

CLOSEST OF FRIENDS

By
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SYNOPSIS

Twenty years ago, ten friends swore allegiance and devotion forever bonding over similar beliefs and moral principles. This weekend they are reuniting and as each member of the group arrives it becomes clear that life has brought changes and changes bring secrets and secrets revealed bring disappointment, disgust, anger and even hate. Does friendship require those closest to you to live a moral life philosophy that is consistent with yours?

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CHARACTER LIST

AMY... early 40s, attractive physically but still a little raw around the edges. Married to Jason.

JASON... early 40s, comes from money, somewhat immature. Married to Amy.

ERIC... early 40s, a dentist, the idealist and mediator in the group. He's gay and in a relationship with Kevin

KEVIN... early 40s, loves to put on the campy act, witty and fun. He's in a relationship with Eric.

SARA... early 40s but still has a knock-out of a body. She has always gotten by on her beauty. She is in a relationship with Doug but they never married.

DOUG... early 40s the male equivalent of Sara, gorgeous and in amazing physical shape. He's a little shallow but harmless. In a relationship with Sara.

CHRIS... early 40s, in many ways still a frat boy. He's married with Missy and Ashley.

MISSY... early 40s, the innocent spirit, a counter culture woman. Married to Chris.

ASHLEY... 26, a beauty and very sweet. Married to Chris

CARLA... early 40s, a tough girl with a lot of street in her. She's a bit of an outsider to the group.

SETTING

This is the spacious common room of an upscale vacation cabin set on a lake. There is a porch that overlooks the lake and the forested hills beyond. The main entrance to the cabin is from this porch. Inside the main doorway and just upstage is a staircase that ascends to a mezzanine. On that mezzanine in the center are three doors leading to bedrooms. Downstairs, stage left, there is a hallway that leads to two more bedrooms and a kitchen. The main room is furnished with a sofa, comfortable chairs, coffee tables, and a bar. It is a space for 'hanging out'.

SCENE BREAKDOWN

ACT ONE

Scene One: The cabin interior early afternoon.

Scene Two: The cabin interior late evening. The porch late evening.

Scene Three: The cabin interior late the next morning. The porch late the next morning.

ACT TWO

Scene One: The cabin interior night. The porch night.

Scene Two: The cabin interior late at night. The porch late at night.

Scene Three: The cabin interior later that night.

Scene Four: The cabin the next morning.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

AT RISE:

AMY enters carrying a large bowl of salad. She's an attractive woman in her early 40's. She wears expensive jeans, a loose fitting top and sandals and more jewelry than is necessary. As she places the bowl of salad on a coffee table, she hears...

ERIC (O.S.)

(angrily)

...If it's any of your business... Yes, I'm gay...

The front door opens suddenly and JASON enters followed closely by ERIC, who seems to be upset. Amy is startled by the emotion.

ERIC (CONT)

(angrily)

...yes, I'm a homosexual. Yes, I'm queer.

JASON

Damn...

AMY

What happened...?

Eric points a finger at Jason's chest.

ERIC

Faggot, fruit, poofter.. You can call me whatever you want and if it bothers you so much that you don't want me poking around in your mouth...

AMY

(lost)
Could somebody...?

ERIC

...then take your rotting teeth and your bleeding gums and find yourself another dentist.

JASON

Jesus... I don't think I've ever seen you pissed off before.

AMY

Somebody want to fill me in?

ERIC

The bigot jumped out of the chair, grabbed a cup of mouthwash, rinsed vehemently, and spun towards me ready to spit.

AMY

Who?

ERIC

But because the novocaine had already taken effect, instead of launching a stream of mouthwash at me, he ended up dribbling green liquid down the front of his crisp white shirt.

JASON

That's hysterical. Who is this dick?

KEVIN

Ready? He's the Chairman of the Equality for All commission. *Ta-da!*

AMY

That's disgusting.

JASON

Unreal...

ERIC

I'm beginning to think while we were sleeping, the world was systematically repopulated by unrelenting hypocrites.

JASON

Yeah, aliens did it. That's their revenge for us tracking up the moon.

AMY

(to Jason)

Lame...

ERIC

No. I'm being very serious.

KEVIN

Well, there's a change.

JASON

Yeah. Right?

ERIC

All I'm getting at is that I think it's important to have an unwavering moral code... otherwise the world implodes. It's not difficult. You make choices and stick with them. You don't change for fashion or money or..

JASON

Wait... wasn't that Mr. Chairman's 'unwavering moral code'?

KEVIN

But it wasn't Eric's 'unwavering moral code'. Eric's 'unwavering moral code' is that only his 'unwavering moral code' can be unwavering... and moral.

ERIC

This isn't about me. This is about...

AMY

(warning)

Ah, ah, ah... we're on vacation. No serious talk allowed.

ERIC

Sorry. You're right.

(pause)

But truly...

AMY

(cutting this off)

No! Vacation...

Eric raises his hands in surrender.

KEVIN

That salad looks delicious, Amy. Thanks.

AMY

Enjoy. That is the last domestic chore I will be performing for the duration of this vacation. This is my week to sit back and escape the tedium that passes for my life.

JASON

You act like our home is some kind of suburban Guantanamo.

(to Eric and Kevin)

She's got a housekeeper, a gardener, a cook, a personal trainer, a nanny...

AMY

And you and two children. None of whom clean up or pick up after themselves.

KEVIN

You should have married a gay. We're always fastidious. Of course, then you wouldn't have two children.

AMY

Seems like a fair trade.

JASON

Wow... you are in full Amy-itis.

AMY

(doesn't sound sorry)

I'm sorry. I just haven't wound down from real life yet. Okay?

JASON

Yeah. Whatever.

ERIC

Hello... vacation... right? Isn't that what you said?

AMY

That's what I said.

JASON

I could have stayed home for this.

ERIC

Come on, guys. The group will all be together again. It'll be like those halcyon days of yore when our biggest concerns were hang-over cures and pregnancy tests.

JASON

Usually on the same morning.

ERIC

(over-selling)

In this sacred place, we shall experience nirvana. This world will once again be the best of all possible worlds.

KEVIN

Thank you, Dr. Pangloss.

JASON

Who's that?

