wooden)
Local kid, Jensen?

ANSEL
Yeah.

FIST
Do we gotta time of death?

ANSEL
Ain't easy to determine right now, but I'd say he's been here two months, maybe longer.

FIST
I'm gonna need to talk to the woman who found him.

ANSEL
Ms. Treadwell. She's one of the cleaning staff.

FIST
Where is she?

ANSEL

Down in the main lodge. I'll warn you now, Snodgrass. She's a bit of a bull. And she don't like cops.

FIST takes a long look at ANSEL and then lifts the bed sheet to look at the body.

FIST

Anyone contact the family?

ANSEL

Yeah. Gotta fiance in Brunswick. She's on her way. And he has an ex, but we ain't located her.

FIST

Jesus Christ, someone really had it in for this guy.

ANSEL

Sure did, Snodgrass.

FIST

Wow, it looks like she put his fuckin' dick in a meat grinder.

NOAH

Fist!

ISABEL

Fist, we ain't got the film for this kinda stuff.

FIST

That's a good line. It'll get a fuckin' laugh.

ISABEL

Just do the line I wrote.

FIST

Yeah, well, how about if we do the line as I see it, Izzy? Or any other fuckin' line? How does that grab you?

She looks at him hard, sighs, grits her teeth.

ISABEL

Fine.

ANSEL

Fine?

ISABEL

Let's start again. From the "dick in the meat grinder" line.

They re-set. FIST lifts the bed sheet.

FIST

Wow, it looks like she took his cock an' played "let's make a chopped salad."

ANSEL

That's not what you said before!

FIST

That's what I'm saying now!

ISABEL

Just keep goin'!

ANSEL

(knowing his line makes no sense)

Uh...yes, we found the knife by the stove.

No one says or does anything.

ANSEL (cont'd)

Fist, you're supposed to drop the sheet and cross to the-

FIST

I'm not doing that. I'm gonna stay here and admire his nuts. What's my next line?

ISABEL

"Anyone dust the knife?"

FIST

Anyone dust his nuts?

ANSEL

No. I didn't dust the...knife. The nuts. His nuts.

FIST

Well, get me the kit an' I'll do it myself now.

ANSEL doesn't move, looks at ISABEL for help. Gets none.

FIST (cont'd)

Jensen? Get me the fuckin' kit. Now.

ANSEL

Uh...I left the kit back at the office.

FIST stares at ANSEL a long time.

FIST

You didn't think we'd need it? This is a crime scene, Jensen. Where's your fuckin' head?

You still upset because I fucked your wife? Twice. In the ass. In your Camaro. Get over it.

ANSEL looks around like "where are we?"
FIST turns to NOAH.

FIST (cont'd)
I'm surprised this Tommy dude didn't chew his arms off. That's what I woulda done. Get myself free. Then taken the bloody limbs an' beaten the holy shit outta that bitch.

They think he's done, but he keeps going.

FIST (cont'd)
Then shoved one arm up her cornhole an' the other up her snatch.

Again, they think he's done, but he keeps going.

FIST (cont'd)
Then set both limbs on fire.

Again, they think he's done, but he keeps going.

FIST (cont'd)
Then-

ANSEL
This is totally stupid!

FIST
I wasn't finished, asshole.

ANSEL
You know, Isabel, when we answered your craigslist ad and came all the way up here from Boston to audition, you didn't say anything about all this.

FIST
Relax, Ansel. The reaming won't be as raw tomorrow. Right, Noah?

NOAH
Isabel, did you scuff up the bed posts? The posts are all scuffed up. See?

He gestures to them.

NOAH (cont'd)
Like in the script.

FIST lets out a knowing laugh.

ISABEL

Yeah, I scuffed 'em up. I told you. I came up here-

NOAH

Why would you scuff up the bed posts *before* we shot the scene between Isabel and Tommy? I mean, aren't the bedposts scuffed *because* of the handcuffs?

ANSEL

(noticing...)

What is that?

ANSEL approaches the stone around the stove and fingers something in the stone. NOAH gets off the bed and follows.

ISABEL

Please, I need to see the blockin', so I can light the scene. Block, light, shoot, come on.

ANSEL

Look. There's an "I" and a "T" in the stone. "IT."

NOAH

Has Stephen King been up here?

ISABEL

Never mind the fireplace.

NOAH

What does it mean?

ANSEL

"IT." Isabel, Tommy.

ISABEL

That ain't what it means.

FIST lets out another knowing laugh.

ANSEL

How do you know that's not what it means?

NOAH

What's going on? Is that in the script, too?

ISABEL

Noah, get back on the bed.

NOAH

Something weird is going on.

ISABEL

Noah, get back on the bed!

NOAH

You guys notice she called the lodge Sprucehaven in the script and this place is called Sprucehaven and she named the cottage B and this cottage is B?

FIST lets out another knowing laugh.

NOAH (cont'd)

What are you laughing at, dude?!

FIST

(suddenly serious)

Ask me that again. *Ask me that again!!*

ISABEL

All right! All right! Listen, this the place where it happened!

ANSEL

Where *what* happened?

ISABEL

Where I killed Tommy.

NOAH

It's real? It's a real story?

ISABEL

Yeah.

ANSEL

What are you talking about? The movie we're making is a true story?

ISABEL

Yeah.

ANSEL

So the Isabel in the script is you?

ISABEL

Yeah.

ANSEL

I asked you when we met if the story was real and you said "no."

ISABEL

I lied.

NOAH

So, if it's all real, the set is real, too?

ISABEL

Yeah, I just said this the place where it happened, Noah.

ANSEL

You have to be bullshitting. No one's this insane.

ISABEL

Look, it's a true story, an' we're shootin' here, in Maine, at this place, this cabin, as opposed to any other cabin, because I wanted to make the film as truthfully as I could. Set, dialogue, clothes, all of it.

ANSEL

Truthful? Snodgrass is suddenly a love interest. Is that truthful?

NOAH

Wait. Clothes? You said "clothes."

ISABEL

I have my clothes with me, for Caitlin, an' what you got on there, Noah, is Tommy's.

NOAH

What the fuck? He died in these clothes?

ISABEL

Yeah.

NOAH

Hold it goddammit. Tommy died in these clothes, Isabel?

ISABEL

Yeah, Noah, yeah! A friend o' mine knows somebody at the police station who got 'em! Don't fuck 'em up!

NOAH

How crazy are you?

