

Monday, July 28, 2008

But-to --

Wait, here's po-mo version - butt-too a face off of enormous proportions - ass backwards and up yours - if a pitbull bites you stick your thumb up its arse -

December 20, 2001

#1 in series - the garage band plays

"it's not dark yet but it's getting there" - b. dylan

floating weeds

act one.

(black. we hear music - raw, percussive. or, quirky, skewed, odd ball take - music from tom wait's beautiful maladies)

(lights up)

(bennie, alone, standing on a corner with a gas can. mid-to-late 20's, lean, angular. everything that comes out of his mouth hints at sarcasm and irony. you're not sure if he's talking to you or making fun of you. bennie's a guy you like and don't like at the same

time. we hear urban street sounds - cars,  
people, sirens)

bennie: excuse me? excuse me? sir? i ran out of gas.  
i'm on my way home from the doctor's, my wife's not  
doing too good and i hate doing this kind of thing, i  
do, i'm not hustling you, i'm not. i got a sick wife,  
she's diabetic, and i got a lot on my mind and yes, i  
admit it, i don't have a job, so i do hate doing this,  
but if i had a few dollars i can drop her off back at  
our apartment, pick up some money there and drive right  
back here and pay you back. sir? sir?

(man moves away, following him for a bit)

bennie: i don't blame you, i hate doing this and i hate  
having to put you in this kind of position, it all  
sucks, it does - i feel shame, you feel guilt, what can  
i say, the finger points at the world economy, here's  
some words of advice --

(holds up his middle finger, lets it sit there  
in silence)

-- yes, it's true, i'm a mime, never give money to a  
mime, i understand and share your world view...

(looking around for a bit. sees a woman)

excuse me? excuse me? hello? i feel silly and  
ashamed, my wife's expecting and we're on our way home  
from the doctor's -- never mind, never mind, please, i'm  
sorry for interrupting you - my wife's having problems  
with her pregnancy and we took her to a specialist for  
these types of things but they wouldn't see her because  
we don't have the right insurance --

(woman's moving away)

bennie: yes, yes, well, i'm sure you got a lot on your  
mind -- let's see, prada shoes or a huge buttery  
croissant, pick up my daughter from practice who wants  
to grow up to be mia hamm or pick up my son who wants to  
grow up to be mia hamm, or maybe, yes maybe, we can  
stroll right by some poor pregnant girl dying a slow  
death because some fat, horny, suburban, bitch, was in  
too much of a hurry to pick up some mr. alexander  
crotchless panties so she can wear them for her husband

- who's, by the way, boning his secretary even as we speak - while she, the woman, that's you, spends her time *conversing* with a mime --

(holds up his middle finger, wiggling it emphatically)

(black out)

(bennie and earl standing on a street corner. bennie's reading a japanese *manga*. earl is holding a *manga*, too, but is staring ahead. beat. bennie looks at earl. earl is 20'ish, earnest, slow)

bennie: earl?

earl: huh?

(beat)

bennie: nothing.

(bennie goes back to his manga. looks up again)

bennie: you look hungry.

earl: i do?

bennie: un-huh.

(bennie goes back to reading. earl thinking about what bennie has said)

bennie: (notices earl) what?

earl: what?

bennie: you were gonna say something.

(earl shakes his head and goes back to reading, then looks up. licks his lips to see if he's hungry)

earl: you hungry?

bennie: no. what? you hungry?

earl: i dunno. maybe.

bennie: i wasn't. but... maybe a little. why, you  
wanna get something?

earl: you wanna?

bennie: (thinking) if you do, i do.

earl: (thinks) okay.

bennie: i'll pay you back, all right?...

(black out)

(bennie holds a bag of doughnuts. earl stares  
at it)

bennie: want one? what you want? glazed, maple bar,  
cake - cake doughnut's good place to start, start with  
the whites, work your palette up to the stronger, more  
robust chocolates - oh, what's this, could it be a  
*doughnut hole*?

(bennie moves the bag to earl)

earl: (reaching) un-huh, yeah, i love doughnut holes -  
-

(bennie pulls it away)

bennie: can't. no such thing. doughnut "hole"?  
doughnut "hole"? when's the last time you ate a  
"hole"? a hole is a hole. nada, nothing, knock-knock  
yoo-hoo, no-one-home - so how can you eat a doughnut  
hole, huh, how?

(earl stares uncomprehending)

bennie: okay, okay, never mind, here, here, have a  
doughnut hole...

(earl reaches, bennie yanks the bag away)

bennie: can't, no such thing...

earl: come on bennie, stop it, give me a doughnut hole, man, come on...

bennie: okay, okay, stop whining, jeez, just having a little fun, i know you love your doughnut holes...

earl: know why? now you see it...

(pops the whole thing into his mouth)

earl: now you don't! wanna see me do it again?

bennie: sure, sure, yeah....

earl: (accompanies himself with carnival music sounds)  
the one, the only, earl the magician, now you see it,  
now you don't --

(pops it into his mouth, a big grin, chewing)

(fade to black)

(gloria lit standing, riding a bus home from work. mid-30's. still attractive, but weary. holds onto the overhead loop. tired, it's been a long day. carrying a stuffed, grocery bag. a seat opens up and she's about to go for it when someone else takes it. goes back to holding the loop. she suddenly turns, someone has groped her. looks around. not sure who it was. upset. someone does it again, she whips around, looking)

(fade to black)

(gloria's apt. bennie and earl sprawled out on the couch watching tv. both in white undershirt tanktops. gloria enters,

struggling to close the door with her hands  
full of the bag and purse)

bennie: (glancing up) gloria...

earl: (noticing and imitating bennie)

gloria...

(earl and bennie don't offer to help. gloria seems to have no expectation from them to do this. they continue watching the tv. as gloria moves by them, bennie grabs the newspaper from her bags, takes the sports section and tosses the rest to earl. gloria continues across and exits. bennie quickly peruses sports, nothing, decides he wants to look at the entertainment section. notices earl has it, reaches over and takes it and tosses the sports section at him. earl gets upset, exits.

gloria enters dressed in an old t-shirt and her underwear. she looks at the newspaper sections on the table. gets the remote and changes the channel to something she wants to watch. earl reenters, snatches the entertainment section from bennie and quickly exits. bennie looks in the direction of the exiting earl. then back at the tv, then at gloria. he takes the remote from her and changes the channel. gloria stares for a beat, shows no emotional comment, then reaches down, grabs a magazine and scans through it)

(black out)

(lights up. gloria and bennie slow dancing in a pool of light. they're both in their underwear. they move for a moment in silence)

bennie: you want me kick mr. arantes' butt? i can, you know.

gloria: bennie...

bennie: shit, i will - do that kind of thing to you...

gloria: bennie...

bennie: he's got no right pulling that kind of shit,  
i'll kill his ass...

(silence, dance)

gloria: i was talking to sarah.

(notices bennie's expression)

gloria: she likes you, bennie.

bennie: what's she got now, the plague?

gloria: she watches out for me, you know.

benny: and i don't?

(pause)

gloria: she says i shouldn't marry you.

bennie: what do you mean?

gloria: that it wouldn't be a good thing

(beat. bennie puzzled)

bennie: i didn't ask you.

(gloria watches him)

gloria: yeah, i know.

(dance in silence)

gloria: you're a good dancer.

bennie: sometimes, if i want to be.

(does a move, gloria glides along)

gloria: hmmm...

bennie: i got the moves...

gloria: you're a regular stallion, aren't you?

bennie: wild and free.

gloria: nothing's free bennie.

(gloria watches bennie)

gloria: yeah, you are.

bennie: yeah, i am. i do what i want, go where i want.

(gloria leans her head on bennie's shoulder.  
they continue to dance)

(cross-fade)

(earl alone on a fire escape. we hear city  
sounds - cars, people yelling. earl pulls out  
a GUN and pretends to be firing)

(fade to black)

(lights up. gloria doing make-up in front of  
the mirror. disheartened by what she sees.  
earl appears behind her and smiles at her in  
the mirror)

earl: you're the most beautiful woman in the whole wide  
world.

(gloria smiles, then looks at herself in  
mirror. sadness)

gloria: i gotta go to work....



(starts to get up, then stops. looks at earl.  
musses his hair affectionately)

gloria: what am i going to do with you, huh?

(earl shrugs happily)

gloria: you like bennie, don't you?

earl: (nodding) un-huh. he takes me everywhere. he's  
like a brother.

(gloria sits down next to him. looks at earl  
for a beat)

gloria: we're a team, you and me. remember? we're a  
team.

earl: we're a team. you and me.

gloria: people may point and say, 'you're nothing', but  
we don't let anyone ever say we're nothing. why?

earl: empty's one thing but nothing's another.

gloria: (nodding) nothing means something's supposed  
to be there but it's not, something's missing. but  
empty means --

earl: (interrupting) all the litter's been cleared out.

gloria: it's real clean and pure. like a nice, shiney  
house with no one home and we can fill it with whatever  
we want. what do you want to put in there?

earl: you and me.

(gloria musses his hair again)

gloria: you...

earl: is bennie part of the team, too?

(gloria watches earl for a bit)

gloria: we'll see.

(gloria gets and up leaves)

(earl looks at himself in the mirror. then takes out the *gun* and draws a few times, checking out how he looks. notices his face. gets caught up making weird faces. then puts the gun back in gloria's drawer)

(fade to black)

(bennie and earl on a street corner. the gas can sits on the ground next to them. earl watches bennie. seems to be more intent on imitating his gestures than listening. he makes small movements to indicate he's watching bennie's gestures. we get the sense he's memorizing them so he can do them later to be like bennie)

bennie: i know it doesn't look like i'm looking, but finding a job is a tricky thing. it's not easy, hell, look at all the people out of work, they ain't stupid. but they aren't smart either. finding a job is like getting a woody. a woody, you know what i mean, an erection? you can't go looking for it. you can't. the harder you try, what? 'come on, come on, where are you, i need you now, sucker, come on, shit, attention, salute your commanding officer sucker'. no way it's gonna happen. you just gotta relax, wait and then...

