

**From Here to Insanity**

by

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From Here to INSANITY was first produced at the Glenmore Dinner Theatre, Calgary, Alberta in January, 1988, with the following cast:

VICKY	Alexandria Patience
JAMES	Doug Fletcher
SARAH	Suzanne Franks
BENNY	John Isaacs

Directed by Zelda Dean

#### CAST OF CHARACTERS

VICTORIA (Vicky) Thirties, upper middle class, maybe an Englishwoman who is kind hearted and conservative. She is usually very capable of coping, but as the play opens, she is a little frazzled. Her condition worsens as the play progresses, though she does come to an important realization.

SARAH Twenty-five. Is a quiet girl who doesn't get to say much, so when she does, what she says is important. From a childhood trauma, she got GLADYS who protects SARAH with the words from the Bible and power of the Lord. The flip side of GLADYS is LOLA. LOLA loves life and is a very sensual and sexual woman with a possessive streak. GLADYS and LOLA are equally passionate at their different ends of the spectrum.

BENNY Twenty-five. "Can communicate, but he doesn't talk". BENNY is a very happy, likeable, energetic young man. He makes himself clearly understood at all times and in no way should he come across as developmentally delayed.

JAMES Late twenties. Is a perfectly normal guy "except that he has blackouts". When he blacks out RITA emerges as his female side. RITA is everything that JAMES isn't, feminine and outrageous. RITA really believes that she is a woman, care in casting should ensure that RITA is a woman as opposed to a gay JAMES.

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Pre curtain

VO Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen. I've been given this news report. A fire has broken out at The Parker Centre. Firefighters are on the scene now. We'll take you to our man-on-the-spot reporter, Larry Kane.

Well, Bill, I'm here at the Parker Psychiatric Centre. You can hear all the happenings in the background. The firefighters are still trying to bring the flames under control. Two thirds of the building is now totally destroyed. Amazingly, it seems that, as of this moment, we have no news of fatalities or casualties. The staff managed to evacuate all the residents, it seems, before disaster struck. There is no word as to the cause of the fire and no estimate of damages. We'll keep you posted as to the new developments as they unfold, but now, back to you Bill. (Lights come up on the house of VICKY. She is sorting books into boxes and separating Cosmopolitans from Playboys)

VICKY Vicky, Richard, Vicky, Richard, Richard, Richard.

(The doorbell rings)

VICKY Richard? Now Vicky, settle down. It could be Richard come to beg forgiveness and demand that I stop the divorce proceedings, but more than likely it's a girl guide selling cookies. (Smiles) I hope she has fudgeeos.

(She crosses to the door and lets in GLADYS and BENNY)

GLADYS Hello, are you Doctor Shane's wife?

VICKY Only technically.

GLADYS I'm Gladys. We've come to live with you.

VICKY I beg your pardon.

GLADYS Didn't Dr. Shane phone you?

BENNY indicates that the phones weren't working, (hands her a note)

GLADYS Yes, I guess the fire caused the lines to go down.

VICKY What fire?

GLADYS        At the Home.

VICKY        There was a fire at the Parker Centre? Well, come in. Hi, I'm Vicky.

(BENNY holds out his hand and smiles)

and you are?

(BENNY smiles more broadly)

Well, yes, I expect you're in shock. What a terrible ordeal you must have been through. Sit down and I just put the kettle on. (pause) A nice cup of tea will soon revive you.

(BENNY nods and sits on the sofa)

Maybe I should read this huh? (She reads) Dear Vicky, Please excuse this scrawl, but a doctor's handwriting is never very good at the best of times. There has been a fire and the Red Cross was having a hard time. You see, the hospital beds are all full, so I'm sending three of my clients to stay with you for a few days until some other permanent arrangement can be worked out. You always did have a big heart and they have no other place to go. I'll phone you later. Thanks so much. Richard. P.S. Benny can communicate, but he doesn't talk.

(VICKY looks up. BENNY nods) Would you like a pencil and paper so that you can write down what you'd like to say?

(BENNY nods his head).

Oh, you can write!

BENNY        (shakes his head ) purrs like a cat.

VICKY        (surprised) Pardon me?

BENNY        purrs again

VICKY        (realizing) Oh, it's a picture of Tybalt. I found her on the highway. It seems she was recently abandoned. We have a lot in common. I just put the Kelly on before you arrived. It won't take long to boil. Well, I have one spare bedroom that has two beds. As it happens, I've taken a couple of weeks off work. I have some work to do at the house, sorting out stuff...

BENNY        (smiles, nods,) whistles

VICKY            He's whistling. Does he think he's a bird?

GLADYS           No, he's imitating your kettle.

VICKY            Would you like some tea, Gladys?

GLADYS           That would be lovely. Bless you.

BENNY            (sneezes) giggles

VICKY            Benny, would you like some? Coffee?

BENNY            imitates a can being opened

VICKY            Oh, pop, coke?

BENNY            (holds up 7 fingers and thumbs up)

VICKY            7-Up? I'll be right back. (She exits to the Kitchen)

GLADYS           What have you got there, Benny?

                      (BENNY picks up the photo of the cat to have a closer inspection. )

BENNY            purrs

GLADYS           Yes, isn't that sweet. Did you have one when you were a child?

BENNY            (nods) barks.

GLADYS           Oh, you had a dog also.

                      (BENNY twitches his nose)

GLADYS           And a rabbit.

                      (BENNY move his hands close together)

                      Smaller, a guinea pig

                      (BENNY moves his hand closer)

                      A hamster. Well, isn't that lovely. What happened to the hamster?

BENNY miaows, squeaks, smacks his hand down like a cat and makes eating noises.

GLADYS Oh, dear, what happened to your cat?

BENNY makes a sound like a cat miaowing, then a speeding car, then the cat, the speeding car closer, louder, the cat, the car, a squeal of brakes and a 'splat' noise

GLADYS Oh dear, how tragic. What happened to the dog?

BENNY makes a barking sound getting further and further away.

VICKY (Entering with a tea tray) Well, here we are. Benny, here's your 7- Up.

(The doorbell rings)

GLADYS Oh, I'll pour. You can go to the door.

VICKY Okay.

(She goes to the door and in falls RITA)

RITA (Doing a 1940 movie star tragedy act) Oh, oh, everything is gone! (Holding back the tears) Everything.

VICKY Oh, my....

GLADYS Oh, not you...

RITA (Composing himself and taking VICKY's hand) Hello. You must be Mrs. Shane.

VICKY Call me Vicky.

RITA Oh, never, never. That's a bastardization.

(SARAH drops an empty cup)

GLADYS Language.

RITA English. I shall call you Victoria. That is your full name isn't it?

VICKY Er, yes, Victoria, but most people call me Vicky.

RITA Never. Victoria is just too beautiful a name to shorten. You may call me Rita.

VICKY (A little taken aback) Rita?

RITA Yes.

VICKY Well, Rita, come in. We're just having tea. Would you like some?

RITA Earl Grey with lemon, thank you.

GLADYS I'll get another cup and saucer.

VICKY Oh, no Gladys. You sit down. I'll get it.

GLADYS No, allow me. I love to be of service. (She exits to the Kitchen)

VICKY Sit down Rita. Make yourself comfortable.

RITA (As if to faint) Oh, oh.

VICKY Are you alright?

RITA Oh, I just love this room, this chintz, those darling little lace pillows. You have wonderful taste Victoria.

VICKY Thank you.

RITA And this table cloth. I have a lace dress exactly in that same material. (Bites the knuckle of his index finger to show anguish. His voice breaks) I mean I used to. But it's all gone now.

(Enter GLADYS with cup and saucer)

Everything, my sequined dress, my make-up kit, even my glow-in-the-dark earrings.

GLADYS Thank Heaven for small mercies.

RITA (turns) Gladys, you are an evil woman.

GLADYS Evil! I walk at one with God.

RITA Well it's 10 after. You're late.

GLADYS (Ignoring him) I know why there was a fire today.

RITA Oh yeah. So do I.

GLADYS It was the wrath of God.

RITA It was Dr. John smoking in the supply room.

GLADYS How do you know. Were you there?

RITA Err, no, just a lucky guess.

GLADYS Ha!

VICKY Did you see the fire start, Rita?

RITA Well...

GLADYS She's...

VICKY She?

GLADYS Yes, she's not going to say if she saw Dr. John. Then she'll have to explain why she was in a room that was out of bounds to clients.

VICKY Well, Rita, I think if you saw anything, you'll have to report it to the authorities. There'll be an investigation and maybe you can help.

GLADYS What were you stealing, Rita?

RITA I didn't steal.

GLADYS (Knowingly to VICKY) She steals bed sheets (To RITA) Are you still wearing them as togas?

RITA I only took some cotton balls.

VICKY Cotton balls?

RITA (Sadly, caught) Yes.

VICKY Why?

RITA You see we only have so much allowance we can spend. I spent all mine on a darling new dress and I'd forgotten I needed cotton balls. I didn't have anything to take my make up off with at night and we have to you know. It's just not good



for your skin you know and mine has a tendency to be oily, actually, I'm the common type - dry forehead and cheeks but oily around the nose and chin. I share my cleansers with Lola. We have the same type skin. (To GLADYS) By the way, when's Lola coming?

VICKY Who?

RITA Dr. Shane told me that Lola was going to be here. That's the only reason I agreed to come here.

VICKY Oh, dear, I don't think I have room for any more house guests.

GLADYS Lola sent me.

RITA You came instead of Lola?

GLADYS Yes. I talked to her and we agreed that I'd be the most helpful to Sarah right now.

VICKY Who's Sarah?

GLADYS She lives with Lola and me.

RITA Poor thing. I haven't seen Sarah for ages.

VICKY Is anyone hungry? Would you like something to eat?

BENNY smacks his lips

VICKY I have cookies, some cake and I could make some sandwiches.

BENNY mimes picking an apple from a tree. It has a worm in it

VICKY An apple? Okay. No problem. Gladys, would you like some fruit?

GLADYS No thanks. I'll help when it comes to supper though. I'm a good cook.

RITA So am I.

GLADYS Cooking is women's work.

RITA I am a woman.

GLADYS You are a man masquerading as a woman.

RITA           And you are a cow masquerading as a human being.

GLADYS        Don't call me a cow.

RITA           O.K. not a cow, you're just a moooddy person.

VICKY         Oh, dear, Rita, would you like anything to eat?

RITA           No thanks, but I'd like to slip into something more comfortable.

VICKY         You're not comfortable in your shirt and pants.

RITA           No, do you have anything I might borrow. I'd take very good care of it. I promise. Not like Lola. You know, I once lent her my silk blouse and she put a cigarette burn in it.

