

POLITE CONVERSATIONS AND WINE

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a play

by  
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Adapted for quarantine presentation on-line



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## SYNOPSIS

ALICE & LISA are a young married couple, ready to take the plunge into motherhood. And that deserves a celebration. And their mothers (DONNA and BETH) may feel left out so ... there'll be two parties. This one will be just the four of them. What could possibly go wrong with that?

## CHARACTERS

- NARRATOR - female
- DONNA - a woman old enough to be a grandmother
- ALICE - Donna's daughter, old enough to be a mother herself
- BETH - a woman old enough to be a grandmother
- LISA - Beth's daughter, old enough to be a mother herself, married to Alice

## SETTING

The action takes place in a modest apartment.

## TIME

The time is the present—give or take a few minutes in linearity—afternoon through sunset and into the evening\*

## A NOTE ON THE FORMAT:

This is a memory play. Events, scenes (segments of this one afternoon/night) unfold as they do in our own recalling. Memory is not linear, therefore, neither is this play. The results of which, as in our own minds, are never the same.

\* - To accentuate the element of time shifting, lighting of the stage may be altered throughout to reflect the time of day (as indicated in footnotes & by chart at the end of the script).

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple  
 With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.  
 And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves  
 And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.  
 I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired  
 And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells  
 And run my stick along the public railings  
 And make up for the sobriety of my youth.  
 I shall go out in my slippers in the rain  
 And pick the flowers in other people's gardens  
 And learn to spit.  
 You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat  
 And eat three pounds of sausages at a go  
 Or only bread and pickle for a week  
 And hoard pens and pencils and beer mats and things in boxes.  
 But now we must have clothes that keep us dry  
 And pay our rent and not swear in the street  
 And set a good example for the children.  
 We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.  
 But maybe I ought to practice a little now?  
 So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised  
 When suddenly I am old, and start to wear purple.

—“Warning” Jenny Joseph

### A NOTE ON THE NOTATIONS:

1. A slash (/) indicates the character with the next line of dialogue begins his or her speech (overlapping dialogue).
2. Dialogue in parenthesis “( )” is expressed aloud, as an aside or unintentionally.
3. Dialogue in brackets ([ ]) is not verbalized / may be expressed nonverbally.

### A CLARIFICATION REGARDING TYPOS:

Nope. They aren't. Did I miss one (or two)?—probably. But for the most part, if you see a typo, such as a word repeated, a grammatical error, lower case or UPPER CASE used in place of common punctuation, it was, indeed, intended.

### A NOTE ON THE NARRATOR/STAGE DIRECTIONS

This is an adaptation from a stage play. In most instances as the NARRATOR calls out stage directions the characters themselves convey the same; *ie: they all drink*. No need to write “they all drink” twice, right?—even though I'm sure I did just that once or twice anyway—seemed to flow.

Also: if a character is speaking “Offstage”: their VIDEO should be OFF with their AUDIO on; when they re-enter the stage, their VIDEO should be turned back on.

NARRATOR

Hi. Good evening; afternoon/whenever you're watching this. I'm your guide because ... this is not the format we're all really used to and people enter and exit stage but there is no stage: there's just this box and we're gonna do the best we can. Buckle in. First things first: this is .. a play entitled POLITE CONVERSATIONS AND WINE—that was a working title and it just never left kinda like your relatives at Christmas. This is the cast.

(Holds up a page to the camera noting the play, the production company, cast, written by, directed by etc credits and that would normally be seen in a:)

Yeah, this is your program. If you want I can hold it here and you can take a screen shot so you can print it out and ...

(Holds it for maybe a count of two or three)

Yeah, so there's that. Uh ... support your local theatre so when we all come back from this we can actually meet in the same room and you'll come to us instead of us come to you.

(Ok, I said the title—everything else is in the program and

(comes the dawn:)

Written for the stage by Michael Perlmutter (why didn't he just [say that up front?] putz.) And uh adapted for *this* [video conferencing platform] whatever *this* is by .. the same guy .. INCLUDING my role which appears nowhere else but here. Did he give me a name? No. But then again you didn't come to see me (except for you guys: hi \_\_\_\_\_ )

(fill in the blank with mom, dad or whoever)

So enough about that. This is a memory play. And just like the way most memories play out it refuses to stay linear.

The events all take place in one span of a late afternoon into early evening in one location so you'd think we could just start at square one and proceed on a straight line to [the end] but memory's more like a game played on a chessboard, right and left, forward and back and even diagonally. And then there's those fucking horse pieces ... and did I mention there was wine involved? So, follow along as you will, we will try with the magic of

(knocks on glass in front of camera)

whatever this is to keep you informed of when we are and when people leave a room and ...

(lifts a glass to the camera:)

Good luck.

(she finishes her drink and looks off into her own living space:)

(Somebody wanna start some coffee?)

(realizes she has the first lines:)

Oh. Sorry. At rise.

We find ourselves in the setting of a modest apartment, doors leading to a kitchenette, a bathroom, bedroom, the usual stuff. Two women, Donna and Alice, share ...

Yeah, you can take it from here ...

(—as the scene opens mid conversation:<sup>1</sup>)

DONNA  
You were purpled.

ALICE  
... I was “what”?

DONNA  
That’s just my word for it.

ALICE  
Purple.

DONNA  
You know the the the the ...

ALICE  
The poem? “When I’m an old woman ...”?

DONNA  
No, no, not the poem—you know: the movie. “Purple”.

ALICE  
The Color Purple.

DONNA  
Yeah, the color you know; Purple: it was a movie.

ALICE  
That’s the name of the movie *The Color Purple*.

DONNA  
Right. Purple.

ALICE  
The *Color* ...  
Actually, it was a book.  
Are you talking about. ...

DONNA  
The boy you were going with before ...

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<sup>1</sup> EARLY EVENING

ALICE  
My wife.

DONNA  
No, the boy ...

ALICE  
Pete. His name was Pete. Why would you— ...?

DONNA  
What he did to you.

ALICE  
Why are you bringing this up?

DONNA  
I'm not. Let's just . . . let it go.

ALICE  
No, you can't do that.

DONNA  
This is ... not the time ...

ALICE  
Why? Why because *she's* here?

DONNA  
Well, there's *that*.

ALICE  
You can't do that—

DONNA  
I'm not doing anything

ALICE  
(Continuing:)  
Start to bring something up and then drop it like it doesn't matter

DONNA  
It doesn't matter.

ALICE  
What he did doesn't matter?

DONNA  
I'm not saying that.

ALICE  
Then what are you saying?

(Pause.)

DONNA  
I hate it when you do this. Like your father, twisting everything I say around.

ALICE  
I haven't twisted anything.  
What is purpled?

DONNA  
... When that boy ...

ALICE  
Pete.

DONNA  
Did what he ...

ALICE  
Raped me.

(Pause.)

DONNA  
It changed you.

ALICE  
Obviously.

DONNA  
... You have guests.

(Slight pause.)

ALICE  
We'll put a pin in this.

DONNA  
That's all I was trying to say. You're right: it's not the time: you have guests—



ALICE

And you're one of them.

DONNA

I'm not a guest, I'm your mother.

ALICE

So is she.

DONNA

You know what I mean.

ALICE

(Pouring another glass of wine:)

I don't think I like this side of you.

DONNA

What's not to like?—This is a party.

(Holds out her glass for a refill as well:)

ALICE

(Playing the ever hostess—she refills her mother's glass.)

It's not a party.

DONNA

It's a girl's night.

ALICE

Girl's night.

NARRATOR

They both drink: There is a subtle light change (I'm not going to stop and start every time this happens) as Lisa and Beth (Alice and Donna's counterparts—Lisa being Alice's wife) enter the scene; Taking from the same bottle, they fill their glasses as well—polishing off its contents as the conversation continues uninterrupted (but I interrupted it, I'm not gonna do that again.):<sup>2</sup>

BETH

Have you thought of names yet?