(nodding to an imaginary erection)

bennie: remember earl, no job's gonna be there if you run after it, same thing with a hard-on. and how am i gonna tell your sister this? huh? but i'm telling you this so you understand something about me. my method. why i do what i do and why you should pay attention to what i do. and why we can't tell your sister what we do when she thinks we're out pounding the pavement.

(fade to black)

(lights up. bennie, earl and sarah. sarah is early 20's, very pretty. they're all on the couch, watching tv. earl starts smacking his lips. as if he's tasting something. trying to figure something out about his taste buds. bennie notices)

bennie: (irritated) earl...

earl: what?

sarah: (to bennie) don't pick on him.

bennie: i'm not picking on him.

(silence. earl is smacking his lips again. bennie stares at him disgustedly)

bennie: jesus, fucking christ...

sarah: leave him alone, bennie. it's all right earl.

bennie: (mimicking sarcastically under his breath) 'it's all right, earl'...

(earl gets up and goes out to the kitchen. bennie and sarah. bennie watches her for a beat)

bennie: what'd i ever do to you? sarah? huh?

(no response)

bennie: i haven't done nothin' to you and yet you talk about me like i was shit. shit this, shit that. i'm not shit, you know. there's a lot i have to offer. a lot i can do, things you don't know i can do --

sarah: rent? you pay any rent?

bennie: no, not yet, but i will as soon as --

sarah: groceries? you help out with food, house stuff or even utilities? what about the -- (continue)

bennie: (overlapping) beer, and not the cheap crap,  
too, micro-brewery stuff...

sarah (cont.): -- car? gas? do you ever gas it up?  
taking it into the garage, you ever pay for any of that?

(silence. bennie gives up and stares at the  
tv)

sarah: i see you.

bennie: i help out in other ways, you just don't know.

sarah: i see you.

bennie: why you always saying that shit - 'i see you',  
like you got x-ray eyes or something, 'i see you'.

sarah: you. what you are. see, i see you bennie but  
gloria doesn't.

bennie: you don't see shit. and if you do, it's shit  
that you see 'cause that's what you want to see not  
what's there 'cause there ain't no shit here. this  
ain't a shit house, my mother didn't raise no shit boys,  
you don't see my shit, you're looking at your own shit.

sarah: i don't need what you got. i ain't even  
interested.

bennie: what i got i ain't offering, trust me.

sarah: good.

bennie: good, too, 'cause it's way too special for  
someone like you.

(pause)

sarah: what do you mean, 'someone like you'?

bennie: like you. you. look at you. i can see you.  
i can see you just like you see me. i see you.

sarah: what do you see? what do you see?

bennie: gloria doesn't see but i see.

sarah: i see you.

bennie: you don't see me, i see you.

sarah: i see you.

bennie: you don't see me 'cause if you did see me you'd see that i'm the best thing that's happened to gloria cause she's the best thing that's ever happened to me.

(pause)

sarah: i see you.

bennie: oh, stop it with this, "i see you" shit, stop it!

(silence)

sarah: i see you.

(earl reenters with a cookie stuffed in his mouth and a plate full of cookies)

earl: i could feel something in my mouth. you know, making it taste good 'cept i didn't know what it was...

(holds up cookies)

tadah!...

earl: (offers cookies) this is what was in my mouth, want some...

(no one takes any. earl is making his carnival sounds and stuffing a cookie into his mouth. bennie gets up)

bennie: (mumbling, exiting) 'i see you'...

(sarah takes a cookie and looks in the direction that bennie exited. looks at earl who's watching her with his mouth full of cookies)

earl: now you see it, now you don't.

(sarah stares as earl stuffs the cookie into his mouth and holds up his empty hands)

(fade to black)

(gloria and sarah on gloria's lunch break. sharing gloria's lunch from her paper bag. gloria staring at sarah's face)

sarah: what?

gloria: (touching sarah's face) that...

sarah: it's just a little nick i got as a kid.

gloria: pretty deep.

sarah: i was hiding under a car, face up. then i jumped up, bang. forgot i was under the car.

gloria: look at this. i liked to watch my dad shave, i liked watching him do it. so one day i thought i'd do the same thing. my mom came in, i had the razor in my hand - 'look mom, i'm daddy'. my mom went practically nuts. it was just a little blood, not too much but you'd think i'd slit my throat...

(pause, watching sarah)

gloria: you and bennie would make a good couple.

sarah: come on, don't say that. he's your boyfriend.

gloria: 'cause you look good together. you're both nice looking people.

sarah: gloria, don't say that.

gloria: you are. you're pretty, not like me.

sarah: no, no, i'm not.

gloria: you are.

sarah: (snapping) i'm not.

(awkward silence)

sarah: he found something yet? bennie?

gloria: (shaking her head) un-uh.

sarah: how much time you gonna give him?

gloria: (shrugs) earl likes him.

(sarah is silent. gloria notices and feels she has to respond)

gloria: earl likes him, they spend time together. i like him.

(they eat for a bit)

sarah: how's your boss?

(gloria shrugs)

sarah: still doing weird shit?

gloria: i've been outta work a long time. we need the money, sarah, it pays pretty good. (beat) as long as no one messes with earl. as long as i can take care of him...

(awkward pause)

sarah: i used to think it was my fault. how could it not be? the shit happening to me. (beat) it's not your fault gloria. it's not.

(fade to black)

(the pill adventure part 2 - frozen tableau: bennie and earl sitting at a park bench and table. earl is wearing a *trenchcoat* and *dark sunglasses*. bennie is staring at some *dollar bills* he holds in his hand. hold for a beat, then unfreeze. bennie gives it back to earl.

we hear a *dog bark*. bennie sees it OS. then bennie looks back at the money earl holds. it's important to have the audience making the connection of the dog OS to the money earl holds)

bennie: a dog. you stay here, don't move, i'll be right back. i'm in the money...

(bennie gets up and moves off stage, whistling for the dog to come to him)

(earl feels something in his trenchcoat pocket and pulls it out. places it down on the table and stares at it. getting upset. bennie returns with no dog. he sits down, frustrated. notices earl staring down at the table. looks down at what he's staring at)

earl: a pill.

bennie: that what it is, huh.

earl: un-huh.

bennie: small sucker, huh.

earl: un-huh.

(bennie notices earl staring at it)

bennie: why you doing that?

earl: doing what?

bennie: well... you're just... what, you wanna take it?

earl: no...

bennie: why not?

earl: well...

bennie: what's a matter, it's just a pill earl. you want me to get you some water or something?

earl: no, no, it's not mine. the pill, it's not mine.



bennie: it's not yours?

earl: (shaking his head) un-uh.

bennie: it's not your pill?

earl: un-uh.

bennie: then why the fuck you staring at it? what's it doing there then?

earl: i don't know.

bennie: what you mean, 'you don't know'?

earl: i found it. in the pocket. it was just there.

bennie: yeah?

earl: (nods) un-huh.

bennie: yeah?

(earl nodding. bennie looks at it for a beat)

bennie: (picks it up) i wonder whose it is?

earl: i dunno.

bennie: i wonder what kind of pill it is?

earl: i dunno.

(pause. they both stare at it intently)

earl: scares me.

(bennie looks at earl)

earl: what if i take it and die?

bennie: what if - what?

earl: take it and die.

bennie: what, like it's going to jump out of my hand, pry open your mouth, and then force its way down your throat?

earl: no, but i feel like i might take it, you know. like i don't want to but i can't stop myself, you know. it could be poison or something, i don't know, and i'll die. the pill. it makes me outta control.

(bennie starts to playfully insert the pill into earl's mouth. getting rough and forceful)

bennie: open up, come on, open up -- (continue)

earl: (overlapping) what are you -- don't, don't  
bennie -- (continue)

bennie: -- take your medicine, take your medicine i'll boy...

earl: -- (cont.) -- please, don't do that, don't do that bennie, bennie...

(bennie is forcing the pill into earl's mouth when earl explodes, throwing bennie down violently)

earl: ahhhhhhh!!...

(silence. earl stares at bennie on the ground. he's not moving. bennie's knocked unconscious)

(black out)

(*bennie's dream.* bennie lit in pool of light, wearing the dark sunglasses. earl lit upstage, facing upstage, rubbing himself. through the dream, we hear a *dog bark* in the distance)

bennie: you know what really feels good? one of those hard-ons you wake up with every once in a while. i had one this morning - ahh, man... you haven't had one like this since you were 15. it's got a life of its own, it could throw a party for itself, no one could

show up and it'd be just fine. confucious say, man with hole in pocket go around feeling cocky all day - yes! and you don't have to piss either so you can enjoy its beauty without disturbing it by having to take a leak or feeling somehow it's not really *bonified* because it's somehow inspired by drinking too much beer the night before and that somehow takes away from its authenticity. no, this is just a boner. a rock hard penis that just stands up and says 'fuck you'.

(black out)

(lights up. bennie lying on the ground. earl stands above him, wearing the sunglasses and trenchcoat, staring down at bennie who moans and struggles to get up)

earl: bennie?

bennie: (grabbing earl) i ought to fucking break your -

(bennie stops. thinking)

bennie: umm, listen. i dunno but i think i had a premonition. a job. yeah, a fucking job, earl.

(black out)

(night. gloria and sarah on a hill overlooking the city. sipping beers, looking up at the night sky, waiting for something. a star *book* sits near by. gloria notices sarah taking a hand full of pills)

gloria: lot of pills.

sarah: headaches. bad...

(sarah pops another beer and gulps down the pills)

gloria: (popping another beer) that many?

sarah: i keep feeling it's a brain tumor, something bad like that.

gloria: did you go to the clinic?

sarah: they won't see me anymore. assholes. they say it's all in my head.