VICKY         How dreadful.

RITA           I was perturbed.

GLADYS        Smoking is for sinners.

RITA           Gladys, don't you have a Bible to read or something? Victoria, do you have a Bible Gladys could borrow?

VICKY         I don't know if I have one.

GLADYS        (Screams) You're an atheist!

VICKY         Well, no, I'm sure I have one somewhere. It's just that I'm in the middle of packing and I don't know if I can lay my hands on it.

GLADYS        It's O.K. I have it with me.

VICKY         I didn't see you bring anything in with you. Are you sure you didn't leave it in the taxi?

GLADYS        No, it's here.

VICKY         Where?

GLADYS        (points to her head) Up here.

VICKY         Oh.

GLADYS I memorized it.

VICKY You memorized it?

GLADYS Yes.

VICKY The passages you like the best.

GLADYS No, the whole thing.

VICKY Really.

GLADYS Well, you never know where you'll be when you need the wisdom and you don't have a Bible handy and then what do you do?

VICKY So you *memorized the whole thing*?

GLADYS Yes.

VICKY That must have been very difficult.

GLADYS No. Learning is easy when you like what you're learning.

VICKY I guess so.

GLADYS Do you want me to recite for you from the begin-?

RITA *No*, absolutely not.

GLADYS Well I could skip ahead to the bits that just apply to you Rita.

VICKY Well memorizing the whole Bible certainly is an accomplishment. You must be proud.

GLADYS Yes, Sarah wanted to be an actress, but her mother wouldn't let her. I acted in the church plays several times. I was Mary in the Christmas pageant three years running.

VICKY Well, with your skill for memorizing, acting would probably be a good career choice.

RITA Be a preacher. You'd make more money.

GLADYS If I made a lot of money I'd give it to the poor people.

VICKY            That's nice.

RITA             That's stupid.

VICKY            What would your ideal career choice be, Rita?

GLADYS          Why don't you go into acting Rita? It would seem your forte.

RITA             No, in our Christmas play, they wouldn't let me play Mary.

GLADYS          I should hope not. How blasphemous.

RITA             So I had to be a shepherd and some stupid teacher tied a dish towel around my head and then I saw the 3 kings and they got tinfoil and sequined crowns. I asked one kid to trade with me. He didn't want to, but I got the crown in the end.

Vicky            The powers of persuasion?

RITA             I hit him over the head with my staff.

BENNY            baa

VICKY            You were a sheep? I was the angel once. I had a sheet tied round me and a halo make out of tinsel. I remember that I wanted a wand to carry and the teacher said I was supposed to be an angel of the Lord, not a tooth fairy.

RITA             I played a fairy once.

GLADYS          Type cast again.

RITA             You should have been in Jack and the Beanstalk, darling.

GLADYS          Jack and the Giant are both men's roles.

RITA             You could have played the cow.

                    (BENNY laughs. GLADYS shoots a look at him and he stops)

VICKY            So, Rita. If you didn't want to act, what would you like to do?

RITA             Interior design. Some fool wanted to paint my walls navy blue, but I painted over them in peach.

VICKY            Oh, how wonderful!

RITA Yes, I have an eye for colour and texture and a real knack for putting things together.

GLADYS (Sarcastically) Yes, look at the way you're dressed.

RITA Couldn't you be a missionary somewhere?

GLADYS I'd love to do foreign work.

RITA Any missionary position would be foreign to you.

BENNY laughs and makes a munching noise

VICKY Oh, sorry, Benny. Yes, of course, I'll get your apple.

GLADYS I'll get it.

VICKY No, that's fine Gladys. I can get it.

GLADYS I was put on this earth to be of help. I will do whatever is needed. I give full service.

RITA Good, go work at a gas station.

GLADYS I'll get the apple.

VICKY You just sit and relax.

GLADYS But I want to help out.

VICKY No, really. It's okay.

GLADYS Are you going to deny me my purpose?

VICKY In the bottom of the fridge.

(GLADYS exits)

RITA Insufferable woman. I can't stand her.

(Enter LOLA)

LOLA (Comes out of the Kitchen) Is that you Rita?

RITA            You are here! (He rushes to LOLA and embraces her)

LOLA            Are you all right? Did you see the fire?

RITA            I know. I lost everything.

LOLA            Never mind, darling. Now we can shop together and get whole new wardrobes.

RITA            I'm so glad you're here. (turning to VICKY) This is Lola. Lola, this is Victoria.

LOLA            Hello Victoria.

VICKY           (weakly) Hi. Gladys you're acting, right?

LOLA            Gladys isn't here.

VICKY           She went into the kitchen.

LOLA            Yes. But then she left.

VICKY           Where did she go?

LOLA            She saw the apple and she left.

RITA            Good, I'm glad.

VICKY           She doesn't like apples?

LOLA            Look what they did to Eve.

VICKY           I see.

RITA            It's nice here Lola. We're staying a couple of days.

LOLA            Nice chintz.

RITA            That's exactly what I said.

LOLA            Hi, Benny.

(BENNY becomes shy and awkward. He waves at her).

(To RITA) Isn't he cute. (She hugs BENNY)

RITA            You're such an animal, Lola.

LOLA            What happened to you in the fire, Benny?

BENNY          snores

LOLA            You were asleep when it happened.

BENNY          imitates a fire alarm

LOLA            Then you heard the alarm.

BENNY          makes the sound, and acts out, footsteps

LOLA            So you ran outside.

BENNY          imitates fire engines

LOLA            And you watched the fire engines.

(BENNY acts out firemen grabbing hoses. He sprays LOLA and JAMES, who duck the water fire. VICKY ducks too, then wonders why she did)

You saw them fighting the fire. And then Dr. Shane sent you here.

(BENNY nods, to VICKY) And you're Mrs. Shane. (to RITA) Does she know?

VICKY          Know what?

RITA            Don't tell her Lola.

LOLA            Why not?

RITA            It's not for us to say.

LOLA            I think she ought to be told.

VICKY          Told what?

RITA            Don't tell her Lola. You could upset her. She's nice...

VICKY          What?

LOLA            If I were her. I'd want to know.

RITA Don't cause trouble Lola.

VICKY Lola, what is it?

LOLA Nurse Kelly.

VICKY Oh, I know that.

RITA You know your husband is having an affair with Nurse Kelly?

VICKY Yes, I know that.

LOLA And that he does it with her in the Supply Room every Thursday?

VICKY No, I didn't know that.

RITA I saw them in there, last Friday.

LOLA I saw them there Saturday morning.

RITA Were you stealing cotton balls?

LOLA Q Tips.

RITA You should have asked me. I had some.

VICKY I have some.

(They look at Vicky)

VICKY Well, I could really use another cup of tea. Would you like one, Lola?

LOLA Actually I'm dying for a cigarette.

VICKY I'm sorry, I don't have any. I don't smoke.

LOLA Do you have a pencil?

VICKY Yes. Do you want to write something?

LOLA No, I want to smoke it.

VICKY You want to smoke a pencil?



LOLA Yes.

VICKY Are you going to light it?

LOLA No, that would be silly.

(VICKY finds a pencil for LOLA and gives it to her)

LOLA (looking at the eraser) Oh, good. Filtered. (She inhales and relaxes)

VICKY Do you want an ashtray?

(LOLA looks at her as if she is crazy)

RITA She can't smoke cigarettes because Gladys always comes along and butts them out.

LOLA I've cut down. I used to go through a pack of non-filtered a day. I got sick.

VICKY Lung cancer?

LOLA Lead poisoning.

VICKY Right.

LOLA Oh, I forgot. This is for you. (She fishes a note out from her cleavage and hands it to VICKY).

VICKY (Reads) Vicky, these are the pills for all three clients. Their names and the dosages are clearly marked on the labels. This is a bit unorthodox I realize, but this is an emergency. Richard. P.S. The contents of this note is, of course, strictly confidential - I hope you're not reading this out loud. (She winces). Do you have some pill bottles to give me, Lola?

LOLA Oh, is that what the note is about?

VICKY Yes. Did the doctor give you some pill bottles?

LOLA Yes.

VICKY Did you leave them in the taxi?

LOLA So to speak.

VICKY            So to speak?

LOLA            I sold them to the driver.

VICKY            You what?

LOLA            He offered me a lot of money.

VICKY            Oh, dear.

LOLA            Don't worry. We don't need any of that stuff. It isn't life threatening.

VICKY            (Picks up the phone) I'll try and phone Richard to get you another prescription.

LOLA            Why don't you wait until Friday morning?

VICKY            No, it's no trouble. I'll call him this evening.

LOLA            But it's Thursday.

VICKY            Yes.

LOLA            There's no reception in the supply room.

VICKY            (pauses) Wait a minute, didn't it burn down?

RITA            No, only the residence. You could probably find Dr. Shane there. All the doctors go in there to smoke and fool around. But, of course, I wouldn't know.

LOLA            No, you just go in to steal!

RITA            And what do you use it for Lola?

LOLA            Well, for any illicit flings I have, I wouldn't go in there. It's too busy. I prefer the broom closet which is on the second floor.

RITA            At least in the supply room there are blankets, sheets, pillows. It's very uncomfortable in the broom closet. You can't lie down.

LOLA            Well, I admit you do have to be more inventive. Actually it's ridiculous I have to use it. We're supposed to live in a healthy rehabilitating environment.

RITA            Right but they won't let us screw on the premises.

GLADYS (Reprimanding) Language!

RITA Ah, damn it.

GLADYS I just won't stand for those kind of words.

VICKY Didn't you ever get caught in the broom closet?

GLADYS Doing what?

VICKY But you just said you didn't use the supply room, because it got too busy so I was wondering if you ever got caught in the broom closet.

RITA Forget it, Victoria. Gladys has never been there.

VICKY Gladys?

GLADYS What?

RITA Gladys heard me say scr....

GLADYS DON'T SAY IT AGAIN!

RITA I wasn't. I was going to ask Victoria for a drink.

VICKY Certainly, Rita. More Earl Grey?

RITA Actually I'd love a screwdriver. I noticed one of your pictures is hanging crooked. If you gave me a screwdriver and screw, I could fix it.

GLADYS (Pleasantly) You're going to go to hell.

RITA I'm screwed!

BENNY munching noises

VICKY Oh, Benny, I keep forgetting. I'm sorry. Well, I'm going to order in some food. What would you like?

BENNY humming Italian song (mimes Pizza dough being made. The dough gets stuck on the ceiling)

VICKY Okay. I have a take-out menu in the kitchen. Benny, what kind of pizza do you like?

