

Mother Stands For Comfort  
a play in two acts  
by Sam Bell

[samtkbell@gmail.com](mailto:samtkbell@gmail.com)

c: 1(401)749-7064

Characters: 7 characters; 3 F, 2-5 M, 1 any gender.

Sally: A small child, easily possessed by poltergeists, quite powerful. Could be played by a puppet. 4, F.

Larry: An organ seller by trade and by choice, raised with money, still prone to tantrums. 24-26, M.

Miss Lenora: “Disgraced” former surgeon, as well as Larry’s business partner and current mother figure. 65, F.

Alice: Wealthy, industrious, aspiring politician, Larry’s actual mother. Also Sally’s mother. 45-55, F.

\*Body: A recently killed local who happens to be a Jeff Bezos-adjacent CEO. Poetic and melancholy in death. He lives on in his organs. 40-55, M.

\*Post Office Worker: Bored, opaque, inured to serendipity and magic. 25-65, any gender (logistically, most likely M.)

\*McKenzie: A former archeologist, currently homeless, unique ideas about astronomy. 35-75, M.

\*Baltimore: No longer lives in Baltimore. A return customer to Miss Lenora and Larry’s organ business, he’s slowly being consumed by his own body. Desperate to occupy a position of power. 30-70, M.

*\*All could be played by the same actor.*

### The Set:

The set is a triangle formation. Each of the bottom two corners is a living area.

One is Miss Lenora’s, an apartment. In the script, all stage direction for scenes taking place here is right-justified. We can see a small kitchen and a living area, with a futon, small table, and carpet.

The other living area is on the other side of the stage. It’s Alice’s house. All stage directions here are left justified. We can see a couch and a coffee table with an armchair next to it, some windows, and a kitchenette with a marble countertop and stool. Stairs lead up Sally’s room, which has a child’s bed and a window. Behind Alice’s house is a very Dark Forest.

Forming the top corner of the triangle is a ramp, which hangs above the two living spaces. Stage directions and dialogue here are centered and in a box. It’s a simple platform, that throughout the play serves as a forest clearing on a hilltop, a Post Office, the roof of a 7/11, and a street corner.

Hanging directly above the platform, leaving enough space for a person to stand up straight without hitting their head, is a neon star that is referred to as the “North Star,” though it’s defined in various ways by different characters.

*Mother stands for comfort  
Mother will hide the murderer  
Mother hides the madman  
Mother will stay mum*

Kate Bush

ACT 1.

*Larry and Miss Lenora are in her apartment. A dead body is laid on a futon in the middle of the room, its insides surgically splayed open.*

*Larry's sharply dressed in a suit, a man in his early twenties with glasses perched on his nose, making him look older than he is. He's writing in a ledger. He's very tense. Every once in awhile he sniffles.*

*Miss Lenora is dressed in surgeon's scrubs. She's fishing around in the cadaver with one hand. With her free ungloved hand, she's eating cookies off of a tray.*

*She chews one contemplatively, pausing, her other hand still in the cadaver.*

MISS LENORA

Not only is it the perfect amount of chewy, but there are little crunchy parts sprinkled throughout.

Is that oatmeal?

LARRY

*quiet*

Toffee.

MISS LENORA

Toffee..!

*She takes a moment to savor the cookie with this new information.*

MISS LENORA

You *must* give me the recipe.

*A tense silence.*

LARRY

Can we address the elephant in the room?

MISS LENORA

What elephant?

LARRY

I know you wanna talk about it, let's talk about it.

MISS LENORA

I don't know what you mean.

LARRY

*outburst*

My mom kicked me out!

*An uncomfortable moment where the words sit in the air.*

*He looks away, fighting back tears.*

*Miss Lenora starts chewing again, slowly, waiting for him to say something. He doesn't.*

*She swallows.*

MISS LENORA

Is it because of...

*She gives a little cough, and gestures that she's swallowing.*

Is it because of our black market organ business?

*He shrugs, still looking away.*

MISS LENORA

...

Maybe you should get a normal job then//

LARRY

// I don't *want* a normal job.

MISS LENORA

I mean look at me.

58, disgraced surgeon,  
yada yada.

I gotta have this job.

But you don't.

You're young, you're a baby. No responsibilities.

LARRY

*looks at her*

This is what I want to do.

*Pause.*

MISS LENORA

Do you have somewhere to stay?

*He doesn't say anything.*

MISS LENORA

You can stay here if you want

I don't care.

*Larry looks at her.*

As long as you make up with your mother.

*Larry takes out Teddy, and reaches out his  
hand.*

LARRY

Scissors.

MISS LENORA

No?  
That out of the question?

LARRY  
*not looking at her.*

Scissors please.

*She picks up the scissors, then sees Teddy  
and withholds them.*

MISS LENORA

Why's that bear all scuffed up?

*He dry swallows, a little desperate.*

LARRY

Can I have the scissors.

MISS LENORA

Larry, that looks like an important teddy bear.

LARRY

...

It's just Teddy.

MISS LENORA

Teddy, as in Proper Noun,  
capital "T" Teddy?  
Like, something a little kid would call their favorite stuffed animal?  
The one they can't fall asleep without?

*Larry makes a grab for the scissors, She  
withholds them.*

Is that your *childhood* Teddy bear,  
Larry?

*Larry leans further and snatches them from  
her hand.*

MISS LENORA

Jesus *Christ* Larry.

*He starts cutting Teddy open. This is painful  
for her to watch.*

... we just got *so* many new ones from the store  
Ones that don't have little souls,  
ones that haven't already been loved by a four-year-old

*He ignores her. She watches a bit longer.*

What's this supposed to accomplish?

*He roughly pulls the back of Teddy open.  
There's a tearing sound.*

*Larry stops. Looks down at Teddy's insides,  
splayed open.*

*He pulls a tiny Build-A-Bear heart out of the  
bear. It's a tiny red Valentine's heart.*

LARRY

A Build-A-Bear heart.

MISS LENORA

What..?

LARRY

*distant*

At Build-A-Bear, you pick out a little heart and put it inside your bear...  
It's how you give it life.

*He holds it to his ear.*

MISS LENORA

What're you listening to it for?

LARRY



...  
Nothing.

MISS LENORA

..what.

LARRY

But I thought maybe...  
maybe I'd be able to hear a children's wish or something.  
A wish I made as a child but...  
forgot that I wanted.

*he trails off, lost in deep memory.*

*She leans in expectantly.*

*He comes back, clears his throat.*

LARRY

Nothing.  
I didn't hear anything.

*Larry swallows, puts the little heart in his  
shirt pocket, fighting tears again.*

MISS LENORA

This is fucking heartbreaking.

*He extends his hand.*

LARRY

You have it?

MISS LENORA

Christ, gimme a second.

*She starts fishing around in the dead guy.*

*Larry opens and closes his hand, impatient.*

LARRY

It's cus you kept talking about my cookies.

*She inserts a scalpel into the cadaver's open chest cavity.*

MISS LENORA

I'll remind you, Larry,  
that neither of us is the boss.

*Larry keeps his hand extended.*

*She cuts the beating heart out of the corpse,  
and holds it up for inspection.*

*It goes \*badump badump badump\**

MISS LENORA

Seems  
functional.

*He holds out an open thermos.*

*She squeezes the heart into the thermos and  
screws the top on, silencing the \*badump  
badump\**

*Larry takes it and crams the thermos into  
Teddy, and starts to sew Teddy back  
together. Lenora looks on, shaking her head.*

*She takes off her surgeon's gloves and picks  
up another cookie. She bites into it.*

MISS LENORA

You could have a good career as a baker, you know.  
You could make up with your mom...

open a little bakery...  
you've got a little sister right?  
A real young, kid sister, yeah?  
I bet she'd love that//

*Larry glares at her.*

MISS LENORA

Okay.

*Larry doesn't answer, keeps working.*

*She eats her cookie, considers the body on  
the ground.*

MISS LENORA

So who's this guy again?

LARRY

Practically Jeff Bezos.

MISS LENORA

A piece of shit then.

LARRY

I only kill people who deserve to die.

MISS LENORA

You know, I wonder sometimes about the people we sell these organs to.  
Like, that person in Baltimore--  
the one who keeps buying from us--

LARRY

That's who this is going to, also.

MISS LENORA

Jeez, why they need so many damn organs.

LARRY

Though fun fact:

they don't live in Baltimore anymore.  
Guess what their new address is?

*He shows her the ledger.*

MISS LENORA

Look at that.  
That's like--

LARRY

Two bus stops from here.

MISS LENORA

Anyway, people like him:  
Do they ever wonder where these organs came from?  
What kid of person used to have their liver or whatever?

*Larry starts packing Teddy into the box.*

MISS LENORA

I guess that sounded deeper before I said it.

LARRY  
*impatient*

Anything else worth keeping?

MISS LENORA

Eh.  
Don't think this guy really took care of himself.

LARRY

Could we mark them down?

MISS LENORA

Maybe some of 'em.  
Not the liver though.  
Look at this thing.  
Look at it!

*Larry doesn't look up.*

The liver's all fucked up.  
Probably pills, or something.

LARRY

Toss it.

MISS LENORA

Maybe I'll keep it.  
It's interesting.  
Lot a dead body can tell you, you know.

*Larry finishes packing up Teddy.*

LARRY

Do you wanna bring this to the post office, or should I?

MISS LENORA

You don't wanna send your little buddy off personally?

LARRY

I don't care.

MISS LENORA

I was gonna take a shower.

LARRY

Okay.

*He starts putting his jacket on.*

MISS LENORA

Could ya leave the cookies?

LARRY

Yeah, they're for you.

MISS LENORA

And where are you gonna sleep tonight?

*He freezes, half in his jacket.*

LARRY

Hotel or something.

MISS LENORA

Just sayin', there's always my futon.

*Larry looks at the futon, with the body on it.*

MISS LENORA

Think about it, kay?

*He finishes putting his jacket on.*

LARRY

I'm off.

*He starts out the door.*

MISS LENORA

Don't forget it's okay to cry!

*The door closes.*

*She stands there, hands on her hip, furrow in her brow, looking at the shut door.*

*She turns to the dead body on the futon.*

MISS LENORA

Do you think I messed that kid up?

*Pause. She takes the second-to-last cookie, leaving one on the plate.*

It's true.

He's an adult.

*She bites into it thoughtfully. It makes her lose her train of thought.*

Damn.  
You *wish* you could try this.

*She stuffs the whole thing in her mouth, wipes off her hands.*

MM!  
Shower time--

*She exits into the bathroom. We hear a shower turn on.*

*The body opens its eyes.*

*It sits up, rubbing its eyes like it just woke up.*

*Its chest and stomach are splayed open. We can see its organs.*

*It picks up the last cookie from the tray, and bites into it.*

*It looks at the audience thoughtfully.*

## BODY

My two favorite water sports were snorkeling and boogie boarding.  
I never got into anything too extreme like surfing.  
I always feared the raw power of the ocean.  
Once things picked up with my retail company  
we had to make sure we were making as much money as possible.  
So we decided to dehumanize our employees,  
so that they could work with the efficiency of robots.  
One way we did this was by not giving them a bathroom break.  
They had to hold their pee.  
This practice was a flagrant abuse of human rights,

and incredibly profitable.

*It finishes the cookie.*

*It reaches into itself, fishes around for a while, making a face of concentration.*

*Eventually it pulls the cookie back out of its stomach. The cookie is fully formed again, and it starts eating it again.*

But of course I felt guilty.

I wasn't a monster.

and I had to hide my guilt somewhere.

So I crumpled it up inside my love for snorkeling and boogie boarding,  
like a spider in a paper towel.