(breaking down)

sarah: maybe it is, maybe it isn't, but i can't take that chance you know.

gloria: sarah...

sarah: (composing herself) maybe i should kill myself, huh. take the whole bunch and put myself out of misery?

gloria: sarah? sarah, it's all right. i'm sure it's just a tension headache, you know. stress. that's what it usually is, huh?

sarah: don't you think about it?

gloria: what?

sarah: killing yourself. just ending it all. you know. just the whole thing?

(gloria is silent for a beat)

gloria: i have to take care of earl. who'd watch out for earl?

sarah: (sipping beer) i would.

(they both start laughing)

gloria: would you? really? if something happened to me?

sarah: something going to happen to you?

gloria: no, but i mean if something did. would you?

sarah: well, sure.

gloria: promise.

sarah: yeah. gloria?

gloria: (grabbing the book) what time is it? is it about time? it's supposed to start at 11:30.

sarah: (checking her watch) yeah, it's... hey, it's 11:45.

(both looking up towards the sky)

sarah: (looking up) i don't see anything, do you?

gloria: (checking the sky) nah, nothing.

sarah: (popping a beer, handing it to gloria) shooting stars, shit.

gloria: (scanning the sky) shooting stars...

(black out)

(bennie with a gas can, checking out potential clients. earl walks up staring into his coffee cup)

bennie: what's wrong?

(earl holds out his cup. bennie takes a sip and hands it back. sees someone)

bennie: excuse me sir? sir? (person walks by) shit.

(bennie notices earl still staring into his coffee cup)

bennie: what?

(earl reaches into this cup and takes out a dripping coin)

earl: someone dropped a quarter in.

(bennie makes a face, sees someone else)

bennie: (moving away) excuse me ma'am? ma'am? i just ran out of gas and i need to pick up my...

(person walks right by)

-- blah, blah, blah...you ask a fucking question, you get a fucking answer. you get a fucking answer, you ask a fucking question. you get on your knees to pray, you find out you're giving a blow job - blah, blah, blah, blah, blah...

(dog barks in the distance and earl turns to look.)

earl: a dog...

(the dog continues to bark. earl exits in the dog's direction)

bennie: (calling) earl...

(fade to black)

(in the black, we hear earl return with a dog)

earl's voice: look.

bennie's voice: you can't keep it.

earl: it's lost, everybody's said so...

bennie: it's got an owner. look, its collar...

earl: finder's keepers, losers...losers...

bennie: weepers, weepers --

earl: yeah, yeah, yeah...

bennie: (leaning in) easy, easy boy, let's see the license...

(we hear bennie handling the license, the dog snaps)

bennie: jesus!

earl: it doesn't like you.

bennie: oh, shut up, earl. this address is right around the corner. go return it.

(no reponse)

earl?

earl: see, it likes me.

bennie: earl!

earl: okay, okay, don't yell, don't yell, okay...

(pause)

(lights up. the pill adventure part 1.  
bennie with the gas can. earl returns with a long *trenchcoat*, *sunglasses*. earl holds some *bills* up to bennie's face)

earl: fifty dollars. they gave me money.

bennie: the owners? for returning the dog?

earl: (nodding) un-huh.

bennie: that coat, too?

earl: (shaking his head) un-uh. i went by a garage sale. somebody died. they were serving lemonade. (touching his glasses) these were in the pockets. cool, huh.

(hums hawaii five o theme, pretends to be a cop firing a gun)

bennie: what's that?

earl: what?

bennie: that. on the sleeve.

earl: i dunno.

bennie: looks like blood.

earl: blood?

bennie: yeah.

earl: jeez, i dunno.

(pause. bennie takes the money and looks at it)

bennie: for the dog, huh?

earl: (nodding) un-huh.

bennie: 'cause it was lost? they were happy?

earl: un-huh.

(freeze. momentarily hold this tableau.

then,

unfreeze. bennie begins to give the money back to earl when we hear a dog *bark*. bennie looks in the direction, then back down at the money)

bennie: a dog. you stay here, don't move, i'll be right back. i'm in the money...

(bennie gets up and moves off stage, whistling for the dog to come to him. black out)

(lights gradually up. continuation of earlier scene with sarah and gloria underneath the night sky. no stars. sarah is looking through the book with a flashlight. several empty six-packs of beer are about. they're drunk)

sarah: where're the goddamn fucking shooting stars?...

gloria: (shaking her head, muttering) out here, waiting for some stars to fall on your stupid ass head.

sarah: yeah, but stars are so much better than that moon shit. *oh, goddess of the moon, whoo...* stars tell



stories, you can get lost in them. there's orion...  
that's his belt. that's his sword... (looks for a  
beat) big sword, huh? (laughing at her own joke) see,  
stars, not like that moon shit, that's like looking in  
the mirror at your own fat ass - who the hell wants to  
worship some big fat goddess' ass...

(sarah calms down, noticing gloria's mood.  
they watch the sky in silence)

gloria: it's not really night. it's just that the sun  
has died.

sarah: yeah?

gloria: it caught a disease. a human one. and the  
doctor said, open up and let me look at your tongue but  
it didn't do any good.

sarah: it never does. doctors are fuckers.

gloria: and the sun closed its eyes. closed its eyes.  
and its body became numb. (pause) it's so black up  
there and i can't see anything. are my eyes closed?  
maybe i just don't have a body anymore. maybe that's  
the floor and we're the sky and it's all upside down.

sarah: gloria?

gloria: where are the stars? where are the stars? i  
want - (continue)

sarah: (fumbling with the book, overlapping) i don't  
know, there're supposed to be, i guess they're coming...

gloria: (continuing) -- some goddamn stars. bright  
shiney things, bits and pieces of that broken-up sun -  
cut me, cut me so deep...

(sarah watches gloria)

(fade to black)

(bennie on phone, holding lost dog leaflets  
he's torn off walls. looking at the top one.

pretending he has a dog. stretches his neck  
which is still sore)

bennie: (reading) yeah, yeah a tibetan terrier mix.  
(listening) no, no license - i don't know why. what?  
no, no, my place is hard to find, let's meet near here.  
you know ninth and folsom, there's a coffee house there.  
(listening) i don't know how it got way over here. i  
don't know - hitched a ride, i don't know. what?  
(listening) i'm not being a wise-ass, just don't talk to  
me like i don't know what i'm doing, i'm doing you a  
favor, okay, i don't like dogs, i'm a cat person --  
what? (listening) okay, okay, you meet me at the coffee  
house on ninth and folsom, what, yeah, 3:30 is good.

(we hear a large dog *growling* outside and loud  
banging on the door)

earl's voice(outside door): (overlapping) bennie, open  
up! bennie! lemme in!

bennie: (continuing over earl's shouts) now, there's  
this... there's this thing. okay, there's this thing -  
-  
hold on a second, just hold, can you?..

(bennie covers the receiver, opens the door  
and earl scampers in -

earl: ahhhh!!!

(earl quickly shuts the door behind him. we  
hear the dog *growling* outside. bennie wants  
to take a look but earl doesn't want him to  
open the door.

earl: you don't wanna -

bennie: (pushing earl aside) get out of my way...

(opens the door. we hear fierce growl as the  
dog lunges. bennie slams the door shut)

bennie: jesus, fucking christ - that the neighbor's  
dog?

earl: it bit me.

bennie: that's a fucking *chupacabra*, man.

(back to the phone)

bennie: yeah -- no, he's growling at the mailman...

earl: (examining) did it break the skin? maybe it's got rabies...

bennie: what was i saying, what was i saying?...  
(covering the receiver) do something with it!

earl: gloria's not going to like it.

bennie: (back to call) -- what? yeah, i'll be there.  
don't worry i'll be there. you be there okay, you be  
there, bye, bye, see you there, bye.

(bennie hangs up)

bennie: shit. these people don't even care about their  
dogs.

earl: yeah, but it's not their dog, it's the  
neighbor's.

bennie: she said it was okay? to borrow it?

earl: (nodding) un-huh. what do we do with it?

bennie: i dunno, feed it.

earl: what?

bennie: (thinking) spam, everybody loves spam. then  
take it for a walk. they like that, walks.

(earl thinks for a bit and then exits to the  
kitchen. bennie picks up the phone, gets the  
next sheet and starts dialing. waits for  
answer)

bennie: hello? hello, i found your dog jezebel...

(black out)

(gloria's apt. gloria and bennie. gloria's just gotten home from work)

gloria: (upset) bennie.

bennie: ah come on, gloria.

gloria: lateesha let you borrow him?

bennie: yeah, yeah --

gloria: and you actually show up with that dog?

bennie: after i've talked with them and explained the situation --

gloria: wait, wait, i don't get this -- they pay you for a dog that's not theirs?

bennie: no, not for the dog but for the effort i made on their behalf, wrong though i be, so they pay me, or reward me as it were, for being a good samaritan and having their interests in mind. see?

(silence)

gloria: i don't want earl involved in any of this shit. you're supposed -- (continue)

bennie: (overlapping) he's not, he's not, don't worry --

gloria: (cont.) -- to take care of earl, set an example for him. show him things, how to take care of himself -

bennie: i am, i am, jeez, i thought you'd appreciate my entrepreneurial effort --

gloria: -- 'cause otherwise you might as well pack up your shit and leave, you know. the landlord has been asking about you, how long you're staying.

bennie: he can't raise the rent, jeez, he can't do that.

gloria: he can do anything he wants, he owns the place  
--

bennie: yeah, but he can't jack the rent up just  
because i've been sleeping over.

gloria: it's been 3 months --

bennie: give me the contract, okay, i'll look at it,  
talk to him myself, shove it down his throat if he  
doesn't like it, trying to jack the rent up.

gloria: please don't yell.

bennie: i'm not yelling.

gloria: that's how you solve everything, huh. yell,  
yell, fight, fight-

bennie: yeah, well, that's how you got to deal with  
these kinds of guys.

gloria: i can't take it...