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<sup>2</sup> **LATE AFTERNOON** - NOTE that Alice & Donna continue as if their previous conversation has not taken place—while in actuality it hasn't—this will become clearer to most as the story unfolds—non linearly. Unfortunately, it may not become clear to all; however please note at each of these junctures, in addition to the lighting shift, the emotional levels and pacing for these women should significantly change; sometimes on a dime.

LISA  
Hey, we need get her knocked up first.

BETH  
(To ALICE:)  
So, you're going first?

LISA  
Then ... we'll see.

BETH  
We'll see?

ALICE  
If we want another.

LISA  
If we can afford another.

BETH  
Have you picked out a ...

ALICE  
Sperm donor?

LISA  
We've been looking.

DONNA  
How do you do that?

BETH  
There's always the old fashioned way. Pick him up in a bar. Worked for me.  
That was a joke honey, I loved your father very much. At the time. We did meet  
in a bar though.

ALICE  
It's mostly on line. So nobody ...

DONNA  
Nobody knows each other.

LISA  
Exactly.

DONNA

‘A little impersonal, isn’t it?’

LISA

I think that’s the point.

DONNA

You are a different generation.

BETH

Well in their situation.

ALICE

He’s not / going to—

LISA

Not going to be in the child’s life so ... that would just be awkward, right?  
Right?

(There is an awkward moment of silence.)

ALICE

Kinda like that, yeah.

NARRATOR

(as ALICE and LISA do so:)

Alice and Lisa high five each other.

DONNA

But it’s so expensive, isn’t it? / How can you—

LISA

Infertile couples do it all the time. / Hetero—

ALICE

We’re saving.

LISA

And we’ve taken out two credit cards for this specific ...

DONNA

Debt? That’s ... that’s ...

ALICE

Our choice: right.

BETH

See? They know what they're doing. They know what they want. You've made a plan. Stick with the plan. What are the names?

LISA

If it's a boy: we were thinking Adam.

DONNA

Cause he's the first.

LISA

Because we like the name.

BETH

And for a girl?

LISA

We're uh ...

ALICE

It's between uh Linda and Katie and uh Evelyn.

BETH

Adam and Eve? (Evelyn: Eve)?

LISA

Oh shit. You snuck that in there, didn't you?

ALICE

No, babe, I didn't—no: Evelyn was your idea.

LISA

Oh shit, it was, wasn't it? OK, Linda or Kate. We've eliminated a name.

ALICE

We were *thinking* of naming her Donna or Beth but you know—how do you ... right? Even if you use both names: who comes first? And then there's Gramma. And Gramma. / And Gramma.

LISA

So, we decided no naming after family members.

ALICE

Because we love you.

LISA

Hell yes we love you.

BETH

We love you too.

(Slight pause.)

DONNA

Of course.

ALICE

Say it.

Say it.

DONNA

I love you. My god, are you that ... I can't think of the word—that / you need to—

LISA

Insecure.

DONNA

Thank you: yes. That you need to hear it?

LISA

Every / day.

ALICE

I need to hear it.

LISA

I love you.

ALICE

Thank you. Everyone needs to hear it; when we grew up you and Daddy would—

LISA

Everyone: and our child / will hear it every day; yes, it's important.

DONNA

I love you, of course I love you, I've always loved you, I always will.

ALICE

Thank you Mommy.



ALICE

We'll see.  
So, we haven't decided on a name.—

LISA

Adam if it's a / boy.

ALICE

We've decided on a boy's name.

(There is as long awkward silence.)

LISA

You want to put on a movie?

DONNA

No. No movie. Let's talk. We hardly ever see you any—I hardly see you anymore.

BETH

She's right: no movie.

LISA

Then we'll need more wine.

ALICE

More wine. More wine.  
Babe?

LISA

What?

ALICE

“More wine.”

LISA

You have two feet.

ALICE

To walk all over you I'm sure.

LISA

(Not in front of the mothers.)

ALICE

Never in front of the Mommies.

NARRATOR

At this point Lisa exits into the kitchen to get more wine. There is a relaxed silence in the room.

LISA (Offstage)

Babe?

ALICE

What?

LISA (Offstage)

Where is it? Where is the wine?

ALICE

You put it away.

LISA (Offstage)

Really? when did “I”?

ALICE

(Exiting also to the kitchen:)

What’s the problem— ...

NARRATOR

Alice also exits into the kitchen; leaving the two mothers are now alone.

This might be a good moment to do your taxes or maybe put in a load of laundry because ...

(The relaxed silence continues. Slowly becoming awkward.)

BETH

Maybe we should put on a movie.

DONNA

No. This is normal, we need to ... work through this.

NARRATOR

Yeah, that ...

We hear the sound of a door closing.

(The sound of a door closing. Silence. The silence grows until finally



NARRATOR

And then again:

(There is another sound of the door.)

ALICE (Offstage)

I found it. It was in the car.

(Re-entering triumphantly with more wine, LISA in tow.)

It was in the car.

LISA

She left it in the car.

ALICE

Thank god it's not summer, right?

BETH

Why; how long was it in the car?

ALICE

Two days.

(Opens the bottle.)

Who wants a refill? It's still got a chill.

NARRATOR

The bottle is opened, glasses are filled and ... everyone drinks.

(during the above line: LIGHT SHIFT as everyone - ad libs through pouring. They all drink.<sup>3</sup>)

NARRATOR

Did you catch that?

(A slight beat.

BETH sighs which fills the silence which in turn draws attention to her way ... wanted or not.)

BETH

What?

LISA

What?

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<sup>3</sup> **AFTERNOON:** the mood immediately sombers down. There is a tension in the room that has perhaps been hanging in the room awhile

ALICE  
What what?

BETH  
What?

LISA  
What?

BETH  
What're you doing?

LISA  
You're the one who sighed: what were you doing—'re you bored already?

BETH  
No.

LISA  
Then what was the sigh?

BETH  
Can't a wom—a mother—I was just—I ... it was just a sigh—it was taking the edge off.

LISA  
I didn't know there was an edge?  
Did you feel an edge?

ALICE  
There's always an edge.

LISA  
Really? Razor or cliff?

ALICE  
A little bit of both—Cinnamon or Raisin?

LISA  
Definitely cinnamon. I hate the way the raisins get between my / teeth.

BETH  
Alright: don't do that.

LISA  
Do what?

BETH

That tag team thing that you do. Don't tag team me.

LISA

Stop.

ALICE

You stop.

BETH

Both of you stop.

LISA

I'm sorry, we're just glad you're here. We're playing.

BETH

Monopoly is playing; you two are ganging up and I wish you would stop. You don't need to entertain me; you don't need to entertain us. Or yourselves.

ALICE

Oh, we definitely need to entertain ourselves.

LISA

Ok, we'll stop.

BETH

Save it for your child.

ALICE

But then when else can we practice?

BETH

You don't need practice, dear. You could teach lessons already. Donna, are you with us?

DONNA

Hmm?

ALICE

Mom? you alright?

DONNA

What—I'm fine, why?

ALICE

Your just so quiet.

LISA

It's not like you.

BETH

It's really not.

DONNA

What is that supposed to / mean?

ALICE

Yeah, what's that supposed to mean?

LISA

It means ... what it means.

ALICE

No more wine for you: you're getting mean. And by mean I mean mean.

LISA

I didn't mean it like that: / I meant it—

ALICE

mean.

LISA

—like: we're playing still, right?

ALICE

We have to stop playing now. Right?

LISA

And *this* is *my* first.

ALICE

So, catch up.

LISA

Don't worry, I will. Now who's being mean?

ALICE

Shut up.

(There is a small silence.)