Which I tucked away in my liver

for routine assault by reckless doses of prescription drugs.

I continued to take trips to Southern California out of a ghostly respect for my youth,

but never again did I catch a gentle wave

or count sea urchins from the water's surface.

*It finishes the cookie. It looks at us meaningfully.*

They said that once I'm dead, I'd regret all the things I did.

But I don't.

I don't feel any feelings at all.

Just a void in my chest.

Something's missing.

*The body closes its eyes.*

But I can still feel it, wherever it is.

It's still alive somewhere, surrounded by warm, fluff.

Like inside a cloud warmed by the sun.

Some fourth-dimensional wind is blowing it somewhere new.

Where it'll be loved forever.

Meanwhile, I myself, me, now stripped of everything useful or curious,

am waiting to be dragged to the top of South Hill,

abandoned in the woods,



at the mercy of the Northern Grizzlies that are moving further  
and further  
southwards.

*The shower switches off in the background,  
snapping the Body out of its reverie. It fishes  
in its stomach, picks out the cookie, and  
places it on the dish.*

*It lays down, like its pretending to be asleep.  
It reaches across to the cookie and dusts it  
off, just to make sure. Lights go down on  
Miss Lenora's apartment.*

*The lights come up on Alice's living room.*

*Alice, in her pajamas, is sitting on the couch,  
smoking a very long, very thin, cigarette,  
reading a campaign pamphlet.*

*Sally wanders in in her pajamas.*

SALLY

mama

*Alice starts.*

ALICE

Darling.  
Can't you sleep?

SALLY

cant find teddy

ALICE

Sorry?

SALLY  
*frustrated*

cant find TEDDY

ALICE  
Where'd you last see him?

SALLY  
shes a girl

ALICE  
Where'd you last see her, darling?

SALLY  
i dont know

ALICE  
She'll turn up tomorrow, I'm sure.

SALLY  
i cant sleep without her

ALICE  
You've only had Teddy for a couple weeks, baby.

SALLY  
shes my best friend though

ALICE  
You didn't have trouble going to sleep before then, did you?

SALLY  
but now shes my *best friend*

*Alice sighs.*

SALLY  
and i looked *everywhere*

ALICE  
We'll find her when it's bright out.

SALLY

...everywhere except  
larrys room

*Alice is silent.*

*Alice rubs between her eyebrows.*

SALLY

im just thinking  
what if she went in there cus she misses him  
maybe  
even though he stopped playing with her

ALICE

We can look in Larry's room soon--

SALLY

right now?

ALICE

--but not tonight.

SALLY

why

ALICE

I have to clean it.  
It's very, very dirty in there.

*Sally pouts.*

ALICE

Come on. It's late.

SALLY

can i fall asleep out here then you carry me to my bed?

*Alice pats the couch.*

*Sally climbs on the couch and lays her head on Alice's lap.*

*Alice runs her fingers through Sally's hair.*

ALICE

Shhh.

Shhhhhh.

*The light softens, cutting Alice out of the picture, and focusing on Sally.*

*A soft light also rises on the platform. Miss Lenora has just dragged the Body all the way to the top of a hill, and ditched it.*

*She spreads some leaves over the Body, barely concealing it, and departs, patting her hands clean.*

*The Body is left protruding from under leaves and filth.*

*It narrates in a saccharine, Goodnight Moon voice.*

BODY

And so Sally drifts into an uneasy sleep, far, far away from her Teddy,  
who at that moment is at the post office, about to be loaded into a cold, metal truck.  
Destination Downtown, which for Sally,  
in her cozy house by the forest,  
might as well be the planet Jupiter.

Or at least that's what's supposed to have happened.  
But folks, this universe of ours might be a mysterious place,  
but it's not governed entirely by flukes.

Cus at that moment, Sally looks out the window,  
into the cold nighttime--  
wolves howling,  
cats knocking over trash cans,  
where her erstwhile brother wanders around,  
drunk cold and motherless.

But she didn't notice any of this  
because in this darkest of dark, dark nights, above it all,  
Sally saw a star.  
The North Star.

*The North Star begins to glow. Orchestral music starts to play,  
like a wishful lullaby*

And at that moment, Sally made a wish.  
Not just any wish.  
A *true* wish.

*Sally puts her hands together, her eyes still closed.  
The music grows.*

#### BODY

And as we all know, nothing is more powerful than a little girl's deepest wish,  
wished at the cusp of sleep, in her mother's arms,  
on the twinklingest of celestial bodies--  
*nothing* is more powerful than that.  
Not even the bureaucracy of the U.S. Postal Service.

*By now everything is black, except for the North Star, which has reached peak  
brightness. The music SWELLS. We see the shadow of a great beast, fangs out,  
towering over the Body.*

*Black.*

*The music continues, but now it's tinny, as if  
it's coming out of a cell phone speaker.*

*Lights up on Miss Lenora's apartment.  
Larry's phone is on the table, on speaker, on  
hold, muzak pouring out of it.*

*The futon is clear of the Body. It looks like it  
was slept on recently.*

*Miss Lenora's has the liver on the table  
table. She's running electrical wires into it,  
performing experiments on it, humming  
along to the muzak as it loops around and  
around. Sometimes it stops and the phone  
says something like:*

*"Your call is very important to us. A  
representative will be with you shortly."*

*When it does, Miss Lenora mimics it exactly,  
like she's heard it many times.*

*Larry comes out of the shower, drying his  
ears with a towel. He looks like a wreck.*

LARRY  
*the music*

Still?

*Miss Lenora looks up at him.*

MISS LENORA

You gotta shave, my friend.

*Larry picks up the phone, looks at it.*

LARRY

Forty five freakin' minutes.

MISS LENORA

They're busy.

LARRY

They're avoiding talking to me.

MISS LENORA

Patience, Larry.

LARRY

There's a lot of money riding on this.

MISS LENORA

It's my money too.  
Patience.

*He tosses the phone onto the futon.*

*(Note: At any point in this scene, Miss Lenora should feel free to interrupt the conversation and mimic any or all of the "Your call is very important to us" message, whenever the audio cycle reaches it. She finds this very funny.)*

LARRY

What's so interesting about that liver?

MISS LENORA

It keeps making this  
*weird* sound, listen.

*She zaps it, looks at Larry expectantly.*

*Larry doesn't hear anything.*

LARRY

Again.

*She zaps it again.*

MISS LENORA

You don't hear that?

*Larry leans in closer. She zaps it again.*

MISS LENORA

It's going like:

*She makes a very, very disturbing sound with her mouth.*

LARRY

The fuck.

No.

*The hold music cuts out abruptly.*

*Up on the platform, the light comes on. Pale fluorescent white, like in a post office.*

*A bored Post Office worker (POW) is on the phone.*

POW

Hello Post Office how can I help you.

*Larry runs to the phone.*

POW

Hello?

*Larry takes it off speaker, puts it to his ear.*

LARRY

Hi, hello, hi, I'm here.

POW

post office how can i help you



LARRY

Yeah, I got an email, from you guys

POW

Okay

LARRY

I had dropped off a package yesterday, and the email said that, there was a processing problem, is how it put it

POW

Name?

LARRY

So i was just wondering, what was going on with that

POW

What's your name, please, sir.

LARRY

Larry.

*The POW types. Larry bites his nail.*

POW

Yeah here you are.

I see you.

so, yes.

There was a processing anomaly with your package.

LARRY

“Anomaly--”

POW

While processing your package, there was a rare circumstance in which--

LARRY  
*exasperated*

Okay, see “rare circumstance,”  
I don’t know what “rare circumstance”

MISS LENORA

Patience Larry

LARRY

I don’t know what “rare circumstance”// means

POW

//Well I can explain// sir

LARRY

// Please do.

POW

*patiently*

Whenever there’s a processing anomaly,  
we require the worker involved to write an explanation on the re-processing  
receipt.

This information is available to the customer whose package// it is

LARRY

//Sure.

POW

I could send it, or read it now

LARRY

Read it now,  
whatever

POW

Okay, give me a moment while I pull it up

*Larry waits. Bites his nail.*

POW

Okay, it's time stamped at 9:23 last night

LARRY

Sure

*The worker clears their throat.*

POW

“While loading this package onto the truck  
I was distracted by a star in the sky,  
a very, very bright star.  
I don't usually look up for long,  
but this star was twinkling something special.  
I felt like it was smiling at me.  
I felt like I was levitating a fraction of a centimeter off the ground.  
It was the most wonderful feeling.  
Suddenly saliva tasted like warm milk.  
And I realized that I was in the presence of my daughter,  
Alexandra.  
My little girl  
who died fifteen summers ago.  
She was older now.  
The young woman she would have been.  
And wise, so wise, so much wiser than me.  
And she spoke to me, in words I never got to teach her.  
She told me that everything was fine.  
She told me nothing was my fault--  
*That she forgave me.*  
And I felt a huge weight lift from my shoulders,  
one I had forgotten was there,  
a cancer of guilt that I'd long ago accepted would kill me,  
no,  
*wanted* to kill me before my god-given time.  
But now, all at once and unexpected,  
I felt it dissipate,  
and the wind whispered,  
in my daughter's voice--  
“Live.

Live like I never could.  
*That is what I want.”*  
And suddenly,  
what I had thought was the tree of my life  
was just one branch on the plant it could be.  
I looked around. Alexandra was gone.  
Really gone, for the first time since she died.  
And in her absence, my mind was quiet.  
And after fifteen years of not really living,  
of cursing my own body for being so selfishly healthy  
something that *she* was robbed of  
this body, my body,  
long-cursed,  
neglected,  
so often equated by my own thoughts to mud, filth, scum,  
was shaking.  
And crying. And gripping this package like a newborn,  
lathering it in a milky froth of tears and mucus.  
So by the time I finally pulled myself together, and drew it away from my chest,  
the address was totally smudged,  
except for the name of sender.  
That I could still make out.  
So I’m sorry, I guess.  
...  
And thank you. ”

*POW spits their gum into the wrapper and  
tosses it away.*

*They casually unwrap another piece of gum  
and pop it in their mouth.*

*Larry sighs in exasperation.*

POW

Don’t worry, sir. We’ve had problems with this employee before.  
They got written up, let’s just say that.

LARRY

So it's coming back here? The package?

POW

Because the return address was smudged,  
we sent it to the address we have on file.

LARRY

...what address?

POW

Same we've always had for your family, sir.  
On file.

*Larry rubs his face in distress.*

LARRY

Did it ship? Can you reroute it?

POW

It was delivered this afternoon, sir.

*This is bad news. Larry hangs up the phone.  
The Post Office goes dark.*

LARRY

*Fucking idiots.*

MISS LENORA

Is it coming back here?

*Larry pulls his jacket on.*

MISS LENORA

What'd they say?

*Larry goes out the door, shuts it behind him.*

MISS LENORA

Okay, don't mind me.

*Miss Lenora puts her ear to the liver, and zaps it.*

*She scribbles something on a piece of paper.*

*Lights down on the apartment.*

*Larry walks over to Alice's house under cover of night.  
He pulls his hood over his head and crouches in a bush.  
He begins throwing pebbles at Sally's bedroom window.*

*In Sally's bedroom:  
a recently-opened cardboard box is in the middle of the floor.*

*After the second pebble or so, Sally sits up out of the box.  
She's holding Teddy in her arms.  
She's wearing a hat made out of newspaper.*

SALLY

you hear that, First Mate?