(pause. bennie notices gloria's crying)

bennie: gloria? gloria? what's wrong? i'm sorry, i'm  
sorry baby. i am, i am...

gloria: this isn't working, this isn't working...

bennie: yes, it is, yes it is, baby...

(bennie embraces gloria, trying to soothe her.  
fade to black)

(earl and sarah. sarah watching earl. they're  
eating a fruit with their hands, messy)

sarah: earl?

earl: huh?

sarah: what's 7 plus 3?

(earl stares)

sarah: if you add 7 and 3 what do you get?

earl: is this a game?

sarah: un-huh, what is it?

donnir: 7 and 3 is... 10.

sarah: what's the fifth letter in the alphabet?

earl: (counting) "e". no... yeah, "e".

sarah: name a big green fruit, that's red --

earl: did i get it right, "e"?

sarah: un-huh. name a big--

earl: i like this game.

sarah: okay, okay, name a big green fruit, that's red on the inside and full of black seeds.

(earl stares)

sarah: people eat it in summer.

(earl stares)

sarah: it's this big... you cut it into slices. i put salt on it, though most people think that's crazy...

(earl stares)

sarah: watermelon.

earl: oh.

sarah: what's the capital of california?

earl: san francisco. no sacramento?

sarah: yeah.

(pause. sarah stares him)

sarah: you really retarded?

(earl is silent)

sarah: i'm sorry earl. you're not retarded. you aren't. you're too smart. you knew the capital of california.

earl: the capital of america is washington d.c. -- the (cont.)

sarah: (overlapping) yeah, you're smart.

earl: -- (cont.) -- capital of washington is seattle. the capital of reno --

sarah: (overlapping) wow, you know a lot.

(sarah opens purse and looks for something. sucking on fingers to clean them. gives earl a gold chain necklace)

earl: -- is nevada, the capital of utah is salt lake city...

sarah: a little something i picked out for you.

(silence)

earl: for me?

sarah: un-huh.

(pause)

earl: i'm not stupid. there's a lot of things i know that other people don't know. things i see.

sarah: yeah, earl, i believe you.

(pause)

earl: you think people don't believe you when you say you're sick. but they do believe you. at first, they do. but you really don't want them to believe you so you keep saying, 'i'm sick, i'm sick' till they don't believe you.

sarah: why do i do that?

earl: i'm not retarded. i'm just slow. slow like a truck not like a race car. slow not broke. not like something you have to throw away. slow not broke --

sarah: (puts her hand on his face and strokes it)  
it's okay, it's okay, earl, you're all right, you're okay...

(fade to black)

(outside on street. bennie talking to a man)

bennie: no this isn't some kind of joke or something. i thought it looked like your dog, i'm not trying to -- why you getting so pissed off for? i'm not the one who lost his dog, you know. so i was wrong, cut off my legs and call me shorty. hey, i'm the one who should be getting pissed off at you having the gall to get pissed off at me. what? no, if you feel like that, i'm not expecting you to pay nothing. no, no if you want to be an asshole about it, after i've spent all this time dealing with your situation, trying to be a good joe about it and you don't want to pay me nothing you goddamn shit-head, asshole, motherfucker, shithead, asshole -- look, you even got me repeating myself you shithead, asshole motherfucker --

(black out)

(gloria sitting up on the sofa, covered with a blanket. pensive. earl enters and sits next to gloria. he seems agitated)

gloria: (noticing) earl?

(no response)

gloria: earl, what's wrong?

earl: can we...



(doesn't finish)

gloria: what? earl? what do you want?

(no response. gloria watches earl for a beat.  
scoots over closer)

gloria: other people? they don't matter. not to us.  
you and me, we're something. we don't let anyone tell  
us otherwise. we've cleaned out all the old crap, all  
the old garbage --

earl: (interrupts) i feel funny, you know.

gloria: earl?

(pause)

earl: i want to, you know... can you? gloria?

(beat. gloria's expression changes)

gloria: i don't know what you're talking about.

earl: you know. like we used to.

gloria: i don't know what you're talking about earl.

(awkward silence)

earl: i know about you and daddy.

(pause)

gloria: what do you know? earl? earl?

(silence)

earl: am i stupid?

(pause)

earl: am i stupid?

gloria: who said that?

(no response)

gloria: he's dead and gone. no one's going to call you those things anymore. you're not stupid, you're not nothing.

earl: i can still hear him. inside here...

(pointing at his head)

...and i get scared.

gloria: it's over and done with, okay earl.

earl: do you think about him?

gloria: no.

earl: what i did was wrong, huh?

gloria: just stop thinking about it. you don't have to think about it anymore.

earl: you think sarah is pretty?

gloria: why?

earl: what about mommie? was she pretty?

gloria: yeah...

earl: when i couldn't go to sleep. she'd come into my room. she would touch my face, "it's okay earl, it's okay. everything's going to be alright". her hands were so soft. and she'd sing this song...

(earl tries to *hum* the song but can't remember it. gets frustrated)

gloria: you got to let it go earl. it's over and done with. he can't hurt you anymore.

(earl struggles to remember the song, getting very agitated)

gloria: (soothing him) shhhh...

(they sit for a moment in silence. then, slowly, gloria puts her hand down the front of earl's pants. earl looks at gloria)

(fade to black)

end of act one.

act two.

(we hear a *scream of shock*, lights up abruptly, and we see gloria run across the stage after someone.

gloria: somebody stop him, he took my purse...

(she comes back on stage, breathing hard, disgusted)

(black out)

(bennie lit. he's just been beaten up)

bennie: what's the point? huh? you force yourself to wake up, struggle out of bed, pour coffee down your throat - you gotta go to sleep again? you eat some fancy schmancy meal of what, what - free range, hydroponically grown ducks, then you just gotta crap it out? you work day and night, killing yourself to get a few lousy coins in your blistered hands, you just go out and blow it on some fucking fancy schmancy ducks grown in water? you breathe in, what, you breathe out. you live, then what, you die. no heaven. no toilet. no lungs. no food. what's the point, huh, what's the goddamn fucking point!

(bennie's nose begins to suddenly *bleed*)

bennie: shit...

(fade to black)

(gloria's apt. sarah and gloria)

sarah: i can't believe what this world's coming to. in broad daylight, jesus. how's your arm? it okay?

(phone rings. gloria picks up the receiver which is next to her on the couch)

gloria: (on phone) no, i'm sorry, there's no dog here, now please stop calling this number.

(gloria clicks it off and tosses it down)

gloria: fucking assholes.

sarah: he get a job yet?

(gloria shrugs)

sarah: why do you stay with him?

gloria: he makes me feel good. when i'm with him. i forget.

sarah: i'll get you a vibrator. and when you're done it doesn't fart.

(gloria doesn't laugh. silence. sarah notices gloria's mood)

sarah: gloria?

(no response)

sarah: you okay? you want to go to the doctor?

(pause)

gloria: i wake up at night and i'm scared. just scared. scared of my face wrinkling, scared of finding grey hairs, scared my body is falling apart, scared someone is going to attack me, scared i'll lose my job, scared the economy is going to crash, scared that no one will take care of earl, scared i'll be old and i'll be all alone, scared that what i always worried was going to happen yet always believed was going to happen later

is finally happening right now and that it's not going to get better with each passing day, only worse.

(sarah opens her purse and pours out things on the table. sorting through to find something to give. finds earrings)

sarah: here, here.

gloria: where'd you get these?

sarah: here, these are nice.

gloria: (handing them back) sarah.

sarah: what?

gloria: you're doing it again.

sarah: it makes me feel good okay. i just like the feeling. walking through these stores full of all these bright, shiny things. expensive things, things you want, things you can't have and then... they're mine.

gloria: but they're not yours.

sarah: but nothing's ever really yours. that's the problem. you think it is - your clothes, your body, your sicknesses. it all belongs to somebody else. yeah, you think it's yours - 'i have a brain tumor', no you don't, it's a headache. 'i'm dying, please see me' - no, sorry it's all in your head. it's not your illness, it's not your brain tumor, not your body, so what's mine?

(holding things she poured out of her purse)

sarah: this, this, this is mine. i took it. i took it back. me, i stole it away. mine. and now it's yours.

(putting the ear rings on gloria. gloria touches them. smiles at sarah)

(fade to black)

(cloudy night. bennie and earl standing on the street corner. bennie has a *black eye*. he's holding a handkerchief up to his face.

earl holds sarah's star book and looks up at the night sky. he has a pen flashlight he holds in his mouth to read the book)

bennie: look at me. look at me, man. no more dogs. no more dogs. (shaking his head) un-uh. and no more ass-hole motherfucker dog owners. they make me repeat myself. (to earl) they make me repeat myself! hello? hello! (beat) i'm just gonna sit here. in fact, if a dog so much as comes sniffing around i'm gonna bite *his* ass. if something's going to happen, it's just gonna happen. it'll come to me and i'll come to it.

(bennie notices earl reading the *book* and staring up at the sky. a *full moon* begins to appear behind the clouds)

bennie: sarah?

earl: (nodding) un-huh.

bennie: shooting stars?

earl: un-huh.

bennie: i don't see no goddamn shooting stars. see a moon.

earl: a moon.

bennie: a big moon.

earl: a big moon.

bennie: don't keep repeating what i say. (beat) a big fucking moon.

(bennie watches earl. pause)

earl: yup.

(they both stare in silence at the full moon)

bennie: (noticing earl's expression) earl?

(no response. earl is hypnotized)

bennie: earl?

earl: the moon...

bennie: yeah?

earl: feel something?...

(earl begins to lean forward, as if pulled by the moon's mysterious, feminine power)

earl: like what?

earl: whoa...

bennie: earl?

earl: whoa...

