

HEROIN'S DAUGHTER

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TIME AND PLACE

A large enough American City. 2016; then 2018. There is a parked pickup truck, **center stage**.

CHARACTERS

DEE, female Heroin addict, age 20; then 22.

BRAND, male Heroin addict, age 27; then 29, Dee's "lover" (also playing the Biblical Hebrew General, JEPHTHAH from *Judges* Chapters 11-12).

SKELLY GEE, a homeless female hunchback, maybe with a shadow of wings, wearing sweats she rifled from a dumpster (also playing LYDIA, Jephthah's wife).

RED, a masked candyman.

HUNTER, a masked candyman.

JET, a masked candyman.

A couple (played by the actor playing Skelly Gee and by any of Red, Hunter, or Jet).

A MAN on the streets at daybreak (played by any of Red, Hunter, or Jet).

A VOICE on the streets at daybreak (played by any of Red, Hunter, or Jet).

A person in the shadows of Jephthah's home (played by any of Red, Hunter, or Jet).

A POLICEMAN (played by any of Red, Hunter, or Jet).

... in the dialogue indicates a thoughtful break.

... // signals the starting point of interrupting (but **not** overlapping) text.

Terrible thunders tore my virgin mantle in twain. – William Blake, Visions of the Daughters of Albion (1793).

The blade sings to me. Faintly, so soft against my ears, its voice calms my worries and tells me that one touch will take it all away. It tells me that I just need to slide a long horizontal cut, and make a clean slice. It tells me the words that I have been begging to hear: this will make it ok. – Amanda Steele, The Cliff.

HEROIN'S DAUGHTER

SCENE 1 – A VIRGIN DOSE

Stage right: Living room (unlit, as the scene begins). Sofa (facing a flat screen TV – the back of the TV toward the audience), three or four soft chairs, coffee table, end tables, lamps, bookcase, rug. All neater and fresher than they are later. A door at the rear leads into other rooms, not visible to the audience (except for a bathroom, lit in Scene 2). An outside door (**toward stage left**), where DEE and BRAND, together with another couple (FEMALE and MALE), arrive in nighttime – spotlight on them – at the rise. They are in a raucous, party mood, with continual, intermittent laughter among the group.

FEMALE

Nighty night.

DEE

Sleepy tight.

FEMALE

Don't let the rug rats ... //

MALE

Don't let the werewolves ...//

FEMALE

Don't let the passion fruit ... //

BRAND

Want to stay for the night?

DEE

Or maybe a bite?

MALE

A bite?

FEMALE

I see some ... anticipation.

BRAND

I can bring you a dream.

Or maybe a scream?
FEMALE

A whole new obsession.
BRAND

Obsession?
MALE

You better believe it.
BRAND

It's a full moon tonight.
FEMALE

Oh, it's happenin', Sweetheart.
MALE

[jokingly] Shut up.
DEE

Don't do what I'm plannin' to do.
FEMALE

My heels aren't tall enough. Sorry. But hang tight, Sister.
DEE

Hang loose.
MALE

Say a prayer for Mother Goose.
FEMALE

Dang it.
BRAND

Bang it.
MALE

Hang it from the highest tree.
BRAND

O Mother, say a prayer for me.
FEMALE

DEE

Me, too.

BRAND

London swings like London swang.

MALE

Like the hairy arse of an orangutan.

DEE

Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?

FEMALE

Virginia Woolf.

DEE

Virginia Woolf.

BRAND

Oh, who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?

MALE

Virginia, the werewolf wolf.

FEMALE

Virginia, a warest wolf.

They laugh, hug, and give each other the shaka sign. Then the other couple exits.

BRAND lets DEE in and turns on the lights. They kick off their shoes.

BRAND

Why do orangutans have orange hair?

DEE

Because there's no peroxide in the jungle.

They laugh.

BRAND

An' what do orangutan professors teach,
when they're lecturin' in London?

DEE

The law of the jungle.

They laugh again.

BRAND

What's an orangutan's favorite book?

DEE

The Apes of Wrath.

They laugh again.

BRAND

What does a four-hundred-pound orangutan eat?

DEE

Whatever he wants.

They laugh again.

BRAND

How many orangutans does it take to change a light?

DEE

There aren't lights, on the trees, in the jungle.

BRAND

On the Christmas trees.

DEE

Orangutans don't celebrate Christmas, Moron.

BRAND

Then what's their favorite holiday?

DEE

Mardi Gras.

BRAND

Why?

DEE

They're party animals, like us.

They laugh again.

BRAND

So ...
what do they call baby orangutans?

DEE

Tang – erines.

They laugh again.

BRAND

An' what are Chinese orangutans called?

DEE

Mandarins.

They laugh again.

BRAND

An' what business are orangutans in?

DEE

I don't know. What business are orangutans in?

BRAND

Monkey business.

They laugh again.

BRAND

An' what does our President have to do with orangutans?

DEE

As little as possible.

They laugh again.

BRAND

An' what does Snow White say when she's sittin' on Pinocchio's face?

DEE

I have no idea.
What *does* Snow White say when she's sitting on Pinocchio's face?

BRAND

Tell me another lie.

They laugh again; and DEE starts dancing around the room, then stands on the coffee table....

DEE

Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?
Virginia Woolf.
Virginia Woolf.
Oh, who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?...

[beat; and bowing] I am, George.

BRAND

The name's Brand.

DEE

Dee's mine....
Pleased to meet you, Brand.

Extends her right hand.

BRAND

The pleasure's all mine.

He pulls her into his arms, and begins kissing her ... first on the lips, then the chin, the neck, and finally, lower.

They undress. The lights dim to dark, as they make love on the sofa.

Afterwards they lie there, relaxed and laughing, in each other's arms, and then put their undergarments back on. Lights return.

BRAND

I have a surprise for you, Dee.

DEE

What?

BRAND

It's a surprise.

DEE

Well, tell me then.

BRAND

I'll show you.

BRAND gets up, and goes into a back room. He returns with a loaded hypodermic needle and a piece of rubber hose.

DEE

What's that?

BRAND

Heroin. Just a little taste, at first.... For dessert.

DEE

O, my God!

BRAND

Don't worry. It's not much.
It's safe. It won't hurt you.

DEE

Are you sure?

BRAND

Absolutely. I wouldn't do anything to hurt you, would I?

DEE

Are you *totally* sure?

BRAND

I'm absolutely sure. I guaran-damn-tee you, it's the greatest high alive.

DEE

Better than ...?

BRAND

Better than anything you've ever felt. You won't believe it.

DEE

Are you sure it won't hurt me?

BRAND

I'm positive. Why would I do anything to hurt you?

DEE

I don't know. I'm just a little scared.
I've never done anything like that.