*Another pebble hits the window.*

SALLY

i'm gonna check it out--

*She cautiously climbs out of the box,  
and puts her hat on Teddy.*

SALLY

you mind the ship.  
if i'm not back before sunrise...  
say a prayer for my departed soul  
and leave this cursed long-gi-tude far, far behind

*She "swims" across to the window.  
Larry hits it with another pebble.*

*Sally opens it and squints into the darkness.  
Larry doesn't notice she's there, or has already thrown another pebble:  
either way, the pebble hits Sally.*

OUCH  
SALLY

Oh shit--  
LARRY

that hurrtrt  
SALLY

Don't cry, don't cry don't cry  
LARRY

i'm bleeding  
SALLY

*Sally don't cry*  
LARRY

hey...  
how do you know my name?  
SALLY  
*angry caution*

...  
LARRY

*She squints into the darkness.*

do i know you,  
o shadowy one?  
SALLY

Sally it's me.  
LARRY

larry?

SALLY

Yes

LARRY

oh hi larry!  
you want me to get mom?

SALLY

No!  
Don't get mom.  
And be quiet, please.

LARRY

you're just here to say hi to me?

SALLY

Yeah, that's right.

LARRY

well  
"hi."

SALLY

...  
Did a package come in the mail today?

LARRY

*Beat.*

why do *you* care

SALLY

I'm just gonna--  
I'm just gonna ask, do you have Teddy?

LARRY



*Sally doesn't answer.*

LARRY

Do you have him?

SALLY

*quietly*

she's a girl

LARRY

Can you give him to me?

SALLY

she's a girl!

and you gave her to me already

LARRY

But he's really mine, though.

I had him before you

SALLY

why'd you give me her then

LARRY

It was too soon, it was a mistake

SALLY

she's already my best friend, you can't have her back

and guess what--

she's so much cooler now

LARRY

he can be both our best friend

SALLY

why do you want her anyway, if you're a grown-up

LARRY

Just let me see her

SALLY  
i guess you're still a baby then

LARRY  
C'mon sally

SALLY  
you're a big baby

LARRY  
are not--

SALLY  
*singsong voice*  
baby wants his teddy!

LARRY  
i am NOT a BABY

*A light switches on in the house. Larry ducks into the bush.*

*When he peeks out, he's whispering, but more urgent now.*

LARRY  
Just let me see it then I'll give it right back.

SALLY  
i don't believe that you'll give it right back

LARRY  
C'mon, you can watch me

SALLY  
if mama doesn't trust you, then i don't trust you!

LARRY  
sshhhhh

*Alice goes into Sally's room*

ALICE

Sally?

*Larry bolts.*

ALICE

Why are you up?

*Alice strides to the window.*

ALICE

I told you to keep the window shut

SALLY

i was sleepwalking

ALICE

It's dangerous, we live right next to the Dark Forest.  
There are bears out these days--

SALLY

bears won't hurt me!  
my best friend's a bear!

*Alice takes Sally's arm.*

ALICE

C'mon.  
Into bed.

*She leads Sally to bed*

*Sally strains against her, trying to "swim" back towards  
the cardboard box.*

SALLY

Oh no! I'm drowning, blub blub--  
BLUB BLUB BLUB I'm DROWNING

ALICE

What are you *doing*?

SALLY

i have to get back to our ship

*Alice lets her go.*

*Sally gets in the boat.*

SALLY

i'm back, first mate.

*She takes the newspaper hat back.*

*Then pauses.*

oh... okay.

you can stay the captain i guess...

i guess that means i have to row our ship

*She tries scooting the box over to her bed, doesn't have much luck.*

*Alice pulls the box.*

ALICE

And all of a sudden a wind blows,  
and brings your boat to port

SALLY

weeee

*Alice hoists Sally up.*

SALLY

teddy wants to be in bed first

*Alice sighs and puts Sally down.*

ALICE

Why's Teddy so bossy all of a sudden?

*She picks up Teddy and puts it on Sally's bed.*

*She turns to Sally, who's squirming around.*

ALICE

Do you need to pee?

SALLY

no

ALICE

You're doing the pee dance.

SALLY

i don't

*She takes Sally's arm.*

*Sally yanks it away from Alice.*

ALICE

*exasperated*

Fine.

Wet the bed.

*Sally climbs up into bed. Alice tucks her in.*

*Alice leaves, starts to close the door.*

SALLY

leave it a little open

*Alice does.*

*Sally lies awake, listening for her mother to stop*

*moving around the house.*

*Alice's light clicks off.*

*Sally sits up.*

SALLY

ok i held my pee all night can i see it again

*Beat.*

just for a second

*Beat.*

*She opens up the back of Teddy (which she seems to have opened earlier and then resealed with a hairclip) and pulls out the thermos.*

*She unscrews it.*

*The heart inside goes \*BADUMP BADUMP\* filling the room.*

SALLY

teddy, it's like you're real now.

*She makes like she's gonna poke the heart with her finger.*

*She pulls it away quickly, like she's been abruptly told off.*

SALLY

Sorry.

*She screws the top back on. The "BADUMP BADUMP" ceases.*

*She puts the thermos back inside of Teddy, and replaces the clip.*

SALLY

now can i pee?

*Beat.*

SALLY

fine.  
i'll hold it.

*She gets under the covers, squirming in discomfort. The lights go down.*

*The North Star flickers to life, lighting the platform. Now it's the roof of a convenience store.*

*Larry's sitting on the roof, head in his lap.*

*A man in ragged clothing, "McKenzie," climbs onto the roof, holding a paper bag. Both are surprised.*

*(Notes: As they become more comfortable with each other, Larry gradually puts on a "street accent," some vague interpretive performance of "street dialect."*

*Also, as they get drunker, they swear more. So they )*

MCKENZIE

Sorry.  
Am I disturbing something?

LARRY

No

*McKenzie cranes his neck to see what Larry was doing with his hands.*

MCKENZIE

You sure?

LARRY

Yeah.

MCKENZIE

Okay.  
I can tell you're deciding in your head whether you should leave or not.

LARRY

Am I in your spot or something?

MCKENZIE

No! No no no.

LARRY  
*gesturing to all the stuff*

Is this all your stuff?

MCKENZIE

Well yeah, but

*McKenzie pulls a 40 out of his paper bag.*

MCKENZIE  
Always thought there's room for more than one up here.

*He sits next to Larry.*

MCKENZIE  
You chose a great spot.  
This is one of the primo spots in town,  
just nobody knows about it.  
Let's keep it hush hush though, okay?

*He unscrews the 40.*

MCKENZIE  
Want some?

LARRY  
Oh no thanks--

MCKENZIE  
We don't have to share a container or anything, look.

*He holds out the 40.*

MCKENZIE  
Hold please.

*Larry takes the 40. McKenzie looks around on the roof, and excavates a broken bottle or filthy styrofoam cup from somewhere*

*He holds it out to Larry.*

MCKENZIE  
Pour me up.



*Larry fills up McKenzie's cup.*

MCKENZIE

Cheers--

*They cheers, and drink. And look out on the town.*

MCKENZIE

Ahhh yessir.

The roof of the 7-11,  
on the North Hill.

looking down on the town.

What a primo spot.

Sometimes I ask myself, why do more people not find this spot?

And then I tell myself, it's because it's a special spot.

It's a magic spot.

*He drinks, performing satisfaction with this explanation, as if it's a satisfying explanation and not one that begs the question:*

LARRY

Why's it a magic spot?

MCKENZIE

See that's what I ask myself too of course,  
to which I wonder the answer for a long long time,  
and the answer I usually come up with is:  
the roof of the 7-11 doesn't just show itself to anybody anytime.

*He drinks again.*

LARRY

Okay.

MCKENZIE

The guy who works behind the counter, for example--  
he knows the roof is here, you know?

Of course he does, duh.

Anyone in any building knows there's a roof over their head.

*He pauses for effect.*

MCKENZIE

*As part of the building, though.*  
It takes a very special set of circumstances  
for the roof to suddenly become a place of its own.

*He drinks again, finishes his cup.*

*He holds it out, Larry pours more.*

LARRY

What circumstances.

MCKENZIE

It's a place--  
As far as I figure,  
this is a place that shows itself to you when you've lost something.  
It's a place for you to think, "how do I get it back?"

*Larry puts his hands over his eyes in shock.*

LARRY

Woah...

MCKENZIE

Am I close or what?

LARRY

That's *exactly* what I was thinking about

MCKENZIE

Yeah, what'd you lose?  
This is the place to find it

LARRY

I lost this package, this important package

MCKENZIE

Oh FUCK that,  
that's the fucking worst man,  
who lost it?

LARRY

Fucking post office...

MCKENZIE

Of course they fucking did,

fuck them, for real.  
FUCK *them*

LARRY

Yo, that's literally what I was up here thinking, like *fuck them*.

MCKENZIE

What was in it?  
Meds?

LARRY

No, nah, not meds

MCKENZIE

Cus they're always losing the most important shit, like the shit that people need to stay *alive*

LARRY

EXACTLY, you're literally saying the words that I've been thinking all night//

MCKENZIE

See, you're not alone//

LARRY

//Just going round and round in my head, like--

*Larry takes his first healthy swig of beer.*

MCKENZIE

See, magic.  
This place gives you what you need  
And sometimes that thing you need is to feel that you're not alone

LARRY

That's not what I need though,  
I need my package

MCKENZIE

Oh well sure

LARRY

I got customers.

*McKenzie holds out his cup. Larry fills it.*

MCKENZIE

What was in it?

LARRY

Like *literally* something someone needs to stay alive

MCKENZIE

Like what?

*Larry takes a swig, looking at McKenzie.*

MCKENZIE

Something interesting?

*Larry casts his eyes around, smiling, conspiratorial.*

MCKENZIE

It is something interesting, isn't it?

*Larry shrugs.*

MCKENZIE

Oh come on.

Look at you.

You can't wait to tell me.

*Larry is trying not to laugh.*

MCKENZIE

Don't make me guess--

LARRY

A heart.

MCKENZIE

What?

LARRY

A human heart.

I'm a organ dealer, I sell organs.

MCKENZIE

No shit

Yes shit

LARRY

You're fucking with me.

MCKENZIE

Maybe I am.  
Whatever then.

LARRY  
*shrugs*

*McKenzie looks at him.*

That's crazy.  
What're you, like twenty five?

MCKENZIE  
*disbelief*

23

LARRY

23...

That's some heavy duty shit to be caught up in at *twenty three*  
Some fucking ballsy shit  
By *mail*?

MCKENZIE

We take precautionary measures

LARRY

What you mean?  
You're sending fucking humans' organs by mail--

MCKENZIE

We pack 'em so you can't tell what's in there

LARRY

How?

MCKENZIE

Stuffed animals.

LARRY  
*whispering in his ear, but so we can hear it*

MCKENZIE

What?

LARRY

We put the organs in stuffed animals,  
so they can't see with like a x-ray,  
they think it's just a present for some kid.

*McKenzie looks at him blankly.*

LARRY

It's a thing, look it up.

MCKENZIE

I can't even picture that.

LARRY

I mean you don't have to, it's how we do it though.

*Larry takes a swig. McKenzie takes a swig, finishes his cup.*

*McKenzie holds out his cup to refill it.*

*Larry holds up the bottle and flicks it. It's empty.*

MCKENZIE

Damn.

I guess that's a night.

LARRY

Check it out.

*He reaches down next to him, and picks up a paper bag.  
He produces a whiskey nip.*

LARRY

I got like twenty of these things.

MCKENZIE

Ohh shit!

*Larry gives him a couple nips, which McKenzie takes graciously.  
This next section accelerates their drunken-ing exponentially.*

LARRY

Yeah, I was already out here about to get drunk, feelin' pretty down about the whole thing.