BENNY Humming music (does a hula dance)

VICKY Hawaiian. Okay. Gladys?

GLADYS That's fine.

VICKY How does Hawaiian sound, Rita?

RITA Fine. What if Lola comes back?

VICKY Oh dear, yes. What does she like?

RITA Everything.

VICKY Right. Pizza for five, I mean, four, never mind. (She exits)

BENNY makes video game noises.

RITA I don't know if she has any video games here Benny. (Crosses to t.v.) She probably has Netflix. Maybe we can watch a movie here. What do you feel like seeing?

BENNY imitates a cowboy walking through swing saloon doors and whistles "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly". (He draws revolvers and shoots GLADYS)

RITA I don't like westerns.

BENNY makes Sci-Fi Star Wars sounds, imitates R2D2 and Darth Vader

RITA No, no Star Wars again!

BENNY laughs (imitation of the 3 Stooges)

RITA Yes, comedies. Here's Beverly Hills Cop.

BENNY laughs like Eddie Murphy

RITA We'll ask Victoria if we can watch it later. Hey, Gladys, look at this. (Points to an old DVD "91/2 Weeks").

LOLA (Crosses to JAMES and takes the tape from him, purrs) How wonderful.

RITA (Delighted it has worked) Hi, Lola!

LOLA (Crosses to BENNY) Put it in, Benny. (She smiles and gives him the DVD)

RITA            You're filthy Lola.

(LOLA giggles. BENNY puts down the tape embarrassed and picks up the remote. We hear a football game in progress)

JAMES            (Crosses to the t.v. and watches.) Yeah, get 'em, go! Tackle, hit, run! (He looks up) Hey, this ain't the Rec room. (Turns off T.V.)

LOLA            Hello, James.

JAMES            Which one are you?

LOLA            Lola

JAMES            How'd you get here?

LOLA            Doesn't Rita tell you anything?

JAMES            Rita? She's here?

LOLA            There was a fire at the Centre. This is Dr. Shane's old house. We're staying here for a couple of days with his wife. She has a spare bedroom. Want to share a bed?

JAMES            Er, what day is this?

LOLA            Thursday night.

JAMES            Oh, man. I've been blacked out since Wednesday morning.

LOLA            Oh, you missed out on all the fun.

JAMES            Well at least I have clothes on.

LOLA            Too bad.

JAMES            No, I mean the last time this happened I woke up and I had fishnets on. Didn't happen this time thank God.

GLADYS            Thank God, and praise the Lord.

JAMES            Hi, Gladys. Well the Doctor told me that Rita did it. If I ever found out who this Rita is there's gonna be trouble.

GLADYS Do unto others!

JAMES Oh, man, this woman has caused me some embarrassment in my life and let me tell you, if I ever find out who wants me to dress like a woman, there's gonna be trouble.

VICKY (Entering) Sorry I took a minute. I was just taking the laundry out of the dryer and I found this. (She holds up a caftan) Would you like to put this on?

JAMES So! It's you!

VICKY Me what?

JAMES You want me to put that on?

VICKY I thought you'd like the rose pattern since you admired my chintz so much.

JAMES Who are you? Some kind of pervert?

VICKY Pervert?

JAMES Why would I want to put that thing on?

VICKY Because you said you'd be more comfortable, Rita.

JAMES I'm not Rita. You must be Rita.

VICKY I thought you were Rita.

JAMES Are you trying to be funny?

GLADYS Victoria, this is James..

VICKY James? James! Hello, I'm Victoria, but you can call me Vicky. Maybe I should have ordered more pizza.

JAMES Vicky, O.K.

BENNY laughs like Eddie Murphy

GLADYS He's being Eddie Murphy.

VICKY He's Eddie Murphy?

GLADYS        No, he's Benny.

VICKY         But you just said he was Eddie Murphy.

GLADYS        Does he look like Eddie Murphy?

VICKY         Well no, but...

GLADYS        He wants to watch Beverly Hills Cop.

VICKY         Oh, oh, yes, of course. Benny, do you know how to work it?

                  (BENNY nods)

                  Help yourself.

JAMES         So you're not Rita?

VICKY         No, I'm Vicky, Dr. Shanes ex-wife. Well soon to be. The divorce hasn't gone through yet.

JAMES         Oh, so you found out about him and Nurse Kelly.

VICKY         Yes.

JAMES         And about those two and their affair in..

JAMES/VICKY The supply room.

JAMES         You know Vicky, I'm not one of those crazies in the centre. I'm just there for my blackouts.

VICKY         I understand.

JAMES         Are you a doctor too?

VICKY         No, I'm a legal secretary.

JAMES         You know that doctor of yours is a real fool.

VICKY         Most people think he's quite a competent psychiatrist.

JAMES         Maybe, but he's a fool if he gave you up for Nurse Kelly.

VICKY Thank you.

JAMES Even if Nurse Kelly does look like Beyonce.

VICKY Oh.

JAMES Look, Vicky, if you've gotta go to work tomorrow, I can look after these two while you're gone.

VICKY Well, no actually, I've taken a couple of weeks off work. I want to sort through some stuff and put it into boxes so that Richard can pick it up later.

JAMES You got boxes to move, I can do that for you.

VICKY Well, that's nice of you to offer Rita.

JAMES Where?

VICKY What?

JAMES Where is she?

VICKY Who?

JAMES Rita.

VICKY Did I say Rita? I meant to say James.

JAMES (Sarcastically) James and Rita sound so much alike.

GLADYS I can help you with the boxes. Always glad to be of service-

JAMES I'm a great handyman too. Anything you want fixed around here, don't hesitate to ask me.

VICKY Is that what you do for a living?

JAMES No, I'm a painter.

VICKY Oils, water colours?

JAMES Latex , gloss.

VICKY Right. Well, that's great.



JAMES            You know last week it was real weird. I was doing a job painting a room navy and some joker came in and re-painted it.

VICKY            Peach?

JAMES            How did you know?

VICKY            Lucky guess.

JAMES            Do you have any beer?

VICKY            Sorry, I don't. Would you like a cup of tea?

JAMES            I don't like tea.

VICKY            You don't like Earl Grey?

JAMES            Who's he?

VICKY            Earl Grey. The tea I made- I have herbal if you'd prefer...

JAMES            No thanks. I don't like any kind of tea. Do you have coffee?

VICKY            Sure. I'll put the kettle on. (She exits)

                      (GLADYS crosses to the tv and turns it off and takes the earphones off BENNY)

GLADYS           Right, Benny, enough t.v. for you. It's trashy and sordid.

JAMES            What am I missing?

GLADYS           I'm going to teach you how to talk.

                      (BENNY smiles)

JAMES            Leave the kid alone.

GLADYS           I'm doing God's work here.

JAMES            Look, one of the doctors told me he hasn't spoken a word for 25 years. What makes you think you can teach him?

GLADYS           I have God on my side.

JAMES           Left or right?

GLADYS           I'm going to teach him the three most important words in the English language.

JAMES           Gimme a beer.

GLADYS           No, praise the Lord. (To BENNY) Come on Benny, we'll start with your name. Benny, Benny, Benny, Benny. Come on, you can do it. Say it. I'm Benny, I'm Benny, you can do it. Yes you can. I'm Benny, I'm Benny, I'm Benny.

                    (Enter VICKY)

VICKY           Well, I put the kettle on.

GLADYS           I'm Benny..

VICKY           Oh, no, not another one. (Backing into the Kitchen) Kettle! Kettle! Tea, tea, tea...

JAMES           (Crossing to her) How bad was the fire anyway?

GLADYS           God moves in mysterious ways.

JAMES           Any casualties?

GLADYS           The patients were saved.

JAMES           The whole thing burned down?

GLADYS           Mostly just the residences. We should still be allowed to go back for treatments tomorrow.

JAMES           I don't need any treatments. I'm going to stay here and read Sports Illustrated and Playboy. (He looks through a Playboy that VICKY was packing and shows GLADYS the cover of the magazine)

GLADYS           (Flustered) If the Good Lord wanted us to walk around with no clothes on, he would have made us that way.

JAMES           (Looking at centrefold) Well, she could put her slippers under my bed any day. (Shows her centrefold to GLADYS. LOLA crosses to JAMES)

LOLA           (Sexily) I have a camisole that colour. Would you like to see? (She goes to take off her sweater and JAMES puts his hands over hers)

JAMES        Lola?

LOLA         Yes?

JAMES        Just checking.

LOLA         (Looking down to his crotch and up to his arms) I bet you strong muscles... (she smiles).

JAMES        Yes, I do. It comes from being a manual labourer.

LOLA         Ummm. I bet you could lift anything.

JAMES        I'm in pretty good shape.

LOLA         I bet you could pick me up easy as anything.

JAMES        Yep. I probably could. (He moves his hands to her waist and he picks her up.)  
Light as a feather.

RITA         Lola?

LOLA         Um. (She tilts back her head to be kissed and closes her eyes.)

RITA         I like that shadow, but the liner could be a little heavier.

LOLA         Oh, Rita!

RITA         Yes.

LOLA         I wanted to be with James.

RITA         He can't handle you yet. He sent me.

LOLA         Do you really think I need more liner?

RITA         Yes, here. (He picks up a pencil)

LOLA         Thanks. (She draws on it like a cigarette)

RITA         I was going to use it to line your eyes.

              (Enter VICKY)

VICKY Well the kettle's on and the pizza should be here soon.

RITA Of course, I don't have any of my make up. It all went up in smoke.

LOLA Well, we can buy lots more new stuff tomorrow.

RITA You have money from the driver remember?

VICKY When I left Gladys and James were here.

RITA / LOLA They left.

VICKY Do you want coffee, Rita?

RITA Oh, no, I hate coffee.

VICKY Lola?

LOLA No thanks.

VICKY Right, well I'll go and turn off the-. (Moves towards Kitchen) I'm going to the kitchen. Are you both going to be here when I get back?

RITA Where would we go?

VICKY Right. (Exits)

LOLA Ben's so cute, don't you think?

RITA I suppose.

LOLA I think I'd like to seduce him. (Runs her hands over BENNY, who smiles) Would you like that Benny?

(BENNY smiles)

RITA Well, he's not the type to kiss and tell.

BENNY (Grins, finds a long plastic band in one of the boxes. He twangs the band ) makes a corresponding noise like a guitar

RITA That's, good, Benny, but can you do "Flight of the Bumble Bee"?