BRAND

Don't you trust me?

DEE

[tentatively] Sure.... But

BRAND

Trust me. You'll be thankin' me for the rest of your life.

DEE

I don't know

BRAND

Don't you trust me?

DEE

Yesss But, is it safe? if you've never done it before?

BRAND

We all have to start sometime.
And there are tons of people out there doin' it right now. And enjoyin' it up the ass.

DEE

Can you stop? I mean, if it's not working right.

BRAND

Sure. You can stop any time you want.

DEE

[pause] Well, okay. But be gentle.
And be careful. And be gentle. I'm scared.

BRAND

Here we go.

BRAND ties the hose around Dee's upper arm, gets a vein, and injects the Heroin.

BRAND

[*beat*] Tell me everything you're feelin'.

DEE

Okay.

[*pause*] O, Jesus Christ!

O shit! O fuck!

It's exploding, in my head.

Pure T orgasms.... Another.... And another.

[*beat*] Oh.... Oh.... Oh....

Everything's soooo, beautiful ... soooo peaceful ... soooo perfect.

Everything's soooo calm ... soooo heavenly ... soooo ... soooo ...

soooo blissful.

I love it. I love it.

I love you. I love this.

I love everything.

This is the happiest I've ever felt. Forever.

It's soooo amazing.

All over me.

Not an ounce of anything else in my body.

I've never been in a place like this.

It's amazing. It's soooo amazing....

You were right. It is the greatest high alive.

BRAND takes a couple of fingers, and gently runs them along Dee's arm.

DEE

Oh, that's delicious!

[*beat*] Could you rock me, please? Wrap me? and rock me in your arms? Please?

Like a cradle?

BRAND takes DEE into his arms, sitting on the sofa. She snuggles herself in, and falls asleep.

BRAND

What a pretty little bird we just caught....

SCENE 2 – A SPIKE INTO HIS VEIN

Stage right: Same living room, a short time later. Shoes and sandals by the outside door. DEE, passed out on the sofa. On an iPhone on the coffee table Lou Reed's 1974 performance of [Heroin](#) plays.

Upstage, stage right: behind a scrim a typical bathroom is lit (possibly in red), where BRAND, in jeans, no shirt and barefoot, is standing by the sink, pouring powdered Heroin from a baggie into a bent-handled spoon. He heats the spoon with a Zippo lighter, sets it down, strains it (using a cotton ball), draws the liquefied Heroin into a hypodermic needle, and presses a drop out the tip. He then ties his belt around his upper arm, holds the end of it by his teeth, and injects the Heroin into a vein which has popped out. Relaxing, he leaves the paraphernalia in the bathroom, enters the living room, turns off the cellphone, and collapses on a chair. The bathroom goes dark.

BRAND

Let me tell it to ya slow, Dee....
Jes so ya know, Dee....
When ya put a spike into your vein,
well, I tell ya, things aren't quite the same.

Yeah, things aren't quite the same.
An' ya really don't care anymore.
I guess I jes don't know.
When that Heroin's in your blood.
An' the blood is in your head.
It's as good as bein' dead. Yeah.
Thank God, you're good as dead.
Oh, thank God you're not aware.
An' thank God ya jes don't care.
An' I guess, Dee, I jes don't know.

Passes out.

SCENE 3 – ANOTHER SPIKE INTO HER VEIN

Stage right: Same living room, two years later, and not so neat and clean. DEE in faded old jeans, a plain, grey, long-sleeve shirt, and barefoot, and BRAND, in shirt and jeans and barefoot, are seated on the sofa, watching silent porn on the TV. BRAND is opening

and shutting a Zippo lighter with one hand (which he does regularly throughout most of the rest of the play). An iPhone is lying on the coffee table, next to Dee's purse.

BRAND

You want some "more"?

DEE

It's about time, Brand.

BRAND

Well, I want some first.

DEE

Okay.

BRAND

From you, first.

DEE

Come on, then.

**They stand and exit into the bathroom
(unseen).**

BRAND (unseen, in the bathroom)

Beating rhythm on the bathroom sink ...

Hold it, boldly, Dee. That's right.
Squeeze it. Scold it.
Touch it, meanly.
And in between me.
Finger me. Pet me, till I'm rung.
Wet me, flick me, bite your tongue.
Soak me. Stroke me. Higher, higher.
Higher. Higher, with desire.
Tease me. Please me. All your might.
Creature feature of delight.

Go on. Go on, my little porn star.
Ride it, Cowgirl.
Ride it, Bitch.
Ride it, all the way.
There you go.... There you go.... *There you go.... **Fucking A !***

Lou Reed's Heroin begins playing again on the iPhone on the coffee table. After a period of silence in the back rooms, the sound of a toilet flushing, and the music goes silent.

DEE (unseen, in the bathroom)

Time for me, Asshole.

BRAND (unseen, in the bathroom)

Whatever you say, Princess....

[*pause*] Would you just look at her.

Just thinking God's what's brought her.

When she's nothing but Heroin's daughter.

BRAND in a pair of soaking briefs and DEE in a bra and panties reenter the living room. He sits back down on the sofa. She sits, as he goes back to watching porn on the TV.

DEE

What are you doing?

BRAND

What am I doing? Is that what you asked?

That's a laugh.

What else is there to do, Dumb Shit?

What we do every fucking night. Watch porn.

That's the great thing about Heroin.

It takes no brains.

Which, I know, you ain't got anyway.

There's nothing to think about; nothing to decide; nothing to do.

What exactly we do every night.

Or else life just sucks, doesn't it?

And we wouldn't want that, would we?

Except for your juice. Know what I mean?...

[*beat*] Know what Snow White said, when she sat on Pinocchio's face?

DEE

Tell me another lie....

They pass out.

SCENE 4 – RAPE

Stage right: Living room, as in Scene 3. Late evening. DEE, again in her faded old jeans and plain, grey, long-sleeve shirt, and BRAND, in jeans and a long-sleeve shirt, opening and shutting his Zippo lighter, are seated, barefoot, on the sofa, watching silent porn on the TV. The iPhone is lying on the coffee table, next to Dee’s purse.

The sound of a car alarm going off. DEE turns to BRAND, slowly rolls up her sleeve, and touches him on the arm. BRAND callously pushes her away.

BRAND

Not now, will you?

DEE

Now, Brand. *Now.*

BRAND

I told you: wait till they get here.
They’ve got the stuff.

DEE

What the Hell, Brand, I can’t wait.
I need it now. I’m getting cramps.
I’m getting’ sick.
I think I’m going to throw up.
I let you do what *you want*, when you want it.

BRAND

Don’t you hear me, Dee?...
I’m saying not now.

Once more BRAND pushes her away and she gives him a push back.