MCKENZIE

Well I'm glad I got here in time for the party

*They cheers their little nips and drink them down, and open the next ones.*

MCKENZIE

My name's McKenzie

LARRY

Larry

MCKENZIE

Larry.

LARRY

McKenzie.

MCKENZIE

So you see I'm right, what a spot huh?  
This is the type of spot that gets you thinking

LARRY

It really does--  
I feel so *light*

*He drinks down another nip.*

*McKenzie points up.*

MCKENZIE

"God's Asshole"

LARRY

What?

MCKENZIE

Nevermind.

LARRY

No,  
what.

MCKENZIE

Not drunk enough yet.

LARRY

Gotchu, gotchu.  
So you been living here long or what?

MCKENZIE

Oh, not too not too--  
Used to live up South Hill.

LARRY

In the forest?

MCKENZIE

Oh yeah, I had a real nice set-up in there. For example:  
A tent, a firepit I made out of bricks.

LARRY

What happened

MCKENZIE

Chased out

LARRY

FUCKING cops, course you were

MCKENZIE

No no not the cops

LARRY

Oh

MCKENZIE

Though fuck the cops too

LARRY

FUCK cops

*They both fall into saying "fuck cops" like some kind of incantation, or hollow pop refrain that everyone knows*

MCKENZIE



FUCK em, fuckem fuckem

LARRY

Fuck'em fuck cops pieces of shit

*McKenzie tosses his nip bottle, unscrews another one.*

MCKENZIE

But anyway//

LARRY

//yeah fuckin' cops

MCKENZIE

Wasn't cops that time at least.

LARRY

still

MCKENZIE

Not cops,  
bears.

LARRY

Oh shittt  
no shittt

MCKENZIE

We got a real bear problem, lemme tell you.  
That forst  
the Dark Forest::  
bears up the wazzoo

LARRY

Think I heard something about that.

MCKENZIE

All of a sudden, too.  
There were never bears before, but now--  
fucking bears.  
And guess what--  
they're getting a taste for human flesh--

LARRY

No way

MCKENZIE

Yeah, somehow...  
for some reason...  
they're just that hungry, but seriously,  
you look in their shit,  
you see human bones sometimes.  
Where they're coming from I got no idea.

LARRY

Why're you looking in bear shit?

MCKENZIE

It's my training, it's hard-wired into me

LARRY

Your training?

MCKENZIE

Yeah I got a PhD

LARRY

Really?

MCKENZIE

Fucking believe it.  
But it wasn't just the shit made me know bout the bears.  
Cus one night, this  
this one big one, big *female* probably,  
cus she was angry, maybe her cubs were nearby,  
I don't know  
surprised me one night.  
I couldn't even get my shit!  
She chased me off my spot, couldn't even keep my shit--

LARRY

Shit--

MCKENZIE

Fuckin-  
Guess what I fuckin' lost--

*Gets ready to list stuff off on his fingers*

MCKENZIE

I lost--

*Pauses, his fingers out. The next exchange (in parentheses) is an extended aside.*

MCKENZIE

(and humor me cus I did get away with my life)

LARRY

(yeah)

MCKENZIE

(gotta be thankful for what we do have, y'know)

LARRY

(course)

MCKENZIE

(cus I am alive and that's all that matters *really*)

LARRY

(seriously yeah)

MCKENZIE

(but also it is a fact that we do live in a world where unfortunately our worldly goods *are* important to us, just a fact, doesn't mean we're materialistic or anything)

LARRY

(nah)

MCKENZIE

(so anyway)

*McKenzie continues counting on his fingers.*

MCKENZIE

--lost my tent,  
lost my food (even though I left it up in the tree for the express purpose of no bear stealing it),  
lost my magazines,  
lost my *books*,

LARRY

--Damn--

MCKENZIE

--Damn is right--  
lost my guitar,  
lost my fuckin'...  
*all my clothes*

LARRY

Shit

MCKENZIE

( 'cept for what I was wearing of course)

LARRY

(course)

MCKENZIE

(lucky I wasn't naked)

*They crack up*

MCKENZIE

---BUT you know what did fucking happen,  
freaking bear bit the *ass* off my *jeans*

LARRY

WHAT

MCKENZIE

I SHIT YOU NOT my friend,  
Larry buddy I was *\*this\** close,  
(not even figuratively literally *\*this\**--

*He shows a small distance between his fingers.*

MCKENZIE

--close to spending the rest of my life as "Assless McKenzie")

*Larry is cracking up*

MCKENZIE

But even as it was I was bounding down the fucking hill,  
away from this bear,  
fucking scared,  
*shitting* myself,

actually *shitting*,  
with no ass on my fucking pants,  
but bowels just *releasing* into the open air--  
Picture it:  
me screaming, running, tearing down the mountain  
every second could be my last,  
and there's me  
leaving a trail of just pure human *release* in my wake down the *fucking mountainside*

*Larry is dying laughing. McKenzie is cracking up too. Eventually:*

MCKENZIE

But somehow I fucking made it.  
Really.  
I mean obviously. I'm here.  
But I did, and I cleaned myself up in a stream...  
covered my ass with a Stop and Shop bag--

*This makes Larry, who was just composing himself, spit a swig of whiskey out of his mouth and start laughing again, though shorter this time: they're on the downhill of the story, after this point, it gets progressively less funny, as the story itself gives way to the quiet afterglow of true hilarity that has come and gone. They continue drinking throughout this process, and after.*

MCKENZIE

And followed the North Star, followed it up here, all the way through town, from South Mountain to North Mountain.  
And here we are.  
Speaking of shit, I like to call that star God's Asshole.

*Larry laughs*

MCKENZIE

No, not a joke.  
This is the serious part, listen.  
That's God's Asshole, for *real*--  
And right here on this roof, we are Stop Number One.

LARRY

You're gonna have to elaborate on that

MCKENZIE

Nothing to elaborate on,  
fucking look at it.  
I'm not the first person to say that that's a *giant glowing asshole*.

*Larry looks at the sky.*

LARRY

I mean I guess

MCKENZIE

And we're stop number one, so when you sit up here,  
and say things,  
well first of all if you concede that all human words, like even the finest poetry,  
is God's farts...  
for this metaphor..

LARRY

Okay yeah.

MCKENZIE

Then up here,  
right under the North Star,  
(his asshole)  
those fart are the most pungent and *absolute*.  
They haven't yet been diluted by the wind, at *all*.  
That's why I say this is Stop Number One.  
That's why this is the best place to come and talk to yourself when you got something to figure  
out.

LARRY

But we're not talking to ourselves

MCKENZIE

OR someone else.

*Larry nods in understanding.*

LARRY

Or someone else.

*Pause.*

MCKENZIE

FUCK yo I just forgot--  
been talking about me this whole time and I freaking forgot what you told me a minute ago--  
*organ merchant* that's crazy.  
That's *crazy* tell me about that

I dunno

LARRY

You don't have to.  
It's just pretty baller

MCKENZIE

*Beat.*

But what I just wanna know is,  
Where you get the bodies?

MCKENZIE

*Larry takes a private sip, playing coy. It's a much sloppier, drunker iteration of his coyness earlier.*

You know you're gonna tell me

MCKENZIE

Kill 'em

LARRY

*McKenzie acts very shocked, which he is, but he acts that way too*

What!

MCKENZIE

Yeah, but listen,  
just rich people though

LARRY

You just kill rich people?

MCKENZIE

Yeah, I do

LARRY

*This is deeply pleasing to McKenzie*

ha HA!

MCKENZIE

LARRY  
*pleased with himself*

It's true

MCKENZIE

I didn't know when I pulled out that forty that I was partying  
with the fuckin'

MAN

LARRY

*unsure what to say to that*

Hey here's to you

MCKENZIE

Here's to YOU pal,  
here's to Robin Hood

LARRY

And Little John

MCKENZIE

C'mon I'm just listening to the story,  
I'm like Friar Tuck

*They cheers and take in yet another nip*

MCKENZIE

So like, who you kill?

LARRY

Few people,  
few really evil people

MCKENZIE

But like who

LARRY

You know Jeff Bezos?

MCKENZIE

no WAY

LARRY

I killed a Jeff-Bezos-adjacent

MCKENZIE



Oh okay

LARRY

Fucking monster  
Absolute sack of shit

MCKENZIE

They all are

LARRY

*Especially* this one.  
You know, he killed a prostitute  
a sex worker, I mean

MCKENZIE

Whatever

LARRY

and like,  
just payed off the judge, and got away with it.  
Probably did this more than once!  
Like, who knows if it was an "accident."  
It was probably something he was *into*, for all we know.  
Like, sexually.

MCKENZIE

Fucking typical.  
Fucking sick.

LARRY

NOBODY should have that amount of power over anyone  
You know, everyone's a person, you know?

MCKENZIE

You know what?  
I'll say it.  
I'm glad he's dead.  
Fucking shit bag.

LARRY

Yeah

MCKENZIE

But isn't it dangerous?

Don't those guys have all kinds of security?

LARRY

Sure, I mean, sure.

But I get in there, make 'em think that I'm their friend.

MCKENZIE

Ahhhh okay.

LARRY

Cus that's one of my skills, you know?

I mean not to brag, not to brag.

MCKENZIE

You can brag, you can brag

LARRY

I mean not to brag or anything, but that's one of my skills,

y'know,

*mirroring* people,

making them think I'm their friend, then

BAM

MCKENZIE

"BAM"

LARRY

But anyway,

how it happens is,

how I do it is--

*Gets dizzy momentarily.*

LARRY

Woah

MCKENZIE

Don't fall off this roof now

LARRY

What was I saying

MCKENZIE

Just how

LARRY

Oh yeah,  
we like usually end up talking for awhile,  
and drinking all this expensive booze, y'know,  
whatever,  
(and anyway, between you and me, this stuff, right here--  
big secret:  
*it's the same shit*)

MCKENZIE

Amen to that.

LARRY

So there I am,  
in their freaking,  
racist ass bullshit slave labor mansions,  
and we talk for a long, long time.  
You know, I've studied how they act,  
I've studied how they are,  
we all have of course.  
And I plan it for months.  
So I show up with a business deal of some kind  
and we get along real good--  
and eventually it gets dark--  
and eventually their bodyguards or whatever,  
they relax and leave us alone--  
and then, when I'm ready,  
I usually slip into the conversation somewhere,  
so casual that they don't even notice,  
I slip in that  
*I'm going to kill them.*

*McKenzie starts, glee in his eyes, like a kid hearing a campfire ghost story.*

LARRY

Then I pretty much,  
just do.

*A moment of silence.*

MCKENZIE

Well I hope you find your heart pal.

LARRY

Thanks otherwise we'll have to refund 20,000 dollars in bitcoin.

MCKENZIE

That's a fine how d'ya do.

*Silence.*

MCKENZIE

I mean, if you're really strapped for some organs,  
I know some guys  
some ne'er-do-wells  
y'know, some other derelicts  
that you could

*Elbows him*

MCKENZIE

“take care of.”

*Beat. Larry fake laughs, shrugs off the joke. He's getting distant.*

MCKENZIE

No I get it, that's not yer thing, but maybe just for this once,  
y'know...  
in my experience people are usually pretty interchangeable.  
Except family.  
Family is--

*He makes a fist to show how solid family is.*

MCKENZIE

'N that's the effin' truth.  
Take my word for it, I'm wise.  
Y'know I have a PhD, in archeology.  
Did that for a few years. Found a bunch of artifacts.  
Got them in a museum, with my name on 'em.  
They're still there, on free-museum, like open-to-the-public days I go in and take a barista  
from the museum cafe and point at my shit and go like  
“See that shit? That's my life's fucking work.”  
And depending on the barista I might get like a free macaron or something  
which is great cus those things are like four bucks.