KEVIN

From "Candide?" Eventually destroyed by his naiveté.

JASON

Wouldn't know. I was a finance major.

KEVIN

That so explains the economy.

ERIC

I think, it's going to be really wonderful to have our group back together again. Friends then, friends forever for twenty years. I love that.

AMY

Why do you think that is?

KEVIN

Probably because you only see each other every twenty years.

ERIC

Do you always have to be a cynic?

KEVIN

Someone has to take out the garbage.

JASON

What does that mean?

KEVIN

I have no idea. Not everything I say can be a *bon mot*.

ERIC

Undeterred by Kevin's lack of faith in humanity, he moves on... We were really lucky to find each other when you think about it. This disparate group from around the country randomly gathers at the same university, believes in the same ideals and bonds forever over those ideals. When you consider the odds of that happening, it's a miracle. Every time I think about it, all the bad things in the world go away. Heaven... absolute heaven.

KEVIN

Are you going to get misty-eyed?

ERIC

Bite me.

KEVIN

Don't think you'd like that.

Kevin crosses to the bar.

KEVIN (CONT)

Everybody good with beer?

AD LIB 'yes'.

KEVIN (CONT)

So exactly what are these 'heavenly' ideals you so profoundly bonded over?

ERIC

Basically, to make the world a better place than the one our parents left us.

KEVIN

Okay, that's nice and bumper-stickery.

Jason laughs.

ERIC

Again... bite me.

JASON

(exaggerating)

We were willing to take a stand against consumerism, objectification of women, racism, income inequality, sexual orientation discrimination, pollution, the environment, poverty, hunger, disease... I leave anything out?

ERIC

(playing along)

Globalization, war, immigration reform...

JASON

And a universal ban on plastic bags.

KEVIN

Well bravo and kudos for all the changes you've made. This really is the age of Aquarius.

ERIC

Could you tone down the sarcasm?

Kevin takes the beers from the fridge and brings them to the others.

KEVIN

Uh...

(considers)

No, no I actually don't think I can. It's what make me endearing.

JASON

(chuckling)

You're bad.

AMY

Are Doug and Sara coming in for lunch?

JASON

I think they went swimming at the lake.

(to Eric)

Did you see Sara in that bikini? I mean I know you're gay but there must have been at least a tiny tingle.

Jason passes around plates and people serve themselves.

AMY

You know I'm right here, don't you?

JASON

Hey, I'm just tingling, not touching.

(to Kevin)

She was hot, right?

KEVIN

Didn't notice. I was ogling Doug's DeVinci-esque torso.

ERIC

You know I'm right here, don't you?

JASON

(to Amy)

You don't think Sara is hot?

AMY

She has a great body... as any of her professors could have told you.

KEVIN

Oh dear... Is that 'best of all possible worlds' starting to crumble?

JASON

So what... you think Sara screwed her way to a diploma?

ERIC

Hey, come on, let's play nice, people. This is us. Remember?

JASON

She started it.

AMY

Grow up, Jason.

ERIC

Vacation... remember?

AMY

I'm trying.

JASON

This is actually the jolly Amy.

Amy flips him off.

KEVIN

Good Lord... Exactly how long have you two been married?

AMY

(semi-joking; semi-bitter)

Forever.

JASON

Getting close to fifteen years.

KEVIN

How adorable. College sweet hearts.

JASON

Not even close. Despite all my charm and smoothness, I didn't get anywhere with her.

KEVIN

You must have gotten somewhere. You're married.

JASON

That was a later development... After graduation, we sort of each went our own way, then met up again at some alumni function.

AMY

A home coming game. Nothing like football and excessive amounts of alcohol to reignite an old flame.

JASON

And I was hot and sexy.

AMY

Seriously...?

JASON

Okay, you were hot and sexy. And I was... What was I?

AMY

Employed.

KEVIN

Oh, damn...

JASON

Very funny.

AMY

Hey, when you come from a family that considered bread and gravy a meal, 'employed' ranks high on the mate choice scale.

KEVIN

What did your father do for a living?

AMY

That's the same question we used to ask him.

JASON

Amy's father was kind of a jack of all trades.

AMY

More like a drunken bum who cared more about Jack Daniels than the family.

KEVIN

And now you have two kids. So sounds like the marriage works.

AMY

The only thing that proves is that Jason's pee-pee works.

JASON

Holy crap... can you just back off for five fucking minutes?

ERIC

Hey, come on... Amy...?

AMY

Sorry.

KEVIN

(trying to lighten things up)

So, Jason, tell me about your children.

JASON

We have two a boy, Jake, twelve and a girl, Michelle eight.

A cell phone rings. All check their phones.

ERIC

It's for me.

Eric answers his phone.

ERIC (CONT)

Hey, Chris, where are you guys?... No, turn left at the feed store then follow rural route 34. You'll know you're getting close when you pass the old cemetery.... What here? Yes, there are five bedrooms. I was hoping that Carla would come. Why?... Okay, see you soon.

Eric disconnects.

AMY

What was that about? The five bedrooms.

ERIC

He said we'd talk about it when they get here. Maybe they brought their kids.

AMY

Oh, crap... They better not have. This is supposed to be about us connecting with our wild youthful years and pretending for a brief delightful moment that we never bred.

ERIC

But if they brought them I think we should be polite about it.

AMY

Easy for you to say. You're not trying to escape the mommy-trap.

JASON

Give it up, Amy...

DOUG and SARA enter from outside. They are the same age as the others. They are wearing swimsuits and both have the bodies for it.

ERIC

How was the lake?

DOUG

Cold. I don't know how fish can stand it?

AMY

You just need to add a little body fat.

KEVIN

Please, don't ever do that.

SARA

Hello, significant other in the house. You can ogle but don't touch.

Sara puts her arm around Doug "taking possession." Doug, uncomfortable with the contact, moves away. Sara is slightly embarrassed by this.

AMY

Ironic.

SARA

Why?

AMY

Just is...

JASON

I mean, really, my body hasn't looked like that since... well actually never because I don't have boobs.

SARA

It helps when you don't have children.

AMY

I knew we should have gone the surrogate route.