(looking down at his clothes)

I thought this was paint. The guy painted houses, right? Are you telling me this is blood?

ISABEL

It's paint. Some of it.

NOAH

Some of it?!

ANSEL

So you're a murderer?

ISABEL

Yeah.

ANSEL

So you killed Tommy, your ex?

ISABEL

Yeah. Right here. 15 years ago.

ANSEL

Then you tried to kill yourself? And you went back to Crawley Manor? How did they ever let you out?

ISABEL

Google it and find out.

ANSEL

So you're a total nut job, psychotic killer, is that it?

ISABEL

That's kinda harsh, I think. I feel like I'm in a much better place now.

ANSEL

Doesn't seem like it!

NOAH

Why didn't you just tell us the truth about everything?!

ISABEL

How you feel now that'cha know?

NOAH

Totally creeped out!

ISABEL

That's why!

FIST

Would you two please get your tails out from between your legs so we can make a fuckin' movie?

ANSEL

You knew the truth, didn't you, Fist?

FIST

What if I fuckin' did? You got something to say about it?

NOAH

I don't like this at all.

FIST

You'll be OK, No-no. Just think of it as art imitating life, or whatever the fuck it is you queer babies say.

NOAH

(disgusted)

Jesus Christ, I was in that bed. Where he was. I'm in his clothes.

ISABEL

Take it easy, Noah.

NOAH

Take it easy? Take it fucking easy?! You got some chutzpah, Isabel!

ANSEL

A guy dies handcuffed to a bed post and this place doesn't have the courtesy to, at the very least, get a new bed frame? 15 years is enough time to get a new bed frame.

NOAH

I'm getting out of these clothes.

ISABEL

No, you ain't.

NOAH

I can't wear these clothes!

ISABEL

Yeah, you can!

NOAH

No way!

He starts stripping. A cell phone goes off. It's ISABEL'S. She grabs it. Looks at it.

ISABEL

That's them. Tommy, keep those fuckin' clothes on!

NOAH

My name is Noah, Isabel! Not Tommy! I'm not your goddamn dead ex-husband!

ISABEL opens her cell.

ISABEL

I meant "Noah!"

(into phone)

Hello?

NOAH

The lines have totally blurred for you, Isabel!

ISABEL
 (into phone)
 Brad? Renee?

NOAH
 I am so out of here! Fuck this movie! I'm going to find
 Caitlin and she's going to say "fuck this movie, too!"

FIST walks over and puts NOAH in a head
 lock.

NOAH (cont'd)
 Hey!

ISABEL
 Fist!

FIST drags NOAH to the handcuffs, grabs
 them...

ISABEL (cont'd)
 (into phone)
 Caitlin, are you there?

...puts one over NOAH's wrist.

NOAH
 Hey! Hey!!!

FIST slaps NOAH hard.

FIST
 Shut the fuck up!

He pulls NOAH, now subdued, to the wood
 burning stove and loops the chain
 around one of the legs, which are
 bolted to the floor, and then locks the
 other cuff around NOAH's other wrist.

ISABEL
 (into phone)
 Where are you guys? (beat) Hello? (beat) I can't...I
 can't hear you. (beat) Your phone isn't... (beat) I can't
 hear you! (beat) You got an iphone, don't you? iphones
 suck! (beat) Hello?! (beat) HELLO?!

NOAH
 Is it Caitlin?

ISABEL
 (into phone)
 Speak up!

NOAH

Let me talk to her. Give me the phone.

ANSEL

What is it with you and Caitlin, dude?!

ISABEL

Shut up, you two!

(into phone)

Brad? (beat) Rene? (beat) You're cuttin' out.

NOAH

Your kvetching (he pronounces it "kvetzing") about Caitlin is starting to get old.

ANSEL

Would you shut up with the fucking white bread Yiddish?

ISABEL

Where are you guys? (beat) Are you close? (beat) I can't...just say "yes!" Say "yes," you're close!

NOAH

My Jewishness offends you?

ANSEL

Your Yiddish offends me! It's like you're pretending to be Jewish because this is how Jews sound to you!

NOAH

You an authority? You're from Wyoming!

ANSEL

Well, I know enough to know it's pronounced "kvetching," not "kvetzing!!"

ISABEL

(to Noah and Ansel)

I can't hear the fuckin' phone!

She looks at phone.

ISABEL (cont'd)

Shit, I lost 'em.

(to Fist)

What the hell you doin'? You can't cuff him to the stove!

FIST

I'm no genius, but it looks like I can.

NOAH

Unlock me goddammit!

FIST

Look, he's right in character. So now she cuffs him to the stove instead of the bed. Works for me. I say we fuckin' roll camera.

NOAH

Isabel, I'm going back to Boston and tell every living soul what happened here! Nevermind you won't be able to use B.U. grad students again, you'll never be able to step foot in Boston again!

FIST goes over to NOAH and kicks him hard in the stomach.

ISABEL

What're you doin', Fist? Bad enough you forced me to use you in the film, an' that you rewrote my movie, but you can't beat up the cast!

FIST

Step aside. I'm making this film.

ISABEL

What?

FIST

This is my movie now. You've fucked this up from the beginning.

ISABEL

You can't have my movie!

FIST

I wonder if Mom's nurse is on-call over at the hospital right now. I should give her a fuckin' jingle.

ISABEL

I've waited all my life to make movies an' now I can an' you wanna take it away from me?

FIST

You're only making movies because you pulled the plug on Mom and got the inheritance. You won't be making anything but license plates if I tell the cops what I know you did.

NOAH

Ho-

ANSEL

Jesus-

NOAH

-ly-

ANSEL
-Christ.

NOAH
-crap.

ISABEL
You can't do this, Fist.

FIST
We made a deal. What I say goes. Or I rat you out. So step
aside, sis. Go home. This is my movie.

ISABEL
Mom couldn't be saved, Fist.

FIST
So you killed her?

ISABEL
I couldn't let her suffer from the cancer no more. I hadda
pull the plug.

FIST
You pulled because you knew the cash was coming.

ISABEL
I've been at home takin' care of Mom. Life's been passin' me
by, Fist. This is my first chance to really do somethin'!

FIST
Nobody cares about your fuckin' problems, Isabel. This is my
movie now. A deal is a fuckin' deal.

ISABEL
I'm sorry Mom gave the inheritance all to me. But it wasn't
no surprise, was it? You said "fuck you" to her all your
life.

