

Scene 1

(A sign that reads “This is a play of a misplaced family. Everything is within the dialogue and deeds” can be seen. The sound of wind in pine trees can be heard on the outskirts of Santa Fe, NM. BLUE stands over a grave. He is wearing a black suit and tie. MUTT is standing next to him and dressed in a casual manner. He holds two sets of flowers in his hand.)

MUTT

Where is everybody?

BLUE

There ain't nobody. She didn't have many friends towards the end.

MUTT

Didn't she go to church?

BLUE

Not the way she used to. She'd go down to the river every Sunday and pray by herself. It was easier for her. A few folks showed up earlier, when the funeral was scheduled, but that was hours ago.

MUTT

You been waiting for me that long?

BLUE

No. I haven't been waiting for you. You been drivin' long?

MUTT

I don't really know. I lost track of the days some place in Arkansas.

BLUE

Arkansas? I though you came from the Maryland.

MUTT

I did. But I had to stop off in Arkansas on my way here.

BLUE

Are you lit?

MUTT

Do I seem lit?

BLUE

I don't know. I haven't been around you in awhile.

MUTT

Well, I'm not lit. I'm just tired.

BLUE

You drive all this distance in that little brown car out front? That shit brown car? Is that the car you been driving all these years?

MUTT

No. I had a bicycle for a while. But it's hard to sleep in the back of bicycle.

BLUE

How many miles you got on that car?

MUTT

Twelve years worth.

BLUE

Right. You got air conditioning in that shoebox?

MUTT

Windows.

BLUE

Too cheap to spring for air conditioning.

MUTT

Broken.

BLUE

Too cheap to fix it. That's predictable. You must fry like an egg in that thing when the sun gets high enough.

MUTT

Should I have called before I got here?

BLUE

Do you have a telephone?

MUTT

You knew I was coming.

BLUE

I thought you'd be here to help carry mother. It looks awful funny having five people carrying a casket. Where's father?

MUTT

Last I talked to him he was in Europe? Word has it you're getting married.

BLUE

Yes. Yes, I am.

MUTT

When did that happen?

BLUE

Engaged? Two years ago. Is that why you are here? To fuck my fiancé?

MUTT

That is not why I am here. You should know why I'm here.

BLUE

I'm here 'cause father needs someone to take care of our ranch house.

MUTT

Our ranch house?

BLUE

Our ranch house. The family house. Father can't afford to pay the leafblowers anymore.

MUTT

Well, good for you. You were always the better of the two of us.

BLUE

Yeah, I was, wasn't I? God damn it, I'm tired.

MUTT

Where's your fiancé?

BLUE

Went back to the house.

MUTT

Where did you meet this girl you're getting hitched to? She from around here?

BLUE

Are you trying small talking with me?

MUTT

Yeah. I am.

BLUE

We were thinking of here. Or Houston. That's where here brother lives. Met her on a Carnival Cruise ship. You'll meet her in a few hours. If you're staying that long?

MUTT

Is that what you've been doing? Working on boats?

BLUE

Cruise ships. I've been working on cruise ships. That and a few other projects I've had in my pocket.

MUTT

What does your fiancé do?

BLUE

She was a dancing girl on the ship. I know you like dancing girls.

MUTT

You are correct. I do. I do like dancing girls. You have always been right about me.

BLUE

My fiancé's a waitress now. All of a sudden she ain't as glamorous to you, is she?

MUTT

The world needs waitresses.

BLUE

Well, she ain't gonna be a waitress for long.

MUTT

You bossin' her around?

BLUE

Just naming a fact. I don't want my fiancé to be a waitress.

MUTT

You boss your fiancé around, Blue?

BLUE

I don't hit her, if that is what you are asking. My fiancé can do whatever the Hell she wants.

MUTT

You let her do whatever the “Hell” she wants?

BLUE

Yeah. I let her.

MUTT

That is great. You let her.

BLUE

You’ll like my fiancé. She has soft skin. It’s hard to get her to shut up, sometimes. She’ll like you. You have charm.

MUTT

That’s what mother used to say.

BLUE

By the way, are you here to clean the crap out of your room?

MUTT

Why?

BLUE

Because I want it out of our house. No one has touched it since you split. Your mother bolted the door shut with a two by four and an iron pad lock.

MUTT

I’m sure we can remove the pad lock.

BLUE

I just want your things gone.

MUTT

What’s the hurry?

BLUE

There is no hurry. I just want your things out.

MUTT

Father told me you’d say that.

BLUE

Yeah. What else has father said about me?

MUTT

He told me plenty. He told me about your back. He told me about your fiancé. Father told me you haven't been taking good care of the house.

BLUE

Father wouldn't know. He's never here.

MUTT

Well, he talks like he knows enough. Enough to call me and talk about it with me. He says the house has roaches.

BLUE

Every house in the state has roaches.

MUTT

And the roof is falling to pieces.

BLUE

It was like that when I moved back.

MUTT

He also told me all the animals are dying.

BLUE

Some have died. We've always lost animals.

MUTT

But, father must have enough animals on the property to call the ranch a ranch. Or he gets taxed for the land.

BLUE

You think I don't know this?

MUTT

I know you know this. But father talks like you don't know this. He talks like he's concerned. He talks about your back. And how much pressure it can take.

BLUE

My back is fine.

MUTT

No it ain't. I can tell by the way you stand.

BLUE

I can lift anything you.

MUTT

Nobody said you can't.

BLUE

I just carried your mother half way across a graveyard.

MUTT

You don't need to remind me.

BLUE

Do I? You still haven't put them flowers down.

MUTT

I told father I'd take care of the place until he got back.

BLUE

When is he coming home?

MUTT

When do you think? He told me to stay in my old room, and pay the bills, and fix the place up. Because he thinks you are not working out.

BLUE

And when did you start listening to father?

MUTT

About three days ago. You can stay. He told me you got nowhere else to go. I'll just be in the room next to you. I'd like to try and make this work. Father will be calling in a day or two to check on my progress. You can talk to him yourself.

BLUE

You touch my fiancé, I'll murder you. You hear me.

MUTT

Yeah. I hear you.

(Silence.)

BLUE

Are you hungry? I made tamales last night. You still like those?

MUTT

Yeah.

BLUE

Green chili in the salad crisper if you want that too. I keep the beer in the cooler under the TV. I keep the TV outside, so I can watch it under the stars. What else have you and father been talking about?

MUTT

Not much.

BLUE

People been sayin' father started dating a young skirt named Amy Warboy about the time I moved back. You'll hear lots of that while you are here. Is she with him? In Europe?

MUTT

He didn't say. She related to Billy Warboy?

BLUE

She's Billy's niece. Remember her? I believe she's Hopi. She is younger than his usual girlfriends. She graduated from grammar school last May.

MUTT

Why are you tellin' me this?

BLUE

Rather you hear it from me, than some drunk at bar.

MUTT

How long have you been here?

BLUE

In the graveyard? It feels like three days.

MUTT

How long have you been back home?

BLUE

All time freezes up here for me. Sometimes it feels like I never left.

MUTT

Your fiancé like it up here?

BLUE

Ask her yourself.

What's her name?
MUTT

Her name is Critter.
BLUE

Critter? That's a nice name.
MUTT

It's a nickname like yours.
BLUE

What's her real name?
MUTT

Judy. You'll like her. She yells at me. Mostly.
BLUE

Sounds like a lot of the girls you've dated.
MUTT

Well, I'm getting married to this one. She's waiting tables at El Patio in Albuquerque. Remember El Patio?
BLUE

Yeah.
MUTT

Don't know how long that will last. Her boss is a genuine piece of work. Half the things he's said to her, I would have smacked him for.
BLUE

I am sure you would.
MUTT

What does that mean?
BLUE

Nothing. I see you still wear your dog tags. You can see 'em through your shirt.
MUTT

What of it?
BLUE

MUTT

Just seeing the dog tags. I know you wanted to stay in the army.

BLUE

There's blankets in the hallway closet. You'll need 'em tonight. It's been getting cold again.

MUTT

Does this bother you?

BLUE

This? I've always done what father wanted. Are those flowers for Kristy? That second set of flowers? She's over there, by the oak tree.

(End of scene.)

Scene 2

(Inside the ranch house. The sun is setting, giving the world a heavenly look. The house is a mess. Curtains are held together with ropes. Paint is chipping from the walls. Sheets cover the furniture, and the floor is covered in dirty throw rugs. Broken antique dolls and various photo albums can be seen. A rope is around one of the dolls. CRITTER and MUTT place candles throughout the house. She is clearly younger than the brothers. BLUE can be seen passed out on a piece of lawn furniture outside. In the distance an old '48 Pontiac can be seen in the grass.)

CRITTER

He likes to sleep outside. When we go camping, he leaves the tent for me. That's why he moved the TV to the porch. And he's not aloud to smoke in the house. You aren't either.

MUTT

I'll keep that in mind. How long ago was the power cut off?

CRITTER

Yesterday. I am surprised Blue didn't tell you.

MUTT

We had other things to discuss. How late is the power bill?

CRITTER

Eight months. That's what the notice said. But the gas still works. For now. Try not to open the refrigerator. I think most of the food can keep for another day or two if we are careful. Blue took a battery from that old car in the lawn and attached to the TV. So you can still watch if you want. But you'll have to wrestle the remote away from him.

MUTT

He hooked the car battery to the TV and it worked?

CRITTER

Blue attached a military current adaptor to the battery so it was grounded right. You can get a good picture from it.

MUTT

He doesn't sleep with you?

CRITTER

Not for a few weeks. At least, not since we came to Santa Fe, since your mother got sick. He just drinks his Budweiser and watches TV, and sleeps.

MUTT

What does he watch?

CRITTER

Nothing. Cartoons. Weather. Black and white movies. He really doesn't *watch* anything. He doesn't care. He turns the volume off. He likes the hum of the TV, and the shifting lights. It's like white noise to him. He'll watch cooking shows so he can cook me something new. He usually makes tamales or burritos. He gets into ruts. When he watches TV, it reminds him that he can cook more. He talks about you.

MUTT

I find that hard to believe.

CRITTER

He says your mother loved you more than him.

MUTT

We don't have the same mother.

CRITTER

He told me you'd say that, if met you.

MUTT

If. Right.

CRITTER

He uses "if" a lot when he talks about you. He told me you were born on your mother's birthday. March seventh. He told me she thought you were an angel from heaven, a gift from God, for all the bad things that had happened to her when she was a kid.

MUTT

My mother was a very colorful person.

CRITTER

I know. She called me princess.

MUTT

She called all of Blue's girlfriends princess.

CRITTER

Well, I'm his fiancé.

MUTT

Of course you are. What are we doing to pay the power bill?