BENNY (starts to twang "Flight of the Bumblebee", but can't do it, so he imitates a bumblebee which chases him and flies down his shirt and down his pants. He grabs for the bee and shoo's it out of a pretend window, but the bee won't go outside and is dangerously close to stinging BENNY so BENNY climbs out of the window and closes the bee in the room. Then he realizes he is on the window ledge many storeys up.)  
Uh, oh.

(He smiles and sits down. LOLA and RITA are very amused. They laugh. Enter VICKY)

VICKY Hi, what's so funny?

RITA Benny. Watch. Go ahead, Benny, do your stuff.

BENNY does a condensed repeat very fast

VICKY (Doesn't understand but pretends) That's great.

BENNY makes the noise of a trombone and piano, then a mandolin.  
(jumps on the sofa which becomes a boat in Venice and he serenades LOLA and poles down the river)

VICKY Very good. Is that your favourite instrument?  
  
(BENNY picks up two pencils and uses them as drumsticks)

LOLA Benny, stop that. They're the only two I have left.  
  
(She takes the pencils away from BENNY and takes a drag on one of them.)

VICKY Hey, Benny, I think Richard used to play drums in a band when he was in university. I bet if we went through all this, we'd find the sticks. Want to look?  
  
(BENNY hesitates and looks at SARAH, imitates her smoking)

VICKY Lola, you don't smoke drumsticks do you?

LOLA No, I eat them.

VICKY YOU EAT THEM!

LOLA I love chicken.

VICKY           Come on Benny, let's go through this stuff.

LOLA            What's this?

VICKY           What?

LOLA            (reading) "Fifty Famous Monologues". Hey, can I look at this? I always wanted to be an actress.

VICKY           I thought that was Gladys.

LOLA            No, Gladys wants to be a preacher. I want to be an actress.

VICKY           You can talk to Gladys?

LOLA            Of course.

VICKY           Oh (Gets an idea) Rita?

RITA            Yeah.

VICKY           Can you talk to James?

RITA            I tried. He doesn't want to listen to what I have to say.

LOLA            Typical. Men never listen to what women have to say.

RITA            Sorry. What was that?

(LOLA makes to hit him and he backs away)

LOLA            You want to look at this monologue book with me, Rita? We could put on a show.

RITA            No thanks.

LOLA            Why not, we'd make a great team.

RITA            James wouldn't let me, James thinks all actors are gay except Humphrey Bogart and he's dead.

VICKY           Yes.

(They look at her)

LOLA Well I'm going to memorize a monologue and act it out. Maybe I could put on a one woman show in the rec room when we go back to the centre. Do you think that's a good idea, Victoria?

VICKY Yes. I think it's an excellent idea.

LOLA This is exciting. There are lots of good monologues in here. I don't know which one to pick. I've always wanted to this one.

RITA I've always wanted to be an interior designer. You'd be amazed at how people have no idea on how to put together a room. (He looks disapproving at the decor) I know a lot about stuff like that, I read decorating books. I signed out twenty interior design books from the library and hid them under the bed so that James wouldn't find them.

VICKY I guess you couldn't take a course on design?

RITA They don't offer anything like that at the centre.

LOLA Yeah, interior design for the unbalanced, colour schemes for crazy people.

VICKY Do you think you're crazy, Lola?

LOLA Honey, we're all crazy. It's just that some of us get caught. (Puffs on a pencil)

BENNY pulling out a harmonica and begins to play "When the Saints Go Marching In"

GLADYS "Oh, when the Saints, oh, when the Saints". I used to sing in the church choir you know.

RITA Benny you idiot, now look what you've done.

VICKY (Pleased she knows that she has recognized GLADYS) Hi, Gladys

GLADYS Hi.

RITA Benny, play something else, a striptease number, anything.

(BENNY shrugs)

You don't know anything else?

(BENNY throws down the harmonica and goes back to looking in the box)

GLADYS        Afternoon, Rita

RITA            Not now it isn't.

GLADYS        Good afternoon, Benny

                  (BENNY stops his rummaging and waves and then goes back to the boxes.)

                  Benny, we're going to continue our lessons today.

RITA            Leave him alone, Gladys. I heard he's had over 12 speech teachers.

RITA            What makes you think you can succeed where they all failed?

GLADYS        I told you, I have God on my side.

RITA            Oh, I thought it was a growth.

GLADYS        Come on Benny. You can do it. Benny, Benny. (She wanders over to the boxes and looks in.) What are you looking for?

BENNY         drum noises

GLADYS        Make a bass drum.

BENNY         bum, bum

GLADYS        Can you make a noise of a car?

BENNY         starts an engine

GLADYS        Make the car go faster.

BENNY         speeds up the car

GLADYS        Change gear

BENNY n-n-n-n-n

GLADYS Good, bass drum beat, then car.

BENNY         B en, B en.

RITA            (Getting into the act) Great. Do you remember that Monty Python movie, those knights in the trees. What noise did they make Benny?



BENNY        Nigh, nigh.

RITA        (Getting excited) Good boy, Benny. Now, put it all together, the drum, the car and the knights.

BENNY        makes the noises of the car, crashes into the drum and kills the knights

RITA        (Looking into the boxes) Ahh, look at what I found. (He pulls out the sticks and BENNY tries to snatch them away from RITA) Oh, huh. You can't have them. Say it, come on, say it.

BENNY        (Angry) Benny!

              (RITA gives him the sticks.)

VICKY        Wow.

GLADYS      Blessed is the power of....

RITA        Bribery.

GLADYS      The Lord.

RITA        Bribery.

VICKY        Okay, enough you two. No fighting. Benny just spoke his first word. We shouldn't argue about it, we should celebrate. Benny, do you want to celebrate?

RITA        How about a party?

BENNY        Benny.

VICKY        Well, Okay.

BENNY        Benny.

GLADYS      A real party.

BENNY        Benny.

VICKY        Sure, why not.

BENNY        Benny

GLADYS        With a cake?

BENNY        Benny

RITA         I'll decorate it.

BENNY        Benny

VICKY        Well, okay, you can decorate.

BENNY        Benny. (says his name over and over again trying out different emotions and breaking out a rhythm with his drum sticks, ending with a very proud) Benny.

               (Everyone applauds and cheers Yeah! Benny!)

RITA         Can we have streamers and balloons too?

BENNY        makes a noise maker sound

RITA         And noise makers

VICKY        I don't have any.

RITA         Lola has money.

VICKY        No, that's okay. I can get some noise makers.

GLADYS       I'll make a cake. I used to run the bake sales at the church bazaar. (She exits to the Kitchen)

VICKY        Maybe I should help her.

RITA         Then who's going to buy the streamers? If you lend me some decent clothes, I'll run to the nearest Mac's store, but I couldn't go out in public dressed like this. Do you have anything I could wear?

VICKY        No, it's okay. I'll go.

RITA         We could send Benny.

VICKY        No. No, I'll go, I'll go.

               (RITA goes to the door. Starts to take off his clothes)

What are you doing Rita?

RITA Well I just can't stand these clothes any more and I just decided I'd rather wear nothing at all than these clothes. They offend my artistic integrity. (He is down to his underwear)

VICKY (Hastily before he takes off his underpants) Well, while I'm at the store why don't you look through my wardrobe and see if you can find something that will fit you?

RITA Do you mean it?

VICKY Yes, Rita

RITA Oh, you're so nice. (He hugs her)

VICKY I want you to be comfortable here. I'll be back in a minute.

JAMES Don't worry. I'll look after Benny and Gladys while you're gone.

VICKY And Lola

JAMES And Lola

VICKY And James

JAMES I'm James.

VICKY You're James?

JAMES Yes.

VICKY Oh.

JAMES (Indicating pants down) Were we in the middle of anything?

VICKY Yes and no.

JAMES Why do you still have all your clothes on?

VICKY Well.....

JAMES Let's move into the bedroom, Benny will see us.

(Her cel rings.)

VICKY           Excuse me? Hi! Richard!

V/O             How are the guests doing?

VICKY           Hard to say right now.

V/O             Have you met Rita?

VICKY           Yes.

V/O             Well, whatever you do, don't tell James about her. It could be very traumatic for him if he isn't in a controlled environment. How did you make out with the medication?

VICKY           I need some more.

V/O             That's impossible.

VICKY           It got thrown away by mistake.

V/O             Well, it's Sunday. I can't get into the supply room today.

VICKY           Oh, what a shame. Why don't you use the broom closet on the second floor?  
(She hangs up) He didn't even ask me how I was.

JAMES          How are you?

VICKY           (Taken aback) Oh, okay.

JAMES          Really?

VICKY           No, actually, not really.

JAMES          I read that women need to talk about their problems. Why don't you tell me about it?

VICKY           You don't want to hear about it.

JAMES          Try me.

VICKY            Well, two weeks ago, I found out my husband was having an affair with a nurse. I confronted him and instead of breaking it off, he moved out. So I started divorce proceedings hoping it would scare him into running home to me. When I told him do you know what he said? "Good job you're a legal secretary, you can get it done cheap." So now I'm divorcing him. I have all these legal hassles, plus, I'm stuck in this house. I'm the one left sorting out all his boxer shorts from the bikini briefs and the 'Sports Illustrated' from the 'Cosmopolitan'. Meanwhile he's discovering rapture in a supply room. (She collapses.)

JAMES            You look like you could use a hug, come here. (Puts his arm around her.) Feel better?

VICKY            Yes, yes, but I'm supposed to be looking after you..

JAMES            My wife left me two months ago.

VICKY            Oh, yes. That's right. I forget. And you're doing okay, right?

JAMES            Except for the blackouts.

VICKY            Right, except the blackouts.

                      (Enter GLADYS, screams.)

VICKY            It's not what you think, Gladys.

GLADYS           For shame, for shame. And in front of Benny too.

VICKY            We were, we were just talking. How's the cake coming?

GLADYS           We need eggs. I see you didn't get to the store yet?

VICKY            No. I was just on my way out. Is there anything else we need? Beside streamers, noise makers, balloons and eggs?

JAMES            What are the streamers and stuff for?

VICKY            Oh, that's right, you weren't here.

JAMES            Where was I?

VICKY            You had left.

JAMES            Where did I go?

VICKY            You don't know?

JAMES            I blacked out and when I came to I had my shirt off and my pants were down. Then I saw you and I assumed...

VICKY            Oh well, you assumed wrong James.

JAMES            Why was I taking off my clothes?

VICKY            Er, you, you were going to take a bath.

JAMES            I was?

VICKY            Yes.

JAMES            Here?

VICKY            Yes, you were on your way to the bathroom.

JAMES            Oh, okay. (He exits to the bathroom)

GLADYS            Go and get the eggs!

VICKY            Right. Eggs. Is there anything else we need?

