

OSWALD'S CHIN

A Very Dark Comedy

BY

Diana E. Sáenz

CHARACTERS

Muriel 50

Julia's Mother, Once worked in the CIA the secretarial pool in the Virginia headquarters.

Julia 29

Was a foreign correspondent before she lost her mind. She is the lust-child of an illicit affair between Frank and Muriel. But Muriel's husband, Tom—not a character—Julia as his own.

Carl 40's

Released a few months ago after serving twelve years in prison.

Kitty 30

Heroine addict, Jazz Disk Jockey, once married to Carl.

Mimsie 21

Killer Diet Sister and Megan's best friend

Megan 21

Killer Diet Sister and Mimsie's best friend

Frank 69

Julia's Bio-dad was at one time Muriel's boss and held an important post in the CIA in the Virginia headquarters. He is now a certified lunatic and has coincidentally ended up in the same sanitarium as Julia.

ACT I

Scene 1 Nine Month's Before The Blood Bath

Scene 2 Touching Bases with Mom

Scene 3 Corn flakes

Scene 4 Quality Time With Bio-Dad

Scene 5 Sandwiches

Scene 6 Bones

Scene 7 Marlon Brando

Scene 8 Can't Get No Connection

Scene 9 Dinner with Oswald

ACT II

Scene 10 Kitty plays her last disk, Julia makes more
empty threats, and unbeknownst to them, the
Killer Diet Sisters stumble upon the secret
to The Ultimate Skinny

Scene 11 Last Rites for Kitty

Scene 12 Mohammed Ali

Scene 13 The Killer Diet Sisters get a life

Scene 14 The Blood Bath

Oswald's Chin lends itself to a stark set.

The dinner scenes require only a table and two chairs. The lights should be hot.

Many scenes need only be done with a series of spots. The most elaborate set is the Kitty's DJ Booth which should be either on a raised section or anywhere separate from the rest of the set, but even that should be minimalist, even impressionistic. The scenes themselves should be viewed as a series of jump cuts so that in the first act, they are one on top of the other.

Although the style was perceived with a sort of filmic quality, this remains a stage drama, because. . .? Because there is much more talking than special effects.

ACT I

Scene 1

Nine Months before The Blood Bath.

Sometime before midnight.

The Killer Diet-Sisters (not related) wear padded slips to make them look about fifteen pounds heavier. There is a spot on them and a bathroom scale at their feet. Mimsie is tying a blindfold over Megan's eyes as they proceed with the ritual of

weighing themselves.

MIMSIE: Okay...step up.

MEGAN: What does it say?

MIMSIE: Shhhh. Wait a minute; get off the scale a moment. Better make sure it's right in between the zero. Okay step on it again. Well Megan, you have lost exactly two whole pounds! Think of it. If you were to buy two pounds of really fatty hamburger, what would it look like? *Removes Megan's blindfold.*

MEGAN: This much?

MIMSIE: More than that. Two pounds is about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an averaged sized cat.

MEGAN: This much?

MIMSIE: That's more like it. Okay, my turn.

MEGAN: Okay. Hey!

MIMSIE: What?

MEGAN: I just got a fabulous idea! Oh, you're gonna love it.

MIMSIE: What-what is going on in that devious little mind of yours?

MEGAN: Let's go to the market and...

MIMSIE: Yeah...

MEGAN: Buy exactly two pounds of the fattiest

hamburger they have...

MIMSIE: And...

MEGAN: Drive up to the lake...

MIMSIE: And....

MEGAN: Feed it piece by tiny little piece to the
fish!

MIMSIE: I love it! On one condition.

MEGAN: What?

MIMSIE: Only if I've lost two pounds also.

MEGAN: Deal. Here let me tie, I'm supposed to tie
it.

LIGHTS OUT.

SCENE 2.

Frank and Julia. Frank, once in a powerful position in the CIA is now a mental patient in Camarillo. He wears a cotton robe. His bare legs are exposed with black socks and slippers and he often stares fiercely at nothing in particular. Julia is wearing cloth shoes, baggy clothes and no make up.

Her hair has been hastily combed but is badly in need of a shampoo. She has dark circles under her eyes and smokes extra long cigarettes one after another. She was at one time a foreign correspondent and has

retained the rhythms and inflection of a reporter in front of a hand held camera while bombs explode in the background. She drops a coin in the pay telephone. Muriel is in her Motel trying to fix a broken fan.

JULIE: C-O-L-L-E-C-T. Eight-zero-mm-mm-mm-six-three-four-mm-one.

Muriel's phone rings.

MURIAL: Oh Poppycock! *To fan.* Don't go away, you little dickens.

JULIA: *As phone rings.* She's writing a book, you know.

FRANK: Uh-oh. True Romance, I hope.

JULIA: Don't patronize—

MURIEL: *Cheerful melodic.* Highway Motel?

JULIA: Mom.

MURIEL: Julia, where are you?

JULIA: Sidney, Australia.

MURIEL: What time is it there?

JULIA: *Glancing at an imaginary wrist watch.* Five in the afternoon. And there?

MURIEL: Almost two a.m., Dear.

JULIA: Did I wake you?

MURIEL: You know I'm a night owl. How are you?

JULIA: I'm fine. How are you?

MURIEL: Fine, just fine.

JULIA: Yes.

FRANK: Nurse! Nurse!

JULIA: Shut up! You want to get us in trouble?

MURIEL: Who are you talking to?

FRANK: *Speaks as Muriel and Julia talk. Slipping into one of his mad reveries.* I'm a very important man, and I have a hundred goons under my command and if you don't get me a box of Hershey's, I'm going to set one of those goons on you. . .

JULIA: Myself.

MURIEL: Oh are your personalities splitting?

JULIA: What personalities?

MURIEL: Who am I talking to?

FRANK: Guatemala!

JULIA: Mom!

MURIEL: What?

JULIA: I wanted to ask you.

MURIEL: About what?

JULIA: About the day I was conceived. It was the 22nd of November.

MURIEL: Wherever did you get that idea?

JULIA: You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

FRANK: Castro didn't leave enough of them to send home in an envelope.

MURIEL: Have you been talking to your father?

JULIA: My father and I are very close. *She winks at Frank.* By the way, where was dad that day?

MURIEL: November 22nd or the day you were conceived?

JULIA: November 22nd. *Under her breath.* The day I was conceived—

MURIEL: What? You know I can't understand you when you mumble.

JULIA: November 22nd.

MURIEL: On November 22nd he was on assignment in Uruguay.

JULIA: That's what I thought because I've met my biological father.

MURIEL: Your who? What did you say?

JULIA: Before you say anything, before you deny everything, before you insist that you were a virgin before, then, and now, before you spread out another peanut butter sandwich—fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck—*Hits her head with the receiver.*

How's the book going?

MURIEL: Slow but steady. So much research, it takes time you know. Now who did you say—

JULIA: Start the second chapter like this. Oswald:

Patsy of the Century.

MURIEL: Yes--for immediate impact.

JULIA: You need to grab them right off. You know how I have these three moles left of my navel?

MURIEL: Yes, dear.

JULIA: Well he has them too.

MURIEL: Who has what?

JULIA: Frank.

FRANK: Don't tell her my name--Don't you know they've tapped the phones?!

MURIEL: Are you sure that's a split personality? It sounds like a man's voice.

JULIA: His name is Rod. He emerged when I was trying to get the assignment in the Congo when they didn't want to send a woman.

MURIEL: Oh my. Well now, what we were talking about?

JULIA: F-R-A-N-K, code name Mole Belly.

FRANK: Three blind moles, three blind moles--

JULIA: Three moles left of his navel.

MURIEL: When did you see his navel?

JULIA: The truth goes naked!

MURIEL: When was the last time you had your medicine?

JULIA: It's just about time.

MURIEL: Darling, go take your pill and lie down, awhile. I'm surprised you called me, it's only the fifth.

JULIA: The fifth?

FRANK: Are you now or have you ever—

JULIA: The fifth?

FRANK: Don't give me that Fifth shit! Fuckin' commies—Fuckin' commies!

MURIEL: I know how you feel about calling only on the fourteenth—

JULIA: It's only the fifth?! What month is it?!
She pulls out a wall calendar from one of her pockets and begin paging violently through it.

MURIEL: July—

JULIA: July?! It isn't June 14, Sunday night?

MURIEL: No, it's actually Monday now, but, three weeks later—

Julia slams the phone down.

JULIA: It's already July!?

FRANK: Oh yes.

JULIA: *With growing hysteria.* God, I hope this doesn't have any disastrous ramifications! A chain reaction, splitting protons and personalities and neutrons and jeeps. The jeep—watch out for the Jeep! *Dives for*

cover.

FRANK: C-c-c-come to me, Darling—Nothing's going to happen to you—My goons will see to that.

JULIA: The jeep?

FRANK: We whack the jeep.

JULIA: Bad Jeep?

FRANK: You just tell your Daddy—Do—Don't what scares your little heart and I'll see to it that animal, vegetable or mineral gets whacked.

JULIA: Whack-whack?

FRANK: With a whack, whack here and a whack, whack there.

Lights black on Frank and Julia.

Muriel hangs up.

MURIEL: Oh Tom, if you've brought up that old mess, I'll—I just don't know what I'll do! Always making trouble, you and your Jack Daniels. *She pulls a micro recorder out and begins.*

November 22, 1963: From the rosy hue of America's pre-assassination era to the violent deflowering of our innocence, there was once a King and Queen who reigned over a land called Camelot. Oh the lousy Persians with their five thousand years of

poetry and tiles and the damned Chinese
indecently bedecked in eons of silk. We
were a country founded by discontents,
generations of uprooted souls, harlots,
convicts, religious zealots, slaves,
refugees. . .men and women of prodigious
will and tenacity! This legacy passed on
like an heirloom toward the Land of
Camelot, where for one swift moment, we
thought we might leave our past behind. .
.Lobster is an aphrodisiac. Make a note of
that and look up aphrodisiacs. *Writes a
note.*

Frank took me to his penthouse. Full of
that love crustacean, we wined and dined to
numb the horror of our loss, I was weak,
trembling, Oh Tom—you were never around
when I was weak. The image of Jackie in her
pink mohair suit as she scrambled to
retrieve the piece of bone blown from
Jack's head, danced in the periphery of my
white matter. While I bathed in the black
and yellow light of *le petit mort*.

Where were *Jack's* brains? Went they as far
as Oswald's chin—Went those precious brains
to where our innocence was lost?

Turns off cassette, crosses to stare out the door. Meanwhile in the DJ BOOTH, Kitty enters the booth with a thermos of coffee. Kitty prepares to begin her show. Kitty closes door and sets the food down. Sets her records down. Muriel turns to the matter of the dysfunctional fan and begins working on it again. Kitty takes out a notebook, looks through papers on desk and turns on the juice.

At the exact same moment, Muriel turns her radio on.

KITTY: This is Machine Gun Kitty from two to six a.m. with Jazz Classics. This hour is brought to you by Molly's Truck Stop. All you guys and gals on the big rigs out there, bringing us those tubers from Idaho, get free coffee, just mention my show to Molly. Say, nighthawks is this the Monday of the first week? Then Bessie Smith our very own, Empress of the Blues, opens up this set with *The Yellow Dog Blues*.

Music Begins.

Muriel unplugs the fan, fiddles with the wires. She plugs the fan back in then turns the switch on. It still doesn't

work.