CRITTER

We aren't paying the power bill.

MUTT

Why not?

CRITTER

We don't have the money.

MUTT

My father isn't giving you any money?

CRITTER

No. Is he giving you money?

MUTT

Who paid for the funeral?

CRITTER

I did.

MUTT

What about the insurance?

CRITTER

There was no insurance. Your mother's policy elapsed years ago.

MUTT

How much was the funeral?

CRITTER
It's not important now.

MUTT
Yes it is. How much?

CRITTER
Enough. Would you like something to drink?

MUTT
Do you have any liquor?

CRITTER
I have vodka in my room. Would you like some?

MUTT
In a little while.

CRITTER
We have sake above the refrigerator. I could warm a glass for you.

MUTT
Sure.

(CRITTER *makes sake for two.*)

CRITTER
How long are you staying?

MUTT
You're husband didn't tell you?

CRITTER
Tell me what?

MUTT
I've decided to stay for a while.

CRITTER
Fantastic. Do you like pictionary? Blue won't play it with me.

MUTT
I've never played before. I'm more of a card player. But, I learn quick.

CRITTER

It's my dream to have a game night. We could have friends over and make cocktails. I love making new friends. Your mother wanted us to have our wedding here, so I could see how many friends she had, but Blue didn't want that.

MUTT

Why not?

CRITTER

He says New Mexico is too dirty for a wedding.

MUTT

That sounds like your man.

CRITTER

I like it here. And, I would like to have the wedding here. She was going to pay for it, your mother. Pay for all the flowers and the cake. She showed me her collection of cake pictures. She wanted to get an ice sculpture of the two of us. She said she wanted to fly whole salmons in from Alaska, and pay a French seamstress to make my dress, and that she would have the Pope come to marry us.

MUTT

The Pope. Was mother still talking to the Pope when she died?

CRITTER

She really knew the Pope?

MUTT

She had her picture taken with him once. She talked to the picture.

CRITTER

She had the picture framed by her bed.

MUTT

Yeah. But she really didn't know the Pope.

CRITTER

Isn't your father friends with the Pope.

MUTT

You hear that from my mother too? My father doesn't know the Pope. My father sang for the Pope in the eighties. The early eighties. But, he doesn't know the Pope.

CRITTER

Your mother made it sound like he knew him.

MUTT

My mother said a lot of things. This ceiling looks like shit.

CRITTER

I'm sorry. It's my fault.

MUTT

Why do you say that?

CRITTER

I haven't had the chance to fix it yet.

MUTT

Who said it was your job to fix the roof?

CRITTER

I did.

MUTT

I believe it. How long have you known my brother?

CRITTER

Long enough.

MUTT

What does that mean?

CRITTER

Long enough to know I love him.

MUTT

How long does it take for you to know you love somebody?

CRITTER

Blue? Five minutes. I know him better than you.

MUTT

He told me you are a dancer.

CRITTER

I was. I don't do that anymore. I have a family to take care of now. Well, my husband, soon to be husband. I enjoyed spending time with your mother. I daydreamed about meeting her for years. Blue keeps a picture of her in the back of his wallet. He keeps a picture of the two of you next to it. You must be two years old. Maybe three. You're on his lap, and you are going down a corkscrew playground slide. He has a toothless grin, and your hands are up in the air.

MUTT

Have you seen a picture of his mother?

CRITTER

He doesn't have a picture of his own mother.

MUTT

Those pictures are harder to come by.

CRITTER

Where are you going to sleep tonight?

MUTT

I will be staying in my room.

CRITTER

Your bed has spiders. Stay in my room.

MUTT

How do you know my bed has spiders? I thought the door on my room was still locked.

CRITTER

We can get it open. But it's difficult. Please. Stay with me. You can sleep in my bed.

MUTT

Where will you sleep?

CRITTER

I'll be on the floor.

MUTT

This is how Michael Jackson got into trouble.

CRITTER

I'll be more careful than Michael Jackson. My bed's the most comfortable one in the house. I took three futons and stacked them one each other. Please. He won't know. I know. He won't. He won't even care.

MUTT

I don't think it's a good idea for you and me to sleep in the same room.

CRITTER

I do.

MUTT

I'm sorry. Not tonight.

CRITTER

In the upstairs bathroom, down the hallway from where I sleep, there's a framed piece of spiral bound notebook between the toilet and the sink with black and blue scribbles all over it. It's your notebook, isn't it?

MUTT

How can you tell?

CRITTER

It's not Blue's handwriting.

MUTT

It's the back of my biology notebook. From freshman year in high school.

CRITTER

I love it. The cryptic blocks that spell The Sex Pistols in a triangle. My first love had a Sex Pistols poster duck taped to his bedroom wall right next to his window so the sunlight could never bleach it. I'm surprised your father let you listen to the Sex Pistols.

(MUTT starts peeling paint off the walls.)

MUTT

He didn't. But, I did anyways. Your husband and I weren't allowed to listen to rock music at all. Father would hit us with a gym sock stuffed with walnuts if he caught us listening to music he did not approve of. Music he did not sing. But we listened to rock anyways.

CRITTER

But, he let's your notebook hang in the bathroom?

MUTT

Father's heart has grown tender over time. My mother hung that notebook in the bathroom. That's probably why he lets it stay.

CRITTER

What are you listening to now?

MUTT

Whatever I can. I don't like today's rock bands. It's all whiny skateboard music. Who gives a shit if your parents got a divorce and your prom date dumped you for the captain of the football team. If you're gonna play rock 'n roll, it should be about the devil or how hard you're gonna rock some town. It's been years since I've had sake.

CRITTER

I like you. You're cute.

MUTT

What do you guys keep this crap around for?

CRITTER

Blue uses it in marinades. You don't take compliments well, do you?

MUTT

I can. When I want to.

CRITTER

I bet you get a mess of compliments. When is your father coming home?

MUTT

What makes you think I know that?

CRITTER

You wouldn't be staying if he wasn't.

MUTT

He'll come back when he comes back.

CRITTER

You're getting drunk.

MUTT

Not really. But I haven't eaten today.

CRITTER

Are you an angry drinker?

MUTT

Maybe.

CRITTER

I'll bet I can get you into my bed by the end of the night.

MUTT

And how are you gonna do that?

CRITTER

I bet you are a bag of fun with a few beers in you. Would you try to kiss me if you were drunk?

MUTT

Possibly.

CRITTER

You're a smart man. I'm a very good kisser. You're a very smart man.

MUTT

Not as smart as I should be.

CRITTER

You are a smart ass too, aren't you?

MUTT

Not as much as I used to be.

CRITTER

I like smart asses.

MUTT

You are the first person I've ever meet who can say that.

CRITTER

Smart asses are usually the most intelligent people in the room.

MUTT

Hence, smart-ass.

CRITTER

The best men are like that.

MUTT

I am not the best of men.

CRITTER

I find this very difficult to believe.

MUTT

Why's that?

CRITTER

I can see it in your eyes.

MUTT

I've heard that one before.

CRITTER

I can. I've dated a lot of creeps. And when you've seen as many as I have, you can see in their eyes if they have a speck of good-for-something in them.

MUTT

Am I good for something?

CRITTER

Good enough to talk to. It even comes through in the picture your brother has in the back of his wallet. You can see it in your brother. Sometimes. When I meet your brother, he smeared the crap out of porter on the cruise ship. The porter called one of my friends a whore. He jammed him in the stomach with folding chair and ordered the porter to say he was sorry for his foul mouth. Everyone on the ship was scared of Blue from then on out, except for me. From then on I knew I had to spend the rest of my life with him. Why did you go away?

MUTT

What did your husband tell you?

CRITTER

He told me you are a coward.

MUTT

Yeah. I wanted to see Europe. Europe mostly. Europe and South America.

CRITTER

No you didn't. How long have you been gone?

MUTT

A little over ten years now.

CRITTER

Was it sad?

MUTT

No. You are a red flag, aren't you?

CRITTER

What do you mean?

MUTT

You're trouble.

CRITTER

What makes you say that?

MUTT

I trust my instincts. Is your husband to be gonna lay there all night?

CRITTER

Probably.

MUTT

Does he have a job?

CRITTER

Your father got him a job cooking at the Coyote Café. But, he mostly lays on his back all day. If we are lucky he gathers his empty beer cans and use them for target practice. He shoots his .45 every night.

MUTT

That doesn't surprise me. But, he doesn't go into work?

CRITTER

No. Too many people at work.

MUTT

They won't fire him?

CRITTER

He is your father's son. He got into a disagreement with the owner...

MUTT

Is that still Mark Miller?

CRITTER

Does it really matter? He was told to put a brick on top of t-bones when he grilled them. So they would cook faster. He refused. He insisted that is no way to cook a steak. He hasn't been back to work since. They send his pay checks in the mail.

MUTT

He hasn't changed a bit.

CRITTER

He threatened to kill a tourist two weeks ago. In front of the Wallgreens in the square. The authorities wrote down his name on a paper drugstore bag, but never did a damn thing about it.

MUTT

Why did he threaten the tourist?

CRITTER

The tourist was yelling at a Navajo street seller. In Spanish. Saying the necklaces he was selling weren't made of silver.

MUTT

Does he carry his gun on him?

CRITTER

I won't let him.

MUTT

Can Blue still throw a punch? With his back and all.

CRITTER

You know about his back?

MUTT

I heard. Hell, I can tell by the way he's sleeping.

CRITTER

It's not as bad as it looks. He can walk straight now. With the way the scoliosis got, he was developing problems breathing and digesting food.

MUTT

Does he have pain?

CRITTER

Sometimes. He refuses to take his pills, the ones the doctor gave him. He's afraid he'll end up like your mother.

MUTT

What kind of pills does he have?

CRITTER

They're powder blue. About the size of a paper clip.

MUTT

Yeah, I know what those are.

CRITTER

They look similar to the ones your mom used to take.

MUTT

Tell me something, what have you two been doing? Since you got attached.

CRITTER

I wouldn't call us attached.

MUTT

Engaged.

CRITTER

Are you bothered by that?

MUTT

Should I be?

CRITTER

You should be jealous. We where in Wyoming for awhile, and men fell over themselves for me.

MUTT

Really. What where you doing in Wyoming?

CRITTER

We got engaged in the backseat of a Pontiac just south of Houston. Blue wore a wool suit he barrowed from a teenager he meet on the cruise ship. It was too small. The cuffs came up to his elbows. But he still looked wonderful. We drove up to Cheyenne the next day to get jobs on a cattle ranch. Blue had it in his mind that we could ride horses real slow across the country. Fixing fences and moving herds of cows across creeks and land. And camp out under the stars and never have to talk to another person if we wanted. His back couldn't take the pounding. The camp doctor told him to get a desk job.