(GUN SHOTS suddenly ring out from a passing car. they hit the ground. we hear a car speed away. they get up cautiously and look. see a body OS)

bennie: jeez...

earl: wow...

bennie: hey? mister? you all right? hey, you all right?

earl: wow...

bennie: jeez...

(bennie exits to check. earl looks around. bennie returns)

bennie: i think he's dead.

earl: yeah, he's dead?

bennie: yeah. wow...

(bennie and earl stare for a long beat. the moon continues to glow)

bennie: (noticing) nice pair of shoes.

earl: yeah, he's dead.

(silence. bennie and earl continue to stare at the body)

(black out)

(earl alone. he's watching bennie OS. standing there, looking around)

bennie's voice(os): dead as door nail. anybody coming?

earl: no.

bennie: (os) it's a sign. dead people are always a sign. carpe diem.

(earl hears a sound. a small kitten's *cries*. exits and returns cradling something in his arms. looks around. doesn't know what to do. we hear a *siren*. suddenly bennie tears by him carrying a pair of shoes)

bennie: (running by) run!!!...

(earl, shocked, runs after bennie)

(black out. siren fades into the night)

(gloria's apt. bennie pacing, wearing his new shoes. talking to gloria. during this scene, earl sneaks across upstage to kitchen. then a litte later sneaks back the other way carrying a bowel of milk)

bennie: i was going into all the clothing stores, at the mall? gap, banana republic, politix - see if they needed anybody to work there. earl was with me. i was



doing all the stores. in and out, in and out, you ask  
earl, i tried them all. i saw this --

(phone rings and gloria exits to answer it)

bennie: (continuing) -- suit, though. nice. it was  
real nice, this suit. and i thought one of the reasons  
i'm having a hard time is that i don't look too good. i  
don't. i really don't. i go in there and i'm done even  
before i can open my mouth...

(gloria reenters)

gloria: no. (then, referring to the phone call) you  
answer it from now on, i don't want a black eye.

bennie: what do you mean, 'no'?

gloria: no, i'm not gonna give you anymore money, okay?  
and tell them there're no more dogs here. they're still  
calling.

bennie: this isn't about asking for money, did i ask  
you for money, this is about a job. you want me --  
(cont.)

(phone rings. gloria decides to answer it and  
exits. bennie continues)

bennie: -- to have a job? you want me to have a job?  
i didn't ask for money, i asked you if you want me to  
have a job?

gloria: (OS) what?

bennie: that's why i'm asking for. not money, but if  
you want me to have a job?

gloria: (OS) okay, yes. the answer is yes, i want you  
to have a job.

bennie: okay, okay... then i need this new suit.  
because --

(gloria reenters)

gloria: you're full of shit...

(upstage earl crosses to garage with bowl of milk)

bennie: because, because, yes, yes, that's the way i look, like shit. and no one wants to hire someone who looks like shit.

gloria: you look like shit because someone beat the shit out of you.

bennie: you have to look like money to attract money. like these shoes. seen these shoes? because --  
(continue)

gloria: (noticing, overlapping) jeez...

bennie: (cont.) -- in answer to my question, 'do you want *me* to have a job?', the suit's what's gonna do it.

(pause)

gloria: maybe you can come by work tomorrow. to meet him.

(notices bennie's reaction)

gloria: mr. arantes is not that bad of a guy.

bennie: he grabbed your ass.

gloria: look, he's willing to consider giving you a job.

bennie: he put his hand up your fucking dress.

gloria: don't start with that now, bennie, don't start with it. (beat) i explained our situation and he wants to meet you. he might have something for earl, too. no more of this dog bullshit.

(she spots earl moving towards kitchen. earl sees gloria looking at him and immediately walks backwards from where he came)

gloria: earl?

(black out)

(gloria, earl and sarah looking into the cardboard box)

sarah: oh, it's so cute.

gloria: no, earl. no. this is not going to work out.

earl: i'll take care of it, i promise.

gloria: no, no you won't... (notices earl's gold chain necklace) where'd you get that?

earl: it's mine. i can take care of it, i can.

gloria: remember last time. the fish? and the time before that, i let you have those birds? what happened, huh? i let you have --

earl: i didn't leave the cage open, it wasn't me --

gloria: no, yes, well not like the birds but --

earl: please, please.

gloria: it's what happens after that's the problem, earl.

earl: i'll keep it over a sarah's.

sarah: hey, i don't know...

gloria: sarah, he can't keep it. (to earl) you gotta take it back to the owners.

earl: i found it.

sarah: i mean, it's okay...

gloria: no, sarah. (to earl) then to an animal shelter. you have to take it back so they can find a new owner for it while it's still cute and little.

(earl turns and leaves)

gloria: don't give me that look. earl? don't you give me that look.

earl: (os) my mother woulda let me keep it. she wouldn't be mean like you are to me.

sarah: (calling) earl, you can keep it over my place.

gloria: no, he can't - don't butt into this sarah.

sarah: i wasn't trying to butt in. i just thought... what's the big deal? huh? it's just a kitty. he can keep it over my place, i don't mind --

gloria: you been talking to earl? when i'm not around?

(beat)

sarah: no. gloria?

gloria: who gave him that necklace?

(sarah shrugs, pretending not to know)

(fade to black)

(bennie and gloria on the sofa with a blanket on them watching tv. they're on opposite sides of the sofa. tension)

(they sit for a beat in silence)

gloria: you think sarah's pretty?

bennie: what?

gloria: do you think sarah's pretty?

bennie: what is this?

gloria: well, do you?

bennie: okay, yeah, why?

(silence)

gloria: i'm 35. you know what that means?

bennie: what?

gloria: i'll always be older than you.

bennie: so, i don't care.

gloria: you say that now, but what about in five years, huh? men are such shits. they are, they're shits.

bennie: i'm not a shit, okay, everybody's calling me a shit.

gloria: you like her? sarah?

bennie: what do you mean? sarah?

gloria: do you find her attractive? in a sexual way?

bennie: no. i find her attractive in a non-sexual way, the way i find cars attractive.

gloria: don't be a smart-ass bennie.

bennie: what kind of question is that, 'do i find sarah attractive in sexual way?'...

(pause)

gloria: it's just earl and me. that's the way it's been. it's always been that way. i've been there for him and he's been there for me.

(fade to black)

(earl making instant coffees, singing a song but not really able to remember the tune. it's the one his mother sang to him. *blue skies*)

(fade to black)

(lights up. gloria and bennie finishing making love. gloria slides off from on top of him. gloria, right back to business. bennie still in the after glow)

gloria: i'm just fucking tired of supporting the both of us.

bennie: (catching his breath) what? yeah, yeah...

gloria: when that alarm goes off at 5:30 i hate it bennie. i just fucking hate it. every morning it hurts just the same, you never get used to it --

bennie: why you get up so early, you don't start work till 9:00 --

gloria: (interrupts) to get ready, to put on my make up, to make sure my clothes are all right, so i can catch the bus, so you can have the car to look for work, right? right?

bennie: yeah, yeah, i'm looking...

gloria: then i work all day for some fucking jerk, stop off at the market to buy food for us, take the bus home --

bennie: i cook, i cook...

gloria: -- then i have to fucking wash the dishes afterwards, dry 'em, put them away...

bennie: i cook, i cook, tell earl to wash, he just sits there like a bump on the log --

gloria: (interrupts) and i'm just getting a little tired of the whole thing. look, if you just made an effort, you know. i don't like my job, but i get up every morning --

bennie: (interrupts) you call that a job?

gloria: don't you talk bad about my job. don't you talk bad about it.

bennie: those guys are just waiting for you to bend over those files so they can check out your ass.

gloria: don't you dare talk about my job. at least i work and bring home some money for us. what do you do, huh?

bennie: and i'm not working for that jerk arantes, okay, i'm not working for him --

(earl enters carrying a tray with 3 coffees and the instant coffee canister on it)

earl: hello.

gloria: you should knock, earl.

earl: coffees. i just thought we could all have coffees together. i made it. i bought it at the store.

(sits on the bed with them)

gloria: earl, knock next time, okay?

earl: it's cappuccino, see, in the can. cappuccino in a can.

gloria: earl? this is not like at home, okay? not like when we were kids.

earl: yeah, but it's just you and bennie

gloria: yeah, i know, but you still can't just barge into our room without knocking.

earl: oh... you might be...

gloria: no, nothing like that.

earl: 'cause it's all right, you know.

gloria: it's just, you can't do that okay?

earl: i've seen you.

(beat)

gloria: what do you mean?

earl: i've seen you two.

gloria: you've seen us, what? what, am i missing something here. you've seen us what, earl?

(earl drinks his coffee)

gloria: bennie, what's he talking about?

bennie: i dunno. this coffee's good.

gloria: earl? tell me? earl?

(grabs his ear and twists it)

earl: i just walked in one time and i saw you two... you know...

gloria: what? what, when did this -- you knew about this?

earl: it only happened one time. i was going to say excuse me but you had your back to me. you were having so much fun.

gloria: wait, wait, earl watched us, you and me? and you let him?

bennie: i didn't let him. i just...he was standing there.

gloria: you didn't tell him to go away, or, or close the door?

earl: (sipping coffee) he waved.

gloria: he waved?

earl: un-huh. like this.

bennie: he's your brother. jesus, i didn't know what else to do.

earl: i waved back. like this.

bennie: what was i supposed to do?



earl: then i left. you looked like you were having fun  
gloria.

bennie: we were.

gloria: you asshole, you pervert. (starts to hit  
bennie with a pillow) you goddamn -- (continue)

bennie: (overlapping) he's your brother for god's  
sake, you get mad if i yell at him...

gloria: -- asshole. you should know better than that,  
he doesn't know any better but you, you goddamn asshole  
pervert...