MURIEL: You are making me very, very angry—ouch!

Enter Carl, a man defeated by twelve years in Prison. He is watchful, a little too respectful, in a way that would make most people uncomfortable. He is carrying a small duffel bag, Muriel ignores him and starts working the fan again. Without looking up, she speaks to him.

MURIEL: What do you want?

CARL: How much for a room?

She scrutinizes him.

MURIEL: Twenty bucks.

CARL: That the cheapest?

MURIEL: You want cheaper than twenty?

CARL: If you got it.

MURIEL: Well, you can have number eight, but there's no hot water in that one. 'Charge you twelve.

CARL: Make it eight and I'll clean it up before I leave.

MURIEL: Ten take it or leave it.

CARL: Okay, ten.

She opens the guest book.

MURIEL: Got some ID?

CARL: ID?

MURIEL: You know what that is, don't you?

CARL: Yeah sure—*Hands her a video store card.*

MURIEL: You Blockbusters card?

CARL: I had to give them my drivers license.

MURIEL: Where's your drivers license then? There's no photo here.

CARL: Look, lady, I'm just looking for a room for the night.

MURIEL: *Studies him a moment.* Okay. You got some kind of collateral?

CARL: Collateral?

MURIEL: Yes, something of value you can pick up tomorrow morning when you leave.

CARL: Oh. Well, I ain't got much. *He digs through his bag.* My daddy's watch.

MURIEL: This belonged to your dad? It doesn't even work.

CARL: Yeah, but it means a lot to me. I'm not about to walk away from my daddy's watch, broken or not.

Muriel reluctantly accepts the watch.

He pulls out some waddled bills and carefully lays out one five and five ones.

He then writes his name in the register.

While he writes, Muriel returns to the fan.

CARL: Something wrong with your fan?

MURIEL: Seems so.

CARL: Mind if I have a look?

MURIEL: You know something about fans?

CARL: Maybe.

MURIEL: Go ahead.

CARL: Wire's too short.

MURIEL: I know that.

CARL: Got some wire and electrical tape?

MURIEL: Ran out.

CARL: Oh.

MURIEL: I bet you can't wait to get to your room.

CARL: ...Maybe you can use some help—maybe I
could—

MURIEL: I don't know you from Adam.

CARL: Yeah, 'guess you have a point. *Turns to
leave.*

MURIEL: You don't have any references on you?

CARL: No.

MURIEL: I don't know you from Adam.

CARL: Look, Ma'm...I...I need some work bad—I'll
work a week free, just give me a place to
sleep and eat, if you like me, we can talk
more.

MURIEL: You think, you're going to want to be
fixing windows and fans and painting,

scrubbing toilets and making beds for nothing?

CARL: Well, after a week, if you think I was worth it, you can pay me. If you don't like, you don't pay. One week of regular eating would be worth it for me from where I'm standing.

PAUSE.

MURIEL: Well, you don't look too dangerous. I have been a little overwhelmed lately. Take number 15, it's the last room down.
Breakfast at Six

CARL: Thanks—Miss—

MURIEL: Muriel.

CARL: And I'm Carl.

MURIEL: I know.

CARL: I guess so, I just wrote it down.
Okay...I guess I'll just turn in now...Thanks, Muriel. You don't have to worry about me. I'm a hard worker...thanks.

Exits Lights Down. Echo of steel doors closed in a prison cell block.

SCENE 3

5:45 a.m. *Jazz Classics* still on the radio. *Kitty* is at her Booth. *Carl*, freshly scrubbed and hair still wet from shower, enters the motel kitchen. He looks around, not sure what to do. He rings the bell. He waits for a while. He rings again. *Offstage:*

MURIEL: Just hold your horses out there!

CARL: It's me...Carl.

Muriel sticks her head out.

MURIEL: Oh! I forgot all about you—

Disappears. Returns shortly with a box of corn flakes, milk. Exits, returns shortly with bowl and spoon. Exits. Carl looks after her. Realizes this is breakfast. Pours the flakes till they overflow the bowl, crushes down the flakes, pours more corn flakes from the box, crushes them, Does it again, then pours milk and begins eating, furtively, hunched over his food. There is something bestial about his eating.

Enters Muriel with a bowl and spoon, She sits at the table and pours out the corn flakes. Only a few crumbs fall out. She sets down the box and exits. She returns

with two cups of coffee in mismatched mugs.

CARL: Thanks. You got any sugar?

MURIEL: What do you need sugar for?

CARL: For my coffee.

MURIEL: Forget about sugar, you don't need sugar.

Pour some milk in it.

CARL: Thanks I don't take milk in my coffee.

Carl takes a sip. It is far stronger than he expected.

CARL: What did you do to this?

MURIEL: It's foreign coffee, put some milk in it.

She exits. Carl stares after her. He looks down at his coffee, raises it to his lips, sets it down. Takes another mouthful of cereal, then pours milk into the coffee mug.

KITTY: This is Machine Gun Kitty, friends and the time is 5:51 in the a.m. Keep those letters coming and requests. I don't know what you like unless you tell me. The number here is 788-4331. Let's listen now to little of Lester Young and Lady Day...
Carl jumps up and dials her number. Phone rings in DJ's booth. Machine Gun Kitty answers it.

KITTY: This is Kitty.

CARL: It's me.

KITTY: Who's you?

CARL: How you been, Baby? Remember me?

PAUSE.

KITTY: Carl?

CARL: Your one and only.

KITTY: Where are you?

CARL: Ever heard of the Highway Motel?

KITTY: Highway Motel—When did you get out?

CARL: A couple months ago. I'm about sixty miles from Kingston. How close are you, exactly?

KITTY: What do you want?

CARL: Just to talk.

KITTY: Forget it.

CARL: I'll be waiting for you.

KITTY: You fixing these days?

CARL: I been clean now.

KITTY: How clean?

CARL: Clean, clean. Clean as a whistle. So, maybe I can take you out for coffee?

KITTY: Like one of those personal ad dates?

CARL: I've been thinking of us—

KITTY: I said, I'm not—

He hangs up.

SCENE 4

Five months before the blood bath.

Julia and Frank. Their manner towards each other is intimate and conspiratorial.

FRANK: The only good thing that came out of that missile business with Nikita, was that it provided me with the first opportunity to plant one on her.

JULIA: The sperm?

FRANK: The kiss, the seed to the sperm.

JULIA: To make me?

FRANK: The Demon Seed.

JULIA: How did it happen?

FRANK: I waited for her to leave her desk which she finally did. Everybody was out getting drunk. We'd had a some very tense moments there with the Soviets and their Surface to Air Missiles and their IL-28 bombers. There were a few Americans who were thanking the Great God of Paranoia for granting them the foresight to build their little bomb shelters—I always liked the idea. Something for archeologists to dig up.

JULIA: Yeah—they might as well have worn 3-D glasses.

They both laugh hysterically and with malice.

FRANK: Some say—

JULIA: Who say?

FRANK: Aw, Embassy Pinkos in Havana thought that the Bay of Pigs destroyed any chance of counterrevolution in Cuba because Castro jailed all our allies and threw the skeleton away. *Pulling out a skeleton key he has on a chain around his neck.* I found it one time when I was skin diving in Key West. Everybody laughed at me and looked at me like this.

JULIA: Like you were nuts.

FRANK: Is that what that look is? I thought it was a you're-lying-look.

JULIA: No, their eyes would've been sideways and their head turned, like this. That was definitely a this-guy-is-out-of-his-mind look.

FRANK: Says who?

JULIA: The Psycho Babblers.

FRANK: A Pinko look, you bet! And how they were crying for *internal* solutions over some

morbid belief in self-determination. But I never liked the idea of relying on Foreigners, always messy and unpredictable.

JULIA: Foreigners?

FRANK: The Cuban Counterrevolutionaries!

JULIA: What would you have done?

FRANK: Send in the second air strike—Scare the pants off them, the way we did to Arbenz in Guatemala. But oh no, that Mick chickened out in the last moment—!

JULIA: But Mom said, the American people made it clear to their Senators and House Reps that they didn't want to get into a Nuke-puke over Rickie Recardo's relatives and Kennedy said from the very start that he wouldn't—

FRANK: Your Mother—!

JULIA: What about my mother?

FRANK: Is very sweet, but uninformed...a true American. I'm the first to say it, but she was a little nothing, a goddammed secretary, by Jove, nimble fingers and numb frontal lobes. We screened the clericals with a battery of sophisticated Harvard tests—

JULIA: Stick your tests, Bio-Dad. Twenty-one she ain't today. Mommy grew up.

FRANK: But I was there I was one of the Big Boys,
Julie—

JULIA: Julia

FRANK: Julia. And not only did he plan a second
air strike but a third. Then Congress made
a ruckus, and the Bastard showed his yellow
streak, and backed down until he realized
that defeat would really make him look bad.
So he sent in the second air strike but it
was too late. Too little and too late.

JULIA: But Mom said there were only 1200 against
Castro's 100,000 and that no amount of air—

FRANK: If you want to quote your mother, then
there's no point in asking me anything.
Pouts.

JULIA: . . .I sorry, I pwomise to never, never
interwup again. O-tay? Pwease?

FRANK: Say purdy please.

JULIA: Pwetty, Pwetty, pwease?

FRANK: That's why we whacked the Bastard. He
began to take that Camelot shit seriously.
Although I've always wondered if maybe. .

.

JULIA: What?

FRANK: Oh nothing.

JULIA: You can tell me.

FRANK: How do I know if I can trust you?

JULIA: It's off the record.

FRANK: There's a record?

JULIA: There's always a record. So it's either on the record, or off the record, and this is off.

FRANK: Okay then, I'll tell you—because I know you can keep a secret, after all you were in news.

JULIA: Dysinformation tolls for you.

FRANK: Maybe. . .perhaps, we'd gotten a little too cocky with all our successes, Arbenz in Guatemala, Lumumba in the Congo, then of course, Ngo Dinh Diem in Vietnam—Heads of state were falling like flies—almost as if all we had to do was wish them away. Maybe we should've used a little more finesse, a lobotomy instead of a decapitation. If we had taken out Sorenson—

JULIA: Sorenson, Sorenson—Don't tell me, I know who he is—

FRANK: The guy who wrote all his speeches—

JULIA: I told you not to tell me—I told you I told you—!

FRANK: Buckle up Girlie-Girl. This isn't some Commie-pinko twenty questions game show and

I'm not some sissy-boy helmet-headed TV Host. And if you can't cut the butter then you'd better switch to Vaseline. And button that button!

Julia buttons the delinquent button her face screwing up as she is about to burst into tears.

JULIA: I don't want to pway anymore. You mean. And what d'you mean, Vaseline? That sounds disgusting and dirty. Are you speaking analy?

FRANK: You live with your Post-assassination sexually transmitted terminology and I'll live with my Pre, thank you very muck indeed! Vaseline, heh heh heh heh heh. *Under his breath.* Women!

JULIA: What did you say?

FRANK: Nothing.

JULIA: You said women, didn't you? And just what is that supposed to mean? Huh? *Silence.* Well Men to you! Men! Men! Men!

FRANK: Touchè.

JULIA: *Tapping him on the shoulder breaking the tension.* Well touchè to you too. *They both break out with their maniacal laughter.*

JULIA: You can't take a little joke.

FRANK: Damn straight I can't and you can't take a little criticism.

JULIA: You mean there are people out there who like criticism?