DEE

Turn off that crappy porn and fix me....
[beat] Fix me, *now*, is what *I’m* saying.

BRAND does nothing but stare at the TV and opens and shuts his lighter. DEE starts pulling at him.

DEE

How long have we been doing this?

BRAND

Doing what?

DEE

Hanging out together. And shooting Heroin.

BRAND

I don't know. Why do you care?
Two years, maybe. What's it matter?
Seems like ten.

DEE

Seems like twenty.

BRAND

So what?

DEE

So, in all that time you've never made me a promise you haven't broken.

BRAND

So what?

DEE

So, get me well, Dickhead. Can't you see? I need it, *now*.

BRAND

Not now, you bitch; I told you.

BRAND pushes her away, and DEE again pulls at him.

DEE

Fix me, *right now*, or I'm getting out of here.

BRAND

Lots of luck. How do plan to get yourself well that way?

DEE

Any way I have to.

BRAND puts his hand – fingers spread out – into her face, and pushes her away. She jumps up.

BRAND

I'm not taking any more of your crap, Dee.
I'm warning you.

DEE

You're no friend.
You're just a dumb-shit fucker.
Heroin's my only friend.

BRAND

Heroin's your Daddy, don't you know?
I brought him to you. Brought you to him.
He's your God in heaven. He owns you.
Whadda think *you* are?
Give yourself a year, and you'll need a facelift to buy a pack of smokes.

DEE grabs her purse off the coffee table, puts the iPhone in it, goes to the front door, and slips her sandals on.

BRAND

What the fuck do you think you're doing?

BRAND gets up, and reaches for her. DEE slaps at his hands.

DEE

Don't try to stop me.
I'm not staying in here any longer, feeling like this.

BRAND

You're acting crazy....
What are you on about?
I told you, they're coming.

BRAND reaches for her again. DEE pushes his hands away.

DEE

Keep your dirty hands off me, Asshole.

BRAND

Listen to me....

You better listen, Dee, or you'll be bigtime sorry.

What's wrong with you? A little shit you have to wait a few minutes for?

Hell, you don't have any idea what being really dope sick is.

When it comes on me, it's ten times worse than anything you can ever feel.

Just sit down, before I knock you down.

DEE

If you put those hands on me again....

BRAND reaches again to take hold of DEE. She pushes him away, turns, and opens the door. BRAND raises his hand menacingly at DEE.

BRAND

You think last time was bad?

If you make me do it, I'm going to kick the crap out of you to fucking tomorrow.

You won't wanna open your eyes for a week.

RED, HUNTER, and JET (in leather masks) appear at the front door.

RED

Are we coming in? or you leaving all of a sudden?

BRAND turns off the TV. DEE drops her purse by the front door, but leaves her sandals on.

BRAND

Yeah, get in here. We're just waiting for you.

RED

Sure looks that way, Buddy, don't it?

**BRAND and DEE go back to the sofa.
RED, HUNTER, and JET find chairs to
sit on.**

BRAND

[*pause*] Got the stuff?

RED

Got the price?

BRAND

No problem.

RED

[*beat*] Yeah. I can sure see that.

DEE

[*beat*] What's the problem?

RED

[*beat*] Just looking.

DEE

[*beat*] At what?

RED

For the payment.

DEE

[*beat*] Then why are you staring at *me*?

JET

[*beat*] Is she a fighter? I like 'em when they're fighters.

**RED, HUNTER, and JET look at each
other and snigger. BRAND does nothing
but open and shut his lighter.**

DEE

[*slight pause*] I don't get what you're staring at.

RED

Just looking at you, Babe.

[*beat*] Why don't you show us a little bit more? before ... //

HUNTER

Sometimes we like seeing what we're getting first.

JET

I don't mind a little struggling, myself, first. Let me go first this time.

DEE

I don't know you.

RED

You think we don't know you? We do your kind every day. For fun. You're just a junkie. Heroin's daughter. Nothing's going to change that. No matter what you're hiding in those jeans.

DEE

You can't talk to me like that.

RED

[*slight pause*] Maybe she don't know the deal. You think?

HUNTER

[*beat*] Maybe we've come to the wrong place.

JET

[*beat*] Maybe she don't think the price is right.

DEE

What price?

RED

[*beat*] Our stuff ain't free, girl.

DEE

Brand pays for it.

HUNTER

What if Mommy's cut him off?

JET

What if Mommy's new boyfriend's a piss ant?

RED

What if *your* boyfriend's a piss ant, Shirley Locks? And owes us big time? Girls like you get expensive you know.

DEE

[*pleadingly*] Brand?

BRAND

Don't look at me, Dee. You're the one who's so hot for the stuff.

DEE

[*shock seeping in*] You can't do this to me.

DEE stands.

HUNTER

You're putting out, or we're getting out....

[*beat*] And doing some hurting on this guy on the way.

JET

Except, I wouldn't mind doing some hurting on him, anyway, the welch....
Make the shit beg a little. And squirm a little. And show some.... Respect.

RED

She pays, he stays, no pain. That's the deal.

JET

If you say so.

DEE

What the Hell? I'm getting out of here.

RED

What do you think is waiting for you out there?

Nothing but being destitute, and getting really raped. That's bloody sure.

HUNTER

Know what destitute means?

JET

Junkies don't know nothing....

They wake up, find their panties down. Cuts and bruises. Blood around. Dried.

A little infection.... What do they care?

HUNTER

Let me tell you what, sister. You'll wake up, dopesick ... in a corner ... somewhere....

You won't even know where. Desperate for a fix. Chills up and down you. Shaking.

Wishing like Hell you were back here with us. In your asshole. Afraid even to shoplift.

JET

Don't matter who you think you are. Don't kid yourself.

HUNTER

We did one a couple of weeks ago, saying she'd been some big time cheerleader. Like, that means something today.

JET

Did her twice. Each. Who cared if she cared.

RED

[*slight pause*] Let me tell you what...

You're a fuck; and a fuck of a lot safer with us riding you, than out there.

HUNTER

There's many a gang out there waiting. Ten of them. Or more.

JET

And a Hell of a lot rougher than us.

Slamming your head against the ground. What do they care?

RED

Let me tell you what: You're damned lucky, that's what.

There's nobody protecting you here but us.

DEE takes a step toward the door.

DEE

[*beat*] I'm calling the police.

HUNTER

Cop callers get *no* fixes ... ever.

RED

[*beat*] Let me tell you what.

This piece of shit ain't going to care what happens to you.

And he's sure as shit isn't going to let you call the cops.

JET

[*beat*] You do anything special? Anything different?

HUNTER

I *do* like different.

Like that one with a clit, big as a toe.

JET

Remember Big-Ass?
She liked what we did.
Remember that?

RED

Said it was real nice.