DONNA

Can we open a window in here? It's a little ...

I got it. LISA

No, I got it, / it's my mother— ALICE

Fine: go ahead. LISA

Thank you. ALICE

Thank you. DONNA

You want I can open a door. ALICE

No need: window's good. And it's "she's" honey: "*She*'s my mother" I'm not an it. DONNA

We're all "its" Mommy. ALICE

We're all she's too. LISA

Good point. BETH

I'm just trying to help. Thank you for cracking the window. DONNA

Flashes? BETH

... No. DONNA

I went through them last year. Believe me it's nothing to be embarrassed about. BETH

Thank you, I menstruate just fine. DONNA

ALICE

Okay then: this just became fun.

LISA

The window too much for you?

BETH

Not at all. Honey, do you have a ...

LISA

You want a blanket?

BETH

No, I brought a sweater, I'll get it if I need it.

LISA

I can get it for you.

BETH

I don't need it. If I do I can ... You just sit.

DONNA

I'm sorry, I just need the air. For the / circulation.

BETH

Of course.

DONNA

Of course.

ALICE

You don't have to apologize.

DONNA

I'm not. I'm just explaining.

LISA

Nobody needs to explain. Nobody needs to apologize: we can just ... be.

BETH

Now *that* sounds like something out of the sixties.

ALICE

Thank you.

NARRATOR

Alice goes to offer a high five to Beth which is unacknowledged and withdrawn [by Alice) before it can get awkward.

(And of course in the time it took for the Narrator to say the above line ... it got awkward ...)

ALICE

Alright then: This is fun. ...  
I'm sure you've been wondering why I gathered us all together here tonight.  
I'm donating a kidney.

DONNA

... What?

ALICE

To the cat. She clearly has a drinking problem: have you seen the floor around her water dish?

(slightest of pauses as no one responds.)

It's everywhere.

LISA

Cheese?

DONNA

Where *is* the cat?

BETH

Lady Gaga.

DONNA

I know the name. I know your cat's name for godsakes.

BETH

No one said you didn't.

ALICE

Under the bed.

BETH

She hides.

LISA

She doesn't like strangers.

Who's strangers?  
DONNA

To the cat.  
LISA

Gaga.  
BETH

She doesn't like company: no one's strangers.  
ALICE

You're a little strange.  
LISA

You're a little stranger.  
ALICE

You're the stranger.  
LISA

So, she doesn't like ME.  
ALICE

I've been waiting for the right to time to say something.  
LISA

Oh, then keep waiting: 'cuz you know we'll only have to get rid of her.  
ALICE

It is was it is.  
LISA

'Guess it was bound to happen.  
ALICE

Sooner or later.  
LISA

Do you two do this all the time?  
DONNA

Do / what?  
LISA



ALICE

What?

BETH

It's their thing. Can you just stop? It's ... a little juvenile.

ALICE

Don't make me be an adult now.

LISA

I was thinking of giving it up for Lent.

ALICE

When is Lent?

LISA

I think it's the stuff that collects in the dryer.

ALICE

We don't have a dryer—Can we get a dryer?

LISA

We have a blow / dryer.

BETH

Your father and I are getting a Divorce.

(Pause.)

LISA

Booya.

NARRATOR

Lisa high fives her mother who half-heartedly receives.

ALICE

(To Donna:)

They've been divorced for six years now.

DONNA

. . I thought so, I just didn't want to say anything.

BETH

Oh, you have to say something: it's the only way to make them stop.

LISA

(That's what she said.)

(It is all Beth can do but roll her eyes.)

LISA

I'm sorry, are you suffering us?

BETH

(I know why the cat hides.)

(LIGHT SHIFTS as <sup>4</sup>...)

NARRATOR

And we all have another drink.

(during the above line: another drink all round.)

BETH

Goddammit it why don't you just admit you're getting menopause like the rest of us and buy yourself some pills.

LISA

Mommy?

ALICE

Mother.

DONNA

Don't call her mother: I am your mother.

LISA

Your both— ... I'm not doing this anymore. I can't do this anymore: I can't deal with it.

(To Alice:)

Fix her.

NARRATOR

Lisa exits deeper into the rest of the apartment. There is a slight pause ...

ALICE

Are you happy now?

---

<sup>4</sup> **EARLY EVENING:** insults have been spewed. Offensive, Defensive positions have taken place

DONNA

I don't need to be fixed.

BETH

Well, she wasn't talking about me.

DONNA

Oh no, no one talks about you. You couldn't stand the whispering.

BETH

At thirty degrees below?

DONNA

Put on your sweater.

ALICE

Stop it. Just stop it. Jesus—

DONNA

Don't.

ALICE

Jesus. Jesus jesus jesus: Jesus fucking H Christ. God. What was I thinking; That we could all get through one night without ... Fuck!

DONNA

Please don't talk like that; it isn't / ladylike.

ALICE

Ladylike went out the window when we said, "I do". Your version of it anyway.

BETH

That isn't fair to talk to your mother like that.

ALICE

She's my mother I'll talk to her the way I want to.

DONNA

I know when I've / overstayed my welcome.

ALICE

Oh, siddown, Mother: you can't drive.

DONNA

Then call me a cab.

ALICE

No one takes cabs anymore. / You mean call you an Uber.

DONNA

Then drive me home.

ALICE

I'm not driving you home.

BETH

I'll drive / you.

ALICE

No one is driving anybody home.

NARRATOR

Beth gets up and crosses to the door Lisa exited through.

BETH

Honey, are you alright in there?  
I'm just gonna. ... Yeah.

NARRATOR

Beth exits following after Lisa.

LISA (offstage)

Go away.

BETH (offstage)

You found Lady Gaga?  
Sorry.  
OK. I'll leave.

NARRATOR

Aaaaaand returns.

BETH

She ran under the bed.

DONNA

Lisa or the cat?

BETH

She doesn't like strangers. So, I guess, I must be a stranger. In my own child's home.

DONNA

So, I take it we're talking about the cat.

ALICE

Mother.

BETH

... Fuck you.

I can't believe I said that. That felt liberating. I have been wanting to say that for three years—all night. God, that felt great.

ALICE

My mother is too much of a lady, so ... I'll have to say it for her: In your twat.

BETH

... Oh my god.

(LIGHTS SHIFT as all have by this time taken another drink.)<sup>5</sup>

NARRATOR

Lisa re-enters: new scene:

LISA

Sorry, wha'd I miss?

DONNA

Nothing we're just catching up. Letting dinner digest.

LISA

How many glasses have you had?

BETH

My second. Why?

ALICE

We aren't counting tonight. This is my last night of binging.

DONNA

So soon? Are you?

ALICE

No.

LISA

No nobody's—not yet. But she has to cleanse the body as it were.

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<sup>5</sup> **AFTERNOON:** Happier times for each; looking forward to the evening ahead

ALICE  
Prepare the temple.

LISA  
Foam the runway.

ALICE  
Grease the wheels. Ready the / anchor.

BETH  
Stop.

ALICE  
You stop—Split the rails--OK, I've stopped.

DONNA  
You're sure this is what you want to do?

ALICE  
To be Mommies? Yes. Yes, Mommies, we want to be Mommies too. And that's why we wanted you over.

DONNA  
So, you *are* ... ?

ALICE  
No. We want to celebrate. And we can't celebrate once we're preppers / because—

LISA  
Because then we couldn't all drink.

ALICE  
Exactly: because everything might make us want to throw up. And who wants to celebrate like that?

DONNA  
You mean the way your father celebrates every other holiday?

ALICE  
That's not his fault but yes: no; no one gets to throw up here. We will throw paint instead.

DONNA  
What?

ALICE

Like we did when we were kids.

DONNA

Oh, yes, when you “helped” me.

ALICE

You returned fire, pretty good.