RITA              (From the bathroom) Bubbles. Need bubbles for my bath!

VICKY            (Calling out) They're under the sink Rita (To herself) Oh, my goodness. (She exits out the front door)

(SARAH sits on the sofa)

SARAH Oh!        (She looks up) Oh! (She looks around confused) Benny!. Benny. Where are we? What is this place? Where are we?

(BENNY shows her a picture from the box)

Looks like Dr. Shane. Is this his house?

(BENNY nods)

Why are we here?

BENNY        sound effects of the fire

SARAH        There was a fire? Was anyone hurt?

(BENNY shakes his head)

Who was at the fire?

(BENNY puts his hands together in prayer)

Gladys was there. Have you seen Lola too?

(BENNY nods, yes.) Well, I guess they're okay. Are they getting me into any trouble?

(BENNY shrugs)

SARAH        Oh, Benny. I wish you'd talk to me!

BENNY        Benny.

SARAH        (Smiles) You said your name!. Oh, Benny, that's terrific. Do it again.

BENNY        (Doing a delighted little dance for her) Benny, Benny, Benny.

SARAH        Well you know what the next word has to be don't you?

(BENNY shakes his head)

SARAH        Wants. That's the next word.

(BENNY looks at her)

SARAH        If you don't tell them what you want, how will they ever know? And if they don't know, how can they ever give it to you and if you don't ask, you may never get it, so you have to learn to say "wants". Benny wants.

(BENNY screws up his face)

SARAH        Come on, Benny. You can do it.

(BENNY makes an effort)

SARAH        Do it for Sarah.

BENNY        WANTS!

SARAH        Yeah, yeah, Benny, again, again.

BENNY        Benny wants, Benny wants, Benny wants!

SARAH        Good, good. Benny wants, Benny wants. What, what does Benny want?

BENNY        Benny wants...

RITA         (From the bathroom) Bubbles, I want bubbles. Gladys, are you there? Bring me the dish soap. I can't find anything in here to make bubbles.

               (BENNY waves to SARAH)

               Gladys, can you hear me? I need some dish soap.

GLADYS      I'm a servant of the Lord, Rita, not for you.

RITA         Do you want me to get it myself? I'll come out and get it naked!

GLADYS      I'll send Benny in with it.

RITA         Or Lola.

GLADYS      That woman is impossible! I'm busy baking a cake.

RITA         You can bake it, but don't you dare decorate it, that's my job. I need bubbles before the water gets cold.

BENNY        Benny

GLADYS      Yes?

BENNY        Benny wants.. (Imitates a pop being opened.)

GLADYS      Oh, praises. Rita!

RITA         (Appears with a towel wrapped around his chest) What?

GLADYS      Benny spoke another word.

BENNY        Benny wants



RITA Hey, that's great!

GLADYS What do you want?

BENNY makes a noise of a pop can being opened

GLADYS A pop.

BENNY repeats noise

RITA I wonder where he learnt to say "wants"?

GLADYS Sarah taught him. I'll get him a pop.

RITA Sure you can get him a pop, but you couldn't get me bubbles.

GLADYS Well, I don't have time to stand around here arguing. There's work to be done. Are you going to sit there idle?

RITA No, I've got work to do. I'm going to make some adjustment to the living room.

(GLADYS exits going into the Kitchen)

RITA Help me move this sofa Benny. There we go. This has to go over here. We're going to fix this place up as a surprise. Victoria will be thrilled when she sees what we've done.

BENNY Benny

RITA That's right, practice, practice, practice.

(The Kitchen door opens and out comes LOLA)

LOLA I've chosen the Blanche Du-Bois monologue. Listen to this you guys. (She recites it using BENNY as "the young man")

RITA Hey, hold it. That's fantastic.

LOLA You like it?

RITA Yeah, the balance and proportion is much better now!

LOLA I meant the monologue. Benny, did you like it?

(BENNY claps. Exits to the Kitchen)

LOLA I need a costume. What should I use?

RITA Here, I saw a robe in the bathroom. You could wear that. (He exits to the Bathroom)

LOLA Okay. I'll do it for Victoria and try it out at the party.

RITA (Entering with a frilly, pink bathrobe) Here, put this on.

LOLA Oh, it's perfect. (Looking out the window) Here comes Victoria.

(Enter BENNY with his pop. LOLA strikes a 'Blanche' pose in her housecoat. Rita sits very excitedly watching VICKY for a reaction to the room. VICKY enters)

VICKY (Not sure who is there) Hi.... people. I'm back. Hello. Here are the eggs.

LOLA Thank you. I have always relied on the kindness of strangers.

VICKY Gladys? (She shakes her head)

LOLA (Advances extending her hand dramatically) Blanche.

VICKY Blanche?

LOLA Blanche Dubois. Pleased to make your acquaintance.

VICKY You're Blanche Dubois? From "A Streetcar Named Desire"?

LOLA The very same.

VICKY I think I need a cup of tea. Would anyone like to... (She looks around)

LOLA (In her LOLA voice) Did I fool you? Did you think I was Blanche?

VICKY Who are you?

LOLA Lola. I was acting!

VICKY Oh, acting.

LOLA Yes, I was rehearsing my monologue. I'm going to perform it for you at the party.

VICKY I see. I thought you had another personality.

LOLA Don't be silly.

VICKY Sorry. (Goes to sit down and realizes that there is no chair there). Where's my chair?

RITA (Points) Doesn't it look much better over there?

VICKY Oh.

RITA I rearranged the room for you.

VICKY Right.

RITA You were encouraging me to develop my interior design talents.

VICKY Yes, I did. Nice, very nice. I guess it will take me a while to get used to the new arrangement.

RITA Did you bring the balloons and stuff?

VICKY Yes, here you are. (She hands him a bag)

RITA Oh, good. Look at all these things I've got to work with here. Now I can really go to town on this place. Here Benny, help me blow up these balloons.

(Vicky's phone rings)

I'll get it.

VICKY Hello Thank you for calling Crazy Acres.

V/O Victoria. I managed to get the repeat prescriptions and I'm having them sent over by courier.

VICKY Couldn't you ask me how I am?

V/O What?

VICKY I wanted you to ask me how I was.

V/O How are you?

VICKY Well, it doesn't count now does it, not if I have to tell you to ask me.

V/O You're sounding irrational Vicky.

VICKY Well, maybe I'm feeling that way.

V/O Are you having a hard time coping with the clients? They'll be gone by tomorrow morning.

VICKY When are you coming over to pick up your stuff?

V/O I have my clothes. That's all I need.

VICKY What about everything else you left behind?

V/O I live with Kelly now. There's nothing there I need.

VICKY (In a small voice) Nothing?

V/O No.

VICKY Goodbye Richard. (She hangs up. Loudly) I want a cup of tea and I want it now!

LOLA One cup of tea coming right up. (She exits)

JAMES Tough stuff huh?

VICKY James?

JAMES Yes?

VICKY I miss him so much.

JAMES It gets better.

VICKY Yeah, yeah I heard.

JAMES Time wounds all heels.

VICKY (Smiles) I wish I could have blackouts.

JAMES What?

VICKY Nothing. Do you remember your first one?

JAMES I was at hockey practice. I fell and broke my arm in three places.

VICKY Oh, that must have hurt.

JAMES Didn't hurt me none.

VICKY No, you didn't cry?

JAMES Men can handle pain. Crying is for women.

VICKY Who told you that?

JAMES My dad.

VICKY Can I ask you something?

JAMES Sure.

VICKY Did you dad think that certain jobs were only for women?

JAMES Yes.

VICKY Truck drivers?

JAMES Men.

VICKY Nurses?

JAMES Women.

VICKY Interior designers

JAMES Women.

VICKY Painters?

JAMES Painters are men, but artists are women or (he grins) gays.

VICKY Did you paint when you were little?

JAMES I painted my bike.

VICKY Pictures?

JAMES        No, I never painted pictures. Hey, you know it's funny about what you just said about interior designers.

VICKY        Why?

JAMES        I got this letter from the library that I had twenty interior design books checked out in my name. I don't know where they are.

VICKY        Check under your bed.

LOLA         Teatime! (Entering with a tray)

VICKY        Have some tea James.

JAMES        No thanks.

VICKY        Have you ever tried it?

JAMES        No.

VICKY        I bet your dad drank coffee.

JAMES        What about it?

VICKY        Here have a cup.

               (JAMES sips it)

RITA         Oh, no, I don't like it without sugar.

VICKY        Oh, Rita!

RITA         Yes? Lola, did you make this tea, it's delicious.

LOLA         Glad you like it. Sarah's mother taught me how to warm the teapot first. That makes the difference.

VICKY        Who's Sarah?

LOLA         She's my friend.

VICKY        Are you close?

LOLA            We're as close as two people can get.

VICKY           Did you share a room at the home?

LOLA            More than that.

VICKY            Oh?

LOLA            Yes, we share clothes, bathwater, a bed.

VICKY            You don't have to tell me any more.

LOLA            Well, Gladys sleeps with her too.

VICKY            Gladys? Sleeps with Sarah?

LOLA            Yes, all the time.

VICKY            Gladys is a lesbian?

                  (LOLA and BENNY find this very funny)

                  What did I say?

LOLA            Gladys isn't a lesbian.

VICKY            But you said she sleeps with friend Sarah.

LOLA            I sleep with Sarah and I'm not a lesbian.

VICKY            Oh.

LOLA            I like men.

RITA            So I've heard.

VICKY            Wait a minute. I think I'm missing something here. Is Sarah a real person?

LOLA            Yes, she looks a bit like me, but, of course, I'm more attractive.

RITA            I met her once. She seemed nice.

BENNY            (Nods his head.) Benny, Benny, Benny.

RITA (Indicating the balloons) Don't talk, blow.

LOLA I've heard that before.

RITA (Laughs) Lola, you slut.

GLADYS (Covering her ears) Language!

VICKY Now you've done it. That was your fault.

RITA Oh, hell.

GLADYS That's where you're going.

RITA Well at least I won't run into you there.

GLADYS I'm going to heaven because I've spent a lot of time on my knees.

RITA God knows so has Lola.

GLADYS Praying. I was praying!

VICKY How does that work Gladys? You're going to heaven and Lola is going to .....

GLADYS It's okay because I'm taking Sarah with me.

VICKY When you die you're going to take Sarah with you? Yes. Cup of tea anyone? Whatever happened to "thou shalt not murder".

BENNY laughs

VICKY Okay, what'd I say? Benny, what did I say that was so funny. Why am I asking you?