FIST
I don't give a shit you got the fuckin' money, Isabel.

ISABEL
Then why you doin' this?

FIST
I lived in L.A. for six years. I want to be a filmmaker now.

ISABEL
Oh, bullshit. You just wanna fuck me over. All your life
you fucked me over. Harrassin' Tommy, ruinin' my prom,
poisonin' my parakeets, alla way back to the sandbox you
tried to fuck me over, Michael.

Her use of "Michael" gets his attention.

ISABEL (cont'd)

I'm sorry Mom liked me better, Michael. I'm sorry you're a fuckin' loser. You the one who blew out your knee an' ruined your senior year of wrestling. You the one who got your eye poked out by a seventh grade *girl*. Michael. (beat) Michael, Michael, Michael. Little Michael. Little pussy Michael. Ain't that what Dad used to call you? Little Pussy Michael. L.P.M. L.-

FIST rushes at her. They grapple.

ANSEL

Hey, guys, come on!

FIST slams her against the wall, knocking down the clock. She pushes him off her. Swipes at him.

ISABEL

(gasping)

Get your fuckin' hands off me!

FIST stares her down.

ANSEL

OK, everyone...everyone just take it easy.

ISABEL

You're just like Snodgrass, Michael. It's perfect castin'. He was a mother fucker. So are you.

FIST grins.

ANSEL

You're not helping, Isabel!

FIST

Tell me what it was like, Isabel? When Snodgrass fucked you.

ISABEL

Shut up.

FIST

Was it good? How old were you? 12? 11? 8?

ISABEL

Shut up.

FIST

He always liked young pussy, didn't? I'll bet your twat was like sweet lemonade, too. I'll bet you screamed.

When he was pounding you. I'll bet it made you go
bat...shit...crazy.

ISABEL
You fuckin'...

ISABEL rushes at FIST. He takes her
right to the floor and grabs her around
the throat.

ANSEL
FIST!

ANSEL moves in to intercede. FIST has
ISABEL down on the floor and is
strangling her.

FIST
You fuckin' bitch!

ANSEL
Fist, what are you doing?!

ANSEL turns to NOAH, who's still
handcuffed to the bed.

ANSEL (cont'd)
Noah, help me!

NOAH
How!?

ANSEL
Fist, don't do this, man!

FIST
I'm going to fuckin' kill you, Isabel!

With great effort, ANSEL pulls FIST off
ISABEL. FIST shoves him away, hard.
No one says anything for a bit as they
recover, breathing hard, looking at
each other.

ANSEL
Noah, thanks for the help!

NOAH
I'm handcuffed to the stove, Ansel!

ANSEL
OK. Everyone just calm...just calm down. (beat) All right?
(beat) Are we all calm? (beat) Just nod your heads if
you're calm.

ANSEL looks over at ISABEL, still down.

ANSEL (cont'd)

Isabel?

They all look over. ISABEL is motionless.

ANSEL (cont'd)

Isabel?

He goes to her.

ANSEL (cont'd)

She's not moving.

He tries to wake her.

ANSEL (cont'd)

Isabel?!

NOAH

Is she OK?

ANSEL

She's not breathing.

ANSEL puts his head to her chest. He looks at them gravely.

ANSEL (cont'd)

She's dead.

NOAH

Oh, shit, oh, shit...

FIST

She's not dead.

ANSEL

Does she look alive to you?

FIST

She's fuckin' fine. She's resting.

NOAH

You fucking killed her, Fist.

FIST

No, I didn't.

ANSEL

She's not pretending to be dead, man!

FIST

Yes, she is. She's acting. It's not bad. We should give her a part in the movie.

ANSEL

Are you fucking insane?

FIST

Get up, Izzy. Look she's getting up.

ANSEL

No, she isn't!

FIST

Sure she is. She's just taking her sweet fuckin' time.

NOAH

Does anyone know CPR?

ANSEL

No. You?

NOAH

No.

ANSEL

Fuck it.

He leans over and starts giving her mouth-to-mouth.

NOAH

You have to pinch her nose.

ANSEL

What?

NOAH

So air doesn't-

ANSEL

I thought you didn't know how?!

NOAH

I don't!

ANSEL

You do it!

NOAH

I'M HANDCUFFED, YOU FUCKING IDIOT!

ANSEL

Where's the key? Fist?

FIST

I don't have the key.

NOAH

Bullshit!

ANSEL goes back to mouth-to-mouth, then pushes on her chest a few times. ISABEL remains still.

ANSEL

Oh, Christ. Oh, Jesus. You killed her Fist. You killed her.

FIST

It was an accident.

ANSEL

You threatened to kill her, Fist! Then you wrapped your hands around her neck and strangled her! How is anyone going to see that as an accident?!

FIST

She had a heart attack. She's got a condition.

ANSEL

What?

FIST

She was clutching at her heart. You didn't fuckin' see it? You guys don't pay attention to shit.

ANSEL

You killed her. I saw it. Noah saw it.

FIST

She was screaming "my heart! My heart!" You didn't hear it? I heard it.

NOAH

We gotta call 9-1-1. Or call down to the lodge and get somebody.

ANSEL

Nobody's down there except that loony deaf guy behind the front desk.

NOAH

He can hear fine. He can't talk is his problem. Call him.

ANSEL

How can he answer the phone if he can't talk?

NOAH

Call *somebody!*

ANSEL goes to the phone, grabs it.
FIST wrestles it from him.

ANSEL

You crazy fuck!

FIST

Let's not do something fuckin' stupid. OK?

ANSEL goes for the door. FIST stops him. They fight.

NOAH

Get him, Ansel! Get him! Come on!

FIST overwhelms ANSEL. He puts him in a choke hold and takes him to the floor against the stove, next to NOAH. He subdues him with a few shots to the ribs. He wraps an electrical cord (from a bag of gear) around him, tying him to the stove. Now both ANSEL and NOAH are against the stove.

FIST

We'll have to remember to include all this in the bonus DVD.

NOAH looks at the camera. Notices something. He looks at ANSEL, who is a little groggy. NOAH gestures for him to look at camera. FIST catches their looks.

FIST (cont'd)

What the fuck are you two looking at?

NOAH

Nothing.

FIST

Fuck you aren't. What is it?

He looks off. Eyes the camera.

FIST (cont'd)

This? This what you looking at?

FIST inspects the camera.

FIST (cont'd)

The fuckin' thing is on.