FRANK: Sure, my little Chippie-Off-The-Old-Block, they're in Hell with sycophants and Tidy-Teddy Sorrenson speeches and they are suffering you bet your bottom they are suffering. We could have gotten that ferret faced little punk, Bobby—it might've scared the bejeebies out of Jack into flying right. Getting Bobby might've made it cleaner, nipped it at the bud.

JULIA: *In her own world.* But then I would have never been born.

FRANK: *In his own world.* Nahhh! It was an object lesson to any future sonofabitch who cons his way into the *Offal* Office and betrays his pals. We backed the Bastard, we shaped his campaign strategy, he turned around and gave Dulles the boot.

JULIA: Allen Welsh Dulles, head of the CIA from 1953 to—

FRANK: 1961 when that broken-backed, wife-cheating, treacherous—*Suddenly breaks into*

his hysterical, malicious laugh. Get rid of Castro—those were his very words—that was the one time I respected that son-of-a-bitch. Exploding cigars and sea shells, poisoned wet-suits and pens—God, what a time that was! What a banana we held! Stares at his hand, holding an imaginary banana, slowly squeezing it and making squishing noises at the same time.

JULIA: But Kennedy got it first.

FRANK: As fate would have it. *Wiping his hand on his shirt.*

We sent Tom Chandler into Dallas to wrap up the business with Clay and David Ferie and of course, Oswald. A good man in his job—not too keen when it came to his wife, though.

JULIA: My father—Tom—You know Tom Chandler?

FRANK: Chandler the Cuckold? Everybody knows him.

JULIA: In Dallas?

FRANK: Why?

JULIA: I've always known that. Ho ho ho. She won't wiggle her way out of this one.

FRANK: Wiggle? Feminine wiggle?

JULIA: You know what you told me earlier, about the lobster and all? Does he know about

you and mom?

Frank Shrugs.

Anyway he visits me at least once a month.

He's still in the business, you know.

Another inmate wanders into the room.

Frank and Julia wave their arms and scream animal noises, scaring her away. They laugh their infectious little laugh again.

FRANK: Operation Vaseline, Julie-a

JULIA: What's that?

FRANK: Have you ever considered E-S-C-A-P-E?

JULIA: Escape?

FRANK: Shhhhhhh! Blab it to walls, why don't you?!

JULIA: Are you planning-?

FRANK: You, Dear Daughter. You're too young for this. I'm happy here. I belong here, no worries, don't have to watch my tongue—everybody just assumes I'm making it all up. But you. You're a chip off the old block. You need to be thinking about providing a decent All-American home for that tadpole you got kicking in there.

JULIA: I've got some mighty ass-kickin' to do, all right.

FRANK: Operation Vaseline. I know where the guns

are kept. I have an underground plan. I know the personnel's schedules. What do you say, Girly-Girl?

JULIA: You've been reading my mail, Daddy-Do-Don't.

FRANK: You're one fucking awesome lady. Which reminds me, I have something for you.
Pulls out a photo from his pocket.

JULIA: A picture? Is that my mother?

FRANK: Taken by one of those photographers they used to have in night clubs.

JULIA: She's so young and sweet. . .You want me to have this?

FRANK: Of course. See the lobster?

JULIA: Is that-? Oh yeah. . .but where are you?

FRANK: *Putting his finger to his lips.*

JULIA: Oh yeahhhh.

FRANK: Let us have a lookie look now, shall we, Girlie-Girl?

JULIA: What do you mean, Daddy-Do-Don't?

FRANK: My baby's baby, coochie coo, coochie coo. Come here.

JULIA: Only if you tell me about Lee Harvey.

FRANK: *Getting nervous.* What's all the hub-bub about that lone crazed assassin. Very dysfunctional family, you know—the Oswalds

were—

JULIA: Psycho Babble, Psycho Babble! Lee Harvey
and you can rub my tummy.

FRANK: A pathetic little toad, a smear on the face
of Texas—Chinless—you must have noticed the
lack of character in his chin—!

JULIA: You said yourself, you whacked—

FRANK: Never mind what I said! Why do you think
I'm here? Experts, men of science with
more degrees than a thermometer, have
diagnosed me loonier than a pack of spider
m-m-m-monkeys in a pit of snakes. I hear
voices, sixty-nine years of voices, from
the OSS, the NSA, the SSE, SIS, ASAP and
SPCA—not to m-m-m-m-mention the voices you
hear. You must have been hearing my voices
or your own voices.

JULIA: They were your voices.

FRANK: Lone-crazed Assassin!

JULIA: Military brat—

FRANK: Gave up his citizenship—

JULIA: Got it back—

FRANK: Picture in *Life Magazine*—

JULIA: Touch-up job by *The Enquirer*—

FRANK: Married a Ruskie—

JULIA: Slipped her through the Iron Curtain—Tell

me, Old Man, or no more nookie nannie, no
more nookie nannie—

FRANK: C-c-c-can't!

JULIA: No more nookie nannie, nor more nookie
nannie—

FRANK: *Trying another tactic.* You're right, D-
darlin', I don't deserve you. Me and my
goons, with a whack, whack here and whack,
whack there—

JULIA: You deserve something all right—

FRANK: What should I get?

JULIA: All the lies from you and Mom—all the years
I've squandered looking for the truth and
come to nothing better than the likes of
you—

FRANK: You whore, you slut!

JULIA: The likes of you that made me, the likes of
you! *She slowly places her hands around
his throat and begins to sing with relish,
as Frank moans in ecstasy.*

Hello, mudder

Hello fahder

Here I am at Camp Granader..

*Suddenly two attendants break in and pull
Julia off Frank, they cut in on each other
lines and talk at the same time as the*

attendants drag Frank away.

ATTENDANT 1: Caught you!

FRANK: What is this—?

ATTENDANT 2: This disgusting little tryst has
just been terminated!

JULIA: Leave him alone!

FRANK: My goons will visit you, you commie
bastards!

JULIA: Help! Help! Somebody Help! My bio-dad's
a very powerful man—!

ATTENDANT 1: Grab his wrists, he's stronger than
he looks.

ATTENDANT 2: Get the jacket—*Both attendants exit
with Frank screaming.*

FRANK: Get my goons, tell them, no wait don't
breathe a word—I'm on their list—!

JULIA: Bio-Dad? *She takes out the photo again and
places it on her womb. We're alone now,
baby mine. What are we going to do?
What's next? What is going to happen next?
Suddenly she wipes her tears away. You
never know what's going to happen next.
Over the intercom a soothing voice
announces:*

*JULIA CHANDLER. YOUR FATHER IS HERE TO SEE
YOU. PLEASE REPORT TO THE FRONT DESK.*

PAGING JULIA CHANDLER.

I love it! I love it! *She laughs hysterically and with malice.* Cuckold Dad! Jack Daniels where are you? *She roots under her bed.* Here we go! A little sodium-type pentothal and the truth is nearer to thee-a, Julie-a! *She exits doing an American Indian dance and chanting,* Daddy was in Dallas, Dallas, Dallas. Daddy was in Dallas, Dallas, Dallas.

SCENE 5

Lunch. Muriel enters with two plates of sandwiches. Carl is wolfing his down. Muriel sits down and is about to take a bite of hers when she cannot help but notice his eating for the sixteenth time. As he eats, he feels her gaze, looks up from his food, slows down and eventually stops eating.

CARL: What's the matter?

MURIEL: Why do you eat like you're in prison?

CARL: Huh?

MURIEL: You can stop eating like—like a convict.
He slows down.

MURIEL: It might help if you sit back instead of hunching over it like it might run away.
He sits back and continues to eat slower.

CARL: What made you say, like a convict?

MURIEL: I read it off your forehead.

CARL: Oh. Yeah, well, maybe...

MURIEL: Maybe what?

CARL: Maybe if the food was a little more like uh, you know, home cooking, well, then, maybe I could, start eating in a more civilized demeanor—But I will take your

advice and change my habits because I would like to be considered a gentleman wherever I am.

MURIEL: What's the matter with your cheese sandwich?

CARL: Gives me piles.

MURIEL: Piles?

CARL: Not enough greens. Didn't used to like them as a kid but then I'm not a kid anymore.

MURIEL: I prefer not to talk about your...problems at the table, or anywhere for that matter.

CARL: You're right maybe I should have put it...plant food is the secret to a long and fruitful life. Poultry pairs up with that group very attractively to the eye and the palate.

He finishes with a flourish and holds his glass up as if to toast her. She gazes at him trying not to betray her amusement.

LIGHTS DOWN.

SCENE 6

The Killer Diet Sisters are each slowly eating four ounces of non-fat yogurt while they study the skeleton in an anatomy book.

MEGAN: Wonder what's the scientific name for
cheekbone?

MIMSIE: You know which bone I want to stick out?

MEGAN: Which one?

MIMSIE: This one! *Indicating her hip bone.*

MEGAN: That would be the coolest. I want this one
to stick out real far. *Turns and indicates
shoulder blades.*

MIMSIE: To kill for Shoulder blades!

MEGAN: You've got shoulder blades.

MIMSIE: Not to kill for.

MEGAN: Ohmigod!

MIMSIE: What?

MEGAN: How could I forget?

MIMSIE: What is it?

MEGAN: You'll see.

MIMSIE: Tell me.

MEGAN: Wait a minute—I thought I put them in this
drawer, oh but then I took them out to look
at them and...

MIMSIE: I look Chinese with my hair like this don't

I? I think I'll memorize the name of every bone on our body. Except there's like three hundred bones in there. Mandible. I like that. The curve of your mandible is..so...exciting...! You know what so cool about you, Megan? I can say anything and it won't blow your mind. I get real bored if I blow somebody's mind unless I'm blowing my own mind at the same time.

MEGAN: I Found them!

MIMSIE: The tickets! How could you forget?

Ohmigod—let me hold them. Megan Nader and Mimsie Larson are the winners of the Los Angeles Chapter of The Janice Stevens Weight Loss Institute and have been invited to the National Conventions at the Las Vegas Hilton, In Las Vegas, Nevada!

MEGAN: Janice Stevens is the best thing that ever happened to us.

MIMSIE: You can say that again.

MEGAN: We've got to go shopping.

MIMSIE: Something that will make us look really skinny. What?

MEGAN: Black, we should wear all black!

MIMSIE: I'd like to wear black from now on. I never want to wear another color again,

just black.

MEGAN: It keeps you so focused.

MIMSIE: Black is the coolest.

MEGAN: The little black dress. That's what we
have to go shopping for.

MIMSIE: Maybe if we stopped eating completely, my
hip bones will show by then.

MEGAN: Mimsie, you know as well as I do, the best
way to lose weight is-

BOTH WOMEN: To eat the right stuff.

MIMSIE: Notice how we don't talk about normal
things. I mean, things, like guys for
instance.

MEGAN: Men are scum.

MIMSIE: Well...yeah...But when we're totally
skinny, we'll be able to have our pick...

MEGAN: Then we can treat them the way they've
treated us.

MIMSIE: Revenge is always the best reason to do
anything.

BOTH WOMEN: Keeps you totally focused.

SCENE 7

*Hot light on Muriel. She is eating a
peeled orange, wedge by wedge.*

MURIEL: It's that T-shirt, that Marlon Brando

look...You didn't look so good that night you came in hungry, but regular eating and gainful employment always makes a difference. You're one of those people the longer you know them, the better looking they get.