*Silence for awhile.*

*He goes in the paper bag. There's no more nips.  
He crumples the bag up and tosses it off the roof,  
they both watch it fall.  
There's some time of silence.  
It could get bitter, like a bad aftertaste.*

*Larry starts humming. He hums a melody for a minute.*

MCKENZIE

Buddy holly?

*Larry nods. He keeps humming the melody.*

*McKenzie starts to bob his head. Eventually:*

MCKENZIE  
*singing quietly*

“Everyday, it's a gettin' closer,  
Goin' faster than a roller coaster,  
Love like yours will surely come my way”

*Larry comes in for the second part.*

BOTH

“Everyday, it's a gettin' faster,  
Everyone says go ahead and ask her,  
Love like yours will surely come my way”

*McKenzie holds his arms up in the air and shouts*

MCKENZIE

GOD'S ASSHOLE

*They laugh. How fun: they're friends now.*

*The lights go down on the platform.*

*Lights up on Miss Lenora's apartment.*

*Miss Lenora is squinting at the laptop,  
wearing the same pair of reading glasses*

*Larry was wearing when he was looking at the laptop. They are the “laptop glasses.”*

*On the table near her is the liver she took out of Body. She’s rigged a microphone up to it, but she’s not paying attention to that now: the headphones that the microphone feeds into are not over her ears, instead sitting on the table.*

*Right now, she’s fixated with great concern on the laptop screen.*

*It’s morning. She’s in her morning clothes. It’s just at dawn. The light is blue. Birds are just starting to sing with each other in the trees outside.*

*In the hallway outside her apartment there’s a muffled banging around. It gets her attention.*

*It stops, she goes back to what she was doing. Then it starts up again.*

*She goes to the door, and looks through the peephole.*

*She opens the door.*

MISS LENORA

Larry..!

*Larry, a mess, a wreck, comes in from the hallway, dragging a recently murdered McKenzie in with him.*

MISS LENORA

It’s too early for this--

LARRY

Get the door

*She helps him drag the body in, and goes to shut the door.*

MISS LENORA

You're plastered.

LARRY

Where's the tarp

MISS LENORA

Sorry,  
I didn't think to get a tarp ready before my morning coffee today.

LARRY

We'll get a new carpet

MISS LENORA

Jesus, Larry.

*Larry lays McKenzie out on the carpet.*

LARRY

So whattaya think?

MISS LENORA

You didn't find the heart?

LARRY

Oh that thing  
That thing is gone forever

MISS LENORA

Baltimore's not happy.

LARRY

Stop calling him *Baltimore*,  
he doesn't live in *Baltimore* anymore,  
he lives *here*.

*Miss Lenora sighs.*

*She crouches and begins to examine  
McKenzie's body.*

*Larry stands there, swaying.*

MISS LENORA

I don't know.

LARRY

What do you mean?

MISS LENORA

This is much lower quality usual.

LARRY

"Lower quality."

MISS LENORA

...

Yeah.

*Larry nods, smiling like he's just been  
insulted.*

LARRY

"Lower quality."

*He savors it. Miss Lenora is bewildered.*

LARRY

"Lower quality!"  
What a *fucking* euphemism.

MISS LENORA



*What?*

LARRY

What a freakin' cop-out.  
"Lower quality."

MISS LENORA

Yeah.

LARRY

You mean "*homeless?*"

MISS LENORA

Jesus Christ...

LARRY

You mean "*subhuman?*"  
You mean "not even good enough to fucking *murder* and *steal from?*"  
This was a human *being*.  
Show some respect.

*Larry gets visibly dizzy.*

MISS LENORA

Larry don't you barf on my floor.

LARRY

*suddenly very tired*

You're being fucking classist.

*She helps Larry sit, and gives him a bowl to hold.*

LARRY

*drunkenly*

How can you even tell what quality of his organs  
you didn't even look inside his organs

*She goes to the faucet.*

MISS LENORA

Look how yellow his skin is.

*She gives him a glass of water.*

*Miss Lenora looks inside McKenzie's mouth.*

MISS LENORA

This man would've died soon no matter what.

Where'd you find this guy?

LARRY

Just take him he's a good guy.

MISS LENORA

Why'd you kill him?

*Larry sways.*

MISS LENORA

I mean what'd he do?

LARRY

Just take the heart and send it to Baltimore.

MISS LENORA

What'd he do?

LARRY

I don't know, he probably...

MISS LENORA

"You don't know?"

LARRY

Probably some fucked up shit.

*Miss Lenora sighs.*

*Beat.*

LARRY

What?

MISS LENORA

*looking at the body*

Maybe there's *something* worth taking.

LARRY

Nicce

*She gets her surgical gear.*

LARRY

We're back in business!

MISS LENORA

Drink that water up.

*He finishes his water with panache and rockets to the kitchen.*

*Larry starts noisily pulling out baking goods*

MISS LENORA

What are you *doing*?

LARRY

Making some cookies

MISS LENORA

*getting to work*

I've already got some of your cookie dough in the oven.

Didn't you smell it?

LARRY

Then I'll make more cookie dough.

I just wanna *do* something.

With my *hands*.

MISS LENORA

Just no more getting drunk and killing people willy nilly.  
Don't want you to turn into a serial murderer now

*Larry turns on her sharply.*

LARRY

I'm not!

MISS LENORA

Turn *into* one.

LARRY

Can you not be joking about stuff like that, though?

MISS LENORA

Okay, but first of all it wasn't a joke.

LARRY

I'm not about to--  
I have empathy.  
I'm an empath, kay?

MISS LENORA

You are, but the past little while, it's been a little concerning to me,  
you walking around with this--  
*proclivity,*  
for *killing,*  
all while being sad, unpredictable, and torn-up about stuff.

LARRY

What stuff?

*Beat.*

MISS LENORA

Your mother.

*Larry trashes the kitchen. He's a raging hurricane of violence. He shatters glasses, smashes plates, embeds knives in the countertop, ejects all the contents from the refrigerator and pops a milk carton under his heel. At the kinetic zenith of his tantrum he leaps out the window in a cloud of broken glass and disappears in the distance. Before he goes, he's taken the liver on the table with him, which he chaotically wrapped in plastic wrap.*

*Miss Lenora, holding her little scalpel, has watched the whole thing without moving. The oven goes "ding."*

*She slowly walks to the kitchen, steps over the mess that Larry made, and takes a tray of cookies out of the oven.*

*She cuts a small piece off one of the cookies with her scalpel, spears it, and puts it in her mouth. It's hot, but delicious.*

*She savors this bite as she picks up a tupperware container from the floor, shaking off the flour or whatever gunk it got covered in during Larry's outburst.*

*She picks up a cookie, but it's still hot and she drops it quickly. She remembers that you have to let cookies cool.*

*She wanders back over to McKenzie's body, takes a blanket off the couch, and wraps it up.*

*By now the cookies are cool enough, and she transfers them to a tupperware.*

*She tries to drag the wrapped-up body out of the apartment while holding the tupperware in one hand, but can't. So she unwraps the body slightly, inserts the tupperware into its rigor-mortis claws, and drags it out of the apartment.*

*Lights go down on Miss Lenora's apartment.*

END OF ACT 1

ACT 2

*Birdsong. Green and yellow dappled forest lighting.*

*Miss Lenora has just dragged McKenzie to the top of South Hill. She lets go of his body bag, rubbing her hands and panting.*

*When she recovers she opens the bag pries the tupperware of cookies from McKenzie's seized-up hands. She pops the top off of the container and places a cookie over each of the body's eyes. While she does:*

I'm really sorry that you died.

MISS LENORA

Where am I, I can't see?

MCKENZIE

A campsite

MISS LENORA

What's that?

Could you repeat?

MCKENZIE  
*can't hear*

An abandoned campsite.  
Torn up and pawed over.  
There's a coffee mug here,  
half full of rainwater and rotting pine needles.

MISS LENORA

What? Hello?

There anybody at my funeral or what?

MCKENZIE

*Miss Lenora looks around. There's no one there.*

I'm sorry I didn't catch that, could you repeat it?

MCKENZIE

*Miss Lenora sets off down the hill with the tupperware, munching on a cookie. The lights*

*continue to follow her down the hill, but stay on over McKenzie.*

*Everything that happens on this platform occurs simultaneous to the other action, as follows:*

*Two bears climb the hill, and start eating McKenzie. For a while, all is normal. Then they discover the cookies. They like the cookies a lot. They split the first one, because both their snouts find it at once. Then they fight over the second one.*

*The lights on the platform go black after Alice says "So why are you here" on page 78.*

*Eventually she reaches Alice's house.*

*Inside, Sally is coloring on the floor, squirming horribly because she hasn't peed in days.*

*The refrigerator is thickly papered in hundreds of her drawings. She shows no sign of stopping. Teddy looks on, wearing its little paper captain's hat, watching her coldly, an alien heart beating deep inside.*

*Miss Lenora has rung the doorbell. Alice is answering the door, before which she was sitting on the couch, rubbing her temples over a book on child-development.*

*We find Miss Lenora behind the door, holding the tupperware container of cookies neatly in front of her.*

ALICE

Yes?

MISS LENORA

I'm a friend of Larry's.

ALICE

He doesn't live here anymore.

MISS LENORA

Yes I know.

Do you have a moment?

ALICE



Hmm.

*Alice looks at her.*

ALICE

You're a close friend then?

MISS LENORA

Enough to be concerned for him.

*Alice considers this. She considers her.*

ALICE

Might as well then.

*She leads Miss Lenora to an armchair besides the couch. Miss Lenora sits, the tupperware in her lap. Alice sits across from her on the couch.*

*Miss Lenora tries not to be distracted by Sally, who very clearly needs to pee very badly. Alice looks frayed, like she hasn't slept in a while.*

*Miss Lenora notices Teddy. She doesn't say anything.*

MISS LENORA

I love your home.

ALICE

Thank you.

MISS LENORA

I always admired houses on the edge of a forest like this.

ALICE

So have I, that's why I bought it.  
Not all tranquil though.

MISS LENORA

I heard about the bear problem up here though.

ALICE

That is what I mean.  
All of a sudden: bears.

MISS LENORA

This far south, too.

ALICE

Yes, it's not natural for them.  
It seems to be only getting worse up there.  
Go figure.  
Y'know, I always wondered whether recycling actually did anything.  
But anyway, you should be careful when you leave.  
The cubs are still small,  
and the mothers need to hunt for them before winter.

MISS LENORA

I see.  
Will it be that way for long?

ALICE

Luckily not.  
Bear cubs grow into adulthood very quickly.  
Once they're four years old.  
Imagine *her*, out hunting and killing, fully grown at four years old.

*Sally brings Alice a drawing, holds it in front of her face, squirming. Alice cooes patiently.*

ALICE

Very nice, darling.

*Sally whispers into Alice's ear. Alice turns to Miss Lenora.*

ALICE

She says to tell you it's a treasure map.

*Miss Lenora makes a sound of appreciation.*

MISS LENORA

Ahhh

*Sally takes the drawing and hangs it on the fridge.*

ALICE

Those are all treasure maps too.

MISS LENORA

I see.

ALICE

Makes you wonder how much treasure there can actually be in the world.

*Miss Lenora watches Sally, politely hiding her concern.*

ALICE

I don't know what I even mean by that.

MISS LENORA

No, I know what you mean.

ALICE

I'm just exhausted, worried.

MISS LENORA

About your son?

ALICE

About my daughter she hasn't peed in *days*

MISS LENORA

I don't mean to impose.

ALICE

Yeah, why *are* you here?

*Beat.*

MISS LENORA

Well--

ALICE

Larry, my son, her brother, we're talking about him?