MUTT

I bet he loved hearing that.

CRITTER

He didn't say anything. He got up out of the doctors visiting chair. Put on his coat. Put on his hat. Put each of his gloves on one at a time. And walked out the glass door. He didn't say a word to me. He got in our car. And waited for me to join him. When we drove home, he drove exactly the speed limit. And stopped a full, stand still stop at every red light. Would you like to see my guitar? I bought it the day before you mother died.

(CRITTER produces a guitar with no strings.)

CRITTER

I know I can't afford it. But, I bought it anyways. Is that wrong?

MUTT

No. It has no strings?

CRITTER

I'll buy those when I have the money. I just like holding it right now.

MUTT

You're very proud.

CRITTER

I'm going to teach myself. I just want to learn how to play a few songs, really. Something to play around the house, or when we have guests. We should have a party. The three of us. For your mother.

MUTT

You need money to have parties.

CRITTER

We will get money.

MUTT

We need to clean this place first.

CRITTER

What the Hell kind of name is Mutt?

MUTT

What the Hell kind of name is Critter?

CRITTER

It's a nickname. My grandfather gave it to me.

MUTT

My name is Mathew. It's biblical. I was born before my mother and father got engaged. My grandfather called me Mutt, because I am mixed breed in his mind.

CRITTER

And you still keep the name.

MUTT

It stuck. It's more memorable than Mathew.

CRITTER

I want to call you Mathew. It's my name for you.

MUTT

Then you can call me Mathew.

CRITTER

Okay, Mathew. What is that red line, over your thumb, Mathew?

MUTT

This? This, I got in Alaska. I worked in a cannery two summers ago, sealing the tops of tin tuna fish cans.

CRITTER

What happened?

MUTT

Got this hand caught in a machine. I got lucky. Most people loose arms in those sorts of situations. I just got my red line.

CRITTER

And what else have you been doing? Have some sake, Mathew. The taste won't kill you.

MUTT

I went to Europe for a while. Cleaned dishes and bartended in Frankfurt. Almost lost my hat to a hungry dog there. I lived in a small mountain town in Mexico as a tour guide. Caught catfish in Arkansas.

CRITTER

Which town?

MUTT

You've never heard of it. No one has.

CRITTER

What part of Mexico?

MUTT

The middle part. Between the water.

(MUTT goes to the rope around the doll and creates a lasso.)

MUTT

I tried lobstering in Maine for about three weeks before I was fired. Only job I was ever fired from.

CRITTER

What happened?

MUTT

Incompetence.

(MUTT *lasso's a doll. He does this repeatedly.*)

CRITTER

You don't seem incompetent.

MUTT

I can be. Sold Chinese fighting fish in Buffalo, sold dwarf hamsters in Lexington, Kentucky for a while. I had steady employment for about three summers in the Mid West working on a popcorn farm. I've even worked on a chili farm just two hours south of here.

CRITTER

Where?

MUTT

Silver City.

CRITTER

I don't know that town.

MUTT

Not many do.

CRITTER

Have you been to Paris?

MUTT

Yes.

CRITTER

Was it wonderful?

MUTT

No.

CRITTER

Where did you learn to use a rope like that?

MUTT

I was a rodeo clown for a short period of time.

CRITTER

That sounds like a blast.

MUTT

It was. But there aren't a lot of gifts involved in rodeo. Just hard work.

CRITTER

Did you bring me a present?

MUTT

Yes I did.

CRITTER

No you didn't.

MUTT

No I got you a present. It's not from Paris. I was in Paris before you and Blue got attached. But I do have something with me.

CRITTER

What is it?

MUTT

I haven't wrapped it yet.

CRITTER

You don't need to wrap it, I'll just rip into anyways.

MUTT

It's in my bag.

(MUTT gets the present from his bag.)

MUTT

I got it in a California flea market.

(The present is wrapped in a cloth. It's an old San Francisco Giants baseball jersey.)

MUTT

I really didn't know what to get you, but I didn't want to meet you empty handed.

CRITTER

I love it.

(CRITTER puts on the jersey.)

CRITTER

Why didn't you ever tell anybody where you were going?

MUTT

I usually didn't know where I was going. But my father knew. He knew where I was. I'd call him, and he would know where I was by the sound of my voice.

CRITTER

Do you like being back?

MUTT

Yes.

(The phone rings. Mutt answers it.)

MUTT

Hello. I'm sorry. She doesn't live here anymore. Not for about a week now. That's all right. Have a nice day.

CRITTER

Who was that?

MUTT

Someone for mom.

CRITTER

I'm sorry.

MUTT

Don't be. My father will be calling, and it's very important that I speak to him. If he calls when I'm asleep, wake me up.

CRITTER

Blue told me he couldn't make it here for the funeral.

MUTT

My father is a very busy man.

CRITTER

Mathew, tell me about my new husband.

MUTT

More important first. I don't know your husband as well as I used to.

CRITTER

What was he like when you were in school? Did he have a lot of girlfriends?

MUTT

He had one. He was what I dubbed as a political mischief. He and an amigo of ours, used to crawl on their hands and stomachs across the grass of rich people's lawns, and steal their cars. Sometimes they would bring me along. They used to steal expensive cars, BMWs and nice Toyotas, and bring them out to a garage in Albuquerque. They'd take apart the seats and the dashboards, and the floorboards and put chunks of cat food and dead fish into the framework of the cars. Then they would carefully put them back together and return the cars to their rightful owners before they had the chance to wake up and see the cars had been gone.

CRITTER

That is awesome.

MUTT

Of course, most of the cars they "remodeled" were owned by the board of the Sante Fe Opera. I think your husband got himself a kick, stickin' it to the people who paid our father to sing.

CRITTER

I can see that. He hates authority. No. He hates egos. That's why he wanted to stay in the army so bad. Everyone seemed equal to him in the Army. He never takes his dog tags off. Not in the shower, not when we make love. The tags scrape against my stomach or my back when we make love.

MUTT

And how often does that happen?

CRITTER

Whenever we fuck?

MUTT

I mean he sleeps in a different bed.

CRITTER

He doesn't sleep in a bed. He sleeps in a chair.

MUTT

He sleeps in a different place than you.

CRITTER

I know where to find him. And he knows where to find me.

MUTT

And you like that?

CRITTER

I didn't say that. I said he knows where to find me. And I always know where to find him.

MUTT

Are you happy with my brother?

CRITTER

Most of the time.

MUTT

Most of the time? When are you not?

CRITTER

When he doesn't talk to me.

MUTT

He's never been much of a talker.

CRITTER

Neither are you. I mean when he doesn't talk to me.

MUTT

Is that a regular occurrence?

CRITTER

It's an everyday occurrence. But that is the way he is. I don't like this conversation. I'm getting drunk.

MUTT

How did a girl like you get on a cruise ship?

CRITTER

You're slurring your speech, Mathew.

MUTT

So are you.

CRITTER

And what kind of question is that? "A girl" like me?

MUTT

You clearly can't hold your booze.

CRITTER

I can hold my booze. I can hold my booze better than you can.

MUTT

Really. Did you learn how to hold your booze on the cruise ship?

CRITTER

Yes. Cruise ships will take anybody they can for whatever they need. I was thinking of going to college, but found out that college cost money. To travel to neat places I've never heard of, to get paid for dancing with old men each night to Duke Ellington music. That was my college. I was paid to look like a patron, and ask men dance, and buy me drinks, and flirt with them. And hold my booze.

MUTT

You where a call girl.

CRITTER

No. Patron services. That's all I was. I didn't have sex with anybody. But, every night some one would make an offer. I was proposed to seventeen times in one week, sailing by Panama.

MUTT

That had to make you feel good.

CRITTER

It's always hard to say no to a man on his knees. You can see the loneliness in his eyes. The desperation. The two go hand in hand.

MUTT

Did you ever say yes?

CRITTER

Obviously I did, Mathew.

MUTT

How did he do it?

CRITTER

He didn't do it. Well, he did, but he didn't come after me the way the other men came after me. He never talked about himself. Sometimes he would. He told me his father was a legendary singer. A legendary singer that drinks like a fish and falls in love with a new girl every Monday. He said that to me. He really said that to me. And he told me New Mexico was different from Old Mexico. He told me you could see it in the sun. He told me he didn't know his mother. He told me he had a half brother who abandoned his

(CRITTER *cont.*)

mother. And who abandoned him because his father told him to, these are his words not mine.

MUTT

I know.

CRITTER

It was more than just listening to me. I couldn't fake anything with him. You could tell from the start. I couldn't be on my game, because there was no game. I had to be careful with the words I used when I spoke to him.

MUTT

Why's that?

CRITTER

Because he listened to me. And told me I looked like Drew Barrymore when I smiled.

MUTT

You do. We need to open the lock on my room.

CRITTER

Are you trying to make me cry?

MUTT

You're drunk.

CRITTER

So are you.

MUTT

I have a lot of work to do tomorrow. I'm going to get the power back on.

CRITTER

How are you gonna do that?

MUTT

I'll improvise. There's a few other things that gotta get done. I have to make this house nice again.

CRITTER

Can we paint the walls?

MUTT

We?

CRITTER

You and me. Can we paint the walls.

MUTT

Yes.

CRITTER

What about all of your mother's things?

MUTT

We will sell her things. Most of her things. I don't know if these dolls are worth anything anymore. But I want to paint soon. Cover these walls.

CRITTER

Can I pick the paint?

MUTT

No. I get to pick the paint. How do I get into my room?

CRITTER

It's easy. I did it last weekend with a butter knife. I opened it when Blue was in the shower. He doesn't know. Your bed is still made. The way your mother left it.

MUTT

I'm sure it is.

CRITTER

There's a brown stain on the floor by the bed. It's big.

MUTT

I know.

CRITTER

Mathew, I've enjoyed having a drink with you tonight.

MUTT

I'll be in my room, Critter.

(MUTT puts the rope back. End of scene.)

Scene 3

(Night time. The sound of rain can be heard. The sounds of gunfire can be heard. BLUE is on the porch of the house with his army pistol, shooting empty beer cans. He is soaked

from the rain. The porch features an empty swimming pool. CRITTER comes out to the porch. She is wearing nothing but the baseball jersey.)

CRITTER

Blue, it's three thirty in the morning.

BLUE

I'm sure it is.

CRITTER

It's raining.

BLUE

Yeah. Kind of nice, ain't it?

CRITTER

Why don't you come inside?

BLUE

Why?

CRITTER

Because, I would like that. It would make me happy.

BLUE

Honey, I have a whole box of shells here. I can't come inside, I haven't even hit a single can yet.

(Silence)

CRITTER

Fine. Did you bring the TV inside?

BLUE

I covered it in a trash bag. It's fine.

CRITTER

Good.