Pause

I've always been a sucker for a white T-shirt. Even if he looks like one of those fighting bags that's taken too many punches.

Light on Julia, a very desperate character.

She leans into the phone in her baggy clothes, except for the addition of a fox collar round her neck. She is smoking incessantly. Phone rings. Muriel answers the phone.

MURIEL: Highway Hotel.

JULIA: Hi mom.

MURIEL: Where are you?

JULIA: London.

MURIEL: What time is it?

JULIA: Nine o'clock in the morning. What have you learned?

MURIEL: Okay, first, the National Security Act and Congress gives up the right to check and

balance the CIA—they answer to no one. The next thing you know, somebody gets in the way—from the King to Jack's strippers—no one's too big or small.

JULIA: And they bury Camelot.

MURIEL: My lovely Camelot.

JULIA: Saw Tom-Dad, came with some gauzy flowers.

This collar with fake brown eyes sewn fast staring past my breast. It's okay because the fox has been dead for twenty-five years. We could start wearing Grandpa right about now. What else have you learned?

MURIEL: Lots of things missing.

JULIA: Name three, they're starting to stare at me—God, their eyes are black!

MURIEL: Clay footprints on the grassy knoll, chinks of curb from the third assassin, tell-tale shadows behind the looky-loos.

JULIA: Look for them in the oversized editions, in the large-type classics, look for them then in *Life* magazine. The untapped seepage from body parts, the isolated targets of alloy instruments. My bio-dad has disappeared into the vortex of another ward. There's a conspiracy, I fear, to

keep the truth relative.

MURIEL: Yes, dear, I know it must be lonely up there. What did your father have to say for himself?

JULIA: The sins of the father corroborated the father of sin.

MURIEL: Corroborated who-what?

JULIA: The photographer's waiving at me, the train's here. Kissy-Kiss.

MURIEL: Take your mother's advice, sweetheart, and stay out of the Middle East.

JULIA: Kissy-Kiss.

MURIEL: Kissy-Kiss. *Hangs up, shaking her head.*
She'll never get out of there.

BOOTH LIGHTS UP.

Kitty dials the phone. Muriel and Julia hang up. The motel desk phone rings.

MURIEL: *Cheerful and melodious.* Highway Motel.
Kitty hangs up. Music ends. Muriel sits back and listens. Light fades on Muriel.

KITTY: Now some of you Nighthawks can never get enough of them below the belt Delta Blues and some of you drive like you got Beelzebub on your tail trying to get them avocados to Pretoria, so for all you, I'm gonna play some Robert Johnson. As

folklore tells us, when Mr. Johnson was still a novice, he met up with the Devil-Legba, some say they know the exact back country crossroads where Legba stepped out and gave him his talent and told him he had eight more years to live—was it worth it? I'll let you be the judge, Nighthawks. Robert Johnson playing, *Me and the Devil Blues*.

The music begins and Kitty sings along with the words and moves passionately to the music of Robert Johnson. While she dances, a hot light opens on Carl sleeping. The music fades out to the moans and sighs of locked up men and the metallic echoes of a prison cell block. The sudden slide slam of a steel door. Carl wakes up with a cry. The prison sounds fade quickly and he is left with the music of Robert Johnson's Me and the Devil Blues. The silhouette of Kitty can be seen dancing in the DJ Booth.

LIGHTS DOWN.

SCENE 8

Kitty is standing outside her Connection's

door. She is knocking.

KITTY: Kyle? Kyle I know you're in there, let me in. I need to see you, Kyle, I'm sick.
Mumbles under her breath. Let me in you son of a bitch before I break the damn door in. *Knocks again and speaks to Kyle.*
Honey, it's me, Kitty, would you let me in?
It's all right, it's just me. Oh Christ, Kyle, I'm feeling awful bad, could you just let me in? I know things are thin right now, but you'd make an exception for your friend, Kitty, wouldn't you? *Under her breath.* I'd fuck the bastard if I thought it would help, if he still had a dick.
Lights Down.

SCENE 9 Carl has just finished dinner. Muriel Enters.

MURIEL: How was your dinner?

CARL: Good, very good. Aren't you hungry?

MURIEL: I ate.

CARL: Oh.

MURIEL: There's more. Want more?

CARL: Thanks, I'm stuffed.

MURIEL: Sure? How was the salad?

CARL: Perfect. The dressing was delicious. Did

you make it yourself?

MURIEL: Well I mixed it with a little bag of spices
you get at the store. But you have to
measure it just right. You sure you don't
want more?

CARL: Oh no, thanks, I really am full.

MURIEL: Okay...never as good reheated.

CARL: Mind if I smoke?

MURIEL: Go 'head.

CARL: Want one?

MURIEL: Me? Oh...well, one can't hurt, can it?

CARL: Not hardly.

MURIEL: Only if it had plutonium particles.

CARL: It'd have to be a freak cigarette.

MURIEL: Oh my, it certainly would.

CARL: Other end.

MURIEL: What?

CARL: Other end, you've got the filter at the
wrong end.

MURIEL: Oh (laughs) sorry.

PAUSE AS THEY SMOKE.

MURIEL: Never eat after four. Sharpens my mind at
night.

CARL: Yeah?

MURIEL: For my research.

CARL: What kind of research?

MURIEL: Ohhh—you'll just laugh if I tell you.

CARL: No I won't.

MURIEL: Yes you will.

CARL: Muriel, I would never do that.

MURIEL: You wouldn't?

CARL: I respect you and I can't imagine not
having respect for anything you would be
interested in.

MURIEL: Really?

CARL: Absolutely.

MURIEL: Okay—

*Exits. Returns with a manila folder,
marked OSWALD, Lee H. thick with papers.*

CARL: Oswald, L.H. This *thee* Oswald? Lee
Harvey, that nut who—

MURIEL: Mr. Oswald was no less sane than you or I.

CARL: Come on, everybody knows he—
Shaking her head resolutely.

CARL: He wasn't?

MURIEL: He was an operative

CARL: Course he was, he was DOA before he got to
the hospital.

MURIEL: Not inoperable, *an* operative for the CIA.

CARL: No way.

MURIEL: Carl, I used to work for them myself.

CARL: You did? No kidding? Nahhh. . .So what

are you doing out here in the flea-bag—I
mean, I didn't mean—

MURIEL: No, I think you can describe this place
with such adjectives as dump or flea bag,
even if there isn't a single flea around,
it's looks like there would be.

I wasn't an agent or anything glamorous
like that. I was a secretary. But need
top security clearance. Somebody has to
type those top secret documents and I was
one of those people.

CARL: Huh! I'm very impressed. . .except. . .

MURIEL: What?

CARL: Well, you don't hear a lot of good things
about them. The CIA, I mean.

MURIEL: And for good reason, I can assure you.

CARL: And you oughta know.

MURIEL: And I oughta know.

CARL: So, uh, what is this research?

MURIEL: Well, see this picture of Oswald?

CARL: Yeah, I remember that picture.

MURIEL: Of course you do, *Life Magazine* programmed
you to never forget it. Mr. Oswald
standing there with a rifle and a commie
newspaper, like a sitting duck all right.
Well, it's a fake.

CARL: What do you mean? You're gonna tell me the U.S. Government—

MURIEL: *Pause.* The U.S. Government what?

CARL: Yeah, I guess they would be capable of a thing like that.

MURIEL: Do you think if he really were a communist that he would be stupid enough to pose with a rifle and subversive material in his hand?

CARL: Yeah the Redski brothers in the pen—were pretty hush-hush, when I think about it.

MURIEL: If you look closely, right at the chin, you see a shadow—that's where they snipped off his chin to superimpose him on some other agent's body. If you look at these other photos of Oswald, you'll notice he had more of a heart-shaped face, on this picture it's—

CARL: Square! yeah, it's really different. I'll be damned. *Puts it down and stands up, suddenly upset.* This stuff, I mean, who cares about this stuff? What's the point of it? It's all over, it happened thirty years ago—what's it to me? Why do you want to dredge up old shit for? Does this mean you're one of them conspiracy nuts?

MURIEL: Conspiracy nuts? Is that what we're called?

CARL: I didn't mean—

MURIEL: Say what you mean, Mister, laugh if you feel like it. They didn't take Lizzie Bordon serious and she got away with murder. *She begins gathering up her "evidence."*

CARL: Don't get all worked up—

MURIEL: Don't you dare talk down to me—!

CARL: I ain't talking down—

MURIEL: Secretaries know everything—everything! And what they don't know, they know where to look for it. That is the object of my research!

CARL: Which is?

MURIEL: I won't tell you because you don't care!

CARL: I do care—it's just that—that—uh, that kind of stuff is no joke, you know, you start asking questions, you end up like that—that reporter chick who committed suicide just as she was going to crack the Jack Ruby case wide open—I saw that on TV not so long ago.

MURIEL: I know who Dorothy Kilgallon was.

CARL: Yeah, you probably typed up her death

warrant—

MURIEL: The Mafia was in charge of national neutralizations. They don't keep paper work

CARL: Terrific. What's another journalist about to break a big story doing the hara-kiri in a hotel room—Old news, Journalists are very depressed people—they have every reason to be—they don't know how to mind their own business—

MURIEL: You think minding your own business will save your bottom?

CARL: It tends to work that way—

MURIEL: See, that's what's wrong with this whole country. People like you who know there is something wrong but all they want to do is "mind their own business." Well this is your business and you're not minding it! And I'm going to find Oswald's chin.

CARL: Oswald's chin?

MURIEL: I'm going to find it. I don't care who thinks I'm one of those conspiracy nuts. *Taking her evidence, she exits in a huff.*

CARL: *Rubs his stubble, scratches his head and sits down. He looks at the floor, at the ceiling, at his thumbnail. He folds his*

hands and twiddles his thumbs and begins singing.

Hello Mudder

Hello Fahder

Here I am in Camp Grenader—

Muriel enters. Kitty dials from a pay phone.

MURIEL: Don't sing that song. It's a stupid song.

I hate it.

Phone rings.

CARL: I'll get it. Highway Motel.

KITTY: Carl? It's me, Kitty.

CARL: Uh, could you spell your last name?

KITTY: Kitty, your wife, who you called...a while ago.

CARL: About six months ago?

KITTY: Well we can talk about that. I'm at this cute little country store, they say, you're about five minutes away from here, straight down the road.

CARL: Could you please spell the last name?

KITTY: What's up?

CARL: Okay, fine...Yeah, the front desk, you can't miss it.

Hangs up.

Enter Mimsie and Megan, fifteen pounds

lighter than the first scene.

MIMSIE: Hi.

MURIEL: Can I help you ladies?

MIMSIE: We want a room.

MURIEL: All we have are double beds.

MIMSIE: Guess it's okay.

Megan whispers to Mimsie.

MIMSIE: What? Oh. How much is a room?

MURIEL: \$25.00. Plus tax.

MIMSIE: That's fine.

MURIEL: Sign here.

MEGAN: Both of us?

MURIEL: Sure—just in case. Where you ladies
headed?

MIMSIE: We're going to a convention.

MURIEL: What kind of convention?

MIMSIE: A Janice Stevens convention.

MURIEL: Is that some kind cosmetic product?

MEGAN: No, not exactly.

MIMSIE: Weight loss.

MURIEL: Oh. You ladies don't look like you need to
lose any weight.

MIMSIE: Well, you might find it hard to believe but
I used to weigh 222 pounds and Megan here—

MEGAN: Mimsie!