He looks at NOAH and ANSEL.

FIST (cont'd)

How long has this been on?

NOAH

I don't know.

FIST

It could've gotten everything.

ANSEL

I doubt it.

FIST

I don't.

NOAH

So what if it's been on? Just turn it off.

FIST

I'll tell you so fuckin' what. It got me strangling my sister here.

ANSEL

I'm sure it didn't.

FIST

Which makes it evidence.

NOAH

It's probably not on.

FIST

It's on. See the red fuckin' light?

NOAH

The red light means nothing.

FIST

I used to be the body guard for all kinds of assholes on all kinds of movie sets. I know good fuckin' well what a red fuckin' light means.

ANSEL

You can just get rid of the film. Then there's no evidence.

NOAH

Yeah, that's right.

FIST

Get rid of the film?

(he laughs)

No fuckin' way.

It's better than any movie you dumb fucks could come up with. I'm keeping the film. I'll edit all the bullshit out. And then Sundance here I come.

NOAH

You can't be serious.

FIST

"An independent film shoot goes horribly wrong when..." I'll figure out the fuckin' log line later. Let's spitball some new title ideas. How about *A Thousand Shades of Fist*?

ANSEL

I think you only have one shade.

FIST

What about *Fuck Shack*? Ooh, that is gold. Now we just need a fuckin' ending to the movie.

ANSEL

You can't keep shooting.

FIST

Fuck I can't. We came up here to make a movie, didn't we? What if I blew up the cabin?

NOAH

I hate that idea.

ANSEL

How's this for an ending? Fist lets Noah and Ansel go home?

FIST

But that wouldn't be true to Fist's character, would it? And we are dealing in truth here, aren't we? Especially now.

NOAH

You don't believe in happy endings?

FIST

We making fuckin' *Bambi* here? Fuck happy endings. Happy endings are for massages. And people who need their hand held just to get through life.

ANSEL

Don't do this, Fist. Trash the film. Nobody has to know.

NOAH

Hell, take the whole camera and throw it in the ocean.

FIST

The only evidence I'm going to destroy is you two with this ending. Now, how we gonna do it? (beat) Ooh, I got it.

Excited, he turns the camera towards them. Adjusts a light.

FIST (cont'd)

This is going to be like *Fatal Attraction* meets *Philadelphia*. All right. I want you two to kiss.

ANSEL

Kiss?

FIST

Big time tongue, too.

ANSEL

Why?

FIST

Fuck Shack, Ansel, Fuck Shack.

NOAH

I'm not kissing Ansel. No way.

FIST

Really? "No way," No-no?

NOAH

Oh, because I'm gay I'll want to kiss Ansel?

FIST

That's what gay is, No-no.

NOAH

You know what I think? I think you're the one who's gay. Maybe you *liked* San Quentin. Found the rapings to be *enjoyable*. "Here's my ass, let me show you how to fuck it."

FIST walks over and slaps NOAH, who tries to block it.

NOAH (cont'd)

Truth hurts, doesn't it?!

This time, FIST bores in with his fist. NOAH tries to defend himself. Can't. FIST hits NOAH hard, subdues him. He gets back behind the camera.

FIST

Ansel, say "come here, my little love bunny." Put your hand on his leg, and then kiss him. Got it? All right. Camera rolling. Action.

ANSEL turns and looks at NOAH.

ANSEL

(no emotion)

Come here...my little...love bunny...

FIST

Cut. Come on, Ansel. With a little more feeling, please. Again. Camera rolling. Action.

ANSEL

(not much better)

Come here...my little-

FIST

Cut. Wow. How much you paying for all this college training, Ansel? Whatever it is, *they're fuckin' you*. Empty your head of all that hoity-toity shit and just act, you little fucker. Camera rolling. Action.

ANSEL

Come here, my little love puppy.

FIST

Cut. It's bunny, Ansel. Bunny. Love bunny. I know how you guys get a hard-on saying the lines as is. So say the fuckin' line as is. All right. Camera rolling. Action.

ANSEL

Come here, my little love bunny.

ANSEL puts his hand on NOAH'S leg, then leans in to kiss him. NOAH doesn't respond.

FIST

Cut. Noah? Kiss him back. Or I show you how I got the name Fist in prison. Ansel. Nice. If I didn't know it, I'd say you were the fuckin' cum chaser. Camera rolling. Action.

ANSEL

Come here, my little-

NOAH

Fuck you, Fist. Fuck you, you fucking low life piece of shit.

FIST comes towards NOAH.

NOAH (cont'd)

HELP! SOMEONE HELP! HELP US!

FIST pounds NOAH into silence.

FIST

That ought to look great on film. I wish we could do another fuckin' take. (beat) All right, if you two ain't gonna get busy, I gotta come up with something else.

He stands back and takes a long look at the two young men.

FIST (cont'd)

Wait. I think I got my ending. I'm going outside. To my truck. You two so much as make a fuckin' peep...

FIST glares at them. He exits. ANSEL strains to get free. Can't.

ANSEL

We're going to die in here. We're going to fucking die in here. (beat) This place is fucked up.

NOAH

I'll tell you what it is. It's a thousand shades of black. (beat) I do want to fuck your girlfriend, by the way.

ANSEL

What?

NOAH

I'm not gay. Or Jewish, for that matter.

ANSEL

You're not?

NOAH

It's just an act. My real name is Duane Peanuckle.

(adopting a slight drawl)

I'm from North Carolina. A guy's gotta do what he has to do to get ahead in Hollywood, right?

ANSEL

How ironic.

NOAH

Ironic?

ANSEL

Well, I am gay. I was sleeping with Caitlin to prove I wasn't. But I'm gay. I am gay.

ANSEL takes a long look at NOAH. He smiles a smile that says "I love you." Realizing, NOAH slowly leans away. FIST enters, wood under his arms. He drops it by the stove.

He goes into a production bag and retrieves a roll of duct tape.

FIST

Since you two assholes are clearly not going to take direction...

He puts some on ANSEL'S mouth. And then on NOAH'S. He steps out of the camera's view.

FIST (cont'd)

This is going to be fuckin' awesome. Like *Backdraft* meets *Philadelphia*.

FIST steps back in and loads the wood into the stove. Then, taking a match book, he lights one match and tosses it in. The guys struggle, screaming muted screams into the duct tape. The fire rises.

FIST (cont'd)

I'm a fuckin' genius.

He gets behind the camera.