GLADYS Well, I have to check on the cake. (She exits)

VICKY Rita, Gladys, just said that when she dies, she's going to take Sarah with her. Is Sarah in danger?

RITA I don't think so.

VICKY We have to warn her or tell the doctors, or something.

RITA Calm down. Everything is okay.



VICKY            That woman who just walked into the kitchen is planning to take the life of an innocent person and you want me to calm down. What are you, crazy?

                      (RITA and BENNY look at her)

                      Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean that. What am I saying? I need a cup of tea.

RITA             You just had one.

VICKY            So.

RITA             Are you a caffeine addict?

VICKY            No, I just like drinking tea.

RITA             The first sign of addiction is denial. Look, I have an idea.

VICKY            Yes.

RITA             We can prevent Gladys from taking Sarah.

VICKY            Good, how?

RITA             Kill her before she gets Sarah.

VICKY            What!

RITA             Joke, I'm joking.

VICKY            Oh.

RITA             Of course, there is a widespread notion that all mentally ill people are potentially dangerous, but it's just not true. Do you have some scissors?

VICKY            What for?

RITA             Well, it doesn't have to be scissors. A sharp knife will do.

VICKY            What are you going to do?

RITA             Cut the string on these balloons.

VICKY            Oh, sure, in my desk. (She points) Well, it used to be over there.

RITA (Proudly) I moved it.  
(GLADYS coming out of the Kitchen.)

GLADYS The cake's doing nicely. Look, Victoria, can we invite Sarah to the party tonight?

VICKY Er, sure. I'll call and invite her.

GLADYS Actually I already did. I talked to her when you were at the store.

VICKY Oh, okay. Yes, that's fine. Can I ask one question?

GLADYS Yes.

VICKY It's of a delicate nature. I'm not sure I should ask.

GLADYS Ask and ye shall receive.

VICKY Does Sarah have just one personality?

GLADYS No, of course not.

VICKY How many does, of course, she have.  
(The doorbell rings).

GLADYS Three of course.

VICKY Oh, joy, well maybe that's her now. (Goes off to answer the door)

RITA Victoria thought you wanted to kill Sarah.

GLADYS Kill her, I help her. Unlike Lola, she's such a sinner.

RITA Lola is my friend. Don't talk about her like that. Benny are you finished blowing up those balloons?  
(BENNY indicates he has no breath left)

VICKY (Returning) It was just the courier. You all have new medicine. Well, it looks like you're supposed to have this stuff with food. We'll figure everything out this evening. How are the preparations coming? How is Blanche Dubois' monologue coming?

GLADYS I'm Gladys.

VICKY Sorry, Lola's told me she was going to do a monologue for the party.

GLADYS So am I.

VICKY Blanche Dubois?

GLADYS No, I'm going to do David.

RITA Sounds like a job for Lola.

GLADYS The Psalm of David.

RITA You want us to throw up the cake?

VICKY Benny, are you going to perform also? This party is in your honour.

(BENNY shrugs)

RITA Come on you can tell us a story, okay?

(BENNY nods gives the 'okay' sign)

RITA Terrific.

VICKY So we're all going to have a lovely time. Gladys what time did you tell Sarah to arrive?

GLADYS Oh, she'll show up when she feels like it.

VICKY I see.

RITA Well I have icing to make.

VICKY There are some candies in the Mac's bag. You can use them to decorate the cake. Benny you can't eat them now. (She takes the candies from Benny and gives them to RITA. RITA exits) Benny you want to help me sort through the last box?

GLADYS Your husband was a real pack rat.

VICKY            Less pack, more rat. I wonder what happened to the pizza? It's been ages since we ordered it.

GLADYS           Well, I'm going to make some sandwiches. (She exits)

VICKY            I feel like I'm in the twilight zone. Benny, music. Let's go through this last box, Benny. If you see anything you want, Benny, help yourself.

                         (BENNY pulls out a tennis game.)

                         Oh, that's for tennis. You throw the ball up and it is on the elastic so the ball returns to you. Here's a tennis racquet. You can go outside and try it if you want.

                         (BENNY exits)

RITA              (Off ) No, no cross.

GLADYS           (Off) Yes, a large pink cross.

RITA              (Entering) Gladys wants to put a crucifix on the cake. Where is Lola when you need her. Lola would go for something more exciting, a butterfly, a heart, a phallus. What are you doing?

VICKY            Oh, it's just my wedding picture.

RITA              You looked nice.

VICKY            It was a beautiful dress, but he ripped it on our wedding night - you know what men are.

JAMES            Yes.

VICKY            James?

JAMES            Yes?

VICKY            You're back!

JAMES            What are we doing?

VICKY            I'm just going through some stuff of Richard's. This is just an old note book of his. I guess I'll throw it out. He used to scribble down lots of things. He was very romantic when we first met. He used to write me poems. Look - I love to watch your body,

From your toes to your smiles.  
For a glimpse of you,  
I'd walk a million miles.

JAMES Ugh, that's awful.

VICKY He was madly in love with me. What can I say?  
(reads) I love all of you  
Right down to your rosy complexion.  
I could be a mirror  
and never bored of your reflection.

JAMES Real bad.

VICKY (reads) I love to touch your skin  
and wrap my arms around your belly  
I'd be forever happy  
Making love to you Kelly.  
Kelly? *Kelly!*  
(She rips up the paper into tiny pieces)

JAMES I always found a shot of something is good at a moment like this.

VICKY Shot, I'll take a shot at him, I'll kill him.

JAMES Don't you want a drink?

VICKY Put the kettle on!

JAMES (calling out) Gladys, plug in the kettle!

VICKY How could he have done this? He used to love me once.

JAMES I'm sure he did.

VICKY I feel like an elastic band that has been pulled too tightly and is about to snap.

JAMES Maybe you need help.

VICKY No, I'd just like Richard to walk through that door without even apologizing and just walk over to me and hug me.

JAMES I don't understand. Just a minute ago, you said you wanted to kill him.

VICKY I would but I'd like to hug him too.

JAMES Boy, are you confused.

VICKY I miss him.

JAMES Come here.

(She does. He hugs her.)

Feel a bit better?

VICKY James, do you think I'm attractive?

JAMES Of course.

VICKY I'm not sure of anything any more.

(He kisses her. She pulls away)

Oh, dear.

JAMES What's the matter?

VICKY I'm sure that wasn't supposed to happen. You're here in my care. I'm supposed to look after you.

JAMES I don't need anyone to look after me. I'm perfectly normal. I just have blackouts. Does that make me crazy? You just wanted to shoot your husband and hug him at the same time. That sounds crazy.

VICKY Speaking of murder, Gladys told me she wants to kill someone. What should I do?

JAMES Keep her away from the person she wants to kill?

VICKY It's too late. She's already coming to the party tonight.

JAMES Sounds like it could be a very interesting party. I hope I'll be able to come.

VICKY Of course you will.

JAMES I never know when I'm going to black out.

VICKY            That must be very difficult for you.

JAMES            Only coming to. Sometimes weird things happen like why did you change the furniture around?

VICKY            Er, just for a change.

JAMES            There hasn't been enough change in your life recently?

                      (Crash in the Kitchen)

GLADYS            (Running out) Oh, my heavens.

VICKY            Did you drop something?

RITA              It better not have been my cake.

GLADYS            No, Rita it wasn't your precious cake. This came through the kitchen window. (She holds up the tennis ball).

VICKY            Oh, James. Oh, Benny!

GLADYS            I've finished decorating the cake.

RITA              That was to be my job!

GLADYS            Well, I've done it.

RITA              But the cake hasn't had time to cool yet. Everything will be ruined. You, you...

VICKY            Rita, don't say it.

GLADYS            All I did was try to help and you call me names.

                      (The phone rings. The others improv argue over VICKY's lines. Start a cushion fight.)

BENNY comes in, his head hung low. He hides under the table saying "Benny wants, Benny, Benny, Benny.)

VICKY            Benny, be quiet! Oh, God I didn't mean that! (She picks up the phone) Hello, I just told a man who hasn't spoken for twenty-five years to be quiet!!

V/O                Vicky?

VICKY Richard!

V/O Hello, Vicky, how are you?

VICKY Don't you ask me how I am.

V/O Well, you sounded a little fraught when I last called.

VICKY A little fraught?

V/O Y es, how are your three house guests?

VICKY I don't have your three house guests. I have six and another arriving at any time. It wouldn't be so bad but they don't all get along. Gladys and Rita are fighting. Gladys is trashing the kitchen, Benny just broke my window and has hidden under the table. Rita keeps moving my furniture around and Lola is wearing my clothes and smoking all my pencils and James, James...

V/O Yes?

VICKY Never mind.

V/O Aren't you going to ask me how I am?

VICKY No, how are you? Arm around the kelly, belly, yeah.

V/O Vicky, you're not making sense and, by the way, Kelly kicked me out.

VICKY What?

V/O Kelly kicked me out. I have to stay in a motel tonight, unless, Vicky.... I miss you, Vicky, do you miss me?

VICKY No, not in the least.

V/O Oh, well, call me later if you feel like it. I'll be at my office until late. I don't have anywhere else to go. By the way, there was a message on my answering machine, something about extra large pizzas.

VICKY That's why they haven't arrived. I dialled your number by mistake.

V/O I could bring some pizzas by after work.



VICKY (Weakly) O.K.

V/O I'll be by later. Seven o'clock sharp.

VICKY Oh, Christ. (Hangs up the phone)

GLADYS (Hits VICKY with a cushion). Don't you start taking the Lord's name in vain.

VICKY Gladys, WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TEA?

Blackout

## Scene Two

(The room has been decorated. The balloons are hung and there are streamers and a hand made sign reads "Yeah, Benny"! "Benny's the Best"!)

VICKY (Off, Bedroom) Lola, I can't find my black shoes. Are you wearing them?

LOLA No, check with Rita

RITA (Off, Kitchen) No, they don't fit me.

VICKY Oh, it's okay. I've found them. Lola, you've been in the bathroom for a while. Are you okay?

LOLA I'm reading your Cosmopolitans, Victoria. There are a lot of interesting magazines in here. (Screams) Filth, filth, filth.

VICKY Did you find a Penthouse, Gladys?

GLADYS Filth!

RITA (Coming out of the Kitchen and giving whisks to BENNY to lick) I'm all finished. I've made my own cake.

VICKY Well, I'm sure there are enough of us to eat two cakes.

RITA There are only four of us.

VICKY Oh, yes, you're right.

RITA You look nervous.

VICKY Well, actually, Richard said he might drop by later. How do I look?

RITA More blush, darker lipstick, take off the broach, change the hose to black.