(CRITTER goes back inside. MUTT enters. BLUE continues to fire his pistol.)

BLUE

Have you fucked my fiancé yet?

MUTT

I didn't come back to be talked to like this.

BLUE

That's a nice baseball shirt she's got on. Makes her tits look real perky. Is that your shirt?

MUTT

That's a present from me to her.

BLUE

Showin' up to your mother's burial with presents. You're a real winner, Mutt. You want a beer?

MUTT

No.

BLUE

Good. More for me. You know, I've been thinking a lot about this whole invading Iraq thing recently. Is it me, or does the whole damn thing look a lot like Vietnam too you? We send troops to a piece of shit real estate in the name of national interest. We gotta get them before they can get us. The Vietnamese are short and brown. The Iraqis are short and brown. Most of them are short and brown. You think America has problems with short, brown people? I mean, when you stop and think about it we really haven't tried to kill any white people in sixty years. And we really didn't want to kill any Nazis. We just wanted to drop bombs on Japanese kids.

MUTT

If you were still in the army...

BLUE

Well, I ain't in the army no more.

MUTT

Yeah, yeah, yeah. But if you were, would you be there right now?

BLUE

Japan?

MUTT

No. Iraq, Idiot.

BLUE

Don't call me an idiot.

MUTT

You just woke me up, blowing the shit out of cans. I call you what I damn well want to call you.

CRITTER

(Off stage) Mathew, just let him shot his cans.

BLUE

Mathew. Well, well, fuckin' well. I see that you and my fiancé are on a real name basis. That was awfully fast, even for you.

MUTT

Well, I used liquor.

BLUE

Nice. Real nice.

MUTT

I find it absolutely fascinating that you can't pay the damn power bill, but you can keep the liquor cabinet stocked.

BLUE

We like to think of that as the medicine cabinet. Help yourself. Won't cost you nothing.

MUTT

I think I might try to stay clean for a while.

BLUE

Oh, dear God? Why?

MUTT

Why are you out here keepin' everybody up right now?

BLUE

I ain't keepin' nobody up. You can go back to sleep. Hey, you wanna see if I can shoot my brains out? Maybe I can shoot your brains out.

MUTT

That's not funny.

BLUE

No. No it isn't. What where you askin'? Before.

MUTT

I asked you if you where still in the army, would you be in Iraq right now.

BLUE

Probably not. Army wanted to make me a teacher. Teach cadets in ethics and philosophy. You know what those are? Might have ended up at West Point.

MUTT

Would you want to be in Baghdad?

BLUE

Yes. I would like to be there right now. Outside of all those gun battles, I would like to be in Iraq right now. You know, before Saddam, Baghdad was considered the Paris of the Middle East. It was supposed to be beautiful. Go inside. It's raining.

MUTT

Come in with me.

BLUE

No.

MUTT

Why not?

BLUE

Because. It's not my home no more. It's your home. And I don't want to sleep inside your home.

MUTT

It's not my home. It's father's home.

BLUE

Keep tellin' yourself that. What color you gonna paint the house?

MUTT

Whatever color I want.

BLUE

Yes. There's daddy's good son talkin'. When was the last time you saw the old man? Saw him. Not talked to him.

MUTT

Four years now.

BLUE

Four. Nice. This was in Europe?

MUTT

No. This was in D.C. He didn't even recognize me at first.

BLUE

He was drunk.

MUTT

No. He wasn't. But I kept saying to myself he was.

BLUE

What girl was he with?

MUTT

I don't remember her name. She had short black hair. Bobbed at the jaw line. Kept sayin' over and over again that he'd give me money, but he was running short.

BLUE

He's been running short for years. But, he still sends presents to half his x-girlfriends. He's six figures in credit card debt alone. Six figures. We get calls from bill collectors all the time. That's why we can't pay the electric. I sold off a few chunks of the farm last month. That money's all gone. Four years you haven't seen him, and you are still his good son. You wanna take a few shots?

(BLUE gives MUTT the gun. He shoots at the cans.)

BLUE

You ever fire a gun before?

MUTT

.22's.

BLUE

Well, this is a .45. It's designed to stop a charging horse. Loosen your grip, or the recoil will break your shoulders up.

MUTT

Say, do you think I can shoot my brains out? Maybe I can shoot your brains out.

BLUE

Go right a head. Shoot me if you got a pair.

MUTT

Did you act like this around mother?

BLUE

Your mother. She was your mother. I never knew my mother.

MUTT

I hear you enjoy reminding people of that fact.

BLUE

Only since your mother died. Only since your mother committed suicide. You do know I was the one who found her, right? She had it all worked out. She laid down in the bath tub, because she knew, she knew damn well that she was going to vomit with all the pills she was going to swallow. It made it easier to clean her up. I did that. I cleaned her. Little blue and white chunks stickin' to her chin. I wiped them off with the flower pattern washcloths she used to put under the sink. Remember. She bought those washcloths just for that reason. She taped her suicide note to her nose. It was written in crayon. She didn't understand why her...only...son had left her.

MUTT

I didn't know there was a suicide note.

BLUE

There is no suicide note. I took it off her face a burned in the driveway before the authorities arrived.

MUTT

Why did you do that?

BLUE

Because. I was a little heated. You gonna shoot them cans?

MUTT

No. Take your gun back.

(BLUE takes the gun back.)

MUTT

Blue. I'm impressed you got engaged. Again.

BLUE

Fuck you.

MUTT

I'm going inside. Will you please come inside with me?

BLUE

No. It's monsoon season. I want to watch the swimming pool fill with water.

(The sound of the rain can be heard. Then the sound of the wind in the pine tress can be heard. End of scene.)

Scene 4

(The sound of wind in pine tress can be heard. The next morning, and the rain has stopped. MUTT is in the field behind the house, working on the engine of the dilapidated '48 Pontiac. CRITTER sits in the driver seat of the car.)

MUTT

Nothing I've ever done is better than driving. But, I'm interested in being at home now.

CRITTER

I was wrong about the food. Everything in the refrigerator went sour.

MUTT

Do you have cheese in there? Cheese doesn't go bad, it's already rotten.

CRITTER

We need more then cheese.

MUTT

We can slaughter one of the rabbits. Take the vacuum cleaner to the Melvin's pawnshop on Old Pacos Trail. Tell 'em you don't want to sell it, you just want to know what they would give you for it. When they give you a price, politely add five dollars to it. You should be able to get about fifteen dollars out of the deal. That should be enough for a weeks worth of food.

CRITTER

How are we going to clean the rugs?

MUTT

We are throwing out the rugs. They're old and beaten. Try starting it?

(CRITTER attempts to turn on the engine. Nothing happens.)

MUTT

Stop. Stop.

CRITTER

What's wrong?

MUTT

I don't know. Yet. What time is it?

CRITTER

I didn't bring my watch.

MUTT

Right. I need a minute. Are there anymore guns in the house?

CRITTER
What of it?

MUTT
We can pawn the guns too.

CRITTER
Why don't we sell something of yours?

MUTT
What am I gonna sell, my teeth? You can only sell belongings that are worth something. I don't have anything of value.

CRITTER
You could sell me.

MUTT
You don't belong to me.

CRITTER
I could.

MUTT
But you don't.

CRITTER
Well, I am sorry forever being born.

MUTT
Apology accepted.

CRITTER
How much can we get for this car?

MUTT
We aren't selling this car.

CRITTER
Aren't cars worth a lot?

MUTT
Sometimes. We might be able to get something for the tires, but we need the rest in the garage.

CRITTER

Why?

MUTT

Well for one thing, I want this damn thing out of the lawn. It makes us look like hill jacks. And if we get this thing up to the garage I can attach the wheel axel to a generator and have power again.

CRITTER

You can run the whole house on the car engine?

MUTT

For periods at a time. We can power the house at night. Save enough money to pay off the real power bill. But we gotta get the engine working first.

CRITTER

What about the carbon monoxide?

MUTT

We will keep the garage door open when the engine is on. Here comes your fiancé.

(BLUE *enters.*)

MUTT

Good Morning.

BLUE

Critter, shouldn't you be at work?

CRITTER

It's my day off.

BLUE

Your day off is Saturday.

MUTT

It is Saturday.

BLUE

I wasn't talking to you.

MUTT

I'm talking to you. It's Saturday and she's helping me today.

BLUE

What is this?

CRITTER

We are fixing the car.

BLUE

That piece of trash ain't gonna work. I took the battery out.

MUTT

I found another battery in the garage.

BLUE

Where?

MUTT

Who the Hell cares? We need to get the car out of the field.

CRITTER

We are going to put a generator to the wheel axel so we can have electricity again.

BLUE

That's brilliant, where you gonna get the gasoline to do that trick?

CRITTER

The gas station.

BLUE

We're out of toilet paper. I'm walkin' to the Loves. You want anything?

MUTT

I'll take two eggs and cheese on a flour tortilla, not corn, and a side of potatoes: western style. And a large coffee. Black. No milk. No sugar. Just black.

CRITTER

I want a Big Gulp Mountain Dew and some Skittles.

BLUE

You gonna give me money?

MUTT

My wallet is in the house. I'll pay you when you get back. And make certain those potatoes are western style.

CRITTER

Skittles. Just the regular kind.

BLUE

I'll be back in hour.

MUTT

Have fun.

CRITTER

And, honey, wear a hat. I don't want you getting sun burned. And not a baseball hat, a cowboy hat.

MUTT

And when you get back, we will need help cleaning out the house. There's paint chips all over the damn place.

BLUE

I'll keep that in mind while I'm getting your food.

(BLUE *exits.*)

MUTT

Get out of the car. I need you to hold something.

(CRITTER *gets out of the car.*)

MUTT

Hold this hose in the radiator. We need to flush out the radiator with air.

CRITTER

Here, let me blow threw it.

MUTT

You're gonna create pressure, and fluids gonna come through this thing quickly.

(*Radiator fluid comes out of the hose.*)

MUTT

Careful. Now try the engine again.

(CRITTER *turns over the engine. The engine sputters sporadically.*)

MUTT

The fuel line is clogged. It'll still work. For now.

CRITTER

Mathew, my hands are dirty. Look at my hands. Should I clean myself?

MUTT

You look fine.

CRITTER

Mathew. Look at my hands. We've been working all morning. I need to clean myself. May I?

MUTT

Sure.

CRITTER

No. I want you to tell me. Tell me to go to the house and clean myself.

MUTT

Critter, go to the house and clean yourself.

CRITTER

Don't call me Critter. Call me Judy.

MUTT

Judy. Go to the house and clean yourself.

CRITTER

Yes, Mathew.

MUTT

Judy. You have cuts on your wrists.

CRITTER

No I don't, silly.