JASON

I was all for it. That Swedish girl at the Starbucks looked like she had great eggs and I was willing to impregnate her naturally but you dissed the idea. So those mommy hips are not my fault.

AMY

Do you never want to get laid again?

JASON

Can I get back to you on that?

DOUG

What's going on?

JASON

Was that lake deep, Doug?

DOUG

Seems to be.

JASON

Good.

Jason exits the cabin and walks off into the woods. Amy flips off the closing door and exits down the hall to the bedroom.

DOUG

Did I miss something?

Eric checks that Amy is gone then lowering his voice.

ERIC

Amy and Jason have been at each other since we got here.

SARA

That's not new. They are always at each other.

ERIC

I think we should do something about it.

SARA

Like what?

ERIC

Well once Chris and Missy get here, I think we should sit them down and have a frank discussion. Maybe we can help.

KEVIN

Like an intervention... or Jerry Springer?
(off Eric's glare)
Or I could just keep my mouth shut.

DOUG

I don't know, Eric. That sounds like trouble.

ERIC

We're friends. Friends help friends. Right?

SARA

I don't know what you think we could do.

ERIC

We all have successful relationships. Especially Chris and Missy. They have a great marriage. I just think we can listen and share our own solutions.

SARA

I guess.

Amy enters putting on a sweater. Kevin quickly changes the subject.

KEVIN

(to Sara)

So... how long have you been together?

SARA

Off and on ever since we graduated.

KEVIN

Why was there an 'off'?

DOUG

(doesn't want to get into it)

Just worked out that way. This salad looks good.

KEVIN

And you're not married?

SARA

Nope.

KEVIN

Hmmm... like a real life Ken and Barbie.

ERIC

(to Amy)

You okay?

Amy pops a beer.

AMY

Fine. Why wouldn't I be?

Amy plops into a chair, she looks angry and distant. She drinks her beer. Sara looks towards Eric, who is looking upset. Sara attempts to change the conversation.

SARA

(to Kevin)

I don't remember how you guys met.

KEVIN

Shopping for socks. Romantic, huh? We bonded over the same pair of lilac argyles, went for a drink, that led to dinner, that led to my apartment, that led to...

SARA

Okay, okay... we got it.

KEVIN

So did I.

Kevin shivers in memory.

ERIC

Kevin... butch up, please.

KEVIN

What is your problem? They know we're gay.

SARA

(to Eric)

When did you come out to us?

ERIC

I announced it at Chris and Missy's wedding. It was an enormous relief to finally tell all of you that I was gay. It was important to me that you knew and accepted me and you did without hesitation which is more than my parents did. I truly appreciated that.

SARA

Did you know you were gay when we were in school?

ERIC

I'm not sure. I was experimenting with the idea but I don't think I really knew yet or maybe I just wasn't ready to acknowledge it.

AMY

Then you were the only one on campus who didn't know.

ERIC

You didn't know I was gay.

AMY

Eric, I dated you for five months.

DOUG

Did I know that?

SARA

Everybody knew that.

Jason enters. He looks sullen.

SARA (CONT)

You okay?

JASON

(not really)

Yep.

Jason crosses to the bar. He gets a beer and stays at the bar.

AMY

Nothing happened between us. I rest my case.

KEVIN

At the very real risk of offending you - maybe you didn't make him tingle.

AMY

Please, this pre-babies body was famous campus wide... among straight men.

ERIC

No, no... hold on. If that's your proof that you knew I was gay, then you didn't know because I distinctly remember fondling your -- thingamajigs.

AMY

No way. When?

ERIC

(Visualizing as he recalls the moment)

It was a keg party after a football game... we were at a frat house or somewhere... we were making out and I smoothly slipped my right hand under your sweater...

AMY

I doubt it.

ERIC

Really?

(reciting)

A butter yellow cowl neck sweater... cashmere... Donna Karan...you were braless and I squeezed your boobs.

KEVIN

I am shocked... Not by the boob grabbing.

(To Eric)

I'm shocked that you went to a football game. However, I am impressed that you remembered the sweater was Donna Karan.

ERIC

I think I bought that sweater for you. For a birthday or Christmas or something.

AMY

No you didn't. Jason bought it for me. You couldn't have afforded it. It cost five hundred and something dollars. I was very impressed.

ERIC

Really? Are you sure?

AMY

Who else had that kind of money? It was when Jason was trying to woo me away from you. It was for Valentine's Day. That's when he was still romantic.

JASON

Didn't do me any good. Eric was the one squeezing your boobs.

DOUG

Anybody hear from Chris?

JASON

Yeah, they called. They were lost and running late. Have you spoken to Chris recently?

DOUG

Not for years. I think the last time I spoke with him or Missy was at Andy's funeral. Why?

AMY

When he called earlier, he asked how many bedrooms there were here. It seemed odd but he said we'd talk later.

SARA

They are not bringing their kids, are they?

KEVIN

We are all offering novenas that the answer to that is no. How many kids do they have?

Jason crosses back towards the group and sits next to Sara.

JASON

We don't really know. Chris and Missy have not been very good at keeping in touch. Do you talk to them, Eric?

ERIC

No, not for a long time. In fact to be totally honest, I was surprised when Chris and Missy accepted my invitation for this reunion. And now that I think about it, his answer was kind of cryptic. He said that he had a big surprise for us.

KEVIN

He's probably dying. You know like in that old movie, The Big Chill. Which incidentally featured several Kevins... Kevin Kline as the sperm donating husband and Kevin Costner as the dead body. We on the other hand have only one Kevin... yours truly.

AMY

He's not dying.

KEVIN

Okay then maybe he's coming out.

AMY

Chris? Absolutely no way that he's gay.

JASON

Slightly too enthusiastic, darling.

AMY

We all have our pasts, dear.

(Enumerating the conquests of Jason)

Susan Lina, Martha Powell, Peggy whats-her-name, Jodie Dreyfus... Shall I continue?

DOUG

You did Jodie Dreyfus? She was the size and shape of a VW beetle.

JASON

She had a pretty face.

SARA

...and certain oral skills that were legendary among the frat boys.

JASON

Like I said, a pretty face.

KEVIN

I thought you were all friends from the university, not junior high.

JASON

A man's special parts are always in junior high.