VICKY Okay. (She exits)

BENNY (Humming) Benny, Benny, Benny.

VICKY Rita, come in here and help me choose a lipstick will you?

(RITA exits BENNY sits contentedly eating the icing. The Bathroom door opens and out comes GLADYS. BENNY offers the whisk to SARAH who takes it and begins licking)

SARAH How are we doing, Benny?

BENNY humming. (He waves)

SARAH Is Gladys being good?

BENNY sound like nails on a blackboard

SARAH That irritating.

BENNY purrs

SARAH How about Lola?

BENNY roars

SARAH Lola's being an animal?

BENNY Benny wants

SARAH You want Lola?

BENNY (shakes his head) Uh uh

SARAH You want animals?

BENNY (nods)Uh huh

SARAH Maybe you should be a vet or work in a zoo. I know you could really take care of the animals well.

BENNY moos

SARAH You want to be a dairy farmer?

BENNY roars

SARAH A lion tamer?

BENNY makes a collage of noises

SARAH        You like all animals. Yeah, me too. I used to have a puppy and fall asleep holding him. I don't get to see Dr. Shane much, but when I do, I'll tell him you want to work with animals. Which is your favourite animal, Benny? What would you like to hold most in the whole world?

(BENNY points)

SARAH        Oh, Benny.

BENNY        Benny wants. (He points again)

SARAH        Shall I tell you a secret? I like you too. But when I was sixteen, I liked a boy, his name was Charles. He wanted me to sleep with him, but I couldn't because it was a mortal sin. But I really loved him, so I did. That's when I got Lola. One time my mother found Lola and Charles, and she went into shock and told my father all about it and my father.....

BENNY        imitates a whip

SARAH        No, he didn't beat me. He prayed for me, he was a minister you see - anyway, that's when I got Gladys and now there's so much Gladys and Lola, there isn't any Sarah left.

(Enter VICKY and JAMES from bedroom. VICKY paces back and forth, holding a cup of tea. SARAH exits to Kitchen)

VICKY        How do I look Benny?

(BENNY gestures approvingly. Exits after SARAH. JAMES looks into one of the boxes and pulls out a hockey puck)

VICKY        Are you sure about the outfit, the make up, the hair?

JAMES        You look great. Why are you all dressed up?

VICKY        James?

JAMES        Yes.

VICKY        Sorry, I though you were....

JAMES        What?

VICKY I thought you were in the bathroom.

JAMES (Looking at her strangely) I already took a bath, remember? (A beat) You know, you look just as pretty without make up.

VICKY That's nice of you.

JAMES What's the matter?

VICKY I'm nervous.

JAMES Do I make you nervous?

VICKY You don't. Richard does.

JAMES Your husband's here?

VICKY No, he's coming by later tonight. We're going to talk.

JAMES Oh. Want some tea?

VICKY I just made a fresh pot.

JAMES I'll get you another cup. (He moves toward the Kitchen)

VICKY Oh, it's in the bedroom.

JAMES The tea?

VICKY I set up another kettle in the bedroom.

JAMES Why?

VICKY Gladys was so busy in the kitchen baking, I didn't want to keep interrupting, so I made tea in the bedroom.

JAMES (Laughing) Next you'll be making it in the bathroom.

VICKY Oh, don't be silly. I don't boil water in the bathroom. (Pause) I have a thermos.

JAMES I see.

VICKY Well, if there's an emergency tonight and I need a quick cup, I may not have time to boil a kettle, so I hid a thermos under the sink.

JAMES Hid?

VICKY Well, yes. It seemed a little odd to leave it out on the counter.

JAMES Do you have any more stashes?

VICKY Oh, no.

JAMES That's good.

VICKY Well, not in liquid form.

JAMES What do you mean?

VICKY I have extra tea in case I run out in the kitchen.

JAMES If you run out, you can just go to the Mac's store and get some more.

VICKY Well, you never can tell when Mac's will run out or the car won't start and you need a cup right then and there.

JAMES I see.

VICKY It's okay. I'll get the tea. I have to change anyway.

JAMES You just did.

VICKY Well, I don't think that this is quite right.

JAMES You look great.

VICKY Really?

JAMES (He crosses to her) Yes, really. If I had a woman as beautiful as you, I'd never leave her.

VICKY Oh.

(He kisses her. Enter LOLA carrying an icing bag.)

LOLA Oh, James.

VICKY Lola!

LOLA Victoria, I hate you, he was mine.

JAMES Lola, I'm not yours.

VICKY Lola, I'm sorry.

LOLA You're going to get it now, Victoria. (She approaches VICKY with a piping bag) I'm going to ice you!

VICKY (Screams) No, not the hair. Richard's coming. (She ducks into the Bathroom)

JAMES Lola, now she's locked herself in the bathroom.

LOLA Okay, James, you're next.

(JAMES backs away making the sign of the Cross as if she was a vampire)

GLADYS Well, I've almost finished my cake. Of course it won't be as good as yours since you took all the candies.

JAMES I didn't touch any candies.

GLADYS Yes, you did, to decorate your cake.

JAMES I didn't make a cake.

SARAH Rita did.

JAMES Rita? Is she here? I want to meet her!

GLADYS Well, I can't stand around here chatting. There're things to be done. Besides I don't think you would like what she has to say.(She exits to the Kitchen.)

(VICKY pokes her head around the Bathroom door.)

VICKY Is it safe to come out?

JAMES Yes, Gladys is back.

VICKY Good job I had that thermos in there.

JAMES Vicky, is Rita here?

VICKY           What?

JAMES           Rita, is she here?

VICKY           No, not now.

JAMES           You've met her?

VICKY           Yes

JAMES           She's the one who pulls all these tricks on me. You know that, don't you. I'd like to talk to her.

VICKY           She tried to talk to you, but she says you won't listen.

JAMES           Well, I'm ready to meet her. When is this crazy broad coming back?

VICKY           I'm never sure.

JAMES           Is she coming to the party tonight?

VICKY           Er, yes, I think she will be.

JAMES           The fur is going to fly tonight when I get a hold of her.

VICKY           Oh, dear.

JAMES           This Rita is a trouble maker and I'm going to fix it so she never makes a mockery of me again.

VICKY           Excuse me, I have to change.

JAMES           And get a refill?

VICKY           Right. (She exits)

                  (Enter BENNY licking the icing bowl. Offers icing to JAMES)

JAMES           No thanks, Benny. You enjoy it.

VICKY           (Off) I can't find my grey shoes. How can I talk to Richard without my grey shoes?  
(She enters half dressed)

RITA            Oh, no, that won't do.



VICKY Rita? Thank God you're back.

GLADYS (Off stage) I heard that.

RITA That just won't work.

VICKY That's why I'm looking for my grey shoes.

RITA But that blouse. I don't know.

VICKY Know what?

RITA Well to work really well, it should be tighter.

VICKY It used to be when I brought it, but I've lost weight recently.

RITA Stress?

VICKY I haven't felt like eating lately.

RITA You probably feel full because of all the tea.

VICKY Tea? Oh, I don't drink that much!

RITA (Walks over to her and takes the cup out of her hand. It remains clawlike. He puts the cup back) I rest my case.

VICKY Never mind the tea, Rita, what am I going to do about this outfit?

RITA Well, it works, but it needs padding.

(VICKY crosses to an ornament that conceals tea bags and takes out a couple and stuffs them in her bra.)

BENNY laughs.

VICKY Well?

RITA Don't go out in the rain.

VICKY What?

RITA            Never mind. Look, Victoria, you can't do that. What's going to happen when he seduces you and takes off your bra and these fall out?

VICKY           He's not going to seduce me.

RITA            He's your husband, right?

VICKY           Right.

RITA            You're his wife, right?

VICKY           Right

RITA            And you love him, right?

VICKY           Right

RITA            I rest my case.

VICKY           Wrong.

RITA            You're not going to make love to him?

VICKY           No, I'm going to kill him.

RITA            Oh.

VICKY           Yes, and no jury would convict me.

RITA            You could be famous. "Wife kills doctor". You'll be on t.v., everything.

VICKY           Maybe.

RITA            One question?

VICKY           Yes.

RITA            When you're famous, can I co-ordinate and accessorize you?

VICKY           Absolutely. Come in the bedroom now and help me right now.

RITA            Okay.

VICKY           I bet Lola stole my shoes. (Exits. From off stage) Has anyone seen my pearls?

RITA Oh, Lola, darling, have you seen Victoria's pearl necklace?

LOLA (Fishes it out of her pocket) This one?

RITA Oh, thank goodness. (Calls out to VICKY) It's okay. We have it.

LOLA I got icing on the beads. I'll just run them under water. (She exits)

RITA How's my icing, Benny? Better than Gladys'?

(BENNY nods)

LOLA Oh, dear.

RITA What?

LOLA (Entering) Well I was just washing Victoria's pearls and I dropped them in the garburater.

RITA Well, get them out.

LOLA The garburater was on. I didn't notice.

RITA You didn't notice?

LOLA What a shame.

RITA That wasn't very nice of you, Lola.

LOLA She was kissing James. I saw him first.

RITA I thought you liked Benny?

SARAH I do.

RITA But...

LOLA If there's any kissing to be done, tell James I'll do it from now on.

RITA Come on, you know I don't talk to James.

LOLA Well, maybe it's time you started.

(VICKY enters in another outfit)

RITA We don't have the beads.

VICKY I thought you said...

RITA No.

LOLA (Sees her) Where's my icing bag? (Runs into the Kitchen)

VICKY Oh, my God. (Runs into the Bedroom. Enter GLADYS)

GLADYS I heard that. No blasphemy allowed.

RITA Goddam.

GLADYS That's enough.

RITA Gladys, go in the kitchen and rehearse your psalm or whatever it is you're going to perform for tonight.

GLADYS I have it memorized.

RITA Gladys is back, Victoria. You can come out.

VICKY (Off) I'm changing.

RITA Again.

BENNY makes eating noises

RITA Benny's hungry.

VICKY (Off) Well, we can start the party as soon as I've finished changing.

RITA I think he wants to eat this week.

VICKY (Off) I'm coming. (Enters) There. How's that?

RITA Perfect.

VICKY You're lying.

RITA Why would I lie to you?

VICKY            Because you want to eat.

RITA             Okay, okay. More lipstick, less blush and put your collar down at the back.

VICKY            (Grateful) Thanks, Rita. (Exits again)

GLADYS                 She seems excited or nervous about something.

RITA             Too much caffeine.

(GLADYS screams and points to a deflated balloon on the floor. JAMES crosses and holds the balloon up to GLADYS)

RITA             It's a balloon, Gladys.