HUNTER

Asked when we could come back and do it again.

JET

[*beat*] Do us a turn, girl.
You've got to know something different.
Show us something different.

DEE

I'm not touching you....
[*beat*] And you're not touching me.

JET

A fighter. Good. It's a lot more fun than just lying there.
And don't think we won't appreciate it. We won't forget you, I promise.

HUNTER

We know how to appreciate girls.
You'll want more, once we get started.
You won't want us stopping.

RED

[*beat*] Let's do her wet. She's probably sick of getting it dry in bed.
Girls like her spend too much time dry. Got any butter here, Big Guy?

HUNTER

Maybe she ain't never done anything like us before.

DEE takes another step toward the door.

RED

Look at her. Maybe she ain't never *seen* anything like us before....
[*beat*] I think we ought to show her what she's got to look forward to.

JET

You're with big boys now, Bunny.

DEE takes another step toward the door.

RED

[beat] She's looking like she's wanting to go for a ride.

HUNTER

Bouncing on a pogo stick.

JET

Bouncing up and down on pogo sticks.

RED

Up and down on all of us friends.

JET

Kneeling on the ground for us friends.

HUNTER

Giving us thanksgiving.
Taking a stick of butter for us.

DEE takes another step toward the door.

RED

Got any, Big Guy?
Got any butter?
Up your ass?

HUNTER

Or jelly?
Any flavor's fine with us.

JET

Yeah.
Any flavor. Or peanut butter.
For her birthday.

DEE takes another step toward the door.

RED

That sounds pretty good.
Peanut butter and jelly.
Haven't actually done that before.

RED stands and begins dropping his pants and shorts.

HUNTER

Up the ass.

HUNTER stands and begins dropping his pants and shorts.

JET

With a lick.

JET stands and begins dropping his pants and shorts.

DEE grabs her purse and darts out the door, slamming it shut before anyone can stop her.

SCENE 5 – A HOMELESS HUNCHBACK

Whole stage: Outside, DEE is on the streets at night. BRAND stumbles to his feet, puts his lighter in his pocket and his shoes on, and goes out the door. Lights fade to dark in the living room, leaving RED, HUNTER, and JET standing there, pulling up their pants. DEE runs down a block, and then into the arms of a homeless hunchback, SKELLY GEE.

DEE

[out of breath] Oh my God.... Oh my God.... Help me.

SKELLY GEE

What's the matter?

DEE

[gasp] Help me.... *Please.*

SKELLY GEE

Are you hurt?
Is someone chasing you?

DEE

Yes.... Yes.... Help me.

SKELLY GEE

I don't have a phone.

DEE

I have one.... Here he comes!

BRAND sees DEE, and starts toward her. She pulls the iPhone out of her purse and pretends to call. He slows.

BRAND

[*calls out*] Crazy Shit! What do you think you're doing?...
What do you think is out here, anyway?..
You're not finding any friends on the streets. Not in the dark. Not on *these* streets.
And not dopesick the way you are.

DEE

[*calls back*] I'm calling 9-1-1, Brand. And telling them you're a rapist.
And you better not let the police catch you.
Not in your condition.

BRAND stops. They are about 20-30 feet apart.

BRAND

[*calls out*] Let's talk this over.

DEE

[*calls back*] What do you think you're up to?

BRAND

[*calls out*] Protecting you.

DEE

[*calls back*] I'm screaming rape if you come any closer.

BRAND

[*calls out*] Who's that freak with you?

DEE

[*calls back*] An angel.... My guardian angel.

BRAND

[*calls out*] I don't see any wings. Is she armed?

DEE

[*calls back*] Stay back, Rat Face, I'm warning you.

DEE starts walking, holding the iPhone in her hand. SKELLY GEE walks with her. BRAND follows, at a safe distance.

DEE

What?... I can't remember what....
What attracted me to a creep like that?

SKELLY GEE

Drugs....

DEE

What?

SKELLY GEE

A girl needs a beard to get drugs.
And pushers like your friend are beards.
Beards that murder mind, heart, and body.
Beards that murder the future. And innocence. And children.
I've seen too many to think pushers are human beings anymore.
They're servants. Servants of the Devil.
Heroin should be exterminated, father, son, and pushers to the coast.

DEE

Why was I that stupid?
Or was it my looks?...
[*beat*] He promised me no more rejection.
So cool about it.

SKELLY GEE

That's the way it is with Heroin.

DEE

The greatest high alive, he said.
Except ... except when I started, I kept stretching and stretching,
until the more I got, the less I felt; and the less I felt, the less I cared....
Who are you, anyway? I'm Dee.

SKELLY GEE

Skelly Gee.

DEE

What??

SKELLY GEE

Like Kelly with an S at the start... “Skelly...”

And Gee. Like Dee, but with a G... “Skelly Gee.”

DEE

Oh...

[beat] Sometimes, Skelly Gee, it would be easier just to die. I feel.

Like now, with everything hurting. And on the streets. And nowhere to go.

Why didn't I just let them screw me, and be done with it?

It couldn't have felt worse than I do now.

SKELLY GEE

Screw you?

Rape you, you mean.

DEE

What?

SKELLY GEE

Rape is a feeling that never goes away.

All you have left is an animal inside you that stays with you.

DEE

I've been an animal inside myself ever since I got hooked....

I guess all of us are.

We roam like animals, for our next fix.

We fear like animals of being dope sick.

Waiting for the hotshot that's out there, that's going to nail us.

Knowing it's out there.

I've seen pictures.

People dissolve from inside out, like a doll's head melting in a fire.

Blood spurting out. Everything bursting out.

You start coughing up your insides, onto the ground, before you die.

With no more human love left in you than blood and gore.

SKELLY GEE

But you *are* human. Not a habit.

Habits need to be destroyed. Like drug pushers.

You need to live. You have an addiction. Be rid of it. Any way you can.

DEE

Who *are* you?...
I know.... Skelly Gee....
Well, maybe, Skelly, maybe I like the idea of not waking up.
Let them fuck me, and never wake up.
What does gang rape even matter?...
Except Except it makes me want to puke.
It makes me want to scratch their eyes out.

SKELLY GEE

It makes *me* want to drive wooden stakes through their hearts.

DEE

I guess that's where my line is drawn:
I'll hustle, to get a fix. I'll screw, to get a fix.
I'll cheat and steal, to get a fix.
But I won't kill. And I won't get gang banged.
Even if other addicts get themselves gang raped on the regular.

SKELLY GEE

You're smarter than that, Dee.

DEE

I can detach. Like I used to, with my dolls.
I can just go back there, with Brand, and let them do what they want with me.
It's only one body. And Heroin will numb it afterwards. Won't it?