(earl is off to the side, confused)

earl: (mumbling to himself) i know better, i know  
better... (to gloria) i know better.

gloria: you don't know better! how can you know  
better!

earl: i know better!

gloria: you're retarded for jesus fucking christ!

earl: (withdrawing) i know bettter, i know better...

(earl exits)

gloria: earl? earl?

bennie: why you getting so upset? huh?

gloria: look what you made me do.

bennie: i didn't make you do that gloria.

gloria: (getting up) look, what the fuck you made me  
do?

bennie: gloria, i didn't make you do that, okay?

gloria? what's this about?

(she goes after earl)

gloria: (ignoring bennie) earl? earl, wait!

(lighting shift. bennie looks up while talking)

bennie: (calling) okay, okay, i'm an ass-hole cause i don't pay for things yet, but don't say i'm not trying cause you don't know what earl and i do all the time. gloria? i'm not a shit.

(bennie's clothes fall down on his head from above as if thrown from a window)

bennie: (looking up) ahh, man, gloria...

(he starts to pick the clothes up)

(fade to black)

(night. bennie lit on street moving his legs and flapping his arms to keep warm)

bennie: least i got these shoes... you shoulda seen my old man. he didn't care what kind of shoes he had on. holey, stinky tennis shoes what he liked to wear. shoes make the man. start from the ground up's how you build a true foundation. i'm here. this is my house. and these are my shoes.

(fade to black)

end of act two

act three

(bennie and earl standing around. bennie appears disheveled and distracted. earl looks well groomed. he's holding a small bag of doughnuts and looking into it)

earl: bennie? want a doughnut hole? bennie?

bennie: huh?

earl: want a doughnut hole?

bennie: yeah, sure.

earl: can't. no such thing. got you, got you.

bennie: (not laughing) that all you got?

earl: (nodding) un-huh. (offering) have one. (pulls bag away) can't. no such thing.

bennie: okay, yeah, i get it, come on, come on...

earl: you know the difference between nothing and empty? you know?

bennie: (stares for a beat, points to earl's head, poking it) nothing. empty. same thing.

(bennie reaches in and grabs a bunch of doughnut holes. earl watches bennie eating)

bennie: how she doing?

(pause)

earl: pretty good.

bennie: she ask about me?

(pause)

earl: (thinking) no.

bennie: no?

earl: no?

bennie: she didn't ask about me?

(pause. earl thinking)

earl: gloria?

bennie: 'gloria', what? (beat) what, who'd you think i meant?

earl: sarah?

bennie: why would i ask about sarah?

earl: i dunno.

bennie: why would i ask about her?

earl: i dunno, that's what i asked.

(pause)

bennie: what if i dated her?

(earl stares)

bennie: what if i called her up and asked her out on a date.

earl: you want to go out on a date with her?

bennie: see, we never dated. we met each other, 'hi', and boom, we're in bed, doing it, you know. we never had a chance to go through the dating thing. 'how do you do? i'm fine, how do you do? oh, i like your hair, is that a new dress?'

earl: you were in bed with her?

bennie: 'you were in bed with her'? hello? hello? i've been living there at the apartment for how long now?

(pause. earl thinking)

earl: oh... oh.

(earl nods to himself)

bennie: what?

earl: nothing.

bennie: you okay?

earl: you can't come back.

(bennie stares)

earl: that's what she said to tell you.

bennie: what do you mean, 'i can't come back'?

earl: you can't come back. that's what she said to tell you.

bennie: until when?

earl: until when, what?

bennie: until when and then i can come back?

earl: you can't come back --

bennie: i know that, that's not what i mean --

earl: well, that's what you said --

bennie: oh, shut up.

earl: i don't want to shut up.

bennie: you shut up.

earl: i don't want to shut up!

(bennie looks at earl and shakes his head disgustedly. silence. bennie notices earl is upset)

bennie: look at you.

(pause)

earl: what?

bennie: look at you.

earl: what?

bennie: what do you mean, what? you look good. yeah, you look good.

earl: yeah?

bennie: (nodding) un-huh, you look good.

(earl thinking)

earl: have a doughnut hole.

(bennie reaches for the bag and earl pulls it away)

earl: can't, don't exist.

bennie: (grabs the bag) oh, give me the goddamn, fucking doughnuts. (muttering) 'can't, don't exist'...

(earl watches bennie eat)

(fade to black)

(gloria standing on the bus. tired, depressed. someone gropes her, she looks around. suspects who did it)

gloria: (whispering) you do that again and i'm gonna cut off your fucking balls, stuff 'em in your mouth and make you eat 'em. Funny, huh?

(fade to black)

(few days later. bennie and earl standing on corner. bennie looks more haggard, likes he's been living on the streets. earl looks even better. hair slick back and styled)

bennie: look at you...

earl: yeah?

bennie: look at you...

earl: i look good?

bennie: you look hungry.

(beat)

earl: yeah, well maybe. a little. you?

bennie: i don't know, a little.

(beat)

what were you thinking?

earl: me? nothing? you?

bennie: nothing. (beat) how about chinese?

earl: chinese?

bennie: yeah, chinese. let's eat chinese. how about chinese?

(bennie starts to exit. earl doesn't move)

bennie: earl?

(no response)

earl?

earl: bennie?

bennie: un-huh?

earl: you know, sarah...

bennie: earl?

(beat)

earl: you got money?

bennie: what do you mean, 'do i got money'?

earl: do you?

bennie: what do you mean, 'do i got money'? do i got money?

earl: well, sarah said --

bennie: what the hell does sarah have to do with this?

earl: well, she said --

bennie: yeah, i do, i do, jesus...

earl: well, the last couple of times...

bennie: you saying i can't pay for myself, that what you saying?

earl: no, no, it's just the last couple of times...  
(beat) sarah said not to give you anymore money --  
(cont.)

bennie: (overlapping) sarah, jesus, how'd she get in this...

earl: -- that's what she told me bennie.

bennie: i'm not asking for money, when did i ask you for money?

earl: i know you don't bennie.

bennie: i didn't ask you for money, all i said was, 'you hungry', that's all i said.

earl: i know, bennie, but sarah made me promise not to give you anymore --

bennie: i'm not asking for money, jesus, fuck this with sarah - i just said 'you hungry?', it wasn't even my idea to begin with --

earl: no, no you asked me, you said, 'you hungry?', it was your idea, it was your idea and sarah made me promise, she made me promise, i didn't want to --

bennie: forget it. let's just forget it, i'm not hungry. and what the hell does sarah have to do with this, huh, earl, she's always had it in for me, goddamn sarah, so you go ahead, you go ahead and eat, i don't give a shit.

(earl starts to leave)



bennie: what, you're just gonna go and eat and leave me here? just leave me here and go eat without me?

earl: you want me to bring you something back?

bennie: no, no, i don't want you to bring me something back.

earl: well, what then? okay, i'll bring you the beef stew over rice, okay. i'll bring it back.

bennie: no, no don't. i won't eat it.

earl: bennie...

bennie: i won't. forget it earl...

earl: bennie...

bennie: don't fucking bring me back any beef stew over rice!

(fade to black)

(bennie standing there, earl returns eating)

bennie: what? you didn't bring me back any?

earl: you said you didn't want any?

bennie: i can't believe you. i just can't fuckin' believe you earl. i just can't --

(earl pulls out something from his bag and holds it out. bennie stares, then points at earl laughing)

bennie: you, you... get outta here, you... you, you...

(bennie takes the food and pushes earl affectionately. bennie dives into the food, he's famished)

bennie: stomach's goddamn empty.

earl: not anymore.

(earl watches bennie stuff his face)

bennie: (mouth full) you, you...

(fade to black)

(bennie is seated in front of gloria. unsure  
what's going on. not in great shape)

bennie: yeah, i seen him.

gloria: lately?

bennie: why you asking me this?

gloria: you seen him?

bennie: yeah, i seen him.

gloria: lately?

bennie: yeah, lately. why you asking me this, huh?

gloria: he moved out.

bennie: you mean, what, like he moved out?

gloria: un-huh.

(pause)

bennie: why he move out?

gloria: i dunno.

bennie: where'd he go to?

(no response)

bennie: gloria?

gloria: sarah's.

bennie: yeah?

gloria: un-huh.

bennie: why sarah's?

(no response)

bennie: sarah's, huh.

gloria: why? you seen something?

bennie: no, nothin'...

(pause)

gloria: so how are things?

bennie: all right. you know. all right.

gloria: where you been staying?

bennie: here and there.

gloria: yeah?

bennie: here and there, un-huh...

gloria: yeah? anything happening on the, you know, you found anything, work, you know ...

(bennie shakes his head)

gloria: that's okay.

bennie: yeah?

gloria: un-huh.

bennie: it's all right? like... 'it's all right'?

(gloria lost in thought)

gloria: you know earl's kitty?

bennie: yeah?

gloria: he didn't take it back. it's over at sarah's.

bennie: yeah?

gloria: did you know?

bennie: that the kitty...what? the kitty was over sarah's?

(beat, no response)

bennie: no, i didn't know. i thought it was at the pound.

gloria: did you know earl was over there?

bennie: sarah's?

gloria: he's living there. he moved in there.

bennie: wow.

gloria: i want you to go over there and get the kitty. take it over to the animal shelter.

bennie: he's not gonna let me take the kitty, gloria. he's gonna say no, you know.

gloria: it's not good for him. sarah thinks it's okay, but she doesn't know earl. i worry about him. he gets so hurt when something bad happens.

bennie: nothing's going to happen to the kitty. sarah's watching it, too --

gloria: (interrupts) you don't know, you don't know, something bad always happens and then i end up having to figure out what to do with the mess.

bennie: yeah, okay, okay, take it easy, take it easy --

(fade to black)

(earl and sarah in bed. sarah is draping jewelry on earl. his arms are extended out)

earl: i feel like a christmas tree.

sarah: you like it?

earl: (nodding) un-huh. you gonna plug me in next?

sarah: earl?

earl: huh?

sarah: maybe it's not good you being here, you know. maybe you should go back home. gloria's very upset.

earl: no.

sarah: you sure?

earl: (nodding) un-huh.