ERIC

God, I feel like we're right back dishing the dirt at that seedy bar where we used to hang.

JASON

Kennedy's.

ERIC

Right. Kennedy's. Who names a bar after a dead president?

AMY

What did we ever see in that place? Sawdust on the floor, all the chairs were sticky with beer...

JASON

Hopefully, it was beer.

SARA

And in warm weather the place smelled of vomit and backed up toilets.

JASON

But the cheeseburgers were good.

(Off the looks of Amy and Eric)

Okay, they were cheap. The pizza wasn't bad.

ERIC

Good times, people. We had some good times.

JASON

It was more than 'good times'. I think we found some sort of special connection. I mean think about it... after twenty years we are all still close, still believe in the same ideals, still care about each other. That's pretty awesome if you ask me.

KEVIN

Didn't Eric already say all of that?

JASON

Yeah, but he's overly sentimental. I really mean it.

AMY

And trust me, he's never sentimental. For Valentine's Day, he gave me a blender.

JASON

You said you wanted a blender.

AMY

Not for Valentine's Day.

JASON

I put a bunch of flowers in it. Enough, Amy.

Jason rises and crosses to the bar.

JASON (CONT)

More beer?

ERIC

Please.

DOUG

Yeah...

I'll take one.
AMY

Sara...?
JASON

No, thanks.
SARA

I'll take one.
AMY

Kevin...?
JASON

I'm good.
KEVIN

I'll take one.
AMY

Jason does not acknowledge Amy.

ERIC
This is going to be a great week. I wish we could see each other more often.

DOUG
Everybody's kind of spread out around the country. Except for Jason and Amy, they live nearby so we see them from time to time. And Sara and Jason play tennis together.

A lot...
AMY

Not really.
SARA

KEVIN
When was the last time you all got together?

AMY
(hesitates then gently)
Andy's funeral.

Andy... Hard to believe...

SARA

What happened to him?

KEVIN

Afghanistan.

AMY

It seems strange that Andy made a career of the military. I still don't know why he did.

DOUG

Wanting to give something back to the country not just take.

KEVIN

Kevin was in the Navy for three years. He was a fighter pilot.

ERIC

Really?

JASON

I can't picture you in the military.

DOUG

Because of my ebullient personality? I wasn't always this demonstrative. But you'd be surprised how much more expansive one becomes stepping out of a tiny closet into a large well-decorated room.

KEVIN

You know it was Andy who got us all together in the first place.

ERIC

Freshman year, right?

SARA

Yes. We were at a protest against something or was it for something... I can't remember what it was.

ERIC

There were so many, they all run together.

DOUG

Right. Anyway, all of us...

ERIC

JASON

And a bunch of other people.

ERIC

...were walking around with signs, chanting some slogan and this big guy is standing there watching us and laughing...

SARA

And Doug walks up to him and says, "You got a problem, pal?"

DOUG

Oh crap, that's right and Andy puts his face right up against mine and says, "Walking in a circle with signs... yeah that's gonna fuckin' change everything." And he walks away.

JASON

Then later at some bar...

SARA

Kennedy's.

JASON

Kennedy's, of course. A bunch of us were having a post-protest beer and Andy pulls out a chair and joins us.

ERIC

Doug immediately wanted to fight him but Andy cools things down and tells us you want to change the world, let's talk reality and he lays out his whole theory of action and intellectual honesty. He said that best way we could make things better was by being better people ourselves and that was the beginning of the group.

SARA

Andy... He was one of a kind.

(beat)

Did you invite Carla?

ERIC

Nobody knows where she is. I sent an email to her last known address, but I haven't heard back. After Andy's death, she just dropped out of sight.

KEVIN

Eric never mentioned her. Was she part of your group?

SARA

Kind of... mostly because she was dating Andy. I mean, we liked her and she fit in but it was really Andy who was part of the group. She was more of a group-in-law.

The SOUND of a car arriving is heard.

ERIC

Sounds like the prodigal couple have found their way. Soon the mystery will be solved.

AMY

I hope to God they didn't bring the kids.

The front door opens and CHRIS bounds into the room. He is also in his forties and a big muscular guy in a raw sort of frat boy way. He is dressed in cargo shorts, a band T-shirt and beat up sneakers.

CHRIS

Let's get this party started.

Eric, Doug and Jason greet Chris with chest bumps and AD LIB guy-to-guy greetings. Amy and Sara hug him and kiss him.

AMY

Oh my God, it's so good to see you.

ERIC

Chris, this is my partner, Kevin.

Kevin extends his hand to shake with Chris.

KEVIN

Pleased, to meet you, Chris.

Chris brushes Kevin's hand aside. For a second, Kevin is offended.

CHRIS

We don't do no stinkin' handshakes here.

Chris embraces Kevin enthusiastically. Maybe overly enthusiastic.

KEVIN

I think you just broke my sternum.

Chris releases him.

ASHLEY enters carrying suitcases. She is about twenty years younger than the others. She wears nice shorts, a casual top and sandals. She is very attractive.

ASHLEY
(Nervously)

Hi.

It's clear that the others don't know who she is.
They look to Chris.

CHRIS
And this is Ashley.

AMY
(Confused)
Your... daughter?

CHRIS
(Laughs)
No. My wife.

SARA
Oh my God... When did you and Missy get divorced?

MISSY enters carrying several bags of groceries. She is also in her forties and has sort of a counter culture look to her. She wears a long loose dress and flip-flops.

MISSY
We didn't. We're still happily married.

KEVIN
(to Eric)
Might want to rethink that intervention.

Missy puts the bags down and crosses to Amy and hugs her and then to Sara.

MISSY

God, it's so good to see you. There's so much to catch up on. But I'm guessing by the bewildered expression on your faces, you guys figured that out. Hi, I'm Missy and you must be Kevin.

KEVIN

Good guess.

SARA

Missy, we need more information.

MISSY

Help me get the rest of the stuff from the car, then we'll talk.

AMY

No, no, there is no way in hell I can wait that long. What's the story, Missy?

MISSY

I know. It all seems pretty weird to you, right?

AMY

"Weird." "Weird" will work.

MISSY

It's actually very simple. Five years ago, we met Ashley and we felt a deep love growing within us, so we decided to add her to our family.