LISA

She’s trying to tell you she wants you to paint the baby’s room.

DONNA

Ohhh my .. honey, I don’t know ...

ALICE

Oh, pleeeeeease. please please please.

BETH

You paint?

ALICE

Yes, she paints. And she was very good. Growing up we always had our bedrooms painted—anything we wanted: Forests, cartoons, seascapes; she could have made a living at it.

DONNA

I .. hardly [think so,] but thank you / all the same.

ALICE

Really. She’s just being modest .. for some reason ...

BETH

Do you still [paint] .. I mean [even if it’s] just for yourself?

DONNA

No, I [hardly pick up a brush anymore—not for me,] but for you [two, my children]: yes.

BETH

So why would you stop?

LISA

(Mother.)

BETH

No, I'm curious. Someone has an artistic streak ... why would they give it up?

LISA

She's not Deanna.

(To Donna:)

Deanna went a little [cuckoo for cocoa puffs, if you ask me].

BETH

(Sincerely interested:)

Why did you stop?

ALICE

Why *did* you stop painting, Mom?

DONNA

It's not important

ALICE

Oh, that sounds important.

DONNA

We're here for you / girls, aren't we—

ALICE

Yes: and us girls want to know.

DONNA

(Just smiles ... )

[it's not interesting .. really, you don't want to me to go into it, trust me, it's rather dull.]

ALICE

Did Daddy make you?

DONNA

No, please, your father [was never like that]. Don't, you know very well [he would never]—It's not interesting.

ALICE

Was it .. me?

DONNA

oh my god, no.



ALICE

Then why then? Really?

DONNA

“Really?” Like, / I’m going to lie to you?

LISA

You know your daughter; she’ll never move past this ...

DONNA

[Fine] ... I don’t know—because ... it’s gonna sound stupid.

LISA

(Holds up a small painting toward the camera as she hands Beth the picture that has been sitting framed on a table)

This is hers.

DONNA

Oh my god, where did you get that from?<sup>6</sup>

(dialogue continues As Beth “receives the painting [within camera view] and looks it over—her countenance remaining objective as to the artwork’s content and quality:)

ALICE

I took it. Can’t have it back.<sup>7</sup>

BETH

(Returning the picture to Lisa to return it to its proper place of honor:)

[This is very nice, thank you for sharing ... ] So, what was the reason? Because it’s starting to sound sinister.

DONNA

It’s silly—because I I saw things and it—it *changed* the way I saw things. And that changed the way I felt [about things] ...

ALICE

Like what? ‘Splain it to me.

DONNA

Oh my [god] ... Alright: Look out the window. You see that—the shade under the tree?

ALICE

Not the sunset? I like the sunset.

---

<sup>6</sup> Playing the ever humble artist—she has been fully aware the picture has been there ever since the girls decorated after moving in.

<sup>7</sup> Playing her part as well—fully aware that Donna’s known of the picture’s home for, shall we say, years ...

DONNA

[OK] both .. so,; under the tree: it feels cooler to me .. where there's shade and and where the sun is hitting: a little warmer. Do you feel that or is it just [me]?

BETH

Can't say that I [do] ...

ALICE

I do, Momma

BETH

Are you cold?

DONNA

That's not—no, I mean:...

LISA

I get you, Mommie Miller.

BETH

You do?

DONNA

Before you were born, I took up painting you know: seriously for a while .. and I tried to do it—bring in some money into the house. Your dad / never tried to stop me.

ALICE

I didn't know this / about you.

DONNA

You don't know everything, little girl. Well, I I sold a few [paintings] in the day but you know: but if I were to look out at that lawn and I found I was starting to stop seeing the shade and the light and the warm and the cool and just see different patterns of green. A maybe little yellow (and you could do with a little watering) and I .. stopped seeing *grass*. It was just colors and pigments. Then shapes and nothing was .. it didn't have a feeling it was just so .. scientific and all; and it scared me; What if I stopped hearing *music* like that and let it turn into just a series of notes and timing and ... and I wanted to experience everything not just break it down into components and who wants to live like that? So, yeah, I stopped; till it went away.

BETH

Maybe you gave up on it too soon. Maybe it was just your mind retraining itself—a growing phase, not replacing anything but adding a layer.

DONNA

I thought about that but ... I gave it some time and it .. wasn't [going away and it wasn't for me]. It was exciting for a little bit, it made me think of Picasso and Van Gogh and you know how their paintings weren't real life but .. maybe for them they were. Maybe that's how they ended up seeing things but I didn't want to [give up the] ..

ALICE

My momma's deep.

DONNA

And it took a good amount of time to get my my ... sight back, you know. Little projects, ok. But if I—And your father—I don't know where you got the idea he stopped me—he never ... And he doesn't even know and he doesn't need to .. He's going through enough.  
But I *will* paint your baby's room. Anything you want. Any time. Every year: Every phase she goes through.

LISA

Or he.

ALL (in varied response.)

Or he.

BETH

(Raising a glass:)

Or she.

ALL (in varied response)

Or she.

BETH

Or it; or they. Am I using the pronoun right?

DONNA

Now *that*, I can't—I don't understand.

ALICE

To my poor sick Daddy.

DONNA

You had me till then.

ALICE

To the chemo.

LISA

To the chemo.

(They all drink, but Donna, who almost does, but in the end doesn't.)

BETH

Change is hard.

DONNA

I hate the chemo.

BETH

Has he lost all his hair?

DONNA

Twice. First the natural way. Then everywhere else.

BETH

Everywhere else will grow back.

DONNA

Hmm.

ALICE

Mother. Yuck.

DONNA

What yuck?

ALICE

Yuck.

LISA

Get your mind out of the gutter young lady.

BETH

If your mother or I'd never visited the gutter, little girls, you two wouldn't be here.

ALICE

Ah. Yuck.

DONNA

That's why it's called yuckin'.

ALICE

Oh my God did my mother just say that?

NARRATOR

Lisa high fives Donna who responds albeit softly.

LISA

(To Beth:)

That's how you do it.

BETH

I'll keep that in mind.

(Donna finally takes a drink. The rest follow as <sup>8</sup>...

LIGHTS SHIFT

As they lower their glasses they are all in the midst of light banter—talking over each other:)

LISA

(As she lowers her drink—continuing:)

Then she—what? Ran another ten yards to the front / door—and bwaaaaa: all over the new tile.

BETH

Enough / now s she's not even here to defend herself.

DONNA

No stop.  
Stop.

ALICE

Exactly. That is exactly how it happened.

BETH

It isn't fair.

ALICE

It was *her* tile.

LISA

Who's trying to be fair? We're just trying to be honest.

BETH

And that's why your sister wasn't invited?

---

<sup>8</sup> DUSK: All are in a good mood now. The wine has begun to relax them each.

LISA

And because she's not my sister.  
Did you give birth to her? I rest my case.  
(As BETH starts to object again:)  
Are you still married to her father?

BETH

He's your father too.

ALICE

Here we go.

LISA

No, here we don't go.

BETH

Don't talk about your father like that.

LISA

Why not? You should hear what he says about you.

(There is the slightest of pauses.)

BETH

What does he say about me?

ALICE

If I wanted someone to throw up on the tiles, I would have invited *my* father.

LISA

I don't know, I never speak to him.

BETH

(Letting it go—to Donna:)  
How *is* the chemo going?

DONNA

We have good days and bad days.

BETH

And this is?  
Any sign of remission? That's what you call it right—remission?

DONNA

We caught it late.

ALICE

Daddy's stubborn: refused to go the doctor for what—two years: three?

DONNA

*Stage three, almost—just past ... He's uh ... he's a fighter.*

BETH

Good for him. How / many—

DONNA

There are four stages. Five if / you count—

LISA

To Daddy.

(Indicating the difference between the two men:)

He's father. He's Daddy.