FIST (cont'd)

This cabin has seen some shit. Almost hate to see it go.

He looks through the lens.

FIST (cont'd)

OK...and...action!

The guys continue to scream muted screams, as before, struggling to get free. Blackout.

Interlude

Lights rise. Music blares. Bonnie Tyler's "It's a Heartache." The same, tough, maid service returns, dressed as before, and removes all elements of play two. One of the them puts up a new clock, which is stuck at 12:25, on the wall. They remove a few stones from the fireplace, as if they have fallen, and put them at the base of the stove (the "IT" stone should be replaced). They leave a single duffel bag, by the bed, which says "Bowdoin Football" on the side of it. When they leave, the lights, and the music, fade out.

Lemon Drop

August. Late afternoon. Hot. August 1978. At rise, JOHN, 51, is pacing. He is thin, haggard, unshaven. In the bathroom, with the door closed, is ISABEL, now 13. She is in a pretty, and very adult, dress. It makes her look much older than 13. She is standing on the toilet trying to open a small window that is stuck. ISABEL pounds lightly on the glass. Hearing her, JOHN stops pacing and listens. After a moment, he paces again. In the bathroom, ISABEL pulls and tugs, gets the window open slightly, and then pounds the glass again, this time louder. JOHN stops, listens. ISABEL stops, too, concerned he might have heard her. He goes to the bathroom door to speak to her (he does not have a Maine accent).

JOHN

Isabel, is everything OK?

She freezes.

ISABEL

Yes.

JOHN

What are you doing in there?

ISABEL

Nothin'.

JOHN

Nothing? You have to be doing something. You've been in there 20 minutes.

ISABEL

I'm takin' a bath.

JOHN

I didn't hear the water running. I heard pounding. Is something wrong?

ISABEL

Daddy, stop buggin' me.

JOHN

I'm not bugging you, I'm-

ISABEL
I have my period!

She steps down off the toilet.

JOHN
What? You have your period? OK, no reason to panic.

ISABEL
Yes, there is! I'm bleedin'!

JOHN
You're bleeding?

ISABEL
I have my period!

JOHN
All right...uh, wow. How long have you been having your period?

ISABEL
This is my first one!

JOHN
Really?

ISABEL
Yes, really! I need tampons! Can you go out and get some?

JOHN
Do you know how to use them?

ISABEL
Daddy! I'll figure it out! I'm bleedin' all down my legs!

JOHN
You are? Girls bleed that much the first time-

ISABEL
Yes!

JOHN
Can you use toilet paper?

ISABEL
What?! Daddy, I need tampons!

JOHN
I can't leave you here by yourself.

ISABEL
I'm safe.

JOHN

I'm not letting you out of my sight.

ISABEL

Daddy, there's blood everywhere in here!

JOHN

OK, OK, hold on.

He goes to the front door, half opens it, pokes his head out, waves. OFFICER SNODGRASS, in full blues, appears at the door. He pushes his way in.

JOHN (cont'd)

Hi, I was wondering if-

OFFICER SNODGRASS

All good in here? Where is she?

JOHN

She's in the bathroom.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

You be nice to her, Coach Pepperton. She's been through a lot.

JOHN

Yes, of course, Officer...

OFFICER SNODGRASS

Snodgrass.

JOHN

I need you to get something, Officer Snodgrass. For my daughter. Tampons, actually.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

Tampons? (beat) I see. Will do.

He looks at the bathroom and then back at JOHN, smiling oddly.

OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)

My partner Jensen and me are gonna be right there down the drive if you need anything else.

He exits.

ISABEL

Who's out there? I heard voices.

JOHN

It was the police.

ISABEL

Not the same men from the house, I hope.

JOHN

No. And only two of them. Snodgrass and-

ISABEL

Snodgrass?

JOHN

Yeah, Snodgrass. Funny name, right? He's going to get you some tampons.

ISABEL

You told him about my period?! That's swell, Daddy!

JOHN

It's a perfectly normal thing for a girl to go through. The policeman doesn't care.

ISABEL

I care!

JOHN

Please don't be upset.

ISABEL

I'm never comin' out of this bathroom ever again!

JOHN

I really wish your mom was here.

ISABEL

I don't! She was screamin' at us when we left the house!

JOHN

She thought it was stupid coming here. But you really wanted to. And I want to make you happy.

He sits on the bed. He cries.

ISABEL

Daddy?

After a moment, ISABEL comes out of the bathroom.

ISABEL (cont'd)

Are you cryin'?

He wipes his eyes.

JOHN

Sorry. I cry now. You should know that.

ISABEL

This is freaky.

JOHN

Football coaches don't cry. Our steely resolve. No crying allowed. It's a unwritten rule. Unless we win a big game. And we didn't do much of that at Bowdoin.

ISABEL

You miss coachin'?

JOHN

No.

ISABEL

It used to be everything to you.

JOHN

I know. (beat) I thought you needed tampons.

ISABEL

Oh.

JOHN

You don't have your period?

She shrugs.

JOHN (cont'd)

What's going on?

ISABEL

I just didn't wanna come out. Everything still feels weird. Bein' back and all.

JOHN

Give it time. Only been a week.

ISABEL

I don't know what I'm supposed to do or say or anything.

JOHN

Me, either. (beat) So...have you had your period? I mean, you're 13 now and...

ISABEL

Daddy.

JOHN

I've missed out on so much of your life.

ISABEL

You always did.

JOHN

I know. And then you got taken away from me and for five years all I've wanted to do is spend time with you. Hear you laugh. Hold you. Kiss you.

ISABEL

Daddy.

JOHN

Sorry. I just can't believe you're really here. (beat) Can I hold your hand?

ISABEL

What?

JOHN

Just...can I just hold your hand? Just for a minute.

ISABEL

(reluctantly)

OK.

Sitting down on the bed, she gives him her hand. He holds it lovingly.

JOHN

(overwhelmed)

This is nice.

Awkward.

JOHN (cont'd)

Well, what do you want to do? We can sit out on the porch or walk to the beach or just talk. I'm boring you. I can see it in your face.

ISABEL

It's OK. You were never that exciting.

Smiles.

ISABEL (cont'd)

So...Mom is all into clay now?

JOHN

Yeah. I think it helped take her mind off things.

ISABEL

And Michael is mean.

JOHN

He got used to being an only child, I think. He'll adjust.

ISABEL

He's got a potty mouth.

JOHN

Yeah, we're working on that.