MIMSIE: What's the matter?

Megan gives Mimsie a disapproving look.

MIMSIE: Oh never mind, Megan doesn't like to talk about it.

MEGAN: Not everybody wants to know our life story, Mimsie.

MURIEL: Well, then I won't offer you a mint chocolate.

The two girls looks at each other and harmonize in unison.

Tomorrow is here.

Tomorrow is now.

We are skinny, we are cool

How to do it?

Get with it!

Just stop eating!

They laugh.

MEGAN: We made that up ourselves. For positive reinforcement. We have our own laws of conduct. We call them the WW Laws.

MIMSIE: Whatever Works.

MEGAN: Yeah, whatever works.

They pay her and exit.

CARL: Whatever works.

MURIEL: I trust them about as far as I could toss them.

CARL: I think they lost more than 222 pounds.

Enter Kitty.

KITTY: Hi.

MURIEL: What can I do for you?

KITTY: Got a room?—Number seven if it's open.
It's my lucky number.

MURIEL: Number seven it is. That's...\$30 a night.

KITTY: Fine, where do I sign?

MURIEL: In here.

KITTY: Could you lend me a hand, with my luggage?
I've got a terrible ache in my back from
driving all night.

MURIEL: Carl, help the lady with her bag, will you?

Kitty and Carl exit. Telephone Rings.

*Julia is crouched into the phone vaguely
demonic, extremely nervous, more than
usual. A lot more. At times while she
holds one cigarette between her lips, she
attempts to light another.*

JULIA: Mother!

MURIEL: Julia—where are you?

JULIA: Where am I? Oh, in Timbuktu. Monsoon.
Never mind that shit, did you eat lobster
because you thought—you were told, that it
would make you wicked. Hornier than a
double-nosed dog in a kennel full of
bitches. Did you or didn't you?

MURIEL: Did I what?

JULIA: Eat lobster?

MURIEL: When?

JULIA: The night I was conceived. The night of
extermination and new life.

MURIEL: How would I know what I ate that night?

JULIA: I think you would remember.

MURIEL: Why should I remember?

JULIA: You demonstrated a healthy appetite.

MURIEL: I suppose that's what it would take.

JULIA: Daddy wasn't there; I know where he was.
Daddy was in Dallas, that night. Daddy was
in Dallas.

MURIEL: Your father was with me, how else could you
have been conceived? He was in Uruguay
from April through December that year. You
were conceived in January and born eight
months later.

JULIA: I was not a preemie.

MURIEL: Julia, I don't know why that's always been
such a problem for you. There's no shame
in having been born a little early. It
shows how eager you were.

JULIA: I was born a month late not early. I have
the birth certificate right here. *Searches*
for the document she stuffed down her

shirt. She drops the receiver and continues the diatribe by shouting while she searches for her birth certificate. I wonder if they should make it so easy to get a hold of these sensitive State documents. All you have to do is write them a letter and send them a check. *She finds it, tattered and soiled.* Ah here we go—Child's First Name—Julia, no middle name, et cetera weight: eleven pounds. No premature baby has ever weighed eleven pounds!

MURIEL: I think there's something wrong with the telephone.

Julia picks up the phone.

MURIEL: Speak up, I can hardly hear you.

JULIA: I said, I was practically walking by the time I was born.
I've met my other father, I was conceived the night of the day the President was shot. You were in Virginia, typing secret documents for The Department, Daddy was on assignment not in Uruguay but in Dallas, Texas.

MURIEL: Here we go again—

JULIA: I have proof. You tell me I'm crazy and I

need to be here—you wanna talk boring? I have proof sure as the missing link will free us with the truth. The monkey cancer that eats away at me, makes me all-powerful. I have the most reliable source there is.

MURIEL: And who might that be?

JULIA: A reporter never reveals her sources.

MURIEL: Your father is a hopeless alcoholic you can't believe anything he says. He's getting old and thinking about dying and his conscience is eating him up—all those nice little South American professors and folk singers that died in the stadium all because your father is so good at what he does. Well, he *should* feel guilty. But now he tells you this pack of lies. He's just getting back at me because I refused to put up with his drinking. Now he's worked you up into such a state—!

JULIA: My state is just fine—it's terrific. I'm the sanest person I know!

MURIEL: Don't raise your voice to me, I'm still your mother.

JULIA: I hope so. Anyway, the reason I called, the real reason was to tell you I'm

pregnant, mother.

MURIEL: Pregnant, my god...What kind of personnel do they have in that place?! Was it one of the attendants? They're always doing things like that. How pregnant are you?

JULIA: Pretty damn pregnant—

MURIEL: How much are you along?

JULIA: Eight months

MURIEL: Eight months?!

JULIA: I've been hiding it though, and I'm going to have this baby. I am growing a witch inside me, I can feel my self getting stronger and wilder and smarter than everybody else and it's only a matter of time that I'm going to make my escape.

MURIEL: What if you get caught?

JULIA: They won't know its me. They'll think I'm dead. I've spent my whole life trying to get to the truth when I could've been having fun, I could've been a happy little money grubber, I could've been the first woman general manager in some high-finance ecological disaster! But no, instead I going to have to come and get you.

MURIEL: I'm not listening to this nonsense—

JULIA: That's what I'm talking about, you never,

never, never listen to me—

MURIEL: Have you been taking your medicine?

JULIA: You want to talk conspiracy—Laser pills I call them, zap drool. Infallible. Zap—drool.

MURIEL: It takes about a year for them to start working—You have to adjust to them first.

JULIA: So one thousand ninety-five pills and a case of *Chap Stick* later, I'm what? Pleasant? Fuck that shit. I need to have my wits about me. It's very hostile around here and you can't depend on everybody being a good Charlie—look what happened to Blanch Dubois, Zap-Drool. Do you realize I'm only one year younger than she was?

MURIEL: Blanch Dubois?

JULIA: She was 30, Middle aged—had to have all her dates in the dark—so they wouldn't noticed her decrepit little old face. I am the Elephant Man—my mother caught in a stampede. Did you take your Thorough-Zone pills?

MURIEL: I don't need them.

JULIA: That's what they all say. Bye-bye.

MURIEL: Bye, Sweetheart.

JULIA: Love you.

MURIEL: Love you too.

They hang up. Muriel turns on her mini-recorder.

MURIEL: Children have no need to know the intimacies of their parents' youth.

Especially when it wasn't so much that we made love—no. It was more like we drove into each other's flesh.

It was at the height of the Cold War. The Cuban missile business was all over. We were all so relieved. The office was empty. Everybody had left early to drink away the fear and celebrate being alive. I was in the coffee room when he walked in behind me. He wasn't standing that close to me but I could feel his breath. I turned to face him—that's when he kissed me...right on the mouth. I was a married woman. I pushed him away and hurried out.

After that I avoided him as much as possible...But the taste of his kiss stayed on my lips

Turns off Recorder

ACT II

SCENE 10

Carl and Kitty in Kitty's Motel room. They are trying not to seem too obvious but it is becomes apparent that a powerful attraction still exists between them.

KITTY: Say hello, Carlito, aren't you glad to see me?

CARL: I'm glad you came, Kitty.

KITTY: Why were you're being so secretive on the phone? You schtupping her on the side?

CARL: Come on, there ain't no need for that. I just want to keep my business my business, that's all. So, how you doing, Kitty?

KITTY: I couldn't come right away. Had to think. You gotta give some time to think on it.

CARL: I never pushed.

KITTY: Yes, I know.

Pause. She looks around the room. Lights cigarette. Offers Carl one.

KITTY: Cigarette?

CARL: No thanks.

KITTY: Quit smoking? *Looking through curtains.*

CARL: Yeah, just quit.

KITTY: Who are those two cutie pies?

CARL: Couple of crackpots.

KITTY: Get much business around here?

CARL: I keep busy.

KITTY: I'll bet. Who's the fat broad? I don't like her.

CARL: She's okay.

KITTY: Uh huh. Got a drink? Don't tell me you don't drink?

CARL: You know, I said, clean, clean.

KITTY: I thought I heard some squeaking coming from somewhere.

CARL: It's good to see you. You feeling all right? *He becomes suspicious of her condition but refuses to admit it to himself.*

KITTY: Sure, why? I guess I must look different.

CARL: You look great.

KITTY: Ten years older.

CARL: You're just reaching your best years.

KITTY: Think so?

CARL: I—

KITTY: Yeah?

They hedge around become more uncomfortable, until simultaneously, they move to each other and lock in a clumsy embrace. They kiss, then Carl pulls back.

There is a pained expression on his face.

CARL: You're strung out—

KITTY: What're you talking about?

CARL: You're doing junk.

KITTY: I had a drink, but—

CARL: Don't play me for a loser!

KITTY: I just slipped. I was clean, but I got nervous. I wanted to see you and I got— God, Carl, you know how it is.

CARL: How long you been doing this?

KITTY: Since yesterday.

CARL: How long, Kitty?

KITTY: It started with you, you remember.

CARL: You only did it a couple times when you were with me—you didn't like it much, I remember.

KITTY: That's when it started. Aw, honey— *She reaches for him. He desperately turns away from her.*

KITTY: What? I'm not good enough for you now?

CARL: You liked being around it, I remember that too.

KITTY: Well I am clean most of the time. Then something happens I start to feel old—I get real down. I just need somebody to help me.

CARL: Kitty. I'm not the right person to do it.

I can't take no chances. I know that
about me.

KITTY: It's gotta be you—I can't do it with anyone
else.

CARL: It can't be me, you gotta do it —you gotta
get help.

KITTY: Those phony shithead shrinks?!

CARL: There's plenty of meetings set up—I got a
few phone numbers here—

KITTY: I don't need to listen people whine about
their stupid little problems, about how
they were beat as kids, who wants to
listen? I don't drag them down with hard
luck stories. Not that I have any. I get
bored, I leave.

CARL: Okay...Okay.

KITTY: We can do it together, you can be my
therapist and doctor and everything else.

CARL: Ain't how it works—you know that.

KITTY: You gonna listen to what therapists say?
They are not objective people, it would
jeopardize their income—

CARL: You don't have a clue and I ain't got it in
me.

KITTY: Then what do you have in you—picking up

after other people's shit? I would never treat you that way. I would shoot you and me before I would treat you like this. You help me and I help you. What more could a person ask for?

CARL: This is my job, I do it and it's okay, I ain't looking over my shoulder. There's something to be said about that. I shouldn't've expected you to understand. It was a dumb thing to call you and expect you to feel the same way about me when I'm a different guy now.

KITTY: You can't be sleeping with that woman?

CARL: Get off it—

KITTY: Then what is holding you here? You even look different—Why are you looking at me that way? You got no right to be disappointed with me, at least I got a job I can talk about, I'm doing something with my life, what have you got? I know what you're thinking—it's the dope—but this is nothing, fucking nothing. I wouldn't've even gotten this way, if you hadn't gone away. It was you who did it. You owe me one. Carl. I can clean up with you around. Don't you get it? Don't let one

little thing change everything.

CARL: But it does. I don't like, but that's what it does.

KITTY: Fuck you...I'm looking at you too, Honey and you look busted down. You even got yourself a gut. Maybe you are a loser.

CARL: You always said you hated sloppy guts—here it is—*He seizes her hand and places it on his belly.*

KITTY: Get your hands to yourself—!

CARL: I'll take the sloppy gut.

Moves to the door, hesitates, shakes his head. Exits.