SKELLY GEE

No question about it, Heroin numbs. Like death numbs.
It numbs your common sense.
It numbs your sense of self-worth.
It numbs your sense of right and wrong.
It numbs your affection for people.
It numbs truth.
It numbs responsibility.
You ask your dolls, why aren't you dolls anymore.
And they'll tell you, "We are. You're just not a little girl anymore."
And you aren't, Dee.
People have habits.
Junkies have compulsions.
Junkies are like spoiled brats. They want what they want when they want it.
People have a conscience. Junkies don't. Junkies are sociopaths.

DEE

Am *I* a sociopath?

SKELLY GEE

If you condone rape, you are.
If you condone OD'ing yourself, you are.
If you destroy yourself the way you're doing, you are.

DEE

Why? Why am I doing this?
There must be something good left in me. But, I can't remember.

SKELLY GEE

It sucks, doesn't it?

DEE

I can't stop it.

SKELLY GEE

If you can't divorce it, kill it.
Those track marks aren't noble wounds on your arms.
Is this how you want to go? Doped out, in the night?
Your mother seeing your body floating up in her dreams like that?
Your youth, your health, your meaning, surrendered without a fight?
Something a freak might consider. But not a beautiful, young girl like you.

DEE

I'm no beautiful young girl. Never have been. Never will be. And certainly not now.
And don't talk about dreams. There aren't any. Not when you're hooked.
When you're hooked, that's all you are. Heroin.
And without it, you're nothing.... Less than nothing. Dopesick.
Without a fix I'm so ugly, and filthy I can't look.

**On the darkened buildings, at the
Director's discretion, pictures are
projected of what Heroin does to addicts
(before and after photos).**

SKELLY GEE

Pushers are Heroin.
If you don't kill the Heroin, you won't get them off your back.
If you don't kill the Heroin, you're going to get raped.
Rapists who go around raping addicts are the scum of the Earth. And should be killed.

BRAND

[*calls out*] If you try and leave, I won't let you. I'll see you dead, first.
And pitch your body in a garbage dumpster.

DEE

[*calls back*] I need *you* to kill me? I don't think so.
That's just one more thing to tell the police.
It's over between us, Brand. You're a murderer.

BRAND

[*calls out*] I am not.

DEE

[*calls back*] You just said you were.
And, besides, you already killed me, getting me innocent on Heroin.

BRAND

[*calls out*] It's not murder, when you don't die in the first year.

DEE grasps her stomach.

DEE

[*to Skelly Gee*] O my God, the pain.... The cramps.... I'm dying now. Or something is.
My guts feel like I need to shit them all out.

They start climbing steps. When they reach the top, they sit down on the last step. DEE puts the iPhone back into her purse, begins throwing stones down, and from time to time holds her head in her hands. SKELLY GEE gently rubs Dee's neck and back.

SKELLY GEE

[*soothingly*] Out of rhythm, rhyme, and tone, Jim Morrison shared all those ills.
So, Dee? Is that *your* comfort zone? Dope sick and broke, blood, sweat, and chills?
I knew Garcia. I knew James Dean. I know the pain that's yours inside.
I'm not the dumbest bird you've seen, between dopesick and suicide.
I get how foul the loathing gets. I get the wish to be done and done.
I get your need, and sore regrets, to find a place to cut and run.
But this whole mess now on your back, you understand it's your frontier.
There is no easy, outside Jack that makes addiction disappear... It's on *you*, my dear.

DEE

Who are you? really?

SKELLY GEE

Just a throwaway.
A fallen angel, so to speak.
I don't touch drugs, anymore.
I don't get in people's way, anymore.
I'm just here. When you need me.

DEE

But, who *are* you?

SKELLY GEE

I have eyes and ears. And tonight, I'm yours.
I'm Skelly Gee. Talk to me.

DEE

There's a blade I see. In my mind. That talks to me.
Calls to me. And calms me.
The thought of it calms me.
One clean slice, and this all is taken away.
Do you know what I mean?
The hate. The shame. The pain. People following me....
[beat] Are you afraid of knives?

SKELLY GEE

No. Absolutely not.

DEE

I am. Do you have one you can lend me?

SKELLY GEE

No. Not a passport, either.

DEE

I wish you did.

SKELLY GEE

You owe more to your life than to let yourself go like that, Dee.
Your lover is your habit. He's your addiction; and he'll be your death.
Don't let him do it. Have the dignity to resist.
Leave your lover, forever, tonight. Or you'll be dead tomorrow.

DEE

I've already left Brand, and I won't go back to him.

SKELLY GEE

Not that creep following us.
Heroin, I mean.
And fentanyl.

DEE

Oh.

SKELLY GEE

[*slight pause*] Innocence is drowned in innocence.
Innocence is believing someone because you hunger for company.
It's so easy. There's no warning.
Most kids who go to Heroin don't have a single soul to warn them.
To tell them how it will steal their soul away, and will eat their life up.

If I'd been your mother, I'd go in your room, every day.
And the first time I'd make a discovery, if it wasn't already too late, I'd get you out.
I'd get you away. Nine months out, into the country. Like you were pregnant.
And I'd pray. And I'd pray. And I sure as Hell wouldn't listen to whining.
I wouldn't be stopped by flailing arms. Or fits. Or any threats.

But, as they say, it takes a village.
I couldn't do it on my own, could I? No one can.
And I wasn't there. Was I?
It's always a choice, not to shoot up.
But it takes a village to stop you, once you've begun.

Children exposed to drugs should be removed. By law. To a safe place.
It takes a village to have the guts that some parents don't have.

**DEE stands; and as she does, BRAND
starts climbing the steps.**

DEE

I'm out of doping out.

DEE sees BRAND climbing the steps.

DEE

RAPE! POLICE! RAPE!

**BRAND turns quickly, and retreats,
down, into the shadows.**

BRAND

[shouts] **You're dead, DEE.**

Just as sure as you're standing there, you're as good as dead.

DEE

[calling out] I hope you go to Hell, Brand.

**DEE turns, trips, and falls. SKELLY GEE
helps her to her feet, and steadies her.**

DEE

Was that a twister? That just knocked me down?

I heard a sound. Like it was the wind. Is that what I heard?

SKELLY GEE shrugs her shoulders.

DEE

Oh, I'm sick. I'm so sick.

SKELLY GEE

Where does it hurt?

DEE

This is living Hell.

I can't catch a breath, without shaking.

The pain's suffocating me....

My legs. I can't keep them from spasms.

Drools.

[slight pause] Mother? Is that you?

SKELLY GEE wraps an arm around DEE.

DEE

No. It can't be.

What's wrong with me?

What was I thinking?

I'm so sick.

God, help me, please, this time.

DEE's hands start shaking, She drops her purse and reaches down to pick it up.