MUTT

Yes. You do. Why do you have cuts on your wrists.

CRITTER

These aren't cuts. These are scrapes.

MUTT

Judy, why do you have scrapes on your wrists?

CRITTER

I don't have scrapes on my wrists, I have scrapes on my arms.

MUTT

Judy. Why do you have scrapes on your arms?

CRITTER

Mathew, you ordered me to go to the house and clean myself.

MUTT

I didn't order you to do anything.

CRITTER

Yes you did. Yes you did. You ordered me to go to the house and clean myself. I heard you. You said it.

MUTT

Judy.

CRITTER

You've been so nice. You been so nice to me. Please don't stop now.

MUTT

Judy. Why are there scratches on your arm?

CRITTER

You can't be happy with some trouble.

MUTT

Go to the house and wash your hands.

CRITTER

No. You told me to go the house and clean myself.

MUTT

Go to the house. And clean yourself.

CRITTER

Yes, Mathew.

(End of scene.)

(A sign that read "This is a play..." now reads "Scene Missing." Opera music can be heard. Then the sound of wind in pine trees.)

Scene 5

(The ranch house. The electricity is back on. BLUE and MUTT salvage mother's possessions. The sound of the car can be heard running off stage. CRITTER is taking a shower in the next room.)

BLUE

The first thing she said to me, when we meet, was that she wanted to have her picture taken on the big X in Dealey Plaza. I think that's outrageous.

MUTT

I think it's outrageous people painted an X where Kennedy got shot.

BLUE

Of course they did. It's a tourist thing now. There are buckets of money in stuff like that.

MUTT

It doesn't make it right.

BLUE

Of course it ain't right. But money is money.

MUTT

Where are you guys going for your honeymoon?

BLUE

We haven't talked about that. It really isn't something I think about.

MUTT

Do you have a date set?

BLUE

We've had a few, but we keep pushing the date back.

MUTT

How long have you been together?

BLUE

We aren't "together." We are engaged. You don't like saying that, do you?

MUTT

It's not the easiest word to speak. Has father met her?

BLUE

Father loves her.

MUTT

Does that make you nervous?

Should it?

BLUE

Considering his history with women. Young women.

MUTT

I think he knows better with her.

BLUE

Does he?

MUTT

If he touches her, I kill him.

BLUE

That's not funny.

MUTT

I'm not attempting to be funny. Any man who touches my wife, I'll shoot between the eyes.

BLUE

Blue, you can't even hit a beer can six feet in front of you.

MUTT

A man's head is bigger than a beer can. (*Silence.*) Have you been married?

BLUE

No.

MUTT

Well, if you are ever in this situation, you'll understand. I'm sure you'd kill a man for touching your woman too.

BLUE

If another man wants to get with a girl I'm seeing I'd let him. You can always replace women.

MUTT

Can you replace mother?

BLUE

Mother wasn't a woman. You can't replace mother. You remember the first time she found out father was sleepin' around on her? They where havin' sex in the bathroom at

(MUTT *cont.*)

his birthday party, and mother walked in on ‘em. She beat that girl with a whole bag of tomatoes. She didn’t beat dad, she beat the crap out of the girl. The whole fuckin’ place was soaked in tomato juice. She beat the Hell out that girl.

BLUE

That was the most fun I’ve ever had in this house.

MUTT

Mom...mom beat the shit out of that girl.

BLUE

How old was that girl?

MUTT

I don’t know. She was older than us, but we were young. It doesn’t really matter.

BLUE

Do you wanna get married? Some day?

MUTT

I don’t know anymore. I think if the wife didn’t yell at me, I could do it. Hey, you want a beer?

BLUE

Sure. I got ‘em in the cooler.

(MUTT *gets two beers*)

BLUE

Have you ever wanted to get married?

MUTT

Yes.

BLUE

Do I know her?

MUTT

No. A girl you don’t know. Cheers.

BLUE

Cheers.

(*The two brothers toast the beer cans.*)

BLUE

Who was this girl?

MUTT

I don't know her name. I saw her pumping gas at a convenience store in Little Rock. She was driving a white car. I've always liked women who drive white cars.

BLUE

Did you want to get married to Kristy?

MUTT

No. I like to pretend I did. But, no. No I never wanted to be married to Kristy.

BLUE

I just wanted to her you say that. Those where nice flowers you brought to her grave.

MUTT

They where the only flowers the store had.

BLUE

That's not the point. They looked nice.

MUTT

Where did mother get all these dolls?

BLUE

Father used to send them when he traveled. He stopped sending them a few years ago. Critter wants to use them in our wedding.

MUTT

May I come to your wedding?

BLUE

Do you want to?

MUTT

I didn't say I wanted to, I asked if I was invited

BLUE

I hadn't thought much about who we are gonna invite.

MUTT

Yeah, but will you invite me?

BLUE

I'd have to talk to Critter about it. With your mother gone now, it changes things.

MUTT

What's changed?

BLUE

Where we're getting married. Where we're gonna live now.

MUTT

You can live here.

BLUE

I thought you lived here now.

MUTT

I do. This is my home now. But you can live here too.

BLUE

I think it's a little early to be talking like this.

MUTT

I don't.

BLUE

Well, it's a little early for me. I need to put a life together. I need money and health insurance.

MUTT

You get cash from that restaurant you're supposed to be working at.

BLUE

I'm talking about a life. Like the kind I had in the military. I mean a steady paycheck.

MUTT

There's no money in the army.

BLUE

There was enough money. And I had purpose. I had structure. More purpose than house painting, or corn husking.

MUTT

Corn husking is relaxing. You'd love it.

BLUE

There's no money in it. I don't see why anybody would want to do anything like that.

MUTT

There's no money in anything.

BLUE

What am I gonna do? Work on farms. You've seen my back.

MUTT

You are doing the same thing right now. Working on the house. Feeding the rabbits.

BLUE

The rabbits are almost dead.

MUTT

That's because you don't feed them right.

BLUE

Critter takes care of rabbits. The rabbits are her responsibility.

MUTT

It doesn't matter. I saw the rabbits. They are looking thin. Their legs are looking small. We'll just change the feed.

BLUE

It's hard to keep rabbits alive in the desert.

MUTT

It's hard to keep anything alive in the desert. It's hard to have anything in the desert, and we already have a swimming pool.

BLUE

An empty swimming pool. Father tried to have chickens for a while, but they just baked in the sun. The only reason to live here was to be close to your mother.

MUTT

There's no way to win this argument, is there?

BLUE

It ain't an argument, I'm just sayin' the obvious. And who the fuck do you think you are? You think you can just waltz in here and say and talk about being a family again. You haven't changed. You haven't changed at all.

MUTT

I've changed enough. Not as much as you, but I've changed. At least I'm not getting liquored up every night and poppin' bullets into the clouds. Is it fun being self absorbed?

BLUE

It's a blast. It's a stone cold good time. What are you imagining here? You and me can paint house together, and Critter will make lemonade.

MUTT

There's money in painting houses.

BLUE

That isn't exactly what I am talking about.

(Silence.)

MUTT

Five years ago I was in New York. Got a job under the table at the Madison Square Garden theatre. Painting set pieces and backdrops. Painted the set for the Wheel of Fortune game show. It was fun. Made decent money.

BLUE

Did you meet Vanna White.

MUTT

Yeah. After all these years, she still wears a size four.

BLUE

Size four.

MUTT

That's a small dress.

BLUE

Father used to have the Playboy with her in it.

MUTT

I remember. The Wheel of Fortune was different. All the audience members were old people in their sixties and seventies. And they served light beer in the stairs. One contestant walked away with a new car and seventy two thousand dollars.

BLUE

Did you fall in love with Vanna?

MUTT

No. But her make-up artist was fine. Your girl is very beautiful. She's got a nice shape. She could turn letters.

BLUE

Whatever. How long where you in New York?

MUTT

Only a few months. I was there on September 11th. After that, I figured I should leave.

BLUE

What was that like? Being there.

MUTT

September 11th was no big deal. I was living in Harlem with a guy I meet from Pittsburg, and another from Atlanta. The night before, we watched Monday Night Football and ate some great Chinese food. I can still remember the game. It was the Giants and Denver. Ed McCaffery broke his leg that night.

BLUE

I remember that game too.

MUTT

Yeah. It was a good game. The three of us got drunk on Budweiser and slept in the next day. I heard the phone ring around 9:15. Then my roommate came into my room and told me a plane went down. I figured a plane had trouble landing at LaGuardia. The runway there is real close to the water. We turned on the TV right when the second plane hit and right then and there we knew what was happening. There was a rumor on the news that a car bomb went off in front of the Capitol Building, and another plane hit the Pentagon. That's when I put my shoes on my feet, went to the ATM, went to the deli and bought mac and cheese and bottled water. Got home in time to watch the towers peel away like bananas on Channel 7. Everybody was very calm on September 11th. Nobody got nervous until September 12th. When the city was shut down and you had nothing to do but watch TV and think about what had happened and what could happen.

BLUE

I saw the whole thing on TV. I couldn't turn the TV off. I just felt numb. On September 13th, there was a retired army colonel on MSNBC talking about how we were purchasing fighter jet fuel from NATO countries. He said "...amateurs talk strategy, professionals talk logistics." And America's army is professional. I heard him say that and felt sick.

MUTT

I didn't. I remember that guy. When he said that I felt good. It felt like it was our turn to punch back.

BLUE
You liked feeling that way?

MUTT
Then. Yes.

BLUE
I guess that's the difference between me and you.

MUTT
Yeah. Maybe.

BLUE
After 9-11 you just sat around your house and watched TV. You didn't go down to the WTC and help out?

MUTT
I went to an ice skating rink that had been turned into a morgue, but they told me to go home. They had to many people there.

BLUE
You didn't give blood?

MUTT
I have a tattoo. They wouldn't let me.

BLUE
What do you have a tattoo of?

(MUTT roles up his sleeve. He shows his brother a tattoo of a scorpion stinging a heart. The heart has the name Kristy over it.)

BLUE
Kristy.

MUTT
I got it in Albuquerque a week after her funeral.

BLUE
We need to clean up. You got paint in your hair. Are you gonna dress up tonight?

MUTT
Yeah. I'll wear something nice.

BLUE

Good. Critter is looking forward to this party. What are we gonna do with all of mother's things?

MUTT

What is there outside of dolls and books?

BLUE

Cloths. Shoes. Jewelry.

MUTT

Give that crap to the Salvation Army.

BLUE

Don't call it crap. What about her bible?

MUTT

You want it?

BLUE

I don't believe in God anymore.

MUTT

Than give it to me. What else is there?

BLUE

A stack of pictures, pictures of you and father. Your old baseball bat.

MUTT

Where's my baseball bat?