KITTY: I'd like for once everything to turn out exactly my way.
Crosses to bag, takes out needle, cotton, drug, spoon and matches. Cuts tar like substance, takes the hypo needles draws water, a few drops in spoon, lights flame under spoon, mixing with tip of needles, draws, unfolds her arm makes a fist and slides the needle in with skill. The music fills up the room while she rushes. Then eyes slowly open, looks around the room without moving her head, relaxed.

KITTY: He called me, Baby. I remember that.

She stands, opens window, opens door and leans out looking outside. Mimsie and Megan are carrying bag with mineral water to their room.

KITTY: Hi.

MIMSIE: Hi.

MEGAN: Hi.

KITTY: Nice night aren't we?

MEGAN: Nice night aren't we?

KITTY: What do you got there?

MIMSIE: Mineral water and lime.

KITTY: Sounds very healthy. You can get very thirsty around here.

MEGAN: You want to share with us?

KITTY: Sure...Come on in.

They enter. Kitty says under her breath. Said the spider to the flies.

KITTY: You know what you two look like?

MEGAN: What?

KITTY: Best friends.

MIMSIE: We are.

KITTY: I figured. You two look like you have a lot in common.

MIMSIE: Sure, we used to have a lot more in common.

MEGAN: Mimsie--

MIMSIE: What's your name?

KITTY: Machine Gun Kitty.

MEGAN: Kitty, oh, I've always loved that name. I always wished it was my name.

KITTY: Oh, don't be one of those sorry characters who doesn't like her own name.

MIMSIE: You sound like you believe in tough love.

KITTY: Tough love?

MIMSIE: You know what that is, don't you?

MEGAN: It's Mimsie's favorite subject.

KITTY: I think I can figure it out.

MIMSIE: Why do you call yourself Machine Gun Kitty?

KITTY: It's my professional moniker.

MIMSIE: Oh.

KITTY: I'm a DJ.

MIMSIE: Really? What station?

KITTY: KYTY.

MEGAN: Where is that?

KITTY: Fifty some miles from here.

MEGAN: What kind of music do you play?

KITTY: Jazz Classics.

MEGAN: Oh.

KITTY: Oh. Got any whiskey to toss in here?

MIMSIE: We're on a diet.

KITTY: Figures.

Silence until Megan can no longer stand it.

MEGAN: He's a strange guy, don't you think?

KITTY: Who?

MEGAN: That guy who works here.

KITTY: Why do you say that?

MEGAN: Can't you tell?

KITTY: Yeah but I still wanna hear what you think.

MEGAN: Well for one thing he looked at me kind of
creepy.

MIMSIE: And everybody knows that men are scum.

KITTY: Then women are scum slurpers.

MEGAN AND MIMSIE: Oh God—disgusting, yuk!

MIMSIE: I think he's got sad eyes.

KITTY: Don't say shit like that, it's downright
stupid.

MEGAN: It's a free country.

KITTY: Says who? Where you two headed, anyway?

MEGAN: A convention.

KITTY: Really?

MIMSIE: Yeah we—

MEGAN: We're business women.

KITTY: Amazing...

MEGAN: The Hotel's got a Jacuzzi and a swimming
pool. I can't wait to jump in a pool. Too
bad there isn't one in this place. I love
a heated pool in winter.

KITTY: Sun's bad for you, especially in winter.

MIMSIE: How's that?

KITTY: The sun's closer.

MEGAN: You're putting us on!

KITTY: I am but not about that.

MEGAN: Not if you use sun screen, anyway.

KITTY: My religion doesn't allow it.

MIMSIE: What religion is it?

KITTY: It's based on eating megadoses, raw stuff
and fresh blood.

MIMSIE: Fresh blood?!

MEGAN: What kind of blood?

KITTY: Mammals.

*The two girls exchange looks and giggle
nervously.*

KITTY: Fresh blood preferably right out of the
vein. How old do you think I am?

MIMSIE: 30?

KITTY: 62. But instead I look that perfect age of
30.

The two girls exchange looks.

KITTY: You have no idea what I talking about do
you?

MIMSIE: When were you born?

KITTY: You calling me a liar?

MIMSIE: No, but—

KITTY: Don't call me a liar, kid.

MIMSIE: Sorry.

MEGAN: You talk funny.

KITTY: In what way?

MIMSIE: You say funny things all right.

MEGAN: Like a vampire.

KITTY: Nice.

MIMSIE: But a cool vampire.

KITTY: Vampires must be somewhere below 98.6

MIMSIE: Hang out at the jazz clubs.

KITTY: What the fuck do you know about Jazz clubs?

MIMSIE: Well—

KITTY: Never mind, the fact you even heard about
them—give credit where credit is due.

MEGAN: You could wear dresses that have holes up
the sides. The little black cocktail
dress.

KITTY: I work all night and go home at dawn.

MEGAN: Vampires have to go home before dawn or
they melt.

MIMSIE: Turn to ashes, Megan.

KITTY: Where did you all get to be so informed?

MEGAN: TV and movies, where else?

KITTY: What about the radio?

MEGAN: Okay, I guess, if you got nothing better.

MIMSIE: Guy, Megan, you shouldn't say that.

MEGAN: Oh yeah, sorry, I forgot you're a DJ.

KITTY: To each his own.

MIMSIE: I'd like to be a vampire. *Sucking on her straw.* Suck your blood!

They fall into a fit of giggling while Kitty observes them.

KITTY: I think we should invite the weird guy over here.

MEGAN: What for?

KITTY: To suck his blood.

MEGAN: As long as there's no calories in blood.

KITTY: Ever seen a fat vampire?

MIMSIE: That's right, they only eat once every twenty-four hours.

MEGAN: You can't get fat doing it that way.

KITTY: He can be tonight's meal.

MEGAN: I'll get him—

MIMSIE: Megan!

MEGAN: God, Mimsie, I was just kidding.

MIMSIE: That's your problem, you're willing to go along with anything anyone says or does. You need to think for yourself.

MEGAN: I know what I'm doing.

MIMSIE: Like lemmings do.

KITTY: Girls, girls, let's not get too deep. Stick around, you might learn—Carl!

MIMSIE: Hey—don't do that! *She tries to stop her.* You're really nutty!

KITTY: I'm kidding—I'm only kidding! But I think
I know what I did wrong. I said it all
wrong. He doesn't want it around right?
Right?!

MEGAN: R-right.

MIMSIE: Whatever you say.

KITTY: Okay then, I gotta convince him that he can
help me clean up.

MEGAN: Clean up what?

KITTY: What the fuck do you think? Huh? What the
fuck is there to clean up in this world?
Jeez! Call him!

MEGAN: Huh?

KITTY: Get him. Go get Carl. Then you can get
the hell out of here.

MIMSIE: Call him yourself.

KITTY: What if he doesn't come?

MEGAN: He must already know you.

KITTY: Save the smart mouth or I'll slap you
silly.

MIMSIE: Let's get out of here, Megan—

KITTY: Nobody walks out on me.

MEGAN: Let's get out of here—

KITTY: Wait a minute!

MIMSIE: You're crazy!

KITTY: Please!

They try to push her aside. Kitty leaps on Mimsie, taking a firm fistful of hair.

They all speak at the same time.

MIMSIE: Hey—Stop it—Megan!!

KITTY: You little bitch!

MEGAN: Hey—Stop it! What're you doing? Stop it I said!

MIMSIE: Megan she's hurting me—Ow ow ow!

Megan takes the lamp and smashes it over Kitty's head. Kitty falls like a sack of potatoes.

MEGAN: Are you all right?

MIMSIE: I think so. God, what happened?

MEGAN: She must be crazy—My God!

MIMSIE: Is she dead?

MEGAN: I don't know.

MIMSIE: Her eyes are open.

MEGAN: Should I feel her pulse?

MIMSIE: Do people get knocked out with their eyes open? Sometimes they die with their eyes open, sometimes with their eyes closed, but I don't think they ever get knocked out with their eyes open.

MEGAN: Me neither.

MIMSIE: Oh shit, Megan, what are we gonna do?

MEGAN: What do you want to do?

MIMSIE: See if she's really dead. I can't feel a pulse.

MEGAN: That doesn't even work when I try it on myself. Listen to her heart.

MIMSIE: How?

MEGAN: Just put your ear on it.

MIMSIE: Get that close?

MEGAN: Just do it will you—I—I can't. Well?

MIMSIE: Nothing...*getting up*. We killed a person, Megan, a moment ago she was talking about vampires and weird stuff—God, was she weird!

MEGAN: You think *you're* weird until you meet the Really-Out-There. What do we do now?

MIMSIE: Call the police, I guess.

MEGAN: We can't!

MIMSIE: Why not?

MEGAN: Because it'll hold us up and we'll miss meeting Janice Stevens!

MIMSIE: We've got to do something.

MEGAN: Let's just leave her here. It was an accident. They'll figure that out.

MIMSIE: Not if we're not around to explain it. They'll find clues and track us down.

MEGAN: What clues?

MIMSIE: What clues? Well whatever. A fingerprint,

a—a pubic hair.

MEGAN: We can't tell anyone.

MIMSIE: This is crazy.

MEGAN: We didn't lose all that weight so we could miss meeting the woman who saved our lives. I know once I meet her, we'll never get fat. They'll want to investigate or whatever it is they usually do. In the meantime, we would've gotten big as a house by then, living on white bread and Kraft Cheese sandwiches, peanut butter and, and powdered milk, oatmeal and instant mashed potatoes.

MIMSIE: How do you know what they'd feed us?

MEGAN: Oh, I don't know, but there's no way, no way, no way I'm gonna miss my convention.

MIMSIE: Come on, we won't even go to jail, it was an accident, self-defense. They'll believe us, I've never even gotten a traffic ticket in my life—

MEGAN: But they'll have to hold us until trial—

MIMSIE: There's always bail.

MEGAN: Get real, Mimsie, how much bail do you think it would take to spring us?

MIMSIE: Maybe you're right. But if we're gonna to this, then it's gotta be together. We

gotta think this out, step-by-step. First
of all, we get rid of any fingerprints.

MEGAN: Right!

MIMSIE: Go get a couple of towels from the bathroom
Megan does so.

MEGAN: Here you go.

MIMSIE: Thanks. I'll start over here.
*They start wiping their alleged
fingerprints from the room.*

MIMSIE: What time is it?

LOOKS AT WATCH—

MEGAN: Omigod! It's past our time!
*They take out some carrots and celery from
their pockets, sit on the bed and start
eating, slowly masticating with an air of
saintliness.*

MEGAN: Do you think they'll find out we did it?

MIMSIE: Why should anyone suspect us?

MEGAN: How many people do you think are staying
here?

MIMSIE: I saw two other cars. Both guys.

MEGAN: How can you tell?

MIMSIE: What girl would drive a four-wheel drive
with tires like that?

They peer through the curtains.

And that Camaro—it looks like a guy's

MEGAN: And then there's that guy she was so
focused on—

MIMSIE: She wasn't focused on him, she was
unfocussed. If she had been focused he'd
be with her right now, and she wouldn't lie
there with her eyes wide open.

MEGAN: Well anyway, I can't see what she wanted
him for. He's so *old!*

MIMSIE: Old people usually like old people, Megan.
That's how people are.

MEGAN: Anyway there's a lot of suspects, we'd be
the last ones to be suspected. But I think
we should get out of here.