DEE

Could you ever believe it? How your daughter's burning herself up?
Lost it all. And her sex. And her brains. And her faith.
Just what you tried so hard to teach me not to do.
You wouldn't believe it, if you saw me now.

DEE and SKELLY GEE walk down another flight of steps and come to a parked pickup truck (center stage). DEE opens the unlocked driver's side door, crawls in, and locks the door. SKELLY GEE does the same on the passenger side.

DEE

Thank you. I needed you....
What am I going to do?

SKELLY GEE

Get to the mountains.
Like Jephthah's daughter.

DEE

Is that who I am? Jephthah's daughter?

SKELLY GEE

You are, if you know you are.

DEE

You think I don't know, don't you? But I do.

SKELLY GEE

I know you do.

DEE

She's the one in the Bible whose father sacrificed her to God. Right?

SKELLY GEE

Made a vow to God to sacrifice her.... But he didn't.

DEE

He didn't?!

She escaped?

No one ever told me she escaped....

Are you sure?

Like me?

Cut, die, or pennywise?...

[beat] But that's impossible. You're lying. The Bible's never wrong.

SKELLY GEE

Daughters of Jephthah no longer need to be sacrificed.

DEE

Her father was at war with the Ammonites; and the Bible says he vowed a vow to God to sacrifice the first thing that came to him, after he got back home, if God gave him victory. Which God did.

And the first thing that ran up to him was Jephthah's only child, whom he loved more than anything. And he had to kill her, to keep his promise to God....

That's what the Bible says.

SKELLY GEE

Jephthah agreed to let his daughter go into the mountains for two months, to bewail her virginity, after which she promised to return to him....

DEE

Okay ...?

Complete darkness.

BRAND, dressed as JEPHTHAH, is alone in the living room (stage right), lying on the sofa. In a few moments SKELLY GEE enters through the bedroom door, dressed as LYDIA, Jephthah's wife (no longer a hunchback). She undresses him; covers him in robes; serves him wine and food; anoints his head; brushes her hair; scents herself with powders of perfume; dons a loose robe; puts bracelets and rings on her fingers, wrists and ankles; and makes love with him. After he falls asleep (on his

stomach), she carefully ties his hands behind his back and opens the outside door for a cloaked figure to enter, who hands her a butcher's knife, and remains in a far corner of the room. LYDIA turns JEPHTHAH on his back and, with the knife in her hands, climbs up to sit astride him. She presses the flat end of the blade against his lips. JEPHTHAH awakens with a start.

JEPHTHAH

What?!

LYDIA

You cry, you die.

JEPHTHAH

What?

LYDIA

If you cry, I'm slitting your throat like a goat. And don't think I haven't the guts to do it. I'd scratch the eyes out of a lioness, barehanded, to protect my daughter. And I'd sure as Hell kill you to save her. Probably will anyway, you coward.... Look at you! Afraid of some Ammonites! So afraid you vowed to God ... what? That if He would let you defeat them, you'd burn the first thing coming out to welcome you home....

[*beat*] What were you thinking?

JEPHTHAH

[*panicking*] I wasn't.... I swear to you, Lydia, I wasn't thinking at all. I never dreamed it would be our daughter.... I never thought....

LYDIA

Who did you think it would be?

JEPHTHAH

I didn't think....
A servant, maybe. Or a goat.

LYDIA

Me? Maybe? Is that what you thought?

JEPHTHAH

You?

LYDIA

It was me, wasn't it? you wanted to kill.

It's what you *hoped* it would be, you good-for-nothing Adulterer.

To use the Lord to get rid of a wife you'd tired of.

JEPHTHAH

I didn't think.

LYDIA

No, you didn't. Except for your own selfish hide.

And maybe your pathetic pride. Count on losing him, at the least.

JEPHTHAH

[*in horror*] No! You wouldn't!

LYDIA

You better pray I won't. Pray hard and long, you barbarian....

To kill your own daughter?...

Think of it. You want to roast our child? And eat her skin, and muscle, and liver?

JEPHTHAH

Good God!

JEPHTHAH gags.

LYDIA

Go! Retch on yourself. Suck on your own vomit. Choke yourself to death....

[*beat*] At the thought of a man killing his own daughter....

For the first time I know the outrage Clytemnestra felt.

JEPHTHAH

I'm a man of war, not of learning. I didn't know what I was doing.

LYDIA spits into Jephthah's face.

LYDIA

I spit on your war. God should have struck you dead in front of the Ammonites.

What right did you think you had, to test the Lord that way, you fool?

JEPHTHAH

I am. I am a fool.

LYDIA

A dead one. This knife is going through your eye, to the back of your skull.
And that's the fool the world will see in the morning.

JEPHTHAH

[*convulses*] *No! You can't.*

LYDIA

Oh? You want to live?

JEPHTHAH

Lydia, don't kill me. Please. I beg of you. Don't kill me.

LYDIA

Don't pray to me, you worm.
You'll die at a mother's hands if you do, for murdering our daughter.

JEPHTHAH

But she but lives. She's in the mountains, these two months. With her girlfriends.

LYDIA

Better pray on your life she keeps on living there.

JEPHTHAH

Almighty God, protect our daughter's life.

LYDIA

Harder!

JEPHTHAH

[*beat*] Forgive me, Lord, for I have sinned against You, grievously.... If I am yet alive
come morning ... and I know my Lydia's hands are in Your hands tonight ... but if I am
yet alive to see the risen sun, then I shall know Your will....

I promise You; I pray to You; I vow to You; I shall never take Your name in vain again. I
vow to protect our daughter. She will be no burnt sacrifice. That I vow. And for my
former vow ... for that rash and headstrong, selfish vow I made, I now repudiate it....

You may, You shall, punish me, as Your will allows. But I beg of You, spare my family.
And, if it's in Your divine will, let me live another thirty years, that I may worship and
honor You, and be with our beloved daughter and our grandchildren.

LYDIA

Lie there, in your naked truth.

SKELLY GEE (LYDIA) stands and exits.

BRAND (JEPHTHAH) lies there, struggling to get his hands free, whimpering. Fade to darkness. A car horn sounds. Sounds of dogs barking. Other ambient nighttime sounds. Then the pickup is lit by a spot, with DEE and SKELLY GEE (as before) seated inside.

DEE

What happened, to them?

SKELLY GEE

Jephthah stood accused.

DEE

How did he plead?

SKELLY GEE

“I am a sinner, who has cared nothing for my wife. I pray, please spare my life.”

DEE

He said *that*?

SKELLY GEE

A man will say anything to save his penis.

DEE

And did he?

SKELLY GEE

God was lenient. He gave Jephthah six years more to live.
But he never saw his daughter again.
And never slept with his wife again.