BLUE

In her room. Sometimes she napped with it. Like a blanket. There's an old record player. She had it altered to play real records. So she could listen to father's records while he's gone. Her diary.

MUTT

I didn't know she kept a diary.

BLUE

She's had it for years. But she skips days. Sometimes weeks. It's more like a puzzle than a diary.

MUTT

You've read it?

BLUE

Not really. I found it when I was trying to decide what to bury her in. Mutt, I'm very impressed with that trick you did with the car. Bring power to the house.

MUTT

You taught me everything I know about cars.

BLUE

I didn't teach you that. I didn't teach hook the car up to the house. I'm going to town. Gotta get supplies for the party tonight. Tonight has to be special.

(End of Scene.)

Scene 6

(MUTT and CRITTER are in the living room. CRITTER is dressed in a bathrobe, and drying her hair with a towel. Her hair is now short and blond. MUTT is boxing the rest of the objects in this room. He then fixes his mother's record player.)

CRITTER

I know it's distinctive, but I wanted to do it anyways.

MUTT

It looks nice. And there's nothing wrong with being distinctive.

CRITTER

I look nice? I don't look fanciful?

MUTT

You look nice.

CRITTER

You have no idea how to talk to a woman, do you, Mathew?

MUTT

I don't talk to women. Women talk to me.

CRITTER

Clearly. Be honest. Is this the right color?

MUTT

He'll like it.

CRITTER

I don't care about him. Is it the right color?

MUTT

Yes.

CRITTER

Walgreen's had so many different colors to pick from, but this one was the best.

MUTT

It looks nice.

CRITTER

You sound like a parrot.

MUTT

What else do you want me to say? You look like a million bucks.

CRITTER

I'm worth far more than a million dollars. Mathew, I want you to seduce me. You've seduced a woman before, haven't you?

MUTT

I wouldn't use that word.

CRITTER

Why?

MUTT

It's too easy.

CRITTER

Than what word would you use?

MUTT

Magnetize.

CRITTER

Brilliant.

(The phone rings. It rings several times. The phone is near Mutt.)

CRITTER

Mathew, answer the phone.

MUTT

(Picking up the phone.) Hello. I'm sorry. We are very happy with our long distance service. I'm sure you would, but we are very happy with our long distance service. I'm sorry. Have a pleasant night.

(He hangs up the phone.)

CRITTER

Are you still waiting for your father to call?

MUTT

He'll call soon.

CRITTER

You look nervous.

MUTT

I'm not.

CRITTER

What are you wearing tonight?

MUTT

What would you like to see me wear?

CRITTER

Something simple, but tasteful. Ask me what I'm going to wear.

MUTT

What are you going to wear?

CRITTER

It's a surprise. I'd show you, but you can't see the bride before the wedding. It's bad luck. Will you kiss me if no one was looking?

MUTT

Do you want me too?

CRITTER

Maybe. I think it would be fun. I bet kissing you would be pleasant.

MUTT

I'm a barrel of monkeys.

CRITTER

I bet you are. I bet you don't fuck. I bet you make love.

MUTT

What does my brother do?

CRITTER

Oh you had to take all the fun out of this, didn't you?

MUTT

I'm not taking the fun out of anything. What does my brother do? Fuck or make love?

CRITTER

He has sex. The first time Blue and I had sex, he told me he liked doggy style, which was fine with me. We could both do it and watch TV.

MUTT

So you were on your hands and knees.

CRITTER

Yes.

MUTT

Do you like that? Do you like being on your hands and knees.

CRITTER

I like feeling the rug under my hands. I like getting rug burn.

MUTT

What was on the TV the first time you had sex?

CRITTER

We kept the TV off. It was very dark. We could only hear the motor of the cruise ship. And the water outside the window. I begged him to come inside me, but he refused. He bought a condom off the janitor.

MUTT

Did you like that?

CRITTER

I liked the begging. Do you use condoms?

MUTT

Sometimes.

CRITTER

You shouldn't. If you were married would you still use a condom?

MUTT

No.

CRITTER

Blue still uses condoms. I hate them. He won't come in me. I hate it. It's not personal.

MUTT

I'm sorry to hear that.

CRITTER

Why are you sorry? You're not the one wearing condoms. Would you wear a condom if we were married?

MUTT

No.

CRITTER

Would you wear a condom if we made love?

MUTT

Maybe.

CRITTER

Maybe?

MUTT

Maybe.

CRITTER

I thought you were a better man than that, Mathew.

MUTT

I'm not.

CRITTER

Don't you want to have children?

MUTT

Men don't want to have children.

CRITTER

Real men do. You're just afraid to have children. Afraid to have something you can't run from.

MUTT

You can run from children. It's easy. I've seen it up close.

CRITTER

You can dump a woman in a ditch and she will always recover. That's why women are better than men. We can recover. Men just wallow. But, a child can hunt you down to any corner of the world.

MUTT

Are you gonna have children?

CRITTER

Of course. A girl and a boy. I've even thought of names.

MUTT

What are they?

CRITTER

No. That's not for you to hear.

MUTT

Why do you want to have children.

CRITTER

So I'll never be alone.

MUTT

That's sad, Judy.

CRITTER

No. No it's not. Would you really fuck me without a condom?

MUTT

Yes.

CRITTER

I knew you would. I knew you would as soon as I saw you. As soon, as soon as you walked in through that door and said "hi" to me, I knew you'd fuck me without a condom. Would you come in me?

MUTT

Would you want me to?

CRITTER

Yes. How would you do it?

MUTT

Slow.

CRITTER

No, Mathew. I mean what position.

MUTT

On the kitchen table with the lights on. No. Not the table. On the kitchen sink. And I'd hold your arms behind your back. Like this.

(He takes her arms and holds them behind her back.)

MUTT

And I'd take the light bulb out of the ceiling lamp and burn you with it.

CRITTER

Where?

MUTT

Your thigh.

CRITTER

But I'm your brother's fiancé.

MUTT

Does that bother you?

CRITTER

Please. Mathew. Do you want to watch me hurt myself?

MUTT

No.

CRITTER

Please. I won't break the skin. I never break the skin.

MUTT

I said no.

CRITTER

I think I'm done talking with you.

MUTT

No you're not. I'm willing to bet cash you'll listen to anything I have to say.

CRITTER

Will you take the light bulb out of the ceiling?

MUTT

No.

CRITTER

Please.

MUTT

Get it yourself.

CRITTER

It will be wonderful. You can masturbate while I burn myself.

MUTT

The scrapes on your arms, they aren't burns.

CRITTER

I didn't try to kill myself, if that is what you are thinking. It is, isn't it?

MUTT

I wouldn't think that.

CRITTER

You better not.

MUTT

Judy. Are you happy here?

CRITTER

I'm happy enough of the time.

MUTT

But you could always be happier.

CRITTER

Everybody could always be happier. Don't you want to be happier?

MUTT

No. I'm fine where I am.

CRITTER

You're a liar.

MUTT

I bet you are an outstanding fuck.

CRITTER

I'm the best.

MUTT

It's a shame you're engaged. Otherwise, I'd have you on that kitchen table by now.

CRITTER

I thought it was the kitchen sink.

MUTT

Yeah. It was. Wasn't it?

CRITTER

I need to go. I need to get dressed.

MUTT

Yeah. Right.

CRITTER

I want you to get dressed to.

MUTT

Right.

CRITTER

What are you gonna wear for the party?

MUTT

You never told me what to wear?

CRITTER

White. Nothing but white. No socks. I don't like socks. They are hard to rip off.

MUTT

You're just a red flag.

CRITTER

I like you, Mathew. I bet you are more than just good in bed.

MUTT

What are we eating tonight?

CRITTER

Chicken wings. Your mother's favorite.

MUTT

What else?

CRITTER

That's all. I don't eat vegetables.

(End of Scene.)

Scene 7

(The muffled sound of opera music can be heard. CRITTER sits in front of a mirror applying make up. BLUE enters. The city lights of the town can be seen in the distance. CRITTER is wearing the baseball jersey.)

CRITTER

Why are you in my room?

BLUE

Your room?

CRITTER

Yes. My room.

BLUE

You've been up for hours.

CRITTER

I'm trying to make myself look beautiful.

BLUE

That is not what I am talking about.

CRITTER

What are you talking about?

BLUE

I've just noticed you've been up here for a long time.

CRITTER

I'm pleased you still know where to find me.

BLUE

I always know where to find you.

CRITTER

Of course you do. A blind man could find me. I just sit still, waiting for you. I told your brother your dog tags scraped my skin when we make love.

BLUE

He's not my brother.

CRITTER

Your half brother. I told your half brother.

BLUE

Do you like him?

CRITTER

I like his cloths. When was the last time we made love?

BLUE

Do you like him?

CRITTER

It's been four months.

BLUE

Do you like him?

CRITTER

Four months.

BLUE

I said, do you like him?

CRITTER

Last month I thought there was something wrong with me.

BLUE

There is nothing wrong with you.

CRITTER

Now I just feel old.

BLUE

You are not old.

CRITTER

I know that. I just feel old.

BLUE

It's the heat.

CRITTER

We haven't had sex since Wyoming. Don't tell me it's the heat.

BLUE

It's just an adjustment time.

CRITTER

No it's not. You're not attracted to me anymore.

BLUE

That's not true.

CRITTER

Yes it is. You don't look at me the way you used to look at me. You don't listen. You grunt like a groundhog...what is it your mother called groundhogs?

BLUE

She wasn't my mother.

CRITTER

Yes. That person. What did she call groundhogs?

BLUE

Whistle pigs.

CRITTER

Whistle pigs. You grunt. Like a whistle pig to every question I ask, while you stare at your little TV.

BLUE

Do you like my brother?

CRITTER

I thought he was your half brother?

BLUE

Do you like him?

CRITTER

He listens to me. He listens to me the way you used to listen to me. If he asked me, I'd kiss him.

BLUE

Has he asked you?

CRITTER

He doesn't have to. The last time we made love, you didn't even kiss. I think I am beginning to hate you.

BLUE

That is a tough thing to say to your fiancé.

CRITTER

It's true.

BLUE

Is it?

CRITTER

I'm beginning to hate the man I'm going to marry.

BLUE

I wish you wouldn't talk like that.

CRITTER

Of course you don't. You just want me to sit softly, and wait for you. Like a good little wife.

BLUE

I'm, sorry you feel that way.

CRITTER

It's not the way I feel. It's just the truth. Did you get the food I told you to get?

BLUE

Yes. We are waiting for you downstairs.

CRITTER

Is this conversation over?

BLUE

Yes. Yes it is.

(End of scene.)