MISS LENORA

Yeah

ALICE

Okay

I don't *want* to talk about him,  
but I guess we're talking about him.

*They both watch Sally.*

MISS LENORA

Yeah, you know...

ALICE

You the one who he's been living with?

MISS LENORA

I don't know if she should be in the room for this.

ALICE

She's not listening, she's in agony,

MISS LENORA

Is she okay?

ALICE

It's a game she's playing with herself.  
I considered holding her over the bathtub and squeezing her like a juicebox,  
but besides that can't think how I would *force* her to pee.

*Beat.*

I'm seeking child psychologists, if you know any.

MISS LENORA

I never had any children.

*Pause. Silence. Rumination. Interesting.*

ALICE

So what, you fucking my son or something?

*Miss Lenora starts laughing.*

*Alice cracks a smile too.*

ALICE

*searching*

What?

Yes?

No?

*Miss Lenora shakes her head no.*

ALICE

That a no?

MISS LENORA

It's just funny, that you'd say that--

ALICE

Funny, yeah I can tell you think it's funny:

Why?

MISS LENORA

He's like family

ALICE

Family, uh huh.

MISS LENORA

I wanted to talk to you cus

I thought maybe you should know...  
what was going on.

ALICE

I'm done with him  
He didn't tell you?

MISS LENORA

He did I just...  
I guess I just wanted to check, first of all

ALICE

You can have him.

MISS LENORA

But just first of all.  
Oh, what?

ALICE

You can have him.

MISS LENORA

Oh no, that's not what I mean either.

ALICE

So why are you here?

MISS LENORA

Well...

*Miss Lenora cocks her head, searchingly. Alice waits. When Miss Lenora says nothing, she jumps in.*

ALICE

Cus  
(and excuse me)  
but here's how I'm hearing you--  
well actually, first of all, you said you don't have kids,  
I heard that right?

MISS LENORA

Yes.

ALICE

Just making sure cus that's what I thought.  
So, here's what I think:  
looking at you,  
and I don't mean to be rude,  
but you're older than me,  
so you're certainly old enough to be Larry's mother.

*Miss Lenora nods slowly.*

ALICE

So,  
are you sort of like...

*Alice gestures to perform some kind of hesitation to say what she's about to say.*

I'm just gonna say it:  
have you been kind of "standing in" as Larry's mother?  
I'm getting the impression that maybe you've been sort of,  
consciously or not...  
Yeah that's it,  
I said it already.  
"Standing in."  
Sorry, I was losing my train of thought, trying to read your face.

*Alice waits for a response. Miss Lenora sighs, turning this over in her mind. Her words come slowly, hesitant.*

MISS LENORA

You know, maybe.  
Maybe that has sort of been what's going on.

ALICE

Okay, sorry.  
Have I just--

*She checks in on Miss Lenora with her gestures.*

MISS LENORA

No you're fine,  
I'd thought about that obviously, maybe in the corner of my mind,  
but now, hearing it out loud...

*Alice nods. She has this effect on people.*

*Miss Lenora takes a deep shaking breath.*

MISS LENORA

Um.

*Miss Lenora looks at the floor. Alice lets her gather herself.*

MISS LENORA

He just like trashed my kitchen this morning

ALICE

*understanding*

Yeah.

MISS LENORA

like, he just showed up with this dead body, for *no* reason, and then just *left* it there after trashing  
my kitchen in a drunken rage--!

*Alice puts a hand up.*

ALICE

Okay see,  
that's, that's the shit I don't wanna be hearing about.  
I don't.  
Don't wanna hear about that "dead body" stuff at *all*.

MISS LENORA

Sorry, I forgot she was here,



ALICE

No it's not her, she can't hear us,  
it's me.

MISS LENORA

I'm sorry, but anyway,  
I got all mad,  
not at him, but at *you*,  
you know?  
Because it's obviously your fault that, he's like this

ALICE

Um--

MISS LENORA

Or that's what I was *thinking* at the time at least,  
you'll have to excuse that.  
I don't know why I was thinking that,  
I'm not a head doctor, I'm a Disgraced Surgeon.  
But anyway, I thought I'd come here,  
and see for myself, you know--  
cus obviously, you're a very powerful person around here, and--

*Sally shows Alice a drawing.*

ALICE

*barely looking at it*

That's nice honey hang it up.

*She turns her attention back to Miss Lenora, nodding, attentive.*

MISS LENORA

So in my head I was like,  
"Oh, she's this powerful person,  
y'know, local royalty"  
essentially,  
cus you are

ALICE

Uh huh.

MISS LENORA

So in my head, when Larry said you kicked him out,  
the first thing I thought in my head was:

*Alice puts up her hand.*

ALICE

Lemme stop you right there:

MISS LENORA

Oh--  
Sure.

ALICE

Before you go any further,  
I just wanna say this.  
It *will* probably be to the benefit of my career,  
in the long run,  
to disown Larry,  
my son,  
the psychopath murderer.  
But I assure you: I'm not doing it for those selfish reasons.  
I'm doing it for the safety and health of my fragile, gifted daughter,  
Sally,  
who I gave birth to  
late in life,  
not to replace my son.  
I want to emphasize this:  
I never intended to replace my son with Sally.  
I will have that be known.

MISS LENORA

Okay.

ALICE

But I bet you thought that decision was the height of selfishness,  
on my part.

MISS LENORA

In my moment of real anger, sure.

ALICE

Thank you.

Thank *you* for admitting that.

*No one* admits that they're wrong.

*No one* admits that they let their emotions get the better of them.

*No one.*

*She gets up and goes excitedly to a drawer.*

ALICE

I wanna show you something.

Something *very* disturbing.

*She fishes through the drawer.*

*Sally makes a disturbing sound, similar to the one Miss Lenora made earlier when trying to show Larry the sound that the liver was making.*

*Miss Lenora notices this.*

MISS LENORA

Um--

*Alice pulls out a pamphlet.*

ALICE

I got given this pamphlet, downtown a couple months ago.

This guy, this one freaking guy, I think he's from Baltimore or something, some out-of-town freak,

moved *here*.

suddenly wants to run for office.

And the thing is, people are *falling* for it.

MISS LENORA

Uh huh...

ALICE

Here, I'll read from it

*She clears her throat.*

“Help me. I’m in pain. I have to be mayor.  
Help. This isn’t my body. Help. If I don’t get an executive position at City Hall, or become a  
CEO in this town, I think a demon will hatch from my body like an egg. Help.”

*She pauses.*

ALICE

And then there’s a URL for his *contributions page*.

MISS LENORA

*puzzled in more ways than Alice knows about*

Huh...

ALICE

*flipping through the pamphlet*

He’s got all this stuff in here--  
and people are *falling* for it--

*Sally has stopped drawing. She’s writhing on the grown, convulsing. Alice doesn’t notice.*

MISS LENORA

Um--

So I decided, I *need* to run against this guy.  
I mean, this can’t be--  
this has to be stopped.

*Sally starts making the Liver Sound.*

SALLY

I’m drowning--

*She continues making the liver sound, alternating between it and saying “I’m drowning,  
I’m drowning”*

MISS LENORA

We need to call an ambulance--

*A loud balloon POP.*

ALICE

Oh shit--

*Blackout on Alice's home.*

*Lights up on the platform. It's a street corner now. Larry's crouched on a curb, holding the plastic-wrapped liver inside his shirt. He's trying to keep warm in the rain.*

*Baltimore man enters, drawn by a sound. He approaches Larry, following his ear, which ends up next to Larry's stomach, wherein lies the whispering liver.*

LARRY

Can I help you?

BALTIMORE

I'm sorry, I couldn't help but hear something very peculiar over here.

LARRY

You looking for something?

BALTIMORE

Yes.

I'm looking for something very rare.

LARRY

I got something rare.

BALTIMORE

It's not something you alone can give me.

LARRY

Oh okay.

BALTIMORE

You from around here?

LARRY

Yeah.

I'm not. BALTIMORE

Where you from. LARRY

Baltimore. BALTIMORE

Oh... LARRY  
I sort of know someone from Baltimore.

You've got a nice downtown. BALTIMORE  
Lot of people willing to listen to you, to talk to you.

Yeah it's pretty nice LARRY  
Wait, so what are you looking for?

*Baltimore points at Larry.*

You got something in your shirt? BALTIMORE

Yeah LARRY

*Baltimore makes a "come on" gesture.*

*Larry looks left and right.*

It's a pretty sensitive object. LARRY

I'll give you a secret in return. BALTIMORE

What kind of secret? LARRY

*Baltimore opens up his jacket. His body is covered in stitches, Frankenstein style.*

*Larry recoils.*

LARRY

What happened to you?

BALTIMORE

I've been buying a lot of organs recently.  
The ones I was born with weren't meant to last.

*Larry looks up at him in recognition.*

LARRY

You in the market for a liver?

BALTIMORE

Why do you ask?

*Larry looks around, and produces the liver from his shirt, hands it over.*

*Baltimore examines it closely, expertly, like a father who found a bottle of whiskey under his son's bed, whose silent judgments on the quality of the liquid are being translated into arcane assessments about the man his son is growing into. As he does, he questions Larry without looking at him.*

BALTIMORE

How'd you get into this business?

LARRY

That's complicated.

BALTIMORE

Ambition or circumstance

LARRY

Ambition

BALTIMORE

And how old are you?

LARRY

Twenty four or twenty five.

BALTIMORE

I would never buy a liver of this quality.

It's riddled with problems.

Probably pill abuse.

*Baltimore puts the liver up to Larry's ear.*

BALTIMORE

Listen to that, though.

LARRY

What?

BALTIMORE

You can't hear that?

*Larry shakes his head.*

*Baltimore hands it back.*

LARRY

You don't want it?

BALTIMORE

Nah.

LARRY

C'mon man, don't you want some  
magic liver that makes some kind of sound that only I can't hear?

BALTIMORE

Are you addicted to drugs?

LARRY



No, man.

No. I've got people to look after.

BALTIMORE

Yeah?

LARRY

Yeah.

*He takes out a pamphlet and hands it to Larry.*

BALTIMORE

Look at this pamphlet.

*Larry takes the pamphlet, looks at it.*

BALTIMORE

Let me be frank.

I have this.... irrepressible  
almost a biological urge, lately.

Do you get those?

*Larry is reading the pamphlet.*

BALTIMORE

I mean it's all in that pamphlet but,  
in short...

I have to run for office.

*Larry points at the pamphlet.*

LARRY

For mayor.

*Baltimore looks into the middle distance.*

BALTIMORE

I need to. It's essential.  
It's a feeling I get in my kidney.  
Or my spleen or something.

LARRY

You're promising a lot here.

BALTIMORE  
*gripping his stomach*

I NEED to be in power.  
In this city, particularly.  
It's very important that it's in this city, that I am in power.  
Ideally in government.  
But I'll take being a CEO or something.  
That's just what I need.  
I can't eat even eat much of anything these days.  
Whatever I eat, my stomach curl and twists and spits it out,  
and the food pulp on the ground, all soaked in stomach acid, is always twisted into a full  
sentence:  
"Be the mayor of this town.  
Be it. You have no choice.  
Or we will eat you."

ALICE

Who will eat you.

BALTIMORE

My organs.

LARRY

Oh shit...

BALTIMORE

I've been on my way here for weeks.  
By foot. By thumb.  
By grace of God.

When I got lost, I would stop to eat, and feel my guts twist and pull on the clay of half-digested food inside me, 7-11 corn dog, Tostitos pulp, the darkness of my body shaping it blindly, as tongues tie cherry stems into bows.