DEE

What happened to Jephthah’s daughter?

SKELLY GEE

Look.... What do you see?

**A golden light shines on the windshield
of the pickup truck.**

DEE

I see her, dancing in the mountains, ravens all around.
She's free. And happy. And I see maidens of Israel going there,
four days a year, to be with her to lament her virginity.

Love is a yellow rose.
Love is a baker's wife.
Love is a newborn's toes.
Love is a newborn's cry.

Love is a baby's shit.
Love is the breaking sky.
Love is the love of it.
Love is a woman's sigh.

Love is our nudity.
Love is the rainbow's curves.
Love is a dancing free,
that barefoot rain deserves.

SKELLY GEE

Love is a new lease on life....
There are five things to remember:
Ninety days, solid, of twelve steps a day.
A wise sponsor.
Something to live for.
The will to *kill* the habit.
And one Good Samaritan, along the way. You saw one. Ravens protect the sacred.

DEE

Is that you? Are you a raven? Dona nobis pacem.

**BRAND approaches the truck, tries the
door, and when he can't open it, begins
pounding on the window, and then
cutting at the glass with his pocket knife.**

BRAND

Get out, you whore. I don't know what you think you're doing in there,
but you're not getting away from me. And who in Hell are you talking to?

DEE

She's an angel. Doesn't say all that much.
Just that they'll be bagging what's left of you any day now, Brand.

BRAND

Bullshit.

DEE

Heroin's going to kill you. Eat you alive. Can't you see the picture?

BRAND

Nobody's going to die, unless you don't get out, like I told you.

DEE

She wants to know why. Why I did what I did to myself.
"Tragedies? At your age?" she asks. "Do you think you're the only one?
Do you think that's a good enough reason to give up? Is that what you think?
Everybody's life has shit in it. That's what makes people different.
People suffer. People always suffer. It's life's patent...."
That's what she's said to me, in so many words.

BRAND

Crazy fucker.

DEE

She showed me a picture, and got me thinking of drawing again, like I used to.

BRAND

Crazy fucker.

DEE

I know what she means. We're going to OD. One more day, one more dose. Maybe.
That may be all it takes.
And I've changed my mind. I don't want to die now. I have something better to live for.

BRAND

You're hallucinating. Sick.
There's nothing for junkies better than fresh Heroin. And you're a junkie.
Get off it. You're a junkie for life. You know that.
What else is going get you well? Methadone? Suboxone, you think?
Nothing's going to cure you.
It's all your brain wants. It's life's metaphor for you. You've said so yourself.
Live with it.

DEE

[*beat*] There once was a place, just above my breasts, up to my shoulder.
A perfect place for a lover's head to rest, after making love. Or a baby's, after nursing.
I mean to fill that space in me again, clean and sober.

BRAND

Empty, empty, empty, empty workplace-drop-out words.
You'll be back, begging for the stuff.
Do you have any idea how paranoid you are? College phobic?
Have you forgotten how many mental health problems you have?
Have you forgotten your fear of living outside Heroin?

DEE

You're just another rapist, Brand; and I'm not going to forget it.

BRAND

You're coming with me.

DEE

O God, isn't there somebody ...?

BRAND

You're dope sick. Cross-eyed. I can see it. I can smell it.
And I'm starting to feel some, too.
You better get out, *now*, so we can both get well. Dope sick drives me *insane*.

**BRAND starts pulling at the door,
unsuccessfully. DEE blows the truck's
horn; and BRAND runs back into the
shadows.**

DEE

[*yells at him*] Fuck me getting well; and fuck me getting well with you, Brand.
And fuck you; and fuck my dope-sick smell. Fuck you. I'll survive, or die trying.

BRAND

[*yells out to her*] I'll get you well. I know what I'm doing.

DEE

[*to herself*] You don't know shit. Getting me gang-raped is all you can see now.

[*to SKELLY GEE*] I feel like killing him. Isn't that strange? I remember only once, when
I was in theatre class my senior year, and I started feeling like this. About a person.

SKELLY GEE

Who?

DEE

Well, not a person, actually. Richard the Third.

I was playing Lady Anne. Shakespeare. In mourning for my young husband, whom Richard had killed. And he came up to me, and tried to seduce me.

That deformed fool....

O, my God, I'm sorry.

I'm sorry. I'm so, so, so sorry. I didn't mean that. That way.

SKELLY GEE gently touches Dee's arm.

SKELLY GEE

No problem, I assure you. No problem here, trust me.... Go on.

DEE

Well, I saw it all in my mind. Like I was the great poet himself:

Richard comes up to me, fawning like Uriah Heep, and proclaims his undying love to me. Which is the reason, he says, he killed my husband in the first place. And I barf.

SKELLY GEE

On stage?

DEE

In my mind.

And Richard says to me that he would kill the day, so that he could sleep the night with me. And to prove it, he bares his chest, pulls out a dagger, and offers it to me.

"Whatever I own, I would destroy it, if I could have revenge on you," I warn him.

"I confess my guilt and my shame; and I pray, Lady Anne, for your forgiveness," he lies.

"Prove it," I challenge him.

"See? My dagger? If you wish, you can bury it in my naked breast."

"You mean it?"

"What?"

"You want me to cut you?"

DEE

“Isn’t that what I just said?”

So I take the dagger, and at first I scratch him a little, and then cut a little deeper.

“Christ! You really cut me. Give me that dagger.”

“Take it. And let the world know your courage is softer than a Lady’s hands.”

“I did so dearly want you.”

“Faint heart, as the saying goes”

“All right. All right. Cut me again, if you must.”

And I do, a little deeper this time.

“God, that hurts.... That’s enough.”

“I don’t do what I wouldn’t welcome on myself.”

And, with a theatrical flourish ... trust me, it would be ... I stab the dagger into my arm.

“What!” he would exclaim in amazement. “You’re opening your own veins to me?”

“It appears no other thing to me.”

“If you must, one last time. If you have to be so cruel to a heart who loves you so.”

So I plunge it, with both hands, into his chest. And that’s how I used to pretend *I* would end the bloody reign of Richard the Third.

SKELLY GEE claps. A MAN comes up to the pickup truck. A dog can be heard barking. A new day is dawning. DEE and SKELLY GEE climb out. DEE trips and falls, but immediately scrambles back to her feet, with her purse in hand. Blood can be seen on her face. The MAN approaches her, takes a handkerchief out of his pocket, and wipes the blood off her face.

MAN

Everything okay?

DEE

It's my skin.
It's crawling with bugs all over in it.

MAN

Can I help you?

DEE

You can hardly do any worse....
[beat] It's him. Over there.

Points.

He's been following me....
Is this your truck?

MAN

[calling out toward where DEE pointed] What are you doing? hiding over there?