(sarah pauses to look at him)

sarah: i like you.

earl: yeah?

sarah: un-huh.

earl: you like me, huh?

sarah: un-huh.

earl: how come?

(pause. thinking)

sarah: i don't have to say yes to you all the time.

(earl thinks about this for a beat)

earl: thank you for keeping mr. kitty here.

sarah: i like mr. kitty.

earl: thank you for keeping mr. earl here.

sarah: (smiling) i like mr. earl.

(pause)

sarah: my mom was beautiful.

bennie: pretty like you, huh?

sarah: my daddy worshipped her, too. cause she was so beautiful. then one day. he began to hate her for it. he'd cut her down. for no reason. just cut her down. and you could see it hurt her so much. and you could see he didn't want to do it but he couldn't stop himself. and all i could do was watch.

(earl gets up)

earl: i wanna go check on mr. kitty.

sarah: maybe it's better not to bother him so much.  
earl?.....

(earl hurries out without stopping)

(pause. sarah thinking)

sarah: (calling) you know this scar on my face? earl?  
the one on the side of my face?

earl: (os) yeah?

sarah: i tell everyone i did it playing underneath a car.

earl: (os) un-huh?

sarah: but i didn't. that's not how i really did it.

earl: (os) no?

sarah: i did it myself. i cut myself.

(silence)

sarah: guys are always staring at me. looking at me.  
telling me how pretty i am.

(earl enters again)

sarah: so i cut myself. so i won't look so pretty. so they'd stop staring at me.

(silence. earl sits down next to sarah. he looks at the scar on her face. touches it)

earl: you want me to stop looking at you?

sarah: no.

earl: you are pretty.

(pause)

sarah: am i your first?

(earl doesn't follow)

sarah: you know. your first girlfriend?

earl: (thinking) no.

sarah: oh.

(pause)

earl: my father drowned my puppy. he shouldn't have done that. so i killed him.

(silence)

sarah: earl?

earl: you need something to like you to like yourself.  
(beat) pretty soon we're gonna need more kitty litter.

(they hear a noise out front. they both look at each other. sarah gets up and exits to look)

(fade to black)

(few days later. earl's back at gloria's.  
gloria watches earl who's checking out his  
hair in the mirror)

gloria: i think you look silly.

(no response)

earl? you look silly.

earl: i don't care.

gloria: i think she's made you look silly.

earl: i don't care!

(silence)

gloria: being mad at me isn't going to bring back mr.  
kitty.

earl: sarah never called me, you know... retarded,  
she never did.

(pause)

gloria: i'm sorry. okay? i'm sorry. i was so mad at  
you two.

(no response)

gloria: earl?

earl: maybe i'm gonna kill bennie.

gloria: earl.

earl: yeah, maybe i'll do that, yeah, maybe.

gloria: earl, i don't like you talking like this.

earl: he killed mr. kitty.

gloria: they told him they were going to find mr.  
kitty a new home.

earl: he had a home, he had a home.



gloria: you can't keep a pet. everybody knows that except you.

earl: i can keep a pet.

gloria: see, you don't understand why you can't and that's what makes people think you're slow. earl? a regular person would understand something like that. and so i'm sorry i called you that but you sometimes don't understand why and that's why you're slow cause if you did we wouldn't be having this conversation and please don't talk like that about bennie. it scares me when you talk like that, i hate it, okay, i don't like it.

earl: you care so much, for bennie you care so much, huh, how come he has to go over sarah's? sarah's?

gloria: he needs a place to stay. he can't stay here. not yet.

earl: yeah, but why over sarah's?

gloria: where else is he going to stay?

earl: he stayed at places, he has places.

gloria: (sarcastically) yeah, he has places to stay...

earl: he looked okay. to me, he did.

gloria: and why do you care if he's over sarah's?

(no response)

gloria: earl?

earl: i don't.

gloria: yes, you do.

earl: no, i don't.

(gloria watches earl)

gloria: were you sleeping with her?

earl: with who?

gloria: don't give me that crap earl, you know who, you know who.

earl: who, sarah? sarah, is that who you mean?

gloria: you can't be doing that kind of thing with sarah, earl, you can't.

earl: why not, huh? why not?

gloria: you can't because of just the things we were talking about, you not understanding what you're doing and not even knowing that you don't understand and thinking that you do and sarah should -- (continue)

earl: (overlapping) okay, okay, i'm retarded, i'm retarded, that make you happy, i'm broke, i'm broke, throw me away, throw me away...

gloria: (cont.) -- know better and that's why i'm so mad at her. no earl, i'm not happy, i'm not that you're the way you are...

(fade to black)

(sarah's place. sarah's helping bennie put a blanket on the couch that's been opened up as a bed)

bennie: i thought gloria was going to let me stay there again. i don't know what happened. thanks.

sarah: it was her idea. i wouldn't done it otherwise.

bennie: i didn't mean for them to kill it. jeez, they're supposed to hold on to them for a few days, try and find a new home for them.

sarah: let's not talk about it.

bennie: no, i mean, i didn't know, i didn't and i wouldn't have done it except gloria was outta of her head, man, she was nuts, she was nuts.

sarah: yeah.

(pause. finishing up the bed)

bennie: she talked to you then?

sarah: no. just about you staying here.

(pause)

sarah: how's earl?

bennie: i don't know, he won't talk to me. talk to earl?

sarah: no, gloria won't let me.

(pause)

sarah: did earl really kill his father?

bennie: (nodding) un-huh. gloria doesn't like to talk about it.

sarah: cause he killed his puppy?

bennie: the father used to beat earl. he thought earl was some kind of sign. maybe the puppy was the last straw for earl. no one's sure exactly what happened. gloria found the father.

sarah: wow. is he okay now? earl?

bennie: i don't think you have to worry about him. this was a while ago.

(pause)

sarah: look, you know about how you were always thinking i was talking shit about you to gloria? i was. sorry. it's just... sorry.

bennie: well. it's true, you know. that's why i got so pissed off. nobody likes being told they're a piece of shit when they know that's what they really are.

sarah: you're not a piece of shit.

bennie: no, no, i am. hey, i'm lazy, i must be. i can't seem to get a job.

sarah: you're particular.

bennie: that's not particular, that's fucked up. see, i had this theory that a good job comes to you. you can't force it. you just got to wait and be open to it. so that's what earl and i been doing everyday for the last month. standing around being open to it. only... well, nothing happened, you know.

(they both laugh)

sarah: something you said made me wonder about you.

bennie: yeah? what?

sarah: what you said about, you knowing you were the best thing for her because she was the best thing for you. that was nice. that was real nice.

bennie: yeah?

sarah: un-huh.

(fade to black)

(night. sarah and bennie sleeping in the bed together. sarah wakes up.)

sarah: bennie, bennie? wake up, bennie.

bennie: what, what?

sarah: there's someone in bed with us.

bennie: what?

sarah: there's someone in bed with us.

(bennie flicks the light on. they stare at a body in the bed on sarah's side)

bennie: who is it?

sarah: i don't know.

bennie: what do you mean, you don't know?

sarah: i don't know who the fuck it is.

bennie: and they're in your bed?

sarah: oh, shut up.

(sarah bends over to get a better look.  
recognizes the figure)

sarah: earl? earl, is that you?

(earl pokes his head up. wearing the  
trenchcoat)

sarah: earl, what are you doing here?

earl: hello.

bennie: jesus, earl, what the fuck you doing?

earl: visiting.

sarah: earl, you can't just sneak into my bed, okay?

earl: how come bennie's here?

bennie: i needed a place to stay.

sarah: he means in bed, stupid.

earl: (to bennie) how come you're in bed with sarah.

bennie: it's a long story, okay?

earl: what about gloria?

bennie: i know, i know, it's just...let's talk about  
this in the morning. okay?

(bennie looks at sarah and earl staring at  
each other)

bennie: what? you two doing something? you two? you and earl?

sarah: earl? earl, you okay?

earl: (to bennie) i came to kill you.

sarah: earl, it's all right. it's all right.

bennie: earl?

earl: i came to kill you.

(takes out the *gun*)

bennie: earl?

sarah: earl, take it easy, you have to calm down, okay.

bennie: earl, what you doing?

earl: you killed mr. kitty.

bennie: i didn't kill -- jesus, what the fuck is this? everybody keeps saying i killed mr. kitty.

sarah: he didn't kill mr. kitty.

earl: yes, he did.

bennie: no i didn't, no i didn't.

sarah: earl, i'm sorry. i'm sorry. it just kinda happened. bennie and me. okay? these things happen. i still like you. i like you very much.

earl: (to bennie) here. take it.

sarah: what is it?

earl: (to bennie) it's the pill you tried to make me take.

bennie: you want me to take it?

earl: could be poison. could kill you and make you die really ugly, you know.

(pushes gun into bennie's face)

sarah: earl, earl...

bennie: easy, easy, okay, okay....

(bennie looks down at the pill and takes it)

earl: the guy who died. at that house? where i got this coat? i didn't say, but he killed himself. took poison. that's what they told me. when they gave me the lemonade.

earl: (referring to the coat) he was wearing this...

(holding out the dark sleeve stain)

earl: blood, blood, blood...