Overcome by the most divine of nauseas,

I'd chuck it up, and find on the steaming asphalt of some endless highway, an arrow:

Hark! Flecked yellow with stomach lining, it would point, always, always, in the direction of this town, my friends.

That's how I got here.

Stomach hungry. Throat tortured by acid.

My body sustaining itself on pure ambition.

I think I have an oracle living inside me.

A blind philosopher king,

the urge to repent pressing on it from past lives.

Seven dead leaders urge me to govern not from the ache to feed myself,

but from the knowledge of pain, the physical memory of death,

and so the love for my fellow sufferers, hence the bread I will place on their tongues.

*A pause of silence after he finishes his story.*

LARRY

I mean.

What a platform.

BALTIMORE

It's not much.

LARRY

No I mean,

I've met some real powerful people, you know?

And like really *talked* with them.

Been in their homes, stared the demon in the *face*.

And boy, is that a different platform than...

well, what you just told me and all these random passersby.

And I think I might be able to help you.

Yeah.

You know, I've been all bent out of shape every which way...

And before you came, I was just sitting in the rain, feeling real bad for myself.

Like *on purpose* sitting in the rain, feeling bad for myself.

*He spits.*

LARRY

Fuck that.  
I want you to meet my mother.

BALTIMORE

Why's that?

LARRY

Just come on--  
Follow me--  
This'll help you out, I think this'll really help you out.  
Hell, this'll help both of us out.

*Larry leads the way. Baltimore follows. Lights down on the platform.*

*Lights up on Alice's house. It's silent.*

*Alice is pulling the drawings off the fridge, and piling them like paper towels where Sally had collapsed earlier, sopping up a disturbing puddle.*

*Miss Lenora is facing away from us. She's sitting at the side of the couch, on which Sally is laying, unconscious but stable, and somehow older.*

*Miss Lenora is just finishing sewing her up, with Alice's sewing kit.*

MISS LENORA

That's not a personal question.  
I brought it up.

ALICE

You don't have to answer it.

*Miss Lenora sighs.*

ALICE

You really don't have to.

MISS LENORA

I'm just thinking of the best way to do it.

*Silence.*

*Alice wanders around, trying to look over Miss Lenora's shoulder.*

*Miss Lenora catches her.*

MISS LENORA

Hey, not yet.  
Don't look yet.

*Alice breathes out steadily, controlling herself. She goes to a cupboard and retrieves a bottle of whiskey. She pours herself a little to calm her nerves.*

MISS LENORA

Okay, I don't know, I'll just say it.

...

I lost my job as a surgeon cus...  
well first of all,  
once I had them open, I never wanted to close them up.  
I just wanted to *look* at all of it,  
pulsing.  
And hear the little sounds that the organs made.  
The little sounds that, sometimes,  
catch your ear cus your own body makes them,  
or maybe your lover's,  
yada yada.

*She motions for Alice to pour her a glass, before turning back to Sally.*

MISS LENORA

I was exposed to those sounds *every day*.  
I thought they were beautiful.  
Type of thing that makes you think:  
being a surgeon is the perfect job for me.  
But actually, it's the exact reason it wasn't.  
Those organs kind of hypnotized me.  
I would watch them be alive, glistening, gently inflating, deflating,  
like the backs of frogs sticking out a pond.

Everyone's organs have different little personalities, you know.  
It's like, looking at someone's face.  
I don't know, or like--

*Alice is handing her the whiskey glass.*

*Miss Lenora drops the contaminated needle in it, leaving Alice unsure what to do.*

MISS LENORA

Let that sterilize for awhile.

*Alice places the cup on the table.*

MISS LENORA

Everyone talks about how all your personality's in your brain,  
but I feel like--  
how much of it's in your like, intestines?  
I know that sounds crazy, but it's actually not.  
Like--  
say your intestines are a little thin, genetically.  
That might influence your mood for your *entire life*.  
Enough so that at some point, it's essentially just a part of your fundamental personality.  
You know.  
Your Ba, your soul, your true self.  
I don't know.

ALICE

So did something happen or what?

MISS LENORA

*shrugs*

I left someone open too long.  
They died.

*She puts the blanket over Sally's stomach, stands up and stretches.*

MISS LENORA

She'll be fine, by the way.  
Her bladder didn't pop too severely.

ALICE

God, I feel awful.

*Alice takes a deep drink.*

*Miss Lenora crosses the room.*

MISS LENORA

Hopefully she's learned her lesson.

*She scoops up Teddy.*

ALICE

That's her imaginary friend.

*Miss Lenora tears the back of Teddy open.*

ALICE

Hey!

*She fishes around inside of Teddy, and pulls out the thermos.*

ALICE

What the *fuck*.

*Miss Lenora unscrews the thermos it. We hear the "Badump badump badump" of the heart inside.*

*She holds it out to Alice. Alice takes it.*

*She's speechless.*

MISS LENORA

I fucking *found* it.

*For some reason this is a massive weight off her shoulders.*

*She starts laughing.*

*Alice hands it back to her, thrusting it away from her body violently.*

ALICE

I knew it,  
I fucking always knew he'd be involved in some shit like this  
*FUCK*

*Miss Lenora screws the top back on.  
She pulls out one of her long, thin cigarettes, and starts smoking it.*

ALICE

Do you *know* what it's like to find a bunch of human organs in freezer bags in your adult son's minifridge?

MISS LENORA

Um...

ALICE

JESUS.  
And now look what's happened to this little girl.  
Why are these cookies here?

MISS LENORA

They were a peace offering I never got to offer.

*Alice opens the tupperware.*

ALICE

Larry's a Junior, you know.  
His dad's name was also Larry.

MISS LENORA

Oh--!

*Alice takes a cookie and starts absently munching on it.*

ALICE

Mm...



*Miss Lenora nods. Throughout the story that Alice tells, she keeps eating the cookies.*

ALICE

Anyway.

Larry Senior was in the hospital room with me.

He was a very sensitive man, a very kind man,

but he had all sort of...

infirmities.

I always used to think: “thank God I’m the one who has to give birth, not him.

He’d never make it.”

I was even a little afraid to have him be in the delivery room with me.

He was so faint of heart.

But he always insisted, throughout the pregnancy, that he would.

I think he was trying to prove something to me,

so I agreed. But for him.

Anyway.

So there I was, on the bed...

Well “there I was” for a while.

26 hours of labor.

But looking at Larry Senior, it was as painful for him as it was for me.

If not more.

I kept trying not to look at his face, because when I did it was so *in pain* that,

I had to worry about feeling sorry for him as well as actually being *in pain*.

But anyway, it meant a lot to him to be in there with me, I thought,

so it felt justified,

and I even downplayed my own to try and get him to stop

*empathizing so much*.

(I resolved to never tell this to him, of course.

It was important to him to feel that pain.)

But I could only hide the pain for so long.

Larry Junior was such a big baby.

So there was no hiding how much it hurt from Larry Senior.

I fucking *screamed*, and one of my eardrums actually popped from it.

It felt good to get that scream out, it actually made it hurt less.

But it wasn’t good for Larry Senior.

He heard me scream and his heart,

which was already so big,  
empathetic,  
so impressionable,  
just exploded, literally, it fucking exploded--  
Evacuated his chest--  
Blood shot through all the veins in his face.  
He was a very handsome man, by the way  
so his face, with all its veins full of blood, looked like a beautiful greek statue that was so full of  
purple bloody cracks that it was ready to crumble to powder at the slightest touch.  
Everyone was focused on me, so I was the only one who saw it happen at first.  
Then even though we were in a hospital, they couldn't even *do* anything because his heart no  
longer existed.

Everyone was very confused.  
They sent the baby off to be cleaned, they carted Larry Senior's body out.  
I was exhausted, I was hallucinating,  
I felt a grief even beyond what you feel for things like *that*.  
Anyway.  
It was another few minutes before they realized I had another baby in me still.

*She pauses. Maybe she takes a cookie. She's really enjoying these cookies.*

MISS LENORA

What?

ALICE

He was a twin.  
He was gonna have a twin sister.  
But I guess,  
for whatever reason, all the nutrients in my body were going to him,  
and not her.  
He was growing up as healthy and robust as two babies, and she was getting weaker and weaker.

*Beat.*

And we didn't even know about her.

*Beat.*

We never had the chance to check in on her.  
Not that it mattered.  
She came out dead.  
Vacant.  
Half the size of Larry Junior.  
He'd taken all of her nutrients.  
He was the size of two babies, after all.

*Pause*

*She starts to cry.*

MISS LENORA

I'm really sorry to hear about all that.

ALICE

I'm not crying about that it's...  
it's these cookies they're so *freaking* good holy CRAP  
It's like--  
every pleasure center of my brain is--  
if you did an MRI of my brain it'd look like a fleet of cruise ships,  
or like Christmas in Manhattan, or something

*She takes some breaths.*

It's okay now though. I have Sally.  
And she's growing up really fast.

MISS LENORA

Who's the father?

ALICE

That's the thing--  
no one!

MISS LENORA

What do you mean--

ALICE

*the cookies*

I feel like I've had these before,  
where did you *get* these

MISS LENORA

Larry made them.

*Alice stops chewing.*

*She puts the cookie on the table.*

ALICE

*deadly serious.*

My feelings are very complicated about that boy.

*A shriek outside--*

*They bolt to the window.*

MISS LENORA

*looking out the window*

Oh my god--

That was him.

*Alice runs to the door, and opens it.*

ALICE

LARRY

*It's dusk outside. Larry is somewhere we can't quite see him. We hear a bear roaring.*

LARRY (O.S.)

NO NO NO NO NO NO

ALICE

LARRY COME IN HERE

LARRY (O.S.)

LEAVE HIM ALONE

ALICE

LARRY

I'M NOT LEAVING HIM

LARRY (O.S.)

ALICE

LARRY

*Larry tears inside. Alice slams the door behind him.*

*Larry crumbles to the ground.*

LARRY

BALTIMORE GOT EATEN BY A BEAR

ALICE

What?

LARRY

He got...  
the *freaking* bears got Baltimore--

ALICE

Who's--

MISS LENORA

Wait,  
Baltimore?

LARRY

Wait--  
Miss Lenora's here?

*Larry pulls himself up, starts backing towards the door.*

LARRY  
*paranoid*

Were you all talking about me?

MISS LENORA

Larry, where are you going?

LARRY

You two were talking about me, huh?

ALICE

Where are you going, Larry?

LARRY

I'm actually gonna leave--

*Suddenly the whole house shakes, like a pickup truck just hit it.*

*A grizzly bear roars. Larry whimpers. The house continues shaking, assaulted by the bear.*

*He crumples to the floor.*

LARRY

I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry

ALICE

Should we call the police?  
Or the national guard, or?

LARRY

NO!  
NO POLICE

MISS LENORA

I'm gonna barricade the windows--

*Miss Lenora starts doing that.*

*Note: Throughout barricading, she starts pouring herself drinks and knocking them back real fast, to mitigate the stress of both the situation and the conversation that's unfolding*

*between Larry and Alice. Until she blacks out on page 97, she's splitting her action between barricading, drinking, and eavesdropping.*

LARRY

Poor Baltimore--  
poor Baltimore poor Baltimore--

ALICE

I'm calling the police!  
Or the parks department or something!

*Larry lurches onto her leg, on his hands and knees.*

LARRY  
*a piercing shriek*

NO!

*Alice is shaking her leg.*

ALICE

Larry, off!  
Get off

*The house shakes.*

LARRY

i'm sorry mama.

ALICE

Sorry for what?

LARRY

i'm sorry i was--

*Alice stiffens.*

LARRY

that i have to--

*He can't get the words out.*

ALICE

I'm your mother Larry.  
You don't do that.