BRAND steps out of the shadows and approaches DEE.

BRAND

[to himself] She won't last much longer.

DEE

[to herself] It's a war with him.

[to BRAND] Stop following me, or I'll call the police.

[to the MAN] Would you call them for me, please?

DEE pulls out the iPhone, and offers it to the MAN.

BRAND

[to the MAN] She's dope sick. She doesn't know what's she's saying.... A Heroin addict.

DEE falls to her knees, clutching her stomach, drops her purse and the iPhone, and vomits. As she begins to stand back up, BRAND rushes her, grabs her arm, and slaps her hard across the face. She collapses, writhing on the

ground in a seizure. The MAN comes up, and kneels beside her. BRAND steps back. SKELLY GEE disappears into the shadows.

BRAND

Seriously dope sick.
I wouldn't touch her, if I were you. She might bite your finger off.

In a few moments DEE sits up, and looks around, dazed.

DEE

Where am I? My brain's on fire. I see lizards.
I gave them what I knew. The memories. And they want to give them all back.

Struggles to her feet.

How did I fall? Did you see?
I can't remember.
I just started feeling dizzy. And weak. And I puked. I think.
And my jaw hurts so bad.
And my mouth tastes like piss.

DEE rubs her face.

DEE

It's so hot, all of a sudden. And I'm as stained as a junkyard couch.

DEE starts removing her clothes. The MAN gently helps her to calm down, and put her clothes back on. Then he steps back.

DEE

What an idiot I've been.
Look. Just look at me. Filthy. And stained.
And I've cut myself, falling all over the place.

DEE picks up her purse and the iPhone, and takes a staggering step toward the MAN. BRAND steps between them, and takes DEE by the waist.

BRAND

You've just been out for a little walk, my Love. And it's time to get home.
Let me help you. I've got your medicine.

There is a slight pause, DEE standing, dazed. Then she attempts to push away from BRAND.

DEE

Fuck you, Brand! Get off me.
Do you think I'm some kind of lunatic?

BRAND

Not this time, Dee. You're coming back home.

DEE

Help me! He's trying to get me gang raped.

DEE drops her purse and the iPhone and slaps out wildly. The MAN steps forward.

MAN

[to BRAND] I don't think she wants to go with you, Buddy.

Pause. BRAND and the MAN stare at each other.

Then, suddenly, BRAND pulls out his pocket knife, opens it, and charges at DEE. Just as suddenly, Brand chokes, and falls, face-forward, onto the ground at Dee's feet – a knife stabbed into his back.

DEE and the MAN stare in disbelief. SKELLY GEE is not there.

MAN

What the Hell? What's going on here?

DEE reaches under BRAND, and pulls out her iPhone.

DEE

It's a Shakespearian metaphor. I'm calling 9-1-1.

DEE calls.

MAN

Who stabbed him?

DEE

I didn't see.... It wasn't me.

MAN

Obviously. And it sure as Hell wasn't me.

DEE

[*into the iPhone*] There's been a stabbing....
He's lying here ... bleeding ... on the ground....
[*beat*] I don't know.... He could be alive. But he's not moving....
And if he's Richard the Third, he's dead by now.
[*pause; then to the MAN*] Where am I?

MAN

Let me talk to them.

DEE hands the iPhone to the MAN.

MAN

[*into the iPhone*] We're on South Redwood, across from the cemetery....
[*beat*] It doesn't look so good.
He's not moving. At all....
On his stomach. The knife is sticking out of his back....
[*beat*] I'll check.

The MAN leans down and takes Brand's pulse.

MAN

[*into the iPhone*] Nope. No pulse.
And no breathing, I can see....
[*pause*] Nobody's here who can do any of that.
Just get EMS here, as fast as possible.

DEE

Have you seen my purse?

DEE reaches under BRAND and pulls out her purse.

DEE

Skelly? Are you around?
I'm in trouble. Deep trouble. And I need you.
I'm going to be an item on TV.
And that's not the thing I want Mom to see. Wherever she is.

[*to the MAN*] Man, what am I going to do?

MAN

Where do you live?

DEE

I don't have a home, anymore. It was on Emanon.

MAN

I know Emanon, between Short Line and Chance.

DEE

I need a new one, from the ground up.
That Virginia Woolf can't blow over.

Sound of emergency vehicle sirens in the distance, getting closer and closer, as the pool of blood spreads out, more and more. Also, in the distance, there is the voice of a street preacher, on a hand-held microphone.

VOICE (offstage, at a distance)

Good morning, America.
Awake to the Savior.
Come home to Jesus. Jesus saves.
He's here to comfort and care for you. He's here for all your problems.
Trust in Him.
And there's nothing that can't be done in His name.

DEE

I saw a boy once, nailed to a cross. A scrap iron cross.
A fucking boy, on a fucking cross, on porn TV. And he was me.
And Brand screamed, "Crucify him!"

DEE turns, and walks toward the pickup truck. But before she can get in, the MAN takes her gently by the arm.

MAN

[almost in a whisper] Is there anything I can do to help you?

DEE

Don't shout at me.

MAN

I'll only ask you once more:
Is there some place I can take you? Safe?

DEE

Stop talking to me....
[beat] Just let me think for a moment, okay?

MAN

[pause] You've got to break the cycle. Or die.

DEE

I can't manage even a day of being dopesick on my own.

MAN

Go to the mountains?

DEE

What do you know?

MAN

I've been there. And I owe somebody.

VOICE (offstage, closer)

Good morning, America.
Awake to the Savior.
Come home to Jesus Christ. Jesus saves.
He's here to comfort and care for you, and all your problems.
Trust in Him, and in His word.
And there is nothing that can't be done, in His name.

DEE

What do you know?

MAN

I know the torture.
I know the desperation.
And the feeling of impending doom.

DEE

I remember hating the rules. Even hating Jesus, some....
I remember a dream.
Jumping into the water. To save a puppy that boys had beaten and thrown in.
And being rescued. Both of us. And cared for. By a stranger.
And waking up. Thinking I had met him.
Met Jesus....

I've been as blind as sunflowers and wood alcohol.

**Sound of emergency vehicle sirens
arriving.**

DEE

O God, give me one more chance. Just one more straw of a chance.
These hours have been the most obscene of my life.
I have a pair among the world's loveliest eyes.
They're the only things of beauty I have.
And I bow them to you.
Please.
Please, find a road for me. For us. Please.
If God is in my heart, my Mother used to tell me,
no better road will be, than where your heart leads you.
Will lead me, and my baby.
And if I'm alive when she's born, and not in jail, and clean, and calm, and sober,
and alive ... well, that's as good an explanation as any.

**A POLICEMAN walks up, his weapon
drawn. DEE drops her purse and raises
her hands over her head.**

END