ALICE

To Daddy.

(LIGHTS SHIFT as they drink. There is a slight moment.<sup>9</sup>)

LISA

Because I thought it was the right thing to do!

DONNA

To leave your ... wife in the middle of her ... pregnancy?

LISA

I have no job. They gave me no warning, Babe, you know that. It's the sensible thing to do.

ALICE

No, it's not—I can't believe you! You waited till we were all together before you—to bring this up?

LISA

I didn't want—I knew you would go into—it's going to be OK.

BETH

God, you can't even say it, can you?

DONNA

DON'T. This is about your daughter going to boot camp, playing soldier, while my daughter has to fend for herself.

BETH

Men do it all the time.

DONNA

And that's supposed to make it right?

---

<sup>9</sup> **NIGHT:** the wine is speaking now: a bombshell has been dropped: responses are based on gut feelings and not sober logic.

ALICE

I don't want you going to some fucking / war.

LISA

I'm not going to war. I'm—I'll ride a / desk.

BETH

That's just what they tell you.

ALICE

That's what they tell you. They lie!

DONNA

Why didn't you ask us to / help?

LISA

ENOUGH!

You can't help us cuz every dime you have goes to Deanna's rehab and your your husband is [dying]— ... And I'm trying to support us through this fucking insanity.

ALICE

Insanity?

LISA

No. That's not what—

DONNA

I know your trying. But maybe this was a mistake.

LISA

... Which part? Having a baby or us in general?

BETH

You can't start off as a General, darling.  
It was a [joke] ...

(Drink.)<sup>10</sup>

BETH

Oh my god that ... what was it ... an art piece? I didn't understand it at all but I knew she was heading out of control.  
[Donna:] Maybe you would [understand], you're an artist.

DONNA

What?

---

<sup>10</sup> **SUNSET:** earlier the height of wine's joy is expressing itself as they share stories ...

NOTE: as we continue it becomes less important that ALL drink but that the woman in focus drinks, (in this case BETH).



Deanna. BETH

What about ... DONNA

My step-daughter, Deanna, she went to art school. BETH

I never went. DONNA

No, Deanna did. And after that [is what she's talking about]. LISA

What? DONNA

Maybe the same thing [happened to her] ... If you want to tell it, [go ahead].. BETH

Really? LISA

Is this about? ALICE

Yes. LISA

Yes: tell her. ALICE

What? DONNA

It's your home. BETH

Ok then. LISA

I know. ALICE

DONNA

What? Tell me what?

LISA

Deanna went to “art school”. I know you didn’t but .. After she graduated she would do this performance art at festivals or showcases or whatever they call them.

BETH

Honey, she isn’t here / to—

LISA

She would throw up this huge screen or a sheet or something unless [they had] a white wall and she would project Facebook.

BETH

And she got in trouble for that.

LISA

So, she changed the name to f’book but everybody knew what she meant and the double entendre [didn’t hurt]. She she’d project this f’book. And she’d sit there with in uh a folding chair. With a little table. She’d scroll through her phone and we’d see her image looking through her whaddo you call it?

ALICE

Messages. Posts. Noti/fications

LISA

Messages. And you see “Christy was live” projected up on the screen or ... OK, so she swipes right and there’s “Christy’s *live* event”. And it’s just some random bullshit phone video of some café band. And meanwhile Deanna pours herself a drink and isn’t really watching because who does, right? Usually you see three-five seconds of it and you scroll up and past it but we can’t because it’s there on the screen and Deanna hasn’t changed it. She just drinks her drink. She finishes her drink. Two full minutes have definitely gone by: we know that because there’s a clock on the corner you know recording the time span and then Deanna pulls a gun out of the cushion of the chair she’s in.

DONNA

I thought you said it was a folding chair.

LISA

Really is that you're take away on this?—And she puts it, the gun, under her chin and pulls the trigger. Blood everywhere and just as soon as we recover: the café turns into the scene of one of those mass shootings and people are running and the band has stopped playing. Mass hysteria and then the picture goes black. “Cynthia *was* live”. Get it?

DONNA

Oh my god .. she's dead?

LISA

Who—no, Mother Miller, it was an art piece.

ALICE

The blood was fake, Mom. It was a prop / gun.

DONNA

What?

ALICE

Deanna's fine.

BETH

She is in rehab.

ALICE

Well, she's in rehab.

DONNA

For shooting herself?

ALICE

Nobody shot anybody.

LISA

She was trying to make point—/(as was I) ...

DONNA

Who's Cynthia?

ALICE

Weren't you listening?

BETH

She meant Christy—you meant Christy was live. She usually tells it so much better than me.

LISA

Holy fuck, I'm trying to make your [Beth] point here and you've [Donna] got me lost on the minutiae.

BETH

I'm just saying if you're going to tell a story be consistent. Because that's when we knew she had a drinking problem.

LISA

[It was a cry for help.]

DONNA

I don't get it.

NARRATOR

(a little annoyed by it all:)

A moment. They all laugh, not necessarily together or for the same reasons ... followed by .. what else:

(LIGHTS CHANGE as they drink.<sup>11</sup>)

DONNA

"L-B-G-T-Q-R-S ..." how many letters are there now?

ALICE

We plan take them all. Slowly. While you're sleeping.

DONNA

No, really what do they all stand for? I know Lesbian, Bi—Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual—

ALICE

Transgender.

DONNA

Gender: fine. See, that's what I mean. Queer.

LISA

What?

DONNA

Queer for Q?

---

<sup>11</sup> **NIGHT:** DONNA clearly is the first to fall to the spirits. BETH tries to hold her own, to outlast DONNA, as ALICE & LISA watch on in amusement.

ALICE  
Or Questioning.

DONNA  
What? Q's the next one, right?

BETH  
I'm staying out of this one.

ALICE  
Q is for Queer or Questioning.

DONNA  
Why?

LISA  
More like "what or who" "Who am I ... I don't know yet; I'm still working that out."

DONNA  
Question: not Queer, because you / already have—

LISA  
Because Queer can be insulting / depending on who you—

DONNA  
What; why? / How—

LISA  
It's like calling someone odd or different.: not right: queer. You get it, right?

ALICE  
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning.

DONNA  
R? LBGTQR ... ?

ALICE  
... Rarely.

DONNA  
S?

ALICE  
Sometimes.

DONNA

... Is that all of them?

ALICE

Yeah. Yeah, Mom, that's it. Isn't that enough?

DONNA

It was easier when it was just just other. You make it all too complicated.

LISA

Other?

ALICE

Some people just say LBGTQ plus.

DONNA

Plus. Same thing: "Other" "plus", right? Just .... other.

LISA

How is that the same thing?

DONNA

It's ... simpler.

LISA

Simpler; how: you mean like heterosexual and ... "other"? Normal and "other"? So, I'm not normal; we're not normal; your daughter isn't normal?

DONNA

I see what you're trying to do.

LISA

I'm not trying to do anything; I'm just repeating back what you said first.

DONNA

I never said normal; did I?

LISA

The fact that you don't even know what you said—whether you said it or not—tells me you thought it.

DONNA

I said other. I remember what I said, I said other.

LISA

While you thought normal. Other and normal.

DONNA

Why're you—?

ALICE

Why're you picking on my Mom?

LISA

Because this . . . this is what you're going to be crying about later. She is going to be crying tonight because her mother called her abnormal.

(Sensing Alice's wanting to shut down the conversation:)

No, no I don't want her to—I want you to know how you effect Ally. She's going to be crying and I'm going to be holding her. I just want you to know.