MIMSIE: If we do that, then they will know it was
us and don't forget, they have our name in
the register book. No, we should spend the
night and leave in the morning like nothing
happened. We shouldn't change any of our
plans, that's important.

MEGAN: We shouldn't've put down our real names.

MIMSIE: How were we to know?

MEGAN: I'll never put my real name down again.

MIMSIE: And we even told her where we're going.

MEGAN: We've blown it.

MIMSIE: No, no, not if we keep our heads—Not if we
remember everything we've done, and think

of a reason for it, and make it all fit in, and know the story back, and forth, and think of different ways to say it—'cause that's how they always catch criminals by tripping them up and when they tell the whole story like they memorized it. We gotta figure out ten different ways of staying it, but so none of it contradicts anything we said before and we've got to stick together and not let them trick us when they question us separately—I mean if it ever comes to that.

MEGAN: You mean if they try to trick us by saying the other one told?

MIMSIE: Exactly. Because we'd never snitch on each other.

MEGAN: Do you want another one?

MIMSIE: No thanks, I'm not that hungry for once.

MEGAN: Me neither.

MIMSIE: We'd better finish wiping off our finger prints.

MEGAN: I don't think we touched that much.

MIMSIE: You can never tell, wipe everything.

MEGAN: We never touched over there—!

MIMSIE: Can't be too careful.

MEGAN: Are you done now?

MIMSIE: You'll thank me later, girl. Do the door again and the front of the door—not yet! Wait 'til we step out and be cool about it—wait! See if there's anybody around. And keep the towels. For all we know they can get fingerprints from towels now—can't forget about progress.

MEGAN: I'm seeing you in a whole new light.

MIMSIE: Me too.

Mimsie looks out.

MIMSIE: Omigosh!

MEGAN: What?

MIMSIE: The man's coming over here!

MEGAN: What man?

MIMSIE: The guy who works here, Carl.

MEGAN: Are you sure?

MIMSIE: He's passing all the other doors!

MEGAN: What does he want over here?

MIMSIE: How should I know?

MEGAN: Oh shit oh shit oh shit!

MIMSIE: Just kidding.

MEGAN: Come on!

MIMSIE: I just thought of something.

MEGAN: Now what?

MIMSIE: What if we have to kill someone else to cover up for this one?

MEGAN: Well at least it wouldn't be the first
time.

They exit.

SCENE 11 KITTY'S MOTEL ROOM

Carl enters Kitty's room and finds her. He assumes she has over-dosed. He moves to revive her then finds the head wound and realizes she's been murdered. He picks up the receiver, reconsiders and places it back in its cradle. The sound of the Prison cell block reverberates, getting louder then ends with the slamming of sliding steel doors. He paces a moment, then decides. He dumps out the contents of her purse on the bed. He finds the keys. He looks out the window, turns out the lights and carries her out the door. Offstage, the sound of a trunk can be heard shutting. He comes back in takes everything that is hers and closes the door.

SCENE 12

Morning several days later. Muriel and

Carl are at the breakfast table reading the newspaper and finishing up their coffee.

CARL: You see—that's the difference. Joe Montana's a great athlete, a great athlete, but Mohammed Ali is a great man. There's the difference. I mean what has Montana ever done, I mean really done for anyone?

MURIEL: I think he sponsored a charity.

CARL: Which one?

MURIEL: Well, I really don't know but I should think he's done it at sometime.

CARL: There's the difference! See even if Montana does sponsor a charity, it's not the same—it's what you expect. But Ali, he took his fame very seriously he saw it as a responsibility, a chance to make a difference. Like that time he heard about them closing down that Jewish home for old people and the next day he was down there and gave them a check for \$100,000. And the man was a poet.

I mean sure, Montana's a charismatic guy. A sort of Great White Hope—if you consider that population-wise there's ten times more black athletes than white—okay so they've

got most the banks, but I'm talking about your heart beating faster—knights and heroes—and Ali's part of that.

MURIEL: Joe Montana's got a certain quiet simplicity.

CARL: Sure—but who's to say what's going on in there. He plays it close to the vest—in that sense, he's hard to reach—to figure out. he's got a lovable face. He's smart. He's got a lot of money and he works hard for it so we don't resent him...He's almost—not quite—one of those Masters of the Universe.

MURIEL: Well now, I think of Masters of the Universe as being liked only by other Masters of the Universe and that's not Joe—

CARL: But he ain't quite one, either. He's still a gladiator—that's the connection—everybody's wanna be. How many guys wouldn't trade their lives for his? No thanks I don't want to be Joe Montana, I am one with the universe right here, emptying the trash and cleaning bathrooms. When I die they'd send me straight to the stupid circle in Hell. People who go to Hell because they were stupid.

You gotta admit to a lot of people—all over the world went happy crazy over Ali. That is a true hero as big and as small as life truly is. Montana's too regular and not regular enough. Don't get me wrong, there's plenty to like about Montana—But there you see? You *like* Montana. You *love* Ali. That's the difference—!

MURIEL: Oh my! Oh my goodness!

CARL: What?

MURIEL: I can't believe—How perfectly horrible!

CARL: What? What?

MURIAL: They found the DJ I always listened to, Machine Gun Kitty, burned to a crisp in her own car not far from highway 17. She'd died from a blow to the skull. Oh—this is so sad. They found heroine in her system. Do you think they're telling the truth?

CARL: Why would they want to lie about a thing like that?

MURIEL: That's what I'd like to find out. You can't believe everything you read in the newspaper. I think they're trying to discredit her.

CARL: Well a lot of those DJs, you know, media people burn the candle from both ends. You

can't say, Muriel, those people are on a pretty fast lane.

MURIEL: And I really wonder why we need to know all this?

CARL: You're a kind lady, you know that? I think, you're right, people should have respect for another person's privacy. This woman probably had some bad breaks that got her strung out.

MURIEL: Well, it's so much a kind heart, Carl, I don't necessarily believe everything I read in the news. See, first they create a certain set of responses from us like Pavlov and his bells. How many movies? Drugs, murder—That's a media-hype formula. Like love and forever after, like all assassins are insane fanatics. So Sunday, she doesn't come to the studio. Monday, she's missing, Tuesday they find her and perform the autopsy. Wednesday, the newspapers are splashed with the details of her addiction. What if she was onto something?

CARL: Muriel—

MURIEL: Something she was about to reveal on the radio—

CARL: Muriel—

MURIEL: What?

CARL: Look, who's to say what happened? But what I think, is that she was a kid with a problem.

MURIEL: Do you think I'm a little paranoid?

CARL: I don't know about that. But notice how people like to put their own brand of thinking on these things?

MURIEL: You don't think there's such a thing as objectivity, do you—all we have is our own thinking to think with.

CARL: Okay but, I seen a few things in my time and I listened to her rap also and she had a certain lingo, you know, a certain street-wise way of talking and it might just be possible that she was a user and, and something went wrong, she might've been scoring—you know guys who sell heroine ain't usually your most upstanding people. And she—well, something happened. I think she was kid with a problem who really loved music. And maybe she's at peace now. You don't think so?

SCENE 13

There is a hot light on Mimsie sleeping.

She wakes up screaming waking Megan up.

MEGAN: What happened? What's the matter?

MIMSIE: Oh God...I was just a dream. It was so horrible!

MEGAN: What was it about?

MIMSIE: I had broken my diet.

MEGAN: Oh that dream.

MIMSIE: You have that dream?

MEGAN: All the time practically.

MIMSIE: But it was so horrible because I was stuffing everything into my mouth and my skin looked bloated out and greasy like the food was oozing out of my pores. And then I saw the scale sort of looming up at me going up and up and up. It was just too awful!

MEGAN: I thought meeting Janice Stevens would change everything automatically.

MIMSIE: Me too. *Pause.* Megan, you don't think that we were meant to be fat? I would rather be dead than get like I was.

MEGAN: Me too. No I don't think so, I mean, it can't be. I'd rather starve to death! But there must be some way, something that we

can do to make us feel different. I mean I feel different but more outside than inside. You know what I mean?

MIMSIE: I sure do.

MEGAN: It seems the only time you can't eat or don't think about eating is when something really exciting is happening, when you're on a roller coaster or drowning—I don't know. Where you going?

MIMSIE: Get dressed. You just reminded me of something that's been bugging me.

MEGAN: What?

MIMSIE: The unsolved mystery of our lives!

MEGAN: You mean how to stay skinny?

MIMSIE: Not quite but maybe you've got something, I'm talking about, where is it? I put it in my wallet—here it is!

MEGAN: The newspaper story about Machine Gun Kitty? But what—?

MIMSIE: The first thing we have to find out, is why.

MEGAN: Why what?

MIMSIE: Why didn't they report it to the police!

MEGAN: Because they're covering up something—of course, We already decided that.

MIMSIE: And whatever it is, we need to know.

MEGAN: Yeah. But why?

MIMSIE: Why what?

MEGAN: Why do we need to know what it is? I mean, what do we care if they burned up her car and her in it. It only made it that much easier for us.

MIMSIE: Oh for Crissake! You're confusing me.

Pause.

One thing is coming in clear to me though—in fact it's coming in so clear that I'm getting chills just thinking about it.

MEGAN: What are you thinking, Mimsie?

MIMSIE: I don't know if you can handle it.

MEGAN: If you can, I can.

MIMSIE: When we're like this. I mean when we're thinking about important things, I mean life and death things—Well I feel skinny!
Silence as Megan listens to her internal workings.

MEGAN: Oh God, you're so right! I feel skinny too! As if I've been this way my whole life and I'm not afraid. This is the first time I haven't felt afraid.

MIMSIE: I feel like I could be the skinniest person in the whole wide world.

MEGAN: But is that the secret to staying skinny?

I mean, is it what skinny people do?

MIMSIE: Don't be an ass, Megan. Every skinny person does whatever works for them, whatever makes them feel skinny. For us it's life and death matters. It's like if you aren't going to eat food, you're gonna have to eat something else.

MEGAN: Wow! *She has to sit in order to take in the full meaning.* Well, you know how I feel about being skinny, Mimsie, I don't care what I have to do to stay this way, but I will.

Pause.

MEGAN: So what do you think we should do?

MIMSIE: The perfect crime! And in order to do that, we should have been the ones who burned her up in her car instead of whoever did do it.

MEGAN: Oh I think I see what you're getting at.

MIMSIE: How can you, I'm not even sure what I'm saying. Fuck.

MEGAN: Okay—just don't say that word I hate that word.

MIMSIE: Well excuse the F-word out of me. Get dressed, we've got things to do, places to go and people to see!

LIGHTS OUT.

SCENE 14 Muriel is preparing dinner, Carl enters.

He has a bottle of wine.

CARL: Hi!

MURIEL: Oh, hello.

CARL: I bought a nice bottle of vino.

MURIEL: Oh that'll be nice.

CARL: And a little gift I found, no big deal, I was browsing through the book store. *Hands her a wrapped book.*

MURIEL: Oh my, what kind of book? *Opening it.*

CARL: That's for you to know, I mean for me to know and for you to find out.

MURIEL: *THE CRIME OF THE CENTURY*, by Joseph Morris. *Reading the back.* The complete story of the life and death of John F. Kennedy. Oh Carl, you really shouldn't have.

CARL: You already have it?

MURIEL: No, but—

CARL: Hey, lady, I wanted to just let you know, I dunno.

MURIEL: Well, this is very sweet of you. Thank you. I have something for you.

CARL: For me, what?