LARRY

You can't run for office mom..  
politicians are all the same,  
they're evil

ALICE

But that's something you'd kill me for?

*Silence. Miss Lenora's looking baldly onto the conversation now, wide-eyed.*

LARRY  
*choked up*

... i have to.

*He starts to really cry.*

LARRY

that's the one thing,  
the one thing  
that i want you not to do.  
you're my mama  
i don't want you to be evil.

ALICE

Larry, listen--

LARRY  
*cutting her off*

//And and and and and---  
and i thought i found a way that you could do it that...  
that maybe you could go be a politician that's *different*,  
and kind of *good*,  
and so i found this guy that's...



*different,*  
so i was bringing him here  
but then he got eaten by a *bear*  
so now i don't know what to *do*

*Larry puts his head between his legs.*

ALICE

“*Different?*”

*Larry, crying, digs the crumpled pamphlet that Baltimore gave him out of his pocket.*

*Alice takes it. She looks at it.*

*She picks the one up from earlier and compares them. They're the same pamphlet.*

*All of a sudden she can't keep from laughing.*

ALICE

The--  
the guy who got eaten out there--  
he's the guy who gave you this?

LARRY

Yeah he's--  
that's his whole thing.  
i was just thinking that//

*Alice bursts out cackling.*

LARRY

What?

ALICE

That--  
that---

*She holds up a finger, holding back her laughter.*

ALICE

That guy was the reason I was running in the first place.

*Pause.*

*Larry's cogs turn.*

ALICE

So that I could beat *him!*  
And all his stupid, *bleeding heart* ideals  
that would really just destroy all of us.

LARRY

*blankly*

That guy?

ALICE

Yeah.

LARRY

*Baltimore?*

ALICE

Yeah, well I don't really know his name.

*Alice goes and hugs her son for the first time, ecstatically.*

LARRY

You forgive me?

ALICE

Yes I forgive you!  
I forgive you because you don't have to kill me anymore!

LARRY

But--  
but I was *going* to

ALICE

*Larry.*  
Larry Larry Larry.

*That was stupid.*

You were a misguided child

LARRY

I--

I--

ALICE

You were!

Just forget all of that.

All that thinking of “Oh, this is right and wrong.”

All that moral high ground that actually amounts to *nothing*.

It’s misguided!

It’s not what you’re *born* into!

You’re born into this!

*She gestures around.*

ALICE

*A palace!*

*So just forget all of that.*

Open up a freaking bakery or something!

LARRY

i do like to bake...

ALICE

*Yeah* you do, and you’re freaking *good* at it!

*Larry suddenly remembers something that deflates him.*

LARRY

but wait...

ALICE

What?

Why’s your face suddenly so long?

LARRY

but mama,

mama, mama,  
it's not like everything's fine all of a sudden.

ALICE

What do you mean, baby?

LARRY

mama, i killed a lot of people,  
i killed this poor homeless guy,  
*and* i killed jeff-bezos-lite,  
which at the time I thought he fucking  
*deserved* but now I don't *know*  
but either way they're gonna come *after* me,  
the police or the agents or the body guards or the army are gonna come *after* me

*He starts descending into hysteria again.*

ALICE

Larry!

*Alice grabs him by the shoulders.*

ALICE

*Larry* listen to me.

*Larry gives her his teary attention.*

ALICE

Listen.

This is gonna make you feel so much better.

*She leads him to the chair, sits him down. Miss Lenora is still barricading the windows,  
but eavesdropping.*

ALICE

Okay.

*She straightens his shirt.*

ALICE

Here's how it is.  
I talked to the ex-wife of "Jeff Bezos Lite."  
I know her from the country club.  
She knows some people that he was in business with,  
she talked to them for me.  
She said they're not mad.  
It was actually kind of an opportune killing,  
apparently.  
He was getting in people's way anyway.

LARRY

Oh...  
but what about the police

ALICE

Ha!  
They're my friends. Don't worry, they've covered up worse.

*Larry considers this for a second.*

LARRY

But I also killed this poor homeless guy

ALICE

Oh really?

LARRY

Yeah.

ALICE

...  
Homeless?

*Larry nods.*

ALICE

...  
Did anyone see it?

*Larry shakes his head eagerly.*

ALICE  
*quietly*

Okay.

*She pats him on the shoulder.*

Okay.

Just forget about that one, alright?

If you forget about it it doesn't matter?

LARRY

okay...

but what about...

*Larry on the verge of tears.*

ALICE

What about what, baby?

LARRY

I don't know I just...

yesterday I guess I was just living in such a cloud of brainwashing,

I...

I don't know what to think, mama

ALICE  
*crooning*

Hey, hey I understand...

it's a lot to suddenly be snapped out of.

LARRY

I just...

I don't know what to be guilty for...

ALICE

Look,

just flip it in your head.

LARRY

Huh?

ALICE

Change how you thought all along.

Like this, for example:

You weren't a ratty, revolutionary Robin Hood, with big (unrealistic) ideas, for solving problems that can't be solved. You never were.

*She slaps him on the chest.*

ALICE

You were a *corporate assassin*,  
a silver *scalpel*, slicing tumors  
from the ever-growing trunk of *civilization*.

*He puffs up a little at this, despite himself. He wipes his eyes.*

ALICE

How's that?

*He smiles, suddenly lighter.*

LARRY

Suddenly everything feels better.

*Miss Lenora collapses, black-out drunk. They both remember that she's there.*

LARRY

i wonder what we should do with her.

ALICE

Hm.

LARRY

she was really nice to me.

ALICE

I think our little conversation stressed her out a little.  
But I like her. I wonder if that bear's still out there?

*The house begins to shake again. The bear is still out there.*

ALICE

*shouting over the noise*

Although if it comes down to it, she's the one to use as bait to lure the bear away

LARRY

okay

*It breaks a window that has been barricaded.*

*They look at each other, and agree without speaking. They go to pick up Miss Lenora's passed out body.*

*All of a sudden Sally sits up, out of a deep, deep sleep. To her, she's been asleep for twelve years. And she's lived all twelve of them.*

*For a moment, the bear stops. All is quiet.*

*Sally yawns--*

*They hear her, and turn around.*

ALICE

Sally--

LARRY

oh hi sally

*Sally turns her head sleepily to look at them.*

SALLY

Oh hello Larry.

Hello mother.

*She climbs off the couch.*



SALLY

Ouch.

ALICE

Careful Sally.  
You have stitches.  
Your bladder burst.

*Sally examines her stomach.*

SALLY

*dazed*

Ha.

*She stands up. She holds herself differently now.*

*She turns to Larry.*

SALLY

It's good to see you, Larry.

LARRY

it's good to see you too

*She looks him up and down. She thinks he's pitiful.*

SALLY

I had a dream about you.  
You tried to kill me.  
That wasn't cool.

*Larry is speechless.*

*She looks him up and down again.*

SALLY

You mean nothing to me now.

*She doesn't look at him again, not truly, for the rest of the play.*

*She walks over to the window that they're at. She stands on her tippy toes to look outside.*

SALLY

There's a bear out there.  
A mama bear.  
Hi mama bear.

*The mama bear grunts, much calmer now.*

SALLY

I used to be friends with a bear like you.  
We used to play together.

*Sally turns, looks around the room. She spots Teddy, disemboweled on the floor.*

*She goes over, picks it up.*

SALLY

Here it is--  
what was it called--

LARRY

teddy

SALLY

I think it was called "Teddy"

LARRY

oh, sally, look what i have

*He fishes in his shirt pocket, and pulls out the Build-A-Bear heart, holds it up to the light.*

*Sally looks at it blankly.*

LARRY

*weakly*

don't you remember?  
teddy's heart!

*She turns back to Teddy, ignoring him.*

SALLY

But the bear got bossy, yknow.  
It wouldn't let me pee. I'm guessing you all remember that.  
Anyway. Stopped being fun.

*She tosses Teddy, forgets about it forever.*

*She looks around absentmindedly.*

SALLY

There was a, uh--

*She gestures like Alice, to shake loose a memory.*

SALLY

*Thermos.*  
There was a thermos, anybody seen it?

ALICE

Sally, I really don't think you should--

*Sally spots it on the table.*

SALLY

Found it.

*She picks it up, unscrews it.*

ALICE

Sally--!

*Sally pauses unscrewing it, looks at her mother cuttingly.*

*Alice shuts up.*

*Sally unscrews the thermos. The heart fills the room with its \*BADUMP BADUMP BADUMP\**

*The grizzly outside smells blood, and really starts to freak out again. The house shakes.*

SALLY

YOU SHUT UP

*This makes the bear even more angry. The house shakes. Dust falls from the ceiling. Glasses on tables tip over and spill to the floor.*

*Sally pulls the heart out of the thermos. Hot, living blood oozes through her fingers and down her wrist.*

SALLY

YOU WANT THIS??

*The bear is going crazy. But somehow, everyone is aware that the frenzy is emanating from Sally herself.*

SALLY

YOU WANT IT??

*The barricade begins to break--*

SALLY

WELL I GET SOME FIRST--

*Sally makes eye contact with the bear and bites into the heart. Alice and Larry make sounds of helpless dismay. But the bear calms down.*

SALLY

That's right, you wait your turn.

*Sally nods her head, working the heart, nodding her head at the new flavor and sensation, finding the angle from which to enjoy it.*

SALLY

Huh.

*She takes another nibble.*

SALLY

I see it. I see it.

*She picks something out of her teeth, looks at it.*

SALLY

I do see it.

*Her attention goes back to the bear.*

SALLY

Okay my friend, you've been patient.

*She snaps her fingers at Larry, not looking at him.*

LARRY

huh?

SALLY  
*impatient*

The little heart.

*He puts the Build-A-Bear heart in her bloody hand.*

*She presses it into the human heart. The pressure makes blood well up and splash on the floor.*

SALLY  
*to the bear*

Okay, look, I've got something for you,  
but I'm coming out and you're gonna take me with you.

ALICE

No.

SALLY

Sorry?

ALICE

You're not going out there.

*Sally searches her face.*

SALLY

Why?

ALICE

*it's so obvious she can't even say it*

Because--

Because--

SALLY

*pitying*

Alice.

This is all too *fucking* complicated.

I just want to wander the forest and kill and eat things  
for no other reason than I'm hungry and I can  
because I'm bigger than them.

*She starts to climb out the window.*

*Alice grabs her. Sally savagely digs her claws into Alice's forearm. She digs them deeper  
and deeper.*

SALLY

Those real big stars you see in the sky,  
you ever look at them and think:

"I swear that star was smaller last night:  
what if it's actually a meteor hurtling at me?"

That's because you know deep down,  
something's coming at you real fast,  
the sky, or the ocean,  
or a plague of maneaters.

Whatever it is, it'll gnaw every last scrap of you off your bones.  
Simple as that.

*Sally lets go of Alice and disappears out the window.*

*By now, Miss Lenora has come awake, crawled over to the coffee table, and gotten ahold of the tupperware of cookies.*

*She vomits loudly into it.*

*Lights down on Alice's house.*

*The North Star flickers on. It's the only light in the theatre. It slowly, gradually brightens. Very slowly, like: is it actually getting brighter?*

*As it does, shadows gather beneath it, in the shape of bears. Once they're all gathered, the figure of a young girl emerges from the center. It's Sally.*

SALLY

You want me to make what?

*Silence.*

How did you learn about cookies?  
I'm not going to make you cookies.

*A low warning growl.*

I'm *not* going to make you cookies.

*A louder, more threatening growl.*

One batch.

*At its brightest point, the North Star causes a power outage. Black.*

*END OF PLAY*