SARA

As a -- wife...?

MISSY

Well, she was a little old to adopt. And then there's the sex thing. You know how that worked out for Woody Allen.

JASON

Has something changed? Isn't bigamy illegal in like... fifty of the fifty states?

MISSY

We don't believe that government has any right to tell us how we can live our lives.

CHRIS

They don't know. They don't care. We live on our own farm way out in the country and nobody bothers us and we don't bother them.

DOUG

You're a farmer? Last I heard you were some kind of big shot in computers.

AMY

We don't really care about Chris's professional life, Doug.

CHRIS

I write code, but I can do that anywhere so I do it on the farm where we produce most of our own food and live a life of freedom. Cool, huh?

MISSY

So does that explain everything?

(looks around)

Of course, it doesn't. Look, we'll get into details later, okay?

AMY

Wow, this is quite a surprise. I mean, you guys were always kind of - I don't know...

MISSY

Hippies.

AMY

I was thinking odd, but this...

DOUG

How come the police haven't arrested you?

CHRIS

(He's given this information before)

Several courts have recently stated that although plural marriage might be technically illegal, they aren't going to prosecute those cases. Unless one of the participants is under eighteen.

ASHLEY

I'm twenty-six.

KEVIN

I'm so disappointed.

They look at Kevin with a question.

KEVIN (CONT)

I thought we would be the non-standard couple, but we're just run-of-the-mill upper middle class homosexuals. That is so *démodé*.

CHRIS

You're funny, man.

KEVIN
(to Eric)

See...

AMY
(Dealing with her shock.)

Do you have children with both wives?

MISSY

We have eleven children.

ERIC

Eleven?! How does that happen?

KEVIN

You're not that gay.

MISSY

We always believed that happiness is a large family. But after our fourth - well I wasn't able to have any more.

JASON

So you thought bringing in extra breed stock was the answer. I'm sorry. I mean I know you live on a farm but come on.

AMY

So you had four children and then...

Indicates Ashley

ASHLEY
(Helping)

Ashley.

AMY

Ashley... had seven?

Ashley laughs at the idea.

CHRIS
(Embracing Ashley)

Does she look like she had seven kids? Besides, she's only twenty-six.

JASON

That doesn't mean shit. For all we know you had her implanted with octuplets.

ASHLEY

No, I only had two so far.

AMY

(bitchy)

Okay, so Missy had four and Ashley had two. It's been awhile since college, but if I remember my math courses that only adds up to six.

MISSY

Look, Amy, we know our life choice is a shock to you but you don't have to be a bitch about it.

AMY

I don't have to, but right now it seems the only intelligent response.

MISSY

(To Chris)

This was a mistake.

Missy moves to collect her things.

ERIC

Wait, wait... We're sorry, Missy. I know we're not handling this well but you have to admit, it's not your everyday revelation.

MISSY

We don't share this with everybody, but we wanted to share our love with all of you. Wasn't the motto of our group 'open, honest, loving'?

ERIC

Yes. And we're really happy that you're here, just-- you know -- give us a chance to get our heads around it, okay?

MISSY

(to Eric)

You always were the calm one in the group. Okay.

KEVIN

So to get back to our mathematics problem, Missy had four and Ashley had two, which gives us six...

He looks expectantly at Missy

KEVIN (CONT)

This is where you come to the front of the class and complete the equation.

CHRIS

Easy. Paloma had five including one set of twins.

AMY

Paloma...? Your -- housekeeper?

CHRIS

Get with the program, Amy. Paloma is my wife.

DOUG

Another wife?

Amy, Jason, Eric and Kevin look towards the open door.

CHRIS

She's not with us. Somebody had to stay home to watch the kids and it was her turn.

MISSY

But she sends her love and said to tell you she really wanted to meet you. You'd like her. She's a very loving spirit.

JASON

Five kids. It sounds like more than the spirit was loving.

DOUG

Okay, I'm totally confused. So you married Missy, then Ashley, then Paloma?

CHRIS

No, Paloma was second, Ashley is the rookie.

ASHLEY

Should I put these suitcases somewhere?

ERIC

Uh, yeah...

(to Chris)

Did you want separate bedrooms?

CHRIS

Dude... Don't you think it might be a little freaky having both wives in the same bedroom?

ERIC

On so many levels, I wouldn't know.

(To Ashley)

The two middle bedrooms up stairs are for you... and you.

Ashley takes the suitcases up the stairs. She opens the first door and puts one suitcase inside, then opens the second door and enters with the other suitcase. She closes the door behind her.

CHRIS

Okay, let's get this party started, break out some cold beers?

AMY

Fuck beer. I need whiskey.

As Amy crosses to the bar...

LIGHTS OUT

END OF SCENE ONE

SCENE TWO

LIGHTS UP ON:

It is late evening. The sun has set. Eric, Chris, Doug and Kevin are lounging around the room. It is clear from the detritus strewn about that substantial quantities of alcohol have been consumed. Jason enters from the lower bedroom area. He grabs another beer from the bar.

CHRIS

How's Amy?

JASON

Out cold. She's going to have a big time headache when she wakes, which means I will not be enjoying her pleasures this e'en. Where are the other girls?

CHRIS

Sara is showing them the lake.

DOUG

She's probably trying to sweat the whole story out of Missy.

CHRIS

What's to tell? We already told you the whole story.

JASON

No, you told us the -- and I put this in major quotes -- the romantic part of the story. Now we need details. Guy details.

DOUG

All right, Chris, let's have the facts. Do you have sex with your wives on consecutive nights, once a week, every other day...?

JASON

Or just birthdays and holidays like the rest of us?

KEVIN

(Pointedly to Eric)

Hmm, not a big difference between straight and gay.

CHRIS

(reluctantly)

Do you really need to know that...

JASON

We do.

CHRIS

Fine, perverts. Since we were always trying to conceive, we worked it around their periods. But as time went by and we all lived together, they ended up on the same menstrual cycle so...

JASON

(disgusted)

No, no... Skip the icky stuff and get to the sex?

CHRIS

It's simple. We have a set schedule. Each wife gets their special week and that leaves me a week off just for myself.

JASON

During which... what you masturbate?