Scene 8

(The sounds of the opera music roars from an old record player. The party. The living room of the house. For the first time in the play the room is clean, in order, and painted white. All three characters are dressed as well as they can be. Numerous bottles of liquor have been carefully lined up on a table, next to a large plate of beautifully decorated chicken wings. MUTT plays with his old baseball bat. CRITTER sits on BLUE's lap. One chair sits a single doll from the previous scenes with the other three characters. The music fades away.)

MUTT

Gonzaga steps up to the plate, bases load, bottom of the ninth, two men out. The pressure must be acute for this insatiable southpaw from Santa Fe. What's this, he's calling his shot? Not since the Sultan of Swat, the Pin Striped Prince, the Great Bambino have we seen such overpowering confidence, such pungent poise. The pitch is up. CRACK! And that ball is headed to Cooperstown. Giants win!

CRITTER

Why didn't you stick with baseball?

BLUE

Father had great plans for the little brother. Did I tell you me and Critter saw Bobby Kennedy.

MUTT

No shit?

BLUE

Yeah, at the Albertsons on San Mateo. He's getting' fat.

MUTT

Of course he is. The bastard drank a quart of buttermilk everyday in high school. I haven't seen him since I left town. Is he still married?

BLUE

I doubt it. He had a basket full of Swanson frozen meals.

MUTT

He got married while we were still in high school. His wife played Pretty In Pink instead of Here Comes The Bride when she walked down the carpet. Me and Bobby Kennedy were the only two on our school ball team to be offered scholarships to play in college.

CRITTER

His name's really Bobby Kennedy?

BLUE

His folks were big fans of Camelot. Hung a painted dinner plate of RFK above Jesus in their kitchen.

MUTT

What was his wife's name?

BLUE

Janet Grady.

MUTT

Janet Grady.

BLUE

Remember when Bobby Kennedy asked Janet to marry him.

MUTT

No.

BLUE

He proposed to her in a park or something and they both ended up at a party Scott Bell's New Year's Eve party.

MUTT

Yeah. That was a bad New Year's.

BLUE

Bobby Kennedy, with no tact what-so-ever, is tellin' everybody at the party how cheap the diamond was when Janet was across the fuckin' room. His uncle "knows" a jeweler who owed him a favor and got the rock for like 60 or 70 percent off the floor price. He kept saying that. He kept saying "floor price."

MUTT

Bobby was always an ass.

BLUE

He was a good enough guy.

MUTT

He was never a good guy. He was always an ass.

BLUE

He asked if you went to that "fancy" college.

MUTT
Arizona State?

BLUE
No. The other place that offered you scholarship.

MUTT
And.

BLUE
And what?

MUTT
What did you tell Bobby Kennedy?

BLUE
I told him you had better things to do.

MUTT
Good for you.

BLUE
I don't consider that lying.

MUTT
It wasn't.

BLUE
Good. I'd hate to be called a liar.

(CRITTER begins to sing at the top of her lungs)

CRITTER
What if the show didn't go on? What if we all got jobs and got to bed before dawn? What if all the stagehands were let go or fired? That just the way the world would be, if you feel out of love with me... Oh, I'm sorry. I just figured if no one was going to be talking to me this evening, I'll just entertain myself. Mathew, will you do a shot with me. We should be thinking of mother right now? And liquor helps me think.

MUTT
You're not the first woman to tell me that.

CRITTER
Let's take one down for Mutt's mother.

BLUE

(Raising his glass.) Here's to Mutt's mother. Best God damn thing on two legs.

(They all drink.)

CRITTER

The first time I meet your mother she gave me a shovel and told me there was buried gold in the backyard and if I found it we could buy an island in the Pacific and live like kings. She asked me what I do, and I told her I am a dancer. And she got a rusted 16 mm reel of film from the hallway closet and told me they were of Martha Graham. But she couldn't find the movie projector, so we had tea instead of watching the movies. She told me I was her new girlfriend, and she wanted to paint my fingernails. She told me you got this house, because it overlooked Santa Fe, like a castle. And I was going to marry into a family of very tall men that ruled New Mexico.

MUTT

Very tall men.

CRITTER

Mathew, may I sit on your lap?

MUTT

Why?

CRITTER

Because, I want to.

(CRITTER stands. She walks slowly to Mutt, then sits on him.)

CRITTER

There. That's not so bad. You should have something to eat. I swear you are skin and bones.

MUTT

I've had enough already.

CRITTER

Mathew, why did Bobby Kennedy ask if you went to that "fancy" college?

MUTT

Bobby has the bad habit of shooting his mouth off.

CRITTER

That may be, but I still want to know what a fancy school is.

MUTT

It's not important.

CRITTER

It's important to me. I want to know everything that is inside you.

BLUE

Critter, old Mutt here was invited to attend, the word for it is attend, isn't it?

MUTT

Yeah. Attend.

BLUE

Old Mutt here, was invited to attend the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.

CRITTER

Mathew, that sounds very prestigious.

BLUE

It is very prestigious. The Cincinnati Conservatory of Music is one of the finest music schools on the planet. And it boasts some of the most successful alumni in the recording industry.

CRITTER

Like who?

BLUE

Like our father.

MUTT

You are dedicated to being a dick, aren't you?

CRITTER

And you had a scholarship?

BLUE

Critter, Mathew had more than a scholarship. He had a full ride. And he passed out of all of his theory classes.

CRITTER

What instrument do you play?

BLUE

Old Mutt doesn't play no instrument. Old Mutt's a singer. In fact, there are some people who think that he's better than our father.

CRITTER

Why didn't you go?

MUTT

Because my father told me not to.

BLUE

Because our father didn't want the competition. That's one thing that always gave me a kick start. You got the fancy scholarship to the fancy school, and dad tells you not to go and you did it. But your mother was so proud, she was so proud. And everyone loved you so much. I know. I heard it from everyone. You couldn't shit wrong. And you did what daddy told you to do.

MUTT

I thought the road had more to offer than following in my father's footsteps.

BLUE

Bullshit.

MUTT

I did.

BLUE

Bullshit.

MUTT

Just did the singing thing to make my mother happy.

BLUE

No you didn't. You were good, and you god damn know it. Critter, I can't sing, at least not like this hound dog. Father never showed me how. Mutt, show my wife how to use her gut to sing.

CRITTER

Show me.

BLUE

Show her the way father used to show you.

MUTT

Shouldn't we be think about mother?

BLUE

We are thinking about your mother.

MUTT

Judy, stand on your feet. And spread your legs.

(CRITTER stands and follows MUTT's instructions. He places his hand on her stomach.)

MUTT

Open your jaw, let your chin drop to your collar bone so we can see the little ball in the back of your throat. And push my hand away when you exhale.

(Silence as Critter does this act.)

BLUE

Lovely.

CRITTER

Thank you, Blue. May I hear you sing sometime, Mathew?

MUTT

No. I don't sing anymore.

CRITTER

Why?

MUTT

Because. My father told me not to.

BLUE

Mathew always does what his father tells him. Even when his mother begged him to do the contrary.

MUTT

Judy, has your fiancé ever told you about his mother?

CRITTER

He's told me some.

MUTT

Some. Some what?

BLUE

I've told her enough. I've told her all she needs to know.

MUTT

Judy, has my brother ever told you why he joined the army? I mean Christ, he hates guns. He can't even shoot a beer can from five feet. Have you told her why?

BLUE

What do you think?

MUTT

Judy, your husband enlisted, is that the word for it? Enlisted? Because he wanted to find his mommy. He wanted to travel the world. That's what they tell you in high school. You'll travel the world if you join the army. Our father got your fiancé's mommy knocked up on a one-night stand. She stayed here for nine months, she stayed in my mothers room...at least that's the way father tells it...had him, then walked out the door. Named him Blue, her favorite color. We know it was her favorite color cause she left a note. Have you shown her the note?

BLUE

No.

MUTT

Why haven't you shown her the note?

BLUE

Because it ain't none of her business.

MUTT

But, Judy is your wife to be. Show her the note, Blue.

(BLUE takes an old piece of paper out of his wallet.)

BLUE

(Reading.) "I named him Blue."

MUTT

I'm sorry I thought the note said something about it being her favorite color.

BLUE

That's just something I tell people.

MUTT

Oh. She was Mexican, wasn't she?

BLUE

The note is written in Spanish.

MUTT

Let's do a shot for Blue's mother. (*He raises his glass.*) Here's to Blue's mother. The best God Damn thing on two legs.

CRITTER

Here's to Blue's mother.

BLUE

Don't drink. Don't drink that.

MUTT

If we don't drink, the booze is just sitting here.

BLUE

You didn't have to mention my mother.

MUTT

You didn't have to mention the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. I believe we are even.

BLUE

We will never be even.

MUTT

No. I guess we won't. I want to get out of here. Let's go to the drive in.

BLUE

I don't want to see a movie, Mutt. Old Mutt. I like saying that. I like saying "Old Mutt."

CRITTER

This Old Mutt.

BLUE

This Old Mutt! The drunken abomination of my wife to be just made a Bob Vila joke.

CRITTER

What did you call me?

BLUE

I called you my wife to be. Critter, do you know you are my second wife to be?

MUTT

Don't do that to her.

BLUE

Judy, do you know you are my second wife to be?

What are you talking about?
CRITTER

Tell her. Go ahead. Tell her.
BLUE

Why don't you tell her?
MUTT

Because I want to see the words come out of your mouth.
BLUE

Judy, Blue was engaged at a very early age. Just like Bobby Kennedy.
MUTT

Do you remember her name, Old Mutt?
BLUE

You know I do.
MUTT

Then say it. I want to hear you say her name.
BLUE

Kristy.
MUTT

Kristy what?
BLUE

Kristy Kelly.
MUTT

What was her full name, Mutt?
BLUE

I don't know.
MUTT

You don't know?
BLUE

No. I don't know.
MUTT

BLUE

Her full name was Kristin Anne Kelly.

MUTT

Kristin Anne Kelly.

BLUE

That's a beautiful name, don't you think?

MUTT

It's a very beautiful name.

BLUE

I'm not asking you. Critter, do you think Kristy Anne Kelly is a beautiful name?

CRITTER

It's a beautiful name.

BLUE

We dated for five years. That's an eternity when you're a teenager. My last year of high school, I got a job busting rocks for a construction company. Worked on weekends and after school for a few hours and made enough money to buy Kristin Anne Kelly a modest ring. When I gave it to her she cried. She looked like Meryl Streep when she cried. Isn't that right, Old Mutt?

MUTT

No, she looked better than that.

BLUE

You are right. She did look better than that. She was so excited about getting married, she tried to loose weight, so she'd look good in her wedding dress. She was already thin, but she got real thin. She was takin' pills eight times a day. Big blue ones, the size of paper clips. She lost so much weight her hair fell out. She had to wear a wig. She was taking so many pills she never knew what day it was.