(slow fade to black)

*(perform the earl-bennie ballet of life and death while sarah sleeps. this is sarah's dream. sarah alone. earl & bennie upstage turned upstage. earl approaches with his stolen gift, bennie's shoes. sarah is grateful but wonders if it's wise to have taken bennie's shoes. bennie appears and tears the shoes away from sarah. earl is enraged and proceeds to strangle bennie as sarah can only watch...black out)*

(then lights abruptly up. sarah's sleeping. bennie is sitting up staring at earl. earl is staring at bennie with the gun to his face. sarah wakes up)

sarah: (waking) jeez, i dozed off. ahh, no, i thought i was dreaming. earl? earl, he's not gonna die. it's been what, two hours, he's not gonna die, okay, he's not gonna die.

(earl hesitates, then lowers the gun)

earl: i think gloria wants you two together.

sarah: earl?

earl: you and bennie.

(sarah and bennie look at each other puzzled)

earl: gloria's not doing too good.

sarah: what do you mean?

(pause)

earl: her boss beat her. that's what i came over to tell you. she didn't want me to say anything. i sneaked out.

bennie: is she okay?

(earl shrugs)

sarah: we should go over there.

bennie: you didn't come over to kill me?

earl: i thought i'd do both. kill two birds with one stone.

(silence. earl stares at bennie)

sarah: earl?

(fade to black)

(morning. sarah is wiping down gloria's face. bennie is pacing off to the side)

bennie: i just pushed him around a little.

gloria: you didn't, tell me you didn't, bennie.

sarah: jeez, you look awful.

bennie: okay, okay, i hit him. i hit him and you should feel good about it.



gloria: oh yeah, i should feel good about it.  
it's a good job bennie. a good job.

bennie: look what he did to you gloria. look at you.

gloria: that's my business, okay. i can take care of  
it.

sarah: yeah, but gloria...

gloria: (pushing sarah's hands away) oh, leave me  
alone...

bennie: and the police won't do shit, they won't. hey,  
he's the boss.

sarah: did you call the police?

gloria: i have to take care of earl, sarah, okay, i  
have to work, make money, pay for food and rent --

bennie: i did it for you. i did.

(gloria seems incredulous)

bennie: what's so hard about that to believe? to show  
you. to show you that i can do something and that i'm  
not a bum.

gloria: so you hit him?

bennie: i hit him cause that's what this kind of guy  
understands. what, did you *tell* him to stop and he  
slapped you around with a few *hard words*, i suppose? i  
did it to show you i care for you. and that i know how  
to take care of you, too.

(earl comes in. silence)

sarah: hello earl.

gloria: (ignores earl. to bennie, sarcastically)  
gee, i just don't know what to say bennie.

bennie: how about, 'thank you. i may not (continue) --

gloria: (overlapping) jesus, fucking christ...

bennie: -- understand why you did it, but i can appreciate the fact you did it for me!!

(silence)

earl: you feeling better? gloria?

gloria: yeah, yeah...

earl: you sure?

gloria: i'm okay, earl.

(earl turns to bennnie)

earl: i may be empty but i'm not nothing. empty's different than nothing. you didn't know that, did you. you're nothing bennie. i can't even see you. yoo-hoo, where's bennie, yoo-hoo. you're not even there.

(turns to gloria)

earl: i took care of him.

gloria: what?

earl: he hit you, right? he beat you up?

gloria: mr. arantes?

sarah: oh no, not another one.

gloria: (concerned) what did you do? earl? you did something to mr. arantes?

earl: yeah.

gloria: (worried) what did you do?

earl: i killed him.

bennie: what?

gloria: how, how did you kill him? earl?

earl: with this...

(earl pulls out gloria's GUN)

sarah: oh, my god....

bennie: earl, we were just there, we didn't see you.

earl: i watched you two leave, then i went in.

gloria: you're not making this up? you really shot mr. arantes?

(earl nods)

bennie: (smells gun and looks at the chamber) it's been fired. one shot.

sarah: you sure you killed him?

earl: in the head. right there...

(points to temple)

earl: i watched him for a long time to make sure. then i took the 42 bus. i got off at folsom and walked the rest of the way home.

(gloria slumps down in her chair)

gloria: oh earl... earl...

earl: it's alright gloria. it'll be like last time. i don't mind. i can stay in there for 9 months.

bennie: i bet the police will be coming soon.

sarah: i'm gonna phone to make sure he really did it...

gloria: you didn't kill him.

earl: yes, i did.

gloria: not mr. arantes.

earl: what?

gloria: father.

earl: what about him?

gloria: you didn't kill him.

(pause)

earl: yes, i did.

gloria: no, you didn't.

earl: yes, i did.

gloria: you didn't. i did.

earl: i don't...what? what are you --

gloria: i did. after you left him, i went in and father was still alive.

earl: no, i killed him 'cause i was so mad that he killed my puppy and he was always being so mean to me, i killed him. that's what everyone said - the judge, you, me, everybody said that, so how could you do it if everybody said i did it.

gloria: i didn't think they'd do anything to you. i didn't think they'd lock you up.

(pause)

earl: you killed papa?

gloria: yes.

(notices earl's confused look)

gloria: you thought you did. but he was okay - not okay, but still alive.

earl: but. i don't understand. it wasn't your puppy.

gloria: i know.

earl: you killed him because of my puppy?

gloria: no.

earl: no?

(long pause)

gloria: you should have seen him after mama died. he was mess. boy, was he a mess. he wouldn't shave, he wouldn't go to work, after a while he wouldn't even go out of the house. he said i had to help out now - take care of the house, cook the food, wash the dishes...

(long silence)

then you were born, and well... i couldn't do it anymore.

he was lying there, on the ground. he had vomited but he was still breathing. i picked up the bat...

(gloria begins to sing *blue skies*, reaches out and strokes earl's cheek. for a moment earl is confused. then as he realizes who gloria is, he recoils. begins to pace around)

earl: no. no, no, no. no. no, no, no, no, no.

gloria: yes.

earl: no.

gloria: yes.

earl: no, no, no, no, no.

gloria: yes, earl, yes -

earl: (overlapping) -- no, no, no, no--

gloria: (overlapping) - yes... yes, earl... --

earl: -- no, no, no, no, no, no, NO, NO, NO, NO, --

gloria: -- yes, yes, earl... YES, YES, YES -

earl: NO, NO, NO-NO-NO-NO-NO-NO-NO-NO!!!!

(long silence)

earl: okay, okay? i wanna say something. okay?  
papa? i killed him.

gloria: no, earl -

earl: no, no, listen to me. listen to what i have to  
say, i killed papa.

gloria: no, you didn't -

earl: you're not listening to me. to me. listen to  
me. what i have to say. i killed papa, not you. okay?  
i killed papa. okay? okay?

gloria: no -

earl: yes, yes, yes, yes - don't do that to me,  
everybody does that to me. i killed papa. yes. are  
you listening to me? i killed him. that's mine. not  
yours, mine. watermelon's got black seeds, washington  
d.c., reno nevada - i know what i did and i did it,  
watermelon.

stupid? not here? nothing? yoo-hoo - he can't take  
care of a kitty, he can't kill anyone, he's too stupid -  
no, i did it to mr. arantes, i did it to papa, me, i'm  
here, watermelon, watermelon, watermelon.

(silence)

gloria: yes. yes, you... yes...

(gloria strokes his cheek. she starts to sing  
*blue skies* to him. they watch each other)

(lights do a slow transition into night.  
outside. a starless, evening sky)

(bennie and sarah watch gloria and earl)

sarah: she was scared the sky was gonna fall. i think  
she wanted it to. the sun to crack into a million  
pieces, pour down on her and cut her so deep her insides  
would be outsides and there would be no more hiding and  
no more secrets and all the tears would wash the hurt  
away and she would never suffer again....

gloria: (to earl) would you like me to tell you a story?

(pause)

earl: yes.

gloria: okay. once upon a time, there were these two plants...

earl: plants? what kind?

gloria: a brother and a sister plant. okay? only all the other plants would point at them and call them names, 'weeds, you're just weeds.'

so one day they decided, 'fuck 'em, who needs this?' and when a big wind came they cut themselves loose, spread their leaves and flew off higher and higher, just like angels --

earl: (interrupts) they're just weeds.

(*shooting stars* begin to fall. only bennie and sarah notice. a subtle music-sound cue. underscores the tone of this scene and accompanies in abstracted quality the actual falling of stars)

bennie: jesus...

(more stars begin to streak down through the night sky)

sarah: the sky is falling...

gloria: (to earl) would you like to tell me a story?

(pause)

earl: empty's when nothing's there and nothing's supposed to be there. but maybe i'm just nothing when something's supposed to be there only it's not. maybe i'm nothing, not empty, just nothing...

gloria: (whispering) you killed him, you killed them both, earl, you did, you did...

(pause)

earl: (to gloria) now you tell me another story...

(they watch each other)

(shooting stars continue to fall)

(gloria pulls earl close to her. they're face to face)

gloria: and the sun said no more mommies and so there were no more mommies. and the sun said no more daddies and there were no more daddies. and the sun said no more babies and there were no more babies. and the sun said it's time to go to sleep and so we cut out our eyes and there was no more light, cut out our tongues and there were no more words, and now there's only silence and nothing. silence and nothing...

(they watch each other. gloria slowly moves forward and kisses earl on the lips. earl gradually returns the kiss. they break apart. stare at each other)

(bennie and sarah continue to watch the sky as earl and gloria fade to black and the final shooting star streaks alone across the night. the sound/musical cue ends)

(bennie and sarah left. silence. they stare at the darkened sky for a beat. then, around them, then at each other. realizing there's nothing for them there, they begin to move off. bennie hesitates. he looks down at his shoes. stares at them for a beat. then, slowly removes the shoes and sets them neatly in front of him. looks at them. then looks up at sarah who's been watching him)

bennie: where's bennie?

sarah: i see you. bennie? i see you, bennie.

(a short burst of *dog barking* in the distance, then immediate silence. bennie and sarah look in its direction. they exit towards where the dog bark was heard)



(the shoes remain lit in a pool of light.  
hold for a moment. silence. then, slow fade  
to black)

end of act three.

end of play.

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