KEVIN

Now who's 'icky'?

CHRIS

It's not just about sex. Each wife gets some quality time with me to talk about stuff. You know problems, concerns, disagreements, disappointments, arguments...

JASON

My God, I'd kill myself.

A disheveled Amy begins to stagger into the room but before she gets in she begins to gag as if to vomit.

AMY

Oh God...

She turns and runs back down the hallway. The guys look towards the hallway and then to Jason who shows no sign of going to her aid.

ERIC

I think your wife might need some help.

JASON

Don't worry about it. She's good at this. She's been through two pregnancies.

CHRIS

Dude...

JASON

Okay, okay.

Jason puts his beer down and heads down the hallway towards Amy.

JASON (CONT)

(Calling off)

You okay, babe?

AMY (O.S.)

What a stupid fucking question.

Jason pauses at the hallway entrance and looks back towards the guys.

JASON

(To Chris)

And you have three wives. I'd rather cut off my penis and put it in the ziplock bag she keeps my nuts in.

Jason exits.

KEVIN

I wonder would 'gay marriage' truly be gay or just as depressingly glum as straight marriage seems to be.

CHRIS

I love being married. I have three great wives. Eleven cool kids. I think marriage rocks.

KEVIN

You think marriage is a buffet.

ERIC

So, is this why you decided to attend the reunion? To break your news to us?

CHRIS

I'm just happy to see you guys again. It's been a while.

ERIC

You're the one who has avoided us. Is this why?

CHRIS

Yeah, kind of. Missy has been wanting to let you all know, but I wasn't sure how to go about it. And I figured this might be a good time to catch up. A lot has changed.

DOUG

No shit.

CHRIS

Hey, not just with me. Eric and Kevin got together. Jason and Amy had a second kid. You and Sara... Actually, has anything changed with you and Sara? I mean other than the additional inches on your biceps? Did you two ever get married?

DOUG

No.

ERIC

Back to the subject you are clearly avoiding. Did you already have this marital arrangement when you came to Andy's funeral?

CHRIS

(a little embarrassed)

Yeah. Paloma was part of the family then. Ashley came later.

ERIC

So you kept this secret from us for... for how long?

CHRIS

What was I going to do send you one of those Christmas card portraits along with one of those stupid 'here's-what-our-year-was' letters?

ERIC

Why not? We are still the same group of friends we were back in the day. Unless your group doesn't fit with our group.

CHRIS

I get that you're pissed, Eric, and I'm sorry. I thought this was the kind of news better delivered in person.

ERIC

Oh really. Well we were in person at the funeral.

CHRIS

That wasn't the right time.

ERIC

Because you knew we'd all be shocked.

CHRIS

No, because it was Andy's funeral.

DOUG

Hey, guys, let's take it down a level, okay?

ERIC

Sorry.

DOUG

But Eric has a point. Why did you wait so long to tell us?

CHRIS

No excuse, Doug. I screwed up. I mean this isn't like Eric coming out. That's pretty traditional compared to what we've got going on. So I guess I wasn't that confident in how you guys would receive the news and didn't want Missy to get hurt if you rejected us.

ERIC

We're not going to reject you, Chris. But it's disappointing that you held out on us for so long.

CHRIS

I said I'm sorry. I explained why. So pull the stick out of your ass and let it go.

ERIC

Don't try and put this on me.

DOUG

C'mon, Chris, if I wanted this kind of reunion, I could have gone to visit my family. We're friends. We accept our differences. One for all, all for one, right?

KEVIN

Oh, like the nine musketeers.

ERIC

Stay out of it, Kevin.

KEVIN

Staying out.

CHRIS

So what do you want, Eric. Do you want us to leave?

ERIC

No. I just... I just want us to be the same tight group we promised we'd be and keeping a secret like that... like I said, disappointing.

CHRIS

And how about you, Eric? We knew you were gay a long time before you got around to telling us. Should I be disappointed?

ERIC

This isn't about me, Chris. This is about you breaking trust with the group.

CHRIS

Okay, I'm sorry. Should I beg forgiveness from Saint Eric? Do you want me to get down on my knees?

KEVIN

Don't go there.

DOUG

C'mon, guys, we're here to have a good time.

CHRIS

So, can we be cool about this?

ERIC

(after a moment)

All right. I'm sorry.

CHRIS

Doug...?

DOUG

It definitely caught me off guard, but if Eric is cool with it, then I'm cool with it.

CHRIS

How about Jason?

Jason enters on cue.

JASON

How about what about Jason?

DOUG

How do you feel about Chris's living arrangements?

JASON

I pity the fool.

CHRIS

Seriously.

JASON

If it works for you then I'm good with it. I mean, isn't this what our group has always been about? We accept each other as we are.

The guys AD LIB agreement.

JASON (CONT)

There you have it.

CHRIS

And Amy?

JASON

We'll have to wait until she sobers up to get that answer.

Sara, Missy and Ashley enter from the outside. They are wrapped in sweaters against the evening chill. They settle into the room, except for Ashley who stands near the staircase.

MISSY

(to Sara)

...it was on the internet, that's all I remember. Chris, where did we see that blooper of Sara?

CHRIS

I don't know. Some YouTube thing about weather girl screw ups.

SARA

Oh God... was it the one where I said...?

(in weather girl mode)

The skies will be so clear tonight you will be able to see up Uranus.

CHRIS

Nope. It was the one where your boob fell out of your top.

SARA

They always put me in such low cut tops, I'm surprised it's the only time. That's why I never talk about the weather in Vermont...

Raising an arm as if pointing at the map.

SARA (CONT)

It's too far north for decency.

MISSY

How's Amy doing?

JASON

Paying homage to the porcelain gods.

SARA

Just like the old days. Such fond memories.

Sara crosses and sits next to Jason.

ASHLEY

Well, I think I'll go up to bed and leave you all to catch up.

DOUG

No stay with us, Ashley.

ASHLEY

You sure. I kind of feel like...

KEVIN

The outsider? Come sit with me.

ASHLEY

Thanks.

Ashley crosses over and sits next to Kevin.

KEVIN

We'll start our own group. Would you like a beer? Wait are you old enough to drink.