DONNA

... Well ... now I know. I'm sorry; I didn't mean . . . anything; I'm sorry. It's just I didn't ... Have you thought I might be crying tonight too? Both of us. You think this is what ... I grew up and this this wasn't normal, alright? This wasn't. This was ... but I ... I'm not wrong that this isn't normal or that this is the new normal. And it gets some getting used to. And now you're having a ... wanting to have a child—her egg in your womb and some donor sperm and it's all just : it's not normal, no. Help me out here.

BETH

Oh, I got no pony / in this—

DONNA

Really?

BETH

Really.

DONNA

... You see this is this why ... you're all ganging up on me now ... Just know. You know. I cry at night. Too. Nobody holds me. Nobody.

LISA

This is NOT the time to make this about you.

DONNA

Excuse me?

LISA

*We* are going to be having a baby. *You* are going to maybe be grandmothers. Maybe. Because if you look at our child or say one thing about her or him or

Lyric or whoever that he she or it is not normal I swear to god you will never see her—him or US again.

DONNA

You ... can't. We have rights

LISA

Do you? Do you?

DONNA

We do.

LISA

Have you looked them up? Because we have.

DONNA

I'm sure you have.

NARRATOR

Donna starts to pull herself back onto her feet (so I assume she's been sitting / this whole time).

ALICE

You need help?

NARRATOR

Really? Interrupt me?; I have so few lines.

DONNA

No.

ALICE

You need help.

DONNA

I need help.

(There is a slight standoff: All waiting on the Narrator ...)

NARRATOR

Beth moves to help Donna to her feet.

DONNA

[No, don't: you might hurt:] Your back.

BETH

Don't worry about my back. Can we close the window now?

DONNA

Do what you want. You're going to anyway.



ALICE  
Harsh.

DONNA  
Truth.

ALICE  
Why are you being like this?

DONNA  
Why are you? Did you invite us here just to insult us like this?

ALICE  
Who's insulting—I think maybe you've had too much to drink.

DONNA  
Little girl, I have not had too much to drink, thank you. I am clearheaded as hell.

BETH  
And menstruating; don't forget menstruating.

DONNA  
Are you saying ... ?

BETH  
You said it not me.

(DONNA chooses not to respond.)

ALICE  
OK, then. I'll put on the coffee.

DONNA  
I'm going to the [bathroom.]

BETH  
I'll make the coffee.

NARRATOR  
OK: let's breath here. Donna and Beth have both left the room. Lisa and Alice share a look, a moment, whatever you want to call it and Lisa follows her mother into the kitchen. Alice takes a drink as she stares out a window.

(LIGHTS SHIFTING thru again:)<sup>12</sup>

NARRATOR

Lisa again re-enters from the kitchen.

LISA

So, what are they doing?

ALICE

Nothing. Just sitting there.

LISA

And *my* mother?

ALICE

The same.

(They continue to watch.)

LISA

You know what they're doing, don't you?

ALICE

Yyyyeah.

LISA

Should we call them?

ALICE

No, they'll come in eventually. They'll get tired [of waiting on each other].

LISA

At this rate they could be here till Tuesday; when the real party's happening.

ALICE

God, can you imagine them in the same room with Jennifer?

LISA

I can't imagined them with Karah.

ALICE

Fuck, no.

We're doing the right thing then, right; having it just us then, right?

---

<sup>12</sup> **AFTERNOON:** ALICE's frustrated tension switches to anxiety/curiosity as move to an earlier moment of this evening.

LISA

Two bomb parties rather than one party that bombs—yeah, I knew it sounded stupid while I was saying it.

ALICE

And yet you continued [on and said it anyway]: good commitment, Babe. [Yeah, and my] mom's idea of a good party is doubling the onion soup mix in the sour cream.

LISA

And crudité.  
How long're you gonna let 'em suffer?

ALICE

I just wanna see who flinches first.  
It's only been ten minutes; one of 'em's bound to give.

NARRATOR

But Lisa is already on the phone.

ALICE

Oh, don't ruin / the fun.

LISA (on phone:)

Mom, this is stupid. Come inside. Yes, we see you. We see both of you. Because she's not going to call her.

ALICE

(Acquiescing with her own phone)

Fine.

LISA (on phone:)

Because she's not.

ALICE

It's ringing.

LISA (on phone:)

You don't need to make an entrance. We both know—we all know / you're here

ALICE

Pick up.  
Mom answer the phone.

LISA (on phone:)

Be the adult.

ALICE

She's getting out of the car.

LISA (on phone:)

You win. You happy now? Maybe you can beat her to the—  
(But she's been hung up on)

Bye Mom.

NARRATOR

Alice opens the door as DONNA is just reaching the porchway.

ALICE

Mommie!!!

DONNA

Hey, honey, I saw you were calling but I was just on my way in so [I didn't pick up]. Fixing my make-up. Lisa.

ALICE

You want a drink?

DONNA

I just walked in.

LISA

Does that mean why don't I have a drink in my hand already or ... ?

DONNA

It means I just walked in.

ALICE

(Regarding Donna's purse.)

Just put your purse on the table. There's only the four of us. No one's going to steal it.

DONNA

You didn't ask your sister?

ALICE

Her sister's in Iowa.

DONNA

Oh; I guess so.

NARRATOR

And yet Donna doesn't set the purse down.  
Meanwhile:

(And BETH is at the door. )

LISA  
Mom.

ALICE  
Momma B.  
You want a glass of wine or a beer?

BETH  
If that's what you're having.

DONNA  
I guess I'll have what you're all having.

ALICE  
Two fire bombs coming up.

DONNA  
What?

LISA  
She's having wine.

DONNA  
What's a fire bomb?

LISA  
You don't want to know.

BETH  
Your sister says hi.  
Sends her love.

ALICE  
Hi.

LISA  
Hi back.

(DONNA hesitates—not sure how she should respond ...)

ALICE  
No one else is coming, Mom. Just us.

DONNA  
You're sure?

ALICE  
Aren't we enough?

(keep it within reach.)

BETH

Why?

DONNA

(BETH rolls her eyes.)

Who wants first?

LISA

Mommie?

ALICE

And finally the purse is set down; traded in for a glass of wine.

NARRATOR

You're getting us drinking pretty fast ... should we be worried?

DONNA

(Setting down her purse to take the wine..)

It's a party.

ALICE

For four.

DONNA

Yes. For four.

ALICE

Because she could've—you could've brought ...

DONNA

We're divorced.

BETH

I know but ... it's a family thing, right?

DONNA

It's a girl thing.

ALICE

Right.

DONNA

LISA

To us.

(They each drink separately.<sup>13</sup>)

DONNA

This is ... I like this.

ALICE

I knew you would. You wanna take the tour?

DONNA

I've been here before.

ALICE

You wanna see what we're gonna do.

BETH

I took the tour on Wednesday.

DONNA

Have you moved anything?

ALICE

No but we're going to. I want your advice.

DONNA

OK then. [After you.]

NARRATOR

I don't need to [tell you they leave them room here, do I?]. yeah, you get the idea.

ALICE (Offstage)

(As they turn a corner in the hallway:)

[This is gonna be] the babies' room.

NARRATOR

Leaving Mother and daughter, Beth and Lisa ...

(BETH takes a drink: a beat.)

BETH

What do you want?

---

<sup>13</sup> NO CHANGE: the same scene continues.

LISA

What?

BETH

How's her father doing?

DONNA (Offstage)

The same.

LISA

Maybe she doesn't want to talk about it. Tonight is ... new—just us. We just wanted to get together; you know? We never see each other ... like this.

BETH

We need a reason to see each other—something you're not saying?

LISA

Wow. I don't know whether to pour you more or make you stop, already.

BETH

I'm here for the show. That didn't come out right. I love you, I'm sorry.

LISA

Back at ya.

BETH

Deanna wanted to be here ...

LISA

I know: she asked if she could skype in. But they wouldn't let her. Rules. Go figure.

BETH

Go figure.

LISA

You're doing the right thing.