GLADYS                Come on, let's go and get this food.

RITA             Okay, I'll carry my cake.

(They exit)

VICKY            Here I am. (She poses)

BENNY            claps, then makes party noises

VICKY Y            es, Benny, let's begin the party. Where are the others?

(BENNY points to Kitchen)

Maybe I should go in and help.

(BENNY shakes his head)

You're probably right. I wonder how the four of them are getting on.

(BENNY holds up five fingers)

(Guessing) Hand?

(BENNY points to each finger)

Five?

(BENNY nods)

Five what? Five people?

(BENNY nods and smiles)

James?

(BENNY nods 'yes')

Rita?

(BENNY nods)

Lola?

(BENNY nods)

Gladys?

(BENNY nods)

Who else? Benny, talk to me. Is Richard here?

(BENNY shakes his head)

Sarah?

(BENNY nods)

Sarah! Sarah is in the kitchen? I didn't hear the doorbell ring.

(Enter JAMES)

Is Sarah here?

JAMES I don't know.

VICKY Was she in the kitchen with you and whoever, by the way, who are you?

JAMES I'm James.

VICKY Oh, of course, I'm sorry.

JAMES            Do you have a hard time remembering names?

VICKY            Who were you in the kitchen with?

JAMES            Gladys.

VICKY            Anyone else?

JAMES            No.

VICKY            Strange. Benny said Sarah was in there.

JAMES            Benny said?

VICKY            Well, not exactly said...

                    (GLADYS enters with sandwiches)

GLADYS          Here we are, sandwiches.

VICKY            Gladys, was Sarah in the kitchen with you?

GLADYS          Yes.

VICKY            But, James just said...

GLADYS          I take care of her.

VICKY            I thought you wanted to kill her.

GLADYS          I never said that!

VICKY            Yes you did.

GLADYS          No I didn't.

VICKY            YES YOU DID.

GLADYS          (Giving her a look) You need help.

VICKY            Wait a minute. If I go into the kitchen, will I see Sarah?

GLADYS          No, of course not.

VICKY But you just said...

GLADYS She was in there.

VICKY Where is she now?

GLADYS The living room.

VICKY (Looks around, realizes everyone is staring at her) Benny, can you see Sarah?  
(BENNY shakes his hand indicating 'maybe')  
James, do you see Sarah?

JAMES No. I see Gladys.

VICKY That's one 'yes', one 'maybe'. Gladys, can you see Sarah?

GLADYS Most of her.

VICKY Most of her?

GLADYS Yes.

VICKY What can't you see?

GLADYS The head.

VICKY Arrgh! Do you see some kind of spirit walking around without a head?

GLADYS No, do you?

VICKY Sarah isn't some sort of ghost?

GLADYS Ghosts are Satan's work.

VICKY He's here too?

JAMES This could be one hell of a party.

VICKY Yes, the party. Benny, why don't you go first. You tell us your story, O.K?  
(BENNY stands and bows. Does an impersonation of a little boy visiting the zoo and getting locked accidentally in a cage with some monkeys.)



Did that happen to you?

(BENNY nods)

Did you go with your mom and dad?

(BENNY holds up 10 fingers)

Hands. What? 10.

(BENNY nods)

GLADYS Benny has 5 dads and 5 mums, right?

(BENNY nods)

I know, I overheard the nurses talking about it.

VICKY 5 moms and 5 dads, I don't get it.

GLADYS He was in five foster homes before he was 6 years old.

VICKY Is that what traumatized him so that now he doesn't talk?

GLADYS No, it was just a mix-up.

VICKY What do you mean, a mix-up?

GLADYS The screening processes were different back then. You see, the first family spoke Spanish. The second were Ukrainians, the third foster parents were English, the fourth were Italian and the last lot were Pakistani.

VICKY So he never got a chance to communicate in one language?

GLADYS Right. And rather than mix up all the languages, he invented his own.

VICKY Wow!

BENNY Benny.

VICKY Yes?

BENNY Benny wants

VICKY            Yes?

BENNY           Benny wants (Points to GLADYS)

VICKY           Oh, he wants you to go next. Weren't you also going to perform Gladys?

GLADYS          (Standing) The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures.

LOLA            Actually that's where it first happened. I did lie down in the pasture. We had a picnic, Charles and me, and, then.....

GLADYS          He leads me beside still waters...

LOLA            There was nobody around for miles, so we took off our clothes and we went skinny dipping in the lake. We started trying to duck each other.....

RITA             Duck? Don't you mean f....?

GLADYS          He leads me in paths of righteousness.....

LOLA            I looked up and coming down the path was my mother.....

BENNY           Uh, oh.

GLADYS          Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death....

LOLA            If looks could have killed.....

GLADYS          I fear no evil...

LOLA            For Charles.....

GLADYS          Is with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me....

RITA             I would imagine so.

GLADYS          Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of....

LOLA            My parents. That night at supper, my mother calmly explained to my father that she had seen me and Charles in the lake.

GLADYS          Thou annointest my head with oil....

RITA He dumped oil over your head?

LOLA No, he was pouring a cup of coffee at the time.....

GLADYS My cup overflows.....

LOLA As he pours the coffee, it runs down the side of the cup, splashing him. He thunders that he is ashamed to have such a sordid daughter....

GLADYS Surely, Goodness and Mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, I shall dwell in the house...

LOLA For a whole year because I am grounded and forbidden to see Charles ever again....

SARAH Enough you two...

GLADYS Amen.

BENNY Benny wants...

SARAH Yes, Benny?

BENNY Benny wants Sarah.

(SARAH smiles and BENNY crosses to her and hugs her. They kiss.)

VICKY You're Sarah?!

SARAH Yes.

VICKY And Lola?

SARAH Yes. She's a part of me.

VICKY And Gladys?

SARAH She's the other part of me.

VICKY But all the time you were Sarah?

SARAH Yes. Lola and Gladys help me out, but I'm feeling really good now. I don't think I'll need them so much now.

VICKY            Because you're out of the centre?

SARAH           No, because. (She looks at BENNY)

BENNY           Benny wants Sarah.

JAMES           I don't really get it.

VICKY           James, it's so simple. She feels wanted. Benny loves her.

JAMES           Love, ha!

VICKY           Yes, love, James.

RITA             Love, romance, lust, passion, how wonderful.

VICKY           Rita?

RITA             Yes, darling?

VICKY           You've been in love?

RITA             Of course. Real women know what love is.

VICKY           Sarah? What can we do to make James accept Rita?

SARAH           I don't know. He doesn't even acknowledge her.

VICKY           Rejection. It'll drive us all nuts.

SARAH           You know all about that.

VICKY           How could you know? You weren't here.

SARAH           Sure I was. Only you couldn't see me.

VICKY           I wish Richard could have been here to see all this. He should have been here by now.

SARAH           He's probably just late.

VICKY            You don't know Richard. Mr. Punctuality. It comes from being a doctor. Everything runs on a schedule. Breakfast at exactly 7:30, arrive at the office at 8:00, patients until 3:30.

RITA             Affair in the Supply Room at 4:00.

SARAH            So, you've been stood up.

VICKY            I bet Nurse Kelly took him back. Well, she's welcome to him. (She sits down.)

BENNY            makes scum noises

SARAH            Even Benny thinks he's scum.

RITA             You're better off without him, darling. I'll put the kettle on and cut the cake up and bring it out. (He exits.)

SARAH            I have an idea.

VICKY            Yes, I suppose I could kill him.

SARAH            No, to help James accept his female side. You can help him.

VICKY            What?

SARAH            Kiss him again.

VICKY            Well, I wouldn't mind, but he's not here.

SARAH            Kiss Rita.

VICKY            Oh, no, I couldn't.

SARAH            Why not?

VICKY            She'll think I'm a lesbian. Wait a minute.

SARAH            Maybe if James thinks you find his female side attractive and desirable, it will help him.

RITA             (Entering.) Here we are. Tea and cake. I cut up Gladys' and mine.

                      (SARAH motions for VICKY to kiss RITA and BENNY act out what she should do.)

VICKY Er, Rita.

RITA Yes, Victoria?

VICKY Could you pass me a piece of cake, please?

RITA Of course, darling. This one has lots of decorations on it.

VICKY Thank you.

SARAH I think Benny and I will eat our cake in the kitchen.

VICKY No! Don't leave!

RITA Don't be silly. Have some cake. (He hands out cake and they all eat.) Then we'll leave you two in private. (To VICKY) Maybe us girls could take in a movie and leave Sarah and Benny alone in the house to....

SARAH Get to know each other.

RITA Exactly what I was going to say.

(BENNY and SARAH urge VICKY behind JAMES' back)

VICKY (To BENNY and SARAH) O.K. (To RITA) Rita, I find you attractive.

RITA Even without make up, how sweet.

VICKY (Going for it.) Especially without make up. (She kisses him.)

RITA Victoria!

VICKY Yes?

RITA Are you a lesbian?

VICKY Arrgh! Sarah!

SARAH I'm sorry, I thought it would work.

VICKY No, Rita. I'm sorry. I wanted to talk to James, ask him to come here.

RITA I told you, he won't listen to me.

VICKY Is James gay?

RITA No, not in the least darling. He just won't accept his female side.

VICKY Do you accept his masculine side?

SARAH Do you love James, Rita?

RITA Yes.

SARAH Tell him.

RITA What?

SARAH Say 'I love you James'.

RITA I love you James.

(beat)

JAMES Why is everyone looking at me?

VICKY (Delighted) James, how do you feel?

JAMES With my hands.

VICKY James! How do you feel?

JAMES Hungry. Oh, good, sandwiches, nice china.

VICKY *Nice china?*

JAMES Yes.

SARAH Definite progress.

VICKY Have a cup of tea James.

(They all watch him drink)

JAMES Not bad.

VICKY James! YOU DRANK TEA! Tea all round. We need a toast. To what shall we drink?

SARAH To Benny.

BENNY Sarah.

JAMES And Victoria.

VICKY To James.

JAMES What about Richard?

VICKY No, you've all started to say goodbye to Rita, Gladys and Lola. I think it's time I started letting go of Richard.

(The others cheer)

Right, now let's sample the cakes.

(They eat)

BENNY makes yuck noises

SARAH You know these candies aren't very sweet.

VICKY I didn't know M & M's came in this colour?

SARAH Rita found them in the cupboard.

VICKY There were no candies in the cupboard. Just tea and the prescriptions.

SARAH The pills!

VICKY Yes.

BENNY Uh, oh.

(They all look at the cake and then at each other as the lights begin to fade.)

The End