Kevin crosses to bar and gets beers for the ladies.

ASHLEY

I'm twenty-six.

MISSY

(not really joking)

And she'll let you know that every chance she gets.

Kevin 'meows'.

ASHLEY

I'm sorry. I didn't mean anything by it.

CHRIS

Something bothering you, Miss?

MISSY

Nope.

Amy enters. She looks like a walking disaster, hair askew, make up smeared and wearing a bathrobe. An incoherent grumble gets their attention.

ERIC

"She walks in beauty, like the night. Of cloudless climes and starry skies..."

JASON

And flecks of vomit in her eyes.

AMY

That bad, huh?

Amy makes her way to the group and plops down between Jason and Sara with a sound of suffering in the effort.

SARA

Maybe you should have stayed in bed.

AMY

No. I was thinking of this whole situation with Chris and Missy and Ashley and I want to apologize for being a bitch about the whole thing.

The group CHEERS.

AMY (CONT)

Oh, please don't do that.

MISSY

Thanks, Amy. That's important to me.

AMY

I was lying on the bed watching the ceiling spin and I asked myself why should I have any problem with this. I don't totally get it, but it's your life. One of the things I have always loved about our group is that we're not judgmental. So, Chris, Missy, Ashley...

(Directing her voice towards the door)

...Paloma. I'm sorry.

JASON

Well, considering the unique and diverse choices we have embraced within our little group I think it just goes to prove that we chose the correct song as our anthem.

(Starts the song)

"CAUSE I'VE GOT FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES..."

The group joins in, except Kevin and Ashley.

THE GROUP

"...WHERE THE WHISKEY DROWNS
AND THE BEER CHASES MY BLUES AWAY
AND I'LL BE OKAY
I'M NOT BIG ON SOCIAL GRACES
THINK I'LL SLIP ON DOWN TO THE OASIS
OH, I'VE GOT FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES."

The group celebrates and laughs.

KEVIN

Well, if y'all are gonna sing country. I'm going to amble off to the bunkhouse.

ERIC

I'll go with you. 'Night, all.

The group AD LIB good nights.

JASON

(Calling after them)

Hang on, I'd better do a quick cleaning of the bathroom. Amy is not renowned for her hurling accuracy.

Jason exits down the hallway.

CHRIS

Gonna take a leak.

Chris exits to the outside.

MISSY

There are bathrooms inside, you know?

DOUG

I'm beat. Gonna turn in.

Doug mounts the stairs.

SARA

I'm going to clean up a little. I'll be up in a minute.

DOUG

'Kay...

Sara seems a little miffed then starts to gather stuff from the tables.

MISSY

You okay?

SARA

Yeah... just tired. It was a long drive.

MISSY

I wish I could look like that when I'm tired. After all these years, you still look great.

SARA

Thanks. Glad somebody notices.

AMY

Hard to miss.

SARA

Meaning?

AMY

Meaning hard to miss.

SARA

You know what you're a grouchy drunk. Always have been.

MISSY

Forget the cleaning. We're on vacation. We're allowed to be total slob. Leave it till morning.

SARA

You talked me into it. Good night.

Sara climbs the stairs and crosses down to the last door on the mezzanine.

MISSY

Something going on with Sara and Doug?

AMY

(dismissive)

Got no idea. You'll have to ask her... or Jason, they're pretty close. Anyway, who cares...

Chris enters zipping his shorts.

CHRIS

Nothing better than a whiz in the woods. All right, see you in the morning.

(Holds out his hand)

Ash...? Wait, hang on.

Chris wipes his hand on his shorts then holds it out to Ashley again.

CHRIS (CONT)

Okay...

ASHLEY

Good night.

Chris and Ashley mount the stairs and enter one of the two center rooms. Amy watches this.

MISSY

Right now you're wondering how that must feel. Seeing your husband go off to bed with a lovely twenty-six year old with a tight little bottom and perky boobs, right?

AMY

You always could read my mind.

MISSY

Honestly, there are times when it doesn't feel good, but you get past it.

AMY

Yeah. Right.

MISSY

I don't know how to explain it... Chris and I never felt that exclusivity was all that wonderful, but we loved each other too much and trusted each other too much to cheat. We could have done the open marriage thing ala the nineteen seventies, but that still felt like cheating because you couldn't share it with your friends and family. So we found this idea and it made sense for us.

AMY

I understand how Chris benefits but what about you?

MISSY

It's not about the sex. I gained two sister-wives and all those children and it makes me feel complete.

AMY

I'm not sure I totally believe you.

Before Missy can respond, Eric enters. He is only wearing boxer shorts.

ERIC

Sorry, I thought everyone had turned in.

MISSY

I'm about to. Good night, Amy. We'll talk more tomorrow.

AMY

'Night, Miss.

MISSY

Good night, Eric.

ERIC

Good night.

Missy mounts the stairs and enters her room.

ERIC (CONT)

Could you do that?

AMY

I really don't know. What are you hiding in your hand? You are not still smoking?

ERIC

No, of course not. I'm a medical professional. I know the dangers of tobacco.

AMY

Show me.

Eric holds out an e-cigarette.

ERIC

I vape. The hypocrisy is less apparent.

AMY

Good night.

Amy exits to the bedroom. Eric exits to the porch and 'lights' his e-cigarette. Doug descends the stairs. He wears sweatpants and is shirtless. He crosses to the bar and gets a bottle of water. He stops and sniffs the air. He crosses and opens the door. Eric immediately hides the cigarette.

DOUG

Hey...

ERIC

Oh, thank God, I thought it was Kevin.

DOUG

Keeping secrets, huh?

ERIC

Nothing important.

Doug and Eric make eye contact and hold it, then Eric looks away.

ERIC (CONT)

It's beautiful out here.

DOUG

That thing smells like old lady perfume.

ERIC

Keep it to yourself and I'll give you a free whitening.

DOUG

Deal.

ERIC

You still Assistant Basketball Coach at that college?

DOUG

Head coach.

ERIC

Congratulations. I forget the college.

DOUG

St. Augustine. Small Catholic school.

ERIC

Still that's great. You're doing well.

DOUG

Yeah, I guess so.

(Pause)

This situation with Chris and Missy is interesting.