BETH

So are you. I'd help if I could.

LISA

I know. We just want you here to have you here. Isn't that enough? I'm not Deanna. Deanna's not Deanna. You're doing the right thing, OK?



BETH

You said that.

LISA

Thought maybe you'd hear it this time. Now say it after me.

(There is a brief pause. LISA waits.)

BETH

Oh, you're serious.

LISA

"I'm doing—

BETH

The right thing. OK, I said it. Now you.

NARRATOR

(as DONNA laughs in the next room, LISA sips and BETH drinks down her drink.)

Donna can be heard laughing in the next room.

BETH

I'm gonna need another.

LISA

*That's my Momma.*

(Making a toast:)

Girl's night.

BETH

To you, honey.

NARRATOR

And everybody's back:

ALICE

(Enters with DONNA in tow:)

Are you toasting without us?

DONNA

You have all night. Don't you work tomorrow?

NARRATOR

Lisa refreshes everybody's drink, / followed by a toast

LISA

It's early.  
"Girl's night."

ALL

(independent of each other:)

"Girl's night".

NARRATOR

They drink.

(As LIGHTS SHIFT<sup>14</sup>)

ALICE

I wish we had a fireplace.

BETH

Why?

ALICE

I just feel like throwing my glass into the fireplace. Doesn't that feel like a throw your glass into the fireplace moment? You know: "To Daddy"—drink—fling—

NARRATOR

And the glass flings from Alice's hand in the midst of her "demonstration"—

ALICE

—ohhh shit.

NARRATOR

—but being plastic nothing breaks: just wine is sent flying.)

LISA

Great style, numbnuts.

ALICE

Hey.

DONNA

It'll come out of the carpet. You just have to—

BETH

Thank god it wasn't red. What're you do—who're you calling?

---

<sup>14</sup> **EARLY EVENING (END OF DUSK):** The wine has done it's work. All moods are different and not necessarily in sync.

ALICE

Cleaning.

NARRATOR

Lisa, of course, has grabbed her phone.

LISA

(On her phone:)

Looking up—

(Reading:)

“It’s inevitable. You have a wine party. Wine will get spilled. Blah blah blah. Blot don’t rub.” Are you rubbing?

ALICE

Are you moving?

LISA

It says we need—

DONNA

Club soda, salt and boiling water.

BETH

It’s easier to remove wet than dried.

LISA

This says you need white wine.

ALICE

Why?

BETH

To dilute the red.

LISA

Shit you know your stuff.

DONNA

Well it’s not red. Well it’s not exactly white. It’s more of a blush.

ALICE

No, it was white; mine was white; yours is the fruity stuff.

LISA

Cuz we know you like the fruity stuff.

DONNA

(Responding to Alice:)

Thank god. You want me to boil the water?

BETH

You can't let it dry.

LISA

It says to hit it when it's wet.

ALICE

Hit it?

LISA

Not hit it hit it. You know, "hit it". And a rubber band—

(Still reading:)

No: this is for a table cloth. Is it just on the carpet? (and these are just ads).

NARRATOR

Beth uses a wash cloth—I don't know where she got a wash cloth—she musta gone into the kitchen for it—sue me, I missed an exit—anyway she and Alice are actually attending to the spill while Lisa is still staring at her phone.

BETH

(Using a wash cloth as she and Alice actually attend to the wine:)

Blot. Don't rub.

ALICE

Blot. Don't rub it.

LISA

Yeah, don't rub it.

ALICE

Don't.

BETH

What? Oh—my god—stop. I don't want to hear that.

DONNA

I've got the water boiling. / Where do you keep the salt—And the soda—

NARRATOR

Apparently Donna's was in the kitchen too ...

(DONNA's visual shuts off)

ALICE

Microwave it.

DONNA (Offstage)

It's on the stove—Do you have club soda?

LISA

Are we going into labor already? Boiling water, clean towels.

BETH

Get off that thing and make yourself useful.

LISA

She did it.

BETH

Really? You are so not ready to be a parent.

LISA

Thank you, Mother.

BETH

I call it like I see it.

ALICE

I've got it.

(Gets up: done.)

BETH

Are you sure?

LISA

Yes. It's gone.

BETH

Is it?

LISA

Can you see it? Good job, Babe.

BETH

It's not a matter of whether you see it. It's a stain. A stain will attract more dirt. You may not see it now because it "looks" clean. But if you don't actually get it all up it will seep into the shag liner and that's where the "stain" will settle.

NARRATOR

Beth takes a towel and begins reblotting the same areas Alice covered.

LISA

Wow, that's a lot of "air quotes" Mom.

BETH

I'm surprised you didn't read that on your phone.

ALICE

Shag liner: is that even a word?

LISA

Shag liner or "Shag liner"?

DONNA (offstage)

Do you need the salt or no?

LISA	ALICE	BETH
No.	No.	Yes. (Blots again.)

ALICE

Yes.

LISA

Oh shit.

ALICE

What?

LISA

I looked up shag liner. Should I turn Safe Search Off?

LISA	ALICE	BETH	DONNA
Yes.	No.	No.	What?

DONNA

(Entering:)

Here's the salt.

NARRATOR

OK, so everybody's in the room now. Beth is blotting. Alice is I don't know where—Lisa's on her phone and Donna just entered with the salt.

Lisa?  
BETH  
(Shows her the towel she's been dabbing with.)

Fine.  
LISA

Salt?  
DONNA

Thank you.  
BETH

NARRATOR  
Beth salts and blots, eventually joined by Alice. Meanwhile Donna exits back to the kitchen.

BETH  
The salt will absorb the wine away from the shag. When it dries you can vacuum it all up.  
We'll have to stay—you need to—have stay away from this area.

LISA  
Why don't we just put a towel over it?

Coming through.  
DONNA

NARRATOR  
Donna re-enters with a one or two quart sauce pan of water.

Where do you need this?  
DONNA

There and there.  
BETH

Here.  
ALICE

NARRATOR  
After re-wetting the last area Donna joins Beth and Alice to attend to the floor

Lisa?  
BETH

LISA

Yes Mother.

BETH

It's your rug.

LISA

It's not our rug it's the landlord's rug.

BETH

It's your deposit.

LISA

Well, when you put it that way.

NARRATOR

And finally, picking up a towel herself, the prodigal daughter descends to the scene of the crime.

LISA

So, what's the water do? You're just getting it wet again.

BETH

My god did you even listen to anything in home Ec? Blot.

LISA

What's Home Ec?

I know what Home Ec is—they stopped offering it before I was in grade school.

ALICE

You mean kindergarten.

LISA

I didn't go to kindergarten.

ALICE

You didn't?

LISA

Nope. Straight to first grade.

ALICE

I didn't know that.

LISA

There are many things you didn't know. And still don't.



ALICE

That explains so much. Like how you never learned how to socialize.

LISA

I socialize. Only when I want to.

ALICE

You turned the safe off didn't you?

LISA

I'll never tell.

BETH

Ok. Now that has to fully dry. That has to dry.

LISA

Dry. Got it.

BETH

These go into the washing machine.

LISA

(Giving names to the assorted wash rags:)

Really? But we can't separate Rory from Lorelei and send Sookie out to be washed without Jackson; they didn't even do that in season three—And what would Emily think?—I think we should wait till they're all ready for the hot tub.

BETH

You are so funny.

ALICE

You need help up?

LISA

I need another drink.

BETH

No, thank you.

DONNA

I think we all need another drink. You need another glass.

LISA

You sure you don't— ...



DONNA

To getting old.

BETH

No. Sorry. Some things I don't / drink to.

LISA

To Shag liners.

DONNA

To what?

ALICE

You don't want to know.

DONNA

Well then: to things we don't want to know.

(as LIGHTS SHIFT as they all drink: <sup>15</sup>)

NARRATOR

Lights [shift] ... you get the drill ...