MUTT

She knew enough. She was losing weight because you ignored her.

BLUE

I never ignored her and you know that.

MUTT

You never ignored her?

BLUE

Is there an echo in here?

MUTT

You're a pig.

BLUE

Kristy came to me two weeks before our wedding, mind you invitations have all been mailed, and she informed me she was late.

MUTT

She wasn't late. She was spotting.

BLUE

That's right. She told Old Mutt first. She told Mutt...because she loved to hear him sing. And what did you ask her, little brother? Tell my wife to be what you asked her.

MUTT

I asked her who's it was.

BLUE

And what did she say, Mutt?

MUTT

She didn't say anything. She just cried.

BLUE

Was that because she didn't know who's kid it was? Or because she did?

MUTT

What do you think?

BLUE

The stains on your carpet.

MUTT

Fuck you.

BLUE

Two nights after informing Mutt she was "spotting", Kristy broke into this very house while we were at the opera, watching our father sing. Broke that window over there with her hand. Her bare hand. It was a bloody mess all over the place. And she went to the kitchen and made herself a coffee mug of white wine, and went up to Mutt's room. She took off her t-shirt, took off her jeans, her underwear, and took off her bra and folded all her cloths nice and neat into little squares and staked them one on top of each other, like a plate of pancakes. She climbed into my brother's bed, and filled a soup bowl with her pills. She shook so hard she feel out of bed and bite off her tongue.

MUTT

Judy, you know what my favorite part about this story is? Take a guess. Your fiancé likes to pretend that he is the only person who lost somebody that day. That brown stain on the floor in my bedroom, that's what came out of Kristy's mouth.

BLUE

And our father said, this was gonna make him look bad. So he paid off the Tribune to not report it. And he bought Old Mutt that shit brown car out front and told him he had to get out of town and never come back. Or our father would never sing in this town again, with a scandal like this. And Mutt could never go to music school, because heaven forbid anyone finds out there too. Funny thing is, our father is never in town to sing anyways.

MUTT

That's all in the past now. Dad said I could come home.

BLUE

Right. Does this bother you, Judy?

CRITTER

Why would it?

BLUE

That's a good answer, Critter. Let's do shots. Let's do shots for Kristy Anne Kelly. The best damn thing on two legs.

(The two brothers drink. Critter does not.)

CRITTER

Mathew, I'd still like to hear you sing some day. Even though you didn't go to that fancy school.

MUTT

I'd like that too, Judy.

(Suddenly, the power goes out.)

MUTT

Crap. The car ran out of gas.

CRITTER

I'll light the candles.

(CRITTER lights the candles. BLUE takes beer cans and liquor bottles and places them in a line.)

CRITTER
What are you doing?

BLUE
Target practice.

CRITTER
In the house?

BLUE
Why not?

(BLUE gets his gun.)

CRITTER
You're not firing that gun in this house.

BLUE
What are you afraid of? Nothings gonna get hit that we can't mend.

MUTT
Blue, don't shoot that gun in this house.

BLUE
I will shot my gun wherever I please.

MUTT
You're not shooting that thing in here.

BLUE
Are you gonna stop me? Come on. Stop me. You gonna take this gun out of my hands?
Come on, Old Mutt. Take this gun out of my hand.

CRITTER
Put the gun down, Blue.

BLUE
Be quiet, Judy. Take it. I'm gonna shoot the fuck out of these cans now, and there is not a
God blessed thing you can do about it.

(BLUE takes his time and aims at the cans. He pulls the trigger. Nothing happens.)

BLUE

Oh. Forgive me. I forgot to put bullets in my gun. Here you can take the gun now, little brother. It's a gift. You can sleep with it, if you want.

MUTT

Keep it. It looks good in your hands.

BLUE

No. Truly, it's yours. It's the last artifact I own from my days in the military.

MUTT

No thank you.

BLUE

Suit yourself. Critter, these candles make the room look real pretty. Good work.

MUTT

I'll get more gas in the morning.

BLUE

Why bother? Say, you wanna read mother's diary?

(BLUE takes the diary out of his pocket.)

CRITTER

You've been reading her diary?

BLUE

Just fragments. It's not really a diary anyway. It's a scrapbook. Quotes. Ideas. Pictures she's cut out of Entertainment Weekly. Pictures of Johnny Depp. A lot of pictures of Johnny Depp. A picture of that girl in the Julia Roberts movie. "The sound of the wind in the pine trees is music to my ears." "If I knew then what I know now, I would have done it all differently." *(Silence.)* "My oldest son is getting married. He brought his girl home. She is a princess. He looks so tall when he stands next to her. It's hard to stand tall with a bad back. I wish I could buy the moon, and give it to my son. I love him." "My cheating husband is the only thing that reminds me the world is real. Some times I wish my husband would divorce me, but I know I am nobody without him."

MUTT

Give me the diary.

BLUE

No.

MUTT

Give me the diary.

It's mine. I gave you her bible.

BLUE

I'll give it back.

MUTT

Blue, give him the diary.

CRITTER

Be quite, Critter.

BLUE

Don't you talk to me that way.

CRITTER

I'll give it back.

MUTT

I said no. It's mine.

BLUE

Blue you're acting like a child.

CRITTER

Shut up, Critter.

BLUE

Don't you talk to me that way!

CRITTER

I said shut your mouth, Judy.

BLUE

DON'T YOU TALK TO ME THAT WAY!

CRITTER

It's okay. It's all right. Keep the book. It's yours.

MUTT

Yeah. It's mine. You can have everything else. This is mine.

BLUE

(The phone rings. It rings for along time. CRITTER finally answers the phone.)

CRITTER

Hello. This is Judy. Judy. Blue's fiancé. Yes, Critter. How are you? Oh. Of course. He's right here. Mathew, it's your father.

MUTT

Hello. Hello father. Where are you? Indianapolis? I thought...I was under the impression you were in Europe. Oh. Yes. Yes. Oh, course. A tall vodka tonic does sound nice right now. Yes. Yes, sir. How's Amy? Amy. Your girl. The girl your with. Oh. I'm sorry to hear that. No, I didn't make it in on time for mother's funeral. I bought some nice flowers. I put your name next to mine on the card. No, sir. Nobody thinks that way. We all know you would have been here if you...yes father. It's coming along. I got the old car out of the field behind the house. The swimming pool will be filled by the time you get here. Blue hooked up the TV outside so we can all go swimming and watch baseball at the same time. Blue did that. When are you coming home? (*Silence.*) It's just that, you said I could come home and you said when I was done fixing the house...I know sir...but...you said we would play catch. No, I'm not disappointed. I understand. I just want to know if you're proud of me? Thank you, sir. Blue's here. Would you like to talk to Blue...

(*Silence. MUTT hangs up the phone. He goes to a window and punches it out with his baseball bat.*)

MUTT

He's at a Holliday Inn. In Indianapolis. Excuse me.

(*MUTT exits with a bottle of tequila.*)

CRITTER

Mathew, wait.

BLUE

Leave him alone.

CRITTER

You're a real piece of work. You know that. How come you never told me about "Kristy?"

BLUE

She is not somebody you just bring up.

CRITTER

I don't know if I want to marry you anymore.

BLUE

Judy...

CRITTER

I'm serious. You really bother me, Blue. I was looking forward to living here. Having a life here, but I don't see how I can. I just can't see that anymore.

BLUE

We don't have to live here. We can go wherever you want to go.

CRITTER

Fuck you! All I ever wanted to do was to turn you on. Do you even love me?

(Smoke can be seen coming off stage)

CRITTER

Do you?

(MUTT enters. His tequila bottle is empty.)

MUTT

Judy, grab your guitar. I lit my room on fire. *(Silence)* Are you deaf? Get your things. The house is on fire.

(CRITTER runs off stage.)

MUTT

Well, there it is.

BLUE

What is wrong with you? You idiot. You fuckin' idiot.

MUTT

You said it yourself. We should just burn the house to the ground. Now get your things. We have to go. I said get your things.

(BLUE attacks MUTT. The two fight for some time. They destroy what is left of the set. The doll in the chair is used as a weapon. CRITTER runs into the scene and breaks up the fight.)

CRITTER

Stop it! Stop it now! Stop it!

MUTT

I said get your things. We need to leave.

(End of scene.)

Scene 9

(The next morning. The graveyard. The smoking remains of the house can be seen in the distance. The three characters are standing over the mother's grave marker. The sun is rising.)

CRITTER

I'm tired of the wool being pulled over my eyes.

BLUE

Nobody has been pulling the wool over your eyes.

CRITTER

Is this her ring? Is this her ring on my finger? Answer me, Blue.

MUTT

No. That's not Kristy's ring. Her ring is still on her hand.

CRITTER

Take it. Take it back.

BLUE

No. It's your ring.

CRITTER

Not anymore it's not.

BLUE

Yes it is. We can still make things work.

CRITTER

How? Tell me how, because I can't see it. I really can't

BLUE

I guess I can't either.

CRITTER

Take it back.

(CRITTER gives her wedding ring back to BLUE. He does not take it.)

BLUE

You've always been Drew Barrymore to me.

CRITTER

It's too late for you to say things like that to me now. I don't want your ring.

(CRITTER *drops the ring in the sand.*)

CRITTER

You should pick it up. It's yours now. It was nice meeting you, Mathew. You were very good to me.

MUTT

It was nice meeting you.

CRITTER

I left my brother's phone number on your dashboard. You should come to Houston, and visit me.

MUTT

Is that where you are going?

CRITTER

Is there anywhere else to go? I want to kiss you before I leave.

MUTT

I'll kiss you when I come to Houston.

CRITTER

I don't believe you. Kiss me now.

(*The two kiss.*)

CRITTER

You are a very good kisser. Thank you.

(CRITTER *exits.*)

MUTT

I was nervous coming here. I was afraid I would be disappointed. But I haven't been. Not yet. It's Sunday, isn't it?

BLUE

Yeah. It's Sunday.

MUTT

We should go to church. That's what we used to do with mom.

BLUE

I told you. I don't go to church no more. Mathew...

MUTT

Yeah.

BLUE

I liked watch the house burn. I know I shouldn't, but I did.

MUTT

I didn't.

BLUE

What do we do now?

MUTT

Father will come home soon. I need to rebuild the house. I told him it would look good as new when he got here.

BLUE

I'm going to town for some coffee. You wanna come?

MUTT

In a minute. I want to watch the sunrise.

(The two brothers stand over the grave markers. A sign that reads "This was a play of a misplaced family. Everything was within their dialogue and deeds. Nothing more is needed." can be seen. Stage hands enter the stage and take apart the set. Mutt and Blue stay in character. Lights fade. Darkness. The sound of wind in pine trees can be heard.)

END OF PLAY