ISABEL

I heard you call him Little Pussy Michael.

JOHN

You heard that? I guess I'm not helping much in the Potty Mouth Department. (beat) I'm sorry about the TV people. They are awful.

ISABEL

And everywhere. Everyone is all over me about this. You sure nobody can find us down here, though?

JOHN

This part of Bailey Island? No way. It's just you, me, and a couple of cops.

Beat.

ISABEL

You left my room exactly as it was before. At home.

JOHN

Nice, right?

ISABEL

No, creepy. I'm not eight anymore.

JOHN

You are to me.

He reaches into his wallet.

JOHN (cont'd)

Hey, I have a photo of you here. This is you at the game against Amherst.

He shows her the photo.

JOHN (cont'd)

Are you a cute little cheerleader or what?

ISABEL

I hated that outfit.

JOHN

No, you didn't. You loved it.

He puts away the wallet. She notices:

ISABEL
You've lost some hair.

JOHN
It happens.

ISABEL
And you're a little fatter.

JOHN
I haven't been eating well. I was on the road a lot.
Looking for you.
(noticing...)
You've got a lipstick smudge.

He wipes it with his thumb. She is
very stiff as he does it.

JOHN (cont'd)
It's not coming off. Hold on.

He gets up. He goes into the
kitchenette. He grabs a hand towel and
wets it at the sink.

ISABEL
Dad...forget it.

He returns to her.

JOHN
Just let me get it. You shouldn't be in lipstick.

He wipes again. Forcefully.

ISABEL
Hey!

She resists. He doesn't stop.

JOHN
I just want to get it off.

They struggle briefly.

ISABEL
You're hurtin' me!

He stops.

JOHN
Sorry. (beat) Sorry. (beat) What are you doing in
lipstick anyway?

ISABEL
He likes it.

JOHN
Who likes it?

ISABEL
Joe.

JOHN
Why are you thinking about him?

ISABEL
I just am.

JOHN
Lipstick makes you look all grown up.

ISABEL
He likes me all grown up.

JOHN
Did he buy you this dress?

She looks down at herself.

ISABEL
He did.

JOHN
And the earrings?

ISABEL
He gave them to me on my birthday last year.

JOHN
I don't want you wearing any of it any more.

He looks at her a long time.

JOHN (cont'd)
What was it like, Isabel? That whole thing.

ISABEL
I don't know. What was it like for you?

JOHN
Me? Like time was standing still. Like this thing was overwhelming me and at any moment, I was going to drown. You were all I could think about. Sometimes I felt guilty when something made me laugh. Or smile. Like I had no right. (beat) Do you have any idea what it was like not knowing what had happened to you? I can't imagine anything worse than not knowing.

ISABEL
Can't you?

JOHN
(noticing...)
There's a scar on your forehead.

ISABEL
There is?

JOHN
Two scars. Three. Looks like you were burned. Did he do that to you?

ISABEL
I don't know. No.

She covers herself.

JOHN
Are you lying?

ISABEL
No.

JOHN
He never tried to hurt you?

She rubs her arm.

JOHN (cont'd)
He do something to your arm?

ISABEL
I don't wanna talk about this.

JOHN
Tell me what he did to you.

ISABEL
Nothin'. He's nice to me.

JOHN
Nice?

ISABEL
Yes.

JOHN
Did he...uh...did he ever lie down with you?

ISABEL
Of course.

JOHN

I mean, did he lie close, in bed, like me and your mom?

ISABEL

Like you and Mom? I remember *you* bein' in the guest room a lot.

JOHN

Did he put his hands on you? In ways you didn't like?

ISABEL

I *always* like it. He loves me.

JOHN

He doesn't love you.

ISABEL

Yes, he does. He says it all the time.

JOHN

He doesn't love you. Don't say that. How can you think-

ISABEL

Cigarette burns are a sign of love. Broken arms are a sign of love. When he ties me up and presses himself down on top of me and pushes my face into the bed, and puts things inside me, it's because he loves me. I scream and cry and bleed because I know he loves me.

JOHN

Oh, my God.

He starts to cry again.

ISABEL

He pays attention to me. You *never* paid attention to me. Every night when he comes home, he tells me he misses me. When he locks me up in my box at night, he sits outside and reads to me. You *never* read to me. He says good night. You never said good night. He tells me he loves me. (beat) All I ever wanted was for you to tell me you loved me.

JOHN

I love you, Isabel.

ISABEL

I don't believe you. (beat) You're cryin' again.

JOHN

Why do you speak about him in present tense?

ISABEL

What do you mean?

JOHN

"He's nice to me. He pays attention to me." You speak as if it's still going on.

ISABEL

Oh. That's a weird thing to notice.

JOHN

It's over. You know that, right?

ISABEL

(abruptly)

It's really hot in here.

JOHN

There's no AC.

ISABEL

Can you open a window?

He gets up and opens the front window. He closes the curtain, fingers it back briefly, to look, then drags it back.

JOHN

There.

He stands there. Doesn't know what to say.

JOHN (cont'd)

You want to watch TV?

ISABEL

There is no TV.

JOHN

(looking around)

Oh. Yeah. (beat) You see what that strange guy at the lodge was watching on his TV when we checked in? Bizarre.

ISABEL

It's called *Faces of Death*. Supposed to be real deaths. That people film.

JOHN

Real? I can't imagine what a person would find entertaining in that.

ISABEL

Some people like dark things. You sure you don't miss football?

JOHN

No. There was a lot of pressure, even at a small college like Bowdoin. Sometimes I think about coaching again. Maybe high school. There's a kid back in Brunswick who's got promise. As a quarterback. I know he's only 13, but he's going to go far, I can tell. Maybe you know him. Tommy Cole?

ISABEL

Why would I know him?

JOHN

Oh. Right. I don't know. You wouldn't, I guess. What do you want to do? What do you like to do?

ISABEL

I don't know.

Beat. Awkward.

ISABEL (cont'd)

Where are you gonna sleep tonight? Only one bed.

JOHN

I won't sleep. Hey, maybe they have board games in here. We could play checkers or-

ISABEL

Checkers? That's a stupid game.

JOHN

OK. What do you want to do?

ISABEL

I don't know.

JOHN

I'm really hungry. Are you hungry? I can have the cops go get us some pizza.

ISABEL

Sure. I like pizza.

JOHN

(enthusiastic)

Great. Great. What kind do you want?