DONNA

He changed you.

BETH

What're you / talking about—?

ALICE

Don't.

DONNA

He did. He did—I saw it.  
And now he's gonna—*she's* gonna leave you too.

BETH

Excuse me?

ALICE

Nobody left.

LISA

Nobody's leaving anybody.

---

<sup>15</sup> **NIGHT:** Past the point of no return ...

DONNA

Sure, you support this.

(Unaware she is referring to Lisa as *he*.)

He can't do anything wrong can he? Except maybe being what God made him.

ALICE

No more for her.

BETH

You're done.

DONNA

She doesn't need to be alone.

BETH

You think I want my daughter going overseas?

LISA

I'm going into the Coast Guard. No one's going overseas.

DONNA

Until they deploy you.

ALICE

Have you already signed up?

DONNA

Why did you turn her into this if you were going to leave her?

ALICE

Mother!

(BETH is beyond words.)

LISA

I'm. Trying. To.

DONNA

I'm sorry. It's not your fault. It's not your fault. It's not your fault. It's [the wine talking].

ALICE

It's no one's *fault*.

DONNA

No, it's his. It's his. It's Peter's.

BETH

Who's Peter?

DONNA

It's not your fault.

(LISA shakes her head to  
BETH: "no, don't go there")

ALICE

It's no one's fault, Mom. Nothing's wrong with me.

DONNA

When I told your father, he cried. Did you know that? He didn't cry when he got diagnosed with cancer. But when I told him about you [he cried].

(Slight pause.)

ALICE

You know why he cried, Mom? Because he saw it in your eyes. You're the only one who doesn't get it, Mom.

DONNA

Oh, I get it. I get it. I'm wrong. Everybody else is ...

NARRATOR

Donna grabs the linen from off the floor:

DONNA

I bought you those for you [for your wedding] ...

(Grabs the washrag from the floor, she throws it across the room:)

Get this in the wash before you ruin the set.

NARRATOR

Lisa takes the towels and sets them aside.

DONNA

How do you do it—how do you do it—how do you just [let her be who she is] and move on? Don't you care?

BETH

And what, lose her? For what? She's my daughter. I have a step daughter in rehab that I turned my back on too many times a... and we're all suffering [for it].

ALICE

Mommy, please.

DONNA

No. No, everybody just shrugs it off and says that's the way it is. But it's not—it's not. Your father ... god ... I can't talk to him. You—you talk to him every time the phone rings I can always tell it's you just by his ...

ALICE

Because Daddy accepts me. Her mother accepts her. For who we are. It isn't a fucking phase.

DONNA

If that boy.

ALICE

Peter. His name is Peter. And he raped me. *Because* I was gay. He didn't turn me into this. *That* was his reaction. I was already gay, Mom.

DONNA

You .... You never told me.  
You told your father?

ALICE

No. You told him. I told you first. 'cuz I couldn't— ... I shouldn't have to go through this now. We got married because we love each other. We didn't get married because a fucking window opened up and we better hurry up before it closes again.  
Why don't you get this?

LISA

Babe. [She's drunk, she doesn't know what she's saying.]

ALICE

No.  
You want to hear the details of that night?

DONNA

... No.

ALICE

Good. Save us all an ugly [moment]... and if my wife wants to go to the Coast Guard or Afghanistan or wherever so she can ... we will work that out. I don't need you to fight my fights, I don't even need you to accept me, I need you to not be in my way.  
And I need you to go home.

DONNA  
(She sets down the glass.)

She changed you.

ALICE  
(Decides against another attempt at correcting her:)

Right Mom.

DONNA  
(Gathering herself together to leave ...)

Does your father know?

ALICE

Talk to Dad.

LISA

I'm calling you an Uber.

DONNA

I can drive myself.

LISA

Mrs. M.

DONNA

I'll wait in my car.

ALICE

Give me the keys.  
You leave it open; you always leave it open.

NARRATOR

Donna gives Alice her car keys.

ALICE  
(As she goes:)

I love you, Mom.

NARRATOR

Donna .. says nothing. She exits. There is a pause.

BETH

You want me to leave too?

LISA

No. Just wait it out. Put on a movie or something.

BETH

I'll ... I'll do the dishes then.

LISA

Or the dishes. Fine. Do the dishes.

NARRATOR

Beth exits into the kitchen. Lisa goes to hug Alice but ...

BETH (Offstage)

Where do you keep the ...

ALICE

I'm coming.

NARRATOR

But Lisa is the one who exits into the kitchen, leaving Alice alone for the moment to empty the last of off her glass.

(LIGHTS SHIFT as:) <sup>16</sup>

NARRATOR

Alice moves to a cupboard and opens up a new bottle. She pours herself a glass of wine (presumably her first). She then goes to look out the window.

ALICE

Holy god, you won't believe it.

LISA (Offstage)

What, Babe?

ALICE

She's here.

LISA (Offstage)

Who's here?

ALICE

(oh my god)—They're Both here.

(Considers her drink as she watches.)

Well, let's see how long this stand-off lasts.

(A soft pause as LIGHTS shift to ...)

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<sup>16</sup> **AFTERNOON:** We are back to before we started.



NARRATOR

End of play

I decided halfway through that I was Deanna. So, I got a name. Didn't get an invite but you know .. that's the way it goes sometimes, ain't it?

Family. You gotta love 'em.

END

page #		FOR REFERENCE USE: (chronological script [for rehearsal purposes only] available upon request)		TIME OF DAY	linear order
start	end	starting dialogue	ending dialogue	lighting	chronological
2	5	DONNA: <i>You were purpled.</i>	ALICE: <i>Girl's night.</i>	EARLY EVENING	TENTH
5	13	BETH: <i>Have you thought of names yet?</i>	ALICE: <i>Who wants a refill? It's still got a chill.</i>	LATE AFTERNOON	FIFTH
13	22	BETH: <i>(sigh) --&gt; What?</i>	BETH: <i>I know why the cat hides.</i>	AFTERNOON	THIRD
22	25	BETH: <i>Goddammit it why don't you just admit you're getting menopause like the rest of us and buy yourself some pills.</i>	BETH: <i>... Oh my god.</i>	EARLY EVENING	NINTH
25	33	LISA: <i>Sorry, wha'd I miss?</i>	BETH: <i>I'll keep that in mind.</i>	AFTERNOON	FOURTH
33	35	LISA: <i>Then she—what? Ran another ten yards to the front / door—and bwaaaaa: all over the new tile.</i>	ALICE: <i>To Daddy.</i>	DUSK	SEVENTH
35	36	LISA: <i>Because I thought it was the right thing to do!</i>	BETH: <i>You can't start off as a General, darling. It was a [joke] ...</i>	NIGHT	TWELFTH
36	40	BETH: <i>Oh my god that ... what was it ... an art piece? I didn't understand it at all but I knew she was heading out of control.</i>	DONNA: <i>I don't get it.</i>	SUNSET	SIXTH
40	45	DONNA: <i>"L-B-G-T-Q-R-S ..." how many letters are there now?</i>	BETH: <i>I'll make the coffee.</i>	NIGHT	ELEVENTH
46	54	LISA: <i>So, what are they doing?</i>	(page 50:) ALL: <i>"Girl's night".</i>	AFTERNOON	SECOND
54	63	ALICE: <i>I wish we had a fireplace.</i>	DONNA: <i>Well then: to things we don't want to know.</i>	EARLY EVENING	EIGHTH
63	68	DONNA: <i>He changed you.</i>	ALICE: <i>I'm coming.</i>	NIGHT	LAST (thirteenth)
68	68	ALICE: <i>Holy god, you won't believe it.</i>	ALICE: <i>Well, let's see how long this stand-off lasts.</i>	AFTERNOON	FIRST