Muriel: *Hands him his father's watch.* I

got it fixed.

CARL: Wow. I'm really touched. I—I just don't
what to say. This is the gesture of an
exceptional human being.

MURIEL: *Embarrassed.* So, are you ready for dinner?
It's Catfish.

CARL: I think I've died and gone to Heaven. Hey
I just thought of something, that catfish
might like a little white wine—like they do
in French Restaurants.

MURIEL: Open it up. There's a couple of wine
glasses in there somewhere.

CARL: Well, actually. I myself don't drink. You
know, I just thought you might like some.
I mean I can have it cooked—that's okay.
But generally...

MURIEL: You brought just it for me? How sweet of
you, Carl.

CARL: Well, you cook and everything—a sort of
little celebration for giving me a chance
and whatever. *He has uncorked the bottle.*

MURIEL: How much do you think is right?

CARL: Your guess is as good as mine.

MURIEL: Go ahead, you do it.

CARL: Okay...*Pours a little in.*

MURIEL: More.

CARL: More?

MURIEL: A little more. That's good. Now we just turn down the flame very low while we eat our salad. It'll be okay. Shall we sit down?

The table is set and the salad is ready to be served. They sit down

CARL: Smells delicious. Yeah, we'll start with the salad, very classy. Let me do the honors...*He serves her then himself.* More?

MURIEL: That's enough.

CARL: And plenty for me...

MURIEL: This is all original food.

CARL: Made by a very original lady.

MURIEL: How do you like the dressing?

CARL: Excellent. You didn't make this from scratch?

MURIEL: Yes I did.

CARL: No kidding? It's great. *They eat in silence for a few moments.* I was thinking of buying a car.

MURIEL: A car?

CARL: Yeah...I mean using yours...well, that's okay, but I that's what I've been thinking. It would be nice to just jump in the car and go for a spin. I always liked going

for rides.

MURIEL: That's something I haven't done in a long time.

CARL: Well, we could go sometime.

MURIEL: You wouldn't mind the company?

CARL: Not at all. Why don't we do that after dinner?

MURIEL: Why not?

CARL: Sure, we deserve a little break from the motel business.

MURIEL: That would be fun.

CARL: Yeah—In fact, there's a place not far from here where they have one of those shit-kicker bands, we could go out there and shake it up a little. You like to dance?

MURIEL: Oh my, it's been so long. But when I was younger—

Enter the Killer Diet Sisters. They ring from the office.

MURIEL: Wouldn't you know it, just as we're having dinner.

She crosses to front desk.

MIMSIE: Hi! Remember us?

MURIEL: Oh of course. How was your convention?

MIMSIE: It was great. It was such a high.

MEGAN: You should try Janet Stevens, she's the

best.

MIMSIE: How have you been?

MUR: Fine...

MIMSIE: Does that guy still work for you? He was
very nice.

MUR: Yes...You want to register?

MIMSIE: Not exactly, we just dropped in to say
hello. Carl? Is that his name?

Carl enters.

MIMSIE: Oh hi. We were passing through and wanted
to have a little visit.

CARL: Well, we were just sitting down to eat.

MEGAN: Oh. Maybe we will take a room. Is it
still \$25?

CARL: Sure enough.

MIMSIE: Can we have number 7?

CARL: Seven? That you're lucky number?

MEGAN: I just liked that room better.

CARL: What room were you in before?

MEGAN: What room was it, Mimsie?

MIMSIE: Five.

CARL: But you liked Seven better? *He becomes
suspicious because room 7 was where Kitty
was killed.*

MIMSIE: It's the mystical number. The lucky number
of gamblers, and...and the number of oceans

and sons with guns.

MEGAN: And the place of the untimely death of
Kitty the Vampire.

MURIEL: What are you talking about?

MIMSIE: Also known as, Machine Gun Kitty, also
known as Katheryn Guinness

CARL: I think you two better leave—

MURIEL: Machine Gun Kitty here? You mean the one
who they found—When was she here?

CARL: Muriel—let's talk—*He tries to steer her
into the kitchen but the Killer Diet
Sisters pull out their guns.*

MIMSIE: Okay everybody sit down. Right now!

MURIEL: Could somebody tell me what is happening?!

MIMSIE: Shuttup and talk when I tell you to.

Megan, Get the window shades.

CARL: You're gonna be disappointed if it's money
you want—

MIMSIE: Shut the fuck up or I'll blow your fucking
brains out! Fucking, fucking.

MEGAN: Fucking, fucking, fucking. This is an
interrogation—On the disappearance of the
famous DJ, Machine Gun Kitty. AKA,
Katheryn Guinness. We know she was
murdered.

MIMSIE: We know cause we murdered her.

MEGAN: But—!

MIMSIE: We did not dispose of her body.

MEGAN: We left it here because who would think it
was sweet lil' ol' us'ums?

MIMSIE: Our question is—

MEGAN: Our question is—

MIMSIE: Why was her body reported only after it was
found far from here, burnt to an overdone
T-bone along with her 81 civic?

MURIEL: I did it.

CARL: What're you talkin' about?

MIMSIE: One at a time. You say you did it? Why?

MURIEL: I never liked dealing with amateurs.

MIMSIE AND MEGAN: What amateurs?

MURIEL: The local dirt water law enforcement
agents.

MIMSIE: What do you think, Megan?

MEGAN: It's a crock of shit. Why did you really
burn her?

MIMSIE: Come on—or we'll blow your fucking brains
out here and now.

CARL: She was my wife.

They stare in amazement.

That's why she was here, she came to see
me. She was—had problems and she thought I
could fix them. I told her to leave, but

the next day, I found her in there. I got scared, I figured they would blame me hands down.

MEGAN: What do you think, Mimsie?

MIMSIE: I think the fucking cat exploded out of the fucking bag. What should we do with them now?

MEGAN: I don't know, what do you think?

MIMSIE: I don't know, what do you want to do?

MEGAN: I don't know, something.

MIMSIE: Hamburger and French Fries!

MEGAN: Totally disgusting!

MIMSIE: Yeah, something, we gotta do something.

MEGAN: Should we let them kiss each other *au revoir*?

MIMSIE: You are grossing me out—they are so old.

MEGAN: Do you think they do it with each other?

MIMSIE: I don't know, I don't want to think about it!

MIMSIE: Don't you know that men are scum?!

MEGAN: You are a scum sucker! *Turning on Carl.*
Take off your pants—

MIMSIE: Yeah, yeah, take them off—

MEGAN: Take them off take them off—!

*Suddenly Julia bursts through the door.
She is nine months pregnant, dressed as a*

hospital worker and is welding a semi-automatic. She begins shooting. However Muriel, because she was standing separate while the Killer Diet Sisters were bullying Carl, manages to duck. Julia keeps shooting until all her ammunition is spent. She then stops, looks at the people she has just murdered. She walks from body to body. Then she sees her mother.

MURIEL: Julia?

JULIA: Mom?

MURIEL: What're are you doing here?

JULIA: I escaped, like I said I would. I came here to kill you.

MURIEL: You saved my life.

JULIA: Really?

MURIEL: Yes, they were going to kill us—Is he—

JULIA: Oh yes, I think so. Is something burning?

MURIEL: The catfish! *She exits and enters.* It's ruined of course...*Looks around.* What a mess!

JULIA: Yeah, but at least you're okay. I'll help you clean it up, but first I have to sit down for a moment.

MURIEL: You weren't kidding about being pregnant.

JULIA: It's a girl.

MURIEL: Do you have a name for her?

JULIA: Kennedy.

MURIEL: Guarantee something's going to happen with
a name like that.

JULIA: The Avenging Kennedy.

MURIEL: Avenging?

JULIA: Don't you think it's about time?

MURIEL: A little child will lead us.

JULIA: It's blood is pure. I wanted to show you
something.

MURIEL: A photo—who is it?

JULIA: Look familiar?

MURIEL: Where did you get this?

JULIA: You were so cute—

MURIEL: What do you mean, were?

JULIA: Do you remember when this picture was
taken?

MURIEL: I'm thinking.

JULIA: You're eating lobster.

MURIEL: Lobster? Where did you get this picture?

JULIA: From the man who bought you that lobster.
Frank Wishner

MURIEL: Frank Wishner? Where did you meet him?

JULIA: In that nut house I was in, I told you.
Then I seduced him.

MURIEL: You did...?

JULIA: Uh-huh. Old age certainly hasn't lowered his sperm count.

MURIEL: Really? But Julia—This is not...I mean...if you really were to believe that he was your father, why, that would mean...and now you, Oh dear. Didn't you think of what kind of child might come out?

JULIA: These are the 90's. We have all kinds of stainless steel and plastoid instruments and iddy biddy cameras that slide in quicker than an earwig. All designed to weed out inferior stock. This baby will be perfect.

MURIEL: Well, I guess it's all right then, if you're sure about this.

JULIA: Really, mother.

MURIEL: But one thing I just don't understand, why were you trying to kill me?

JULIA: You never told me the truth about Bio-Dad and Cuckold-Dad and God knows what else and I've spent my whole life looking for it.

MURIEL: There's no finding something like the Truth. It keeps changing.

JULIA: Mom, the facts dammit. There are undeniable facts.

MURIEL: I'm surprised at you Julia, being a

reporter and all, how difficult it is get
at the facts—

JULIA: *Holding her head.* You see! That's why I'm
having problems—

MURIEL: Oh Julia, you won't understand until you're
a mother. But part of parenting is about
protecting your children from the harsh
realities of human nature.

JULIA: Why? So that they can grow up and be duped
even more?

MURIEL: No, no...Well maybe I did make a few
mistakes. You've always been such a
challenge. Some children, many children
would have been perfectly content with your
upbringing. You just never know what to do
until it's all over.

JULIA: It's probably congenital, look at Bio-Dad.

MURIEL: Oh my yes. I'm not surprised to hear he
ended up in that place. He was always a
little intense.

JULIA: Did people ever look at him like this?

MURIEL: Oh my, yes. *Looks at Julia's stomach.* My
Dear, you're a child with child.

JULIA: Will you help me raise her?

MURIEL: Of course I will, Sweetheart...

JULIA: But won't it interfere with your research—?

MURIEL: Not at all. You can help me with it.

JULIA: I have been helping you.

MURIEL: That's right. If I could only get into their archives. Some little corner that they missed. Some little room full of bits and pieces of celluloid. A teeny tiny little triangle of flesh. How big could it be? Look at this picture of me, if you cut me off at the chin and pasted me somewhere else, how big would that piece be?

JULIA: Pretty damn small.

MURIEL: That's why I'm sure they overlooked it somewhere, and its just sitting there, waiting for us. Wait a minute, I must get this down.

She pulls out her micro-recorder and speaks into it. From the random chaos of the universe to the mysterious reaches of a computer's hard disk, when things get lost at the same time they generally tend to get lost together. And so, where ever we find Mr. Oswald's minuscule chin, we will find our lost innocence. Shimmering and pure as black and white celluloid.

She turns it off.

JULIA: Do you really think we've changed that

much?

MURIEL: Oh my...just take a look around!

JULIA: Oh...*Her eyes wander around the room and finally rest on the photo of her mother she is holding.* I can stare at some pictures for hours.

MURIEL: Look at the flower arrangement—It even looks early sixties, and that hat.

JULIA: I love the hat.

MURIEL: I always thought I looked a little bit like Paulette Goddard.

LIGHTS DOWN.