ISABEL

Whatever.

JOHN

Pepperoni or cheese or what? I don't remember what you used to like.

ISABEL

I don't care. Anything. Whatever.

JOHN

There's Pedro's Pizza. In Brunswick. How's that?

There is a knock at the door. JOHN gets up and gets it.

JOHN (cont'd)

Yeah?

Tampons in hand, OFFICER SNODGRASS pushes his way in.

JOHN (cont'd)

Can we do this outside?

OFFICER SNODGRASS

(approaching Isabel)

You doin' all right?

She nods wordlessly. He offers her the tampons.

OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)

Your *daddy* said you needed these. Got 'em from the lodge.

JOHN

Officer Snodgrass, you don't have to-

OFFICER SNODGRASS

Yes, I do.

She takes the tampons from OFFICER SNODGRASS.

JOHN

OK, thanks. Can you get us some pizza, too? Pedro's in Brunswick. Or any place you know.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

I'll call it in. Partner and I can't leave the grounds. Strict orders.

(to Isabel)

Is there anything else you need?

She shakes her head "no."

OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)

I don't mind. It's my job. My job is to fix all our problems.

ISABEL

I'm good.

SNODGRASS exits.

JOHN

Oh, boy. His name isn't the only thing a little funny. Sorry about him barging in like that. At least he seems competent. Unlike everyone else. I mean, the police couldn't find you. *I* found you.

ISABEL

You also lost me.

Beat.

JOHN

Yes. (beat) How did he do it? How did this guy grab you?

ISABEL

It was at that football thing in Portland.

JOHN

I know that. The Patriots summer camp. But how did he get you? Your mom and I left you at that kids' tent for five minutes to go hear Chuck Fairbanks speak.

ISABEL

It wasn't five minutes!

JOHN

What happened?!

ISABEL

Why is this important?!

JOHN

I just want to know how he did it!

ISABEL

I don't remember!

JOHN

(aggressive)

The lady at the tent told us he talked to you for thirty seconds and then gave you something. What did he give you? Money? Pretty little earrings?

ISABEL

I don't fuckin' remember!

This stops JOHN.

JOHN

Oh, my God, I am so sorry. Oh, Jesus. What am I doing?

ISABEL

You were bein' mean. You were being Dad the Football Coach.

JOHN

Maybe I'm just tired. I haven't eaten anything. I'm sorry.

ISABEL

Forget it.

JOHN

I can't wait for the pizza. I'm going to see if there's something here.

He goes to the kitchenette and opens the fridge.

JOHN (cont'd)

Red hot dogs and Moxie. Oh, boy.

ISABEL

I have some lemon drops, if you want one.

JOHN

You do?

ISABEL

Yeah. I always keep them. My little addiction.

She goes into her dress pocket, retrieving a tiny bag.

JOHN

No, thanks, hon.

ISABEL

They're pretty fillin'.

JOHN

Yeah?

ISABEL

Sure. They're big.

JOHN

All right, then.

He closes the fridge. She gives him one. He puts it into his mouth.

JOHN (cont'd)

Sweet.

ISABEL
They're lemon drops.

JOHN
And a little salty. Bizarre.

He sits down on the bed.

ISABEL
Here, have two.

She offers another.

JOHN
One is fine.

ISABEL
You're hungry, aren't you?

He smiles.

JOHN
OK.

He takes a second lemon drop and puts it in his mouth.

JOHN (cont'd)
You going to have one?

ISABEL
No. I can wait for the pizza.

She sits next to him. They sit quietly for a moment as he tosses around the candy in his mouth.

JOHN
So now what?

ISABEL
Now we wait. (beat) For the pizza.

JOHN
I thought we could talk.

ISABEL
About what?

JOHN
Where we go from here.

ISABEL
Oh.

JOHN

How we make up for lost time.

ISABEL

We can't make up for lost time.

JOHN

We can try.

ISABEL

You can't get back what's gone.

JOHN

You're awfully wise for 13.

ISABEL

Joe gives me...uh, gave me books to read. Lots and lots of books.

JOHN

What sort of books?

ISABEL

Books about culture and stuff. Society. All the problems we have.

Tired, he half-laughs, agreeing,
rubbing his eyes.

JOHN

We do have a lot of problems. Vietnam is over, though.

ISABEL

Joe wants to fix all our problems.

JOHN, looking dazed, barely hears her.

JOHN

Wow, I haven't had a lemon drop in forever.

He sighs, looks at her, smiles. She
doesn't react, so he looks off. He
takes a deep breath in, and then lets
it out.

JOHN (cont'd)

Wow, I am tired. You tired?

ISABEL

No.

JOHN

(looking up at the clock)

12:25? That can't be right.

The clock on the wall says 12:25.

ISABEL

I think that clock is broken. It's been on 12:25 since we got here.

He checks his watch.

JOHN

It's 6:15. (beat) I can't ever remember being this tired.

ISABEL

Maybe you'll sleep tonight.

JOHN

No. (beat) You know, we don't even know this guy's last name. All we have is "Joe." The police raided the house after you and I fled and there was no identification anywhere. No paperwork, nothing. (beat) What's Joe's last name? Did he ever say it to you?

ISABEL

No.

JOHN

Never? Are you sure?

ISABEL

Why are you pushin' me?

JOHN

Because I want to find this man. I want to know what he looks like, what he did for a living. What were his daily habits? Did he ever come down out of the mountains? I want to know everything.

ISABEL

I thought we came up here to get away from all that?

JOHN

His name was Joe. What was his last name?

ISABEL

I don't know.

JOHN

Joe Smith?

ISABEL

I don't know.

JOHN

Joe Johnson? Joe Downs? Joe Merriweather?

ISABEL

Stop it.

JOHN

Joe Emerson? Joe Williams?

ISABEL

Shut up!

JOHN

Joe Young? Joe Brown? Joe Harrison?

ISABEL

Please!

JOHN

Joe Reynolds? Joe Wilson? Joe-

ISABEL

Snodgrass!

She catches herself, startled. He looks hard at her.

JOHN

What? What did you say? Did you say Snodgrass? Snodgrass? Like the cop outside?

His breath labors hard. He swoons.

JOHN (cont'd)

Oh, shit.

He starts to rise, as if to go to the door, but his body goes half-limp, and he hits the floor on his knees.

JOHN (cont'd)

Jesus, what's wrong with me?

He looks up at her.

JOHN (cont'd)

I'm...

He tries to reach for her, but he falls to the floor. The candy spills out of his mouth. He tries to get up. Can't.

ISABEL

Don't fight it, John.

JOHN

Isabel...?

ISABEL
Relax. The poison won't kill you. At least, it's not supposed to.

JOHN
Poison?

ISABEL
It just paralyzes you. For a little while.

JOHN
Wha...what are you doing?

ISABEL
I'm doin' to you what he did to me.

JOHN
Huh?

ISABEL
He gave me a lemon drop. To get me to his car. It's laced with some thing with a really weird name. Starts with an "r." He said it's from the sixties.

JOHN
I...

ISABEL
He told me to always keep these lemon drops in my pocket in case I need them. In case anyone came for me.

JOHN
Isabel...

He starts crying again.

ISABEL
I'm sorry, John. I'm going back to him.

JOHN
Wh-why?

ISABEL
Because he loves me and takes care of me.

He can hardly talk. Or move.

JOHN
I've changed.

ISABEL
So have I.

She stands up.

Goodbye.

ISABEL (cont'd)

Mustering the strength, he snatches her leg. She tries to get away, but he holds on. She falls.

Let go of me!

ISABEL (cont'd)

You're *my* daughter.

JOHN

She pulls free, kicking him. He rolls, goes limp. She looks at him. Inspects him closely. She then reaches into his back pocket and removes his wallet, taking all the cash in it.

No...

JOHN (cont'd)
(grunting)

She tosses the wallet down at him. She gets up and goes into the bathroom. Doesn't close the door. She climbs back onto the toilet and attempts to get out the window. It's very difficult for her. In the other room, JOHN regains some strength and begins to drag his body slowly towards the bathroom. Just as he gets to the open door, she sees him, gets off the toilet, and tries to close the door. He blocks it.

Isabel...

JOHN (cont'd)

She kicks at him. They fight. At one of her kicks, he grabs her foot. Down she goes. He pulls her towards him.

Please...

JOHN (cont'd)

Her shoe comes off and she's temporarily free. She tries to close the door again. He stops her. She slaps at him. Over and over. Finally, he grabs an arm and pulls her down, out of the bathroom.

You're my daughter.
JOHN (cont'd)

She fights to free herself. He pulls her all the way into his arms.

No! No! Noooooooo!
ISABEL

You're my daughter.
JOHN

Noo!
ISABEL

He holds on with everything he's got, crying.

You're my daughter...you're my daughter...you're my daughter...
JOHN

After a moment, he goes limp again. She frees herself. Just then, a pounding at the door. She rushes to get it. OFFICER SNODGRASS enters.

I heard screamin'.
OFFICER SNODGRASS

I'm OK.
ISABEL

She embraces him.

Don't.
OFFICER SNODGRASS
(pushing her off)

He ducks out the door.

All good, Jensen!
OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)

Entering again, he closes the door. He sees JOHN.

What happened, Isabel?
OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)

I gave him the lemon drops.
ISABEL

He inspects the body.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

You really fucked up.

ISABEL

But I brought him here, like you told me to, if I was ever found. Because you said you would come. I gave him the lemon drops, like you told me to do, Daddy.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

You should never have allowed yourself to be caught. You compromised everything.

ISABEL

But I did what you told me to do.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

What does he know?

ISABEL

Nothing.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

You've been at home for a week. What does he know?

ISABEL

Nothing.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

You've been alone together, in here, for almost an hour. What did you talk about?

ISABEL

I...

OFFICER SNODGRASS

What?

ISABEL

He tricked me.

He turns, cold-blooded, and looks at her.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

What do you mean?

ISABEL

He tricked me. He knows who you are.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

Oh, Isabel. You *really* fucked up.

ISABEL

He was talkin' in circles. I got confused!

OFFICER SNODGRASS
I'm gonna need you to do somethin'.

ISABEL
What?

OFFICER SNODGRASS
He knows. No one can know.

ISABEL
What does that mean?

OFFICER SNODGRASS
You've been traumatized. You weren't thinkin' straight. You got into a fight. You hit him.

ISABEL
What are you talkin' about?

OFFICER SNODGRASS
I want you to finish him off.

ISABEL can't respond. He looks around the room.

OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)
There's several loose stones from the fireplace. Grab one.

ISABEL
And do what?

OFFICER SNODGRASS
Grab one!

She does.

OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)
Kill him, Isabel.

ISABEL
What?

OFFICER SNODGRASS
No one can know about me.

She looks at him, then down at her father.

OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)
Do it.

She hesitates, getting emotional.

ISABEL

Daddy, please.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

He never loved you, never hugged you, or spent any time with you. It was like you didn't exist.

Suddenly, she brings down the rock, cracking her father's skull.

OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)

Keep goin'.

She hits her father again. And again. Blood flies. She stops.

OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)

Very good.

ISABEL seems deeply traumatized.

ISABEL

Can we go now?

OFFICER SNODGRASS

No. I have to arrest you.

ISABEL

Why?

OFFICER SNODGRASS

You killed him.

ISABEL

You told me to do it!

OFFICER SNODGRASS

So?

ISABEL

I wanna go back home with you!

OFFICER SNODGRASS

You can't come back now. You're a killer. And you have your period.

ISABEL

No...no, I don't. I was just pretendin'.

OFFICER SNODGRASS

You have your period.

ISABEL

I don't!

OFFICER SNODGRASS

You're all grown up.

ISABEL

I thought you liked me grown up!

OFFICER SNODGRASS

You're not the sweet, precious thing I once knew. Not even close. I'm gonna call my partner outside.

He turns away, pulls out his walkie-talkie, and...

OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)

Jensen, this is Snodgrass.

He can't get out the rest of it. ISABEL comes up behind him and strikes him with the stone in the back of the head. He falls, stunned. On the floor, he turns to look up at her.

OFFICER SNODGRASS (cont'd)

Isabel...?

Falling on top of him, she hits him again. And again. Until he is no longer moving. She rolls off, breathing hard. She drops the stone. She is dazed. She sits on the floor, confused, traumatized. She just breathes and stares out at nothing, book-ended by the two bludgeoned bodies. The sound of footsteps approaching outside. The lights slowly fade out.

Epilogue

Lights up. The maid service enters and cleans the place, strips the bed, puts on new sheets, puts a chocolate on the pillow, and exits. They hit the outside porch light. Everything goes black. Crickets rise. Fade.

End of play