ERIC

That it is.

DOUG

You seemed pretty angry about it earlier.

ERIC

No, it wasn't their situation. It's just... I like the trust we've always shared. Our group. I don't want to see it fall apart.

DOUG

And you think Chris keeping this secret did that?

ERIC

Hope not. I'd like things to stay as they were always for all time. What we have is good.

DOUG

Yeah.

(beat)

I'm happy to see you, Eric.

ERIC

You, too.

DOUG

I still think about you, you know?

ERIC

That was a long time ago in a different galaxy.

DOUG

To me, it seems like yesterday.

(pause)

Do you still think about me?

ERIC

Not in that way.

DOUG

But you think about me?

ERIC

I think about all of you.

After a moment...

DOUG

Things are good with Kevin?

ERIC

Yes. Where are you going with this, Doug?

DOUG

I don't know. I just know that seeing you again a lot of the old feelings came up.

ERIC

Push them back down, Doug. Let's consider it an indiscretion of youth... a boyish experiment, okay?

DOUG

I'm not trying to start anything. It's just that... ever since that time I've been unsure of who I am. When I was with you, I thought I might have figured it out, but...

ERIC

Let it go, Doug. That was twenty years ago. You've got a beautiful life with Sara and I'm in a committed relationship. Let's keep it that way.

DOUG

Can we talk about it?

ERIC

The subject is closed. Whatever you're trying to work out for yourself has nothing to do with me. It's only about you.

DOUG

I don't think so. I understand that you are in a relationship, but that doesn't mean...

ERIC

Doug... don't start again. I'm trying to be polite, but there is nothing between us and there never will be anything between us and further more if you are truly wrestling with sexual orientation issues, I think the person you should be speaking with is Sara.

DOUG

This has nothing to do with Sara.

ERIC

Really? Are you having sex with men?

DOUG

Sometimes but it's just sex and I'm careful. It doesn't mean anything.

ERIC

It does mean something. It means you're not being honest with yourself or Sara. Honesty is one of our core values, Doug. That kind of dishonesty just spins out of control eventually. You need to deal with it.

DOUG

I'm a coach. I work with young men... at a Catholic college. How long do you think I'd keep that job if I came out?

ERIC

Then why are you coming on to me?

DOUG

Because you understand what we had...

Doug reaches out to touch Eric, but Eric pushes his hand away.

ERIC

I'm going back inside. This conversation never happened.

Eric extinguishes his cigarette. He tries to return inside, but Doug blocks his way.

DOUG

You can't do this to me, Eric. You can't pretend I don't exist... that what we had doesn't exist.

ERIC

What we had was a one night stand, Doug. That's all it was. Forget it.

Eric pushes past him, enters the cabin and crosses down the hall to his bedroom.

DOUG

(calling after)

Actions have consequences, Eric. They have consequences.

Doug slams his fist into the porch rail in anger.

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF SCENE TWO

SCENE THREE

LIGHTS UP ON:

It is late morning. The room is still a mess from the booze-fest the previous night. Missy enters from the kitchen and places coffee service on the bar. She pours a cup. Amy, hungover, stumbles in and pours a cup.

AMY
(barely audible)

Mornin'...

MISSY

How's the head?

Amy responds with an incoherent grumble.

AMY

You seen Jason?

MISSY

I think he and Sara went for a walk.

From upstairs, we hear the raucous sounds of Ashley and Chris... mostly Ashley... having sex.

AMY

Really...?

MISSY

She's an energetic twenty-six.

AMY

I forgot what real sex sounds like. How do you just ignore that?

MISSY

We have a big house. I don't usually hear it.

AMY

You hear it now.

MISSY

(trying to be cool about it)

It's just sex. You learn to accept it. Our love is bigger than that.

AMY

It would make me feel like... I don't know...

Sounds continue

MISSY

Yeah... well... yeah...

(changes subject)

I'm going to take a shower.

Missy starts back upstairs.

AMY

Think I'll take my coffee outside.

Amy exits out on to the porch.

The sex sounds reach their peak and finish as Missy passes the bedroom door. There is laughter and joy now from the bedroom. Missy regards the door and looks unhappy. After a moment, head down, she exits into her bedroom.

Amy sits on the porch with her coffee. Jason arrives from the wilderness.

JASON

Good morning. How are you feeling?

AMY

Like crap. You got up early.

JASON

Yeah took a walk. Saw an amazing eagle down near the lake. I'm going to grab a shower.

AMY

Whatever.

Jason ignores this and exits into the cabin and down the hallway.

A moment later, Sara comes out of the wilderness. Even in the morning, she looks great.

SARA

Hey, feeling any better? You got a snoot full last night.

AMY

You've got leaves or something in your hair.

Sara removes leaves from the back of her head.

SARA

I was lying in the grass watching this beautiful eagle down by the lake. Probably where I got the leaves.

AMY

Yeah, probably.

SARA

Do we have a problem?

AMY

I don't know. Do we?

SARA

Ever since we got here you've been taking shots at me or making snide remarks.

AMY

Really? Wasn't aware of that.

SARA

What's going on?

AMY

Same thing I was wondering.

Amy rises and crosses off.

AMY (CONT)

Think I'll see if I can find that eagle.

Amy crosses off passing Eric as he enters.

ERIC

Morning, Amy. Feeling okay?

AMY

Eric, did you see an amazing eagle?

ERIC

No. Why?

AMY

You probably weren't lying down.

Amy exits into the wilderness. Eric crosses to Sara.

ERIC

What's that all about?

SARA

I don't know. Hangover I guess. You still thinking we should get involved in Amy and Jason's marriage.

ERIC

I'm not sure it's appropriate with whole Chris and Missy thing and you and Doug...

They enter the cabin.

SARA

Me and Doug? What about me and Doug?

ERIC

Nothing. I mean, you know... you guys aren't really married, actually not married at all...

SARA

Neither are you and Kevin. What's going on?

ERIC

It's really nothing. I'm just a little upset. I mean, I didn't put this reunion together for drama, we're here to have fun... enjoy each other... So Jason and Amy can work out their own problems, right?

SARA

Okay.

Sara climbs the stairs and goes into her room.
Eric gets his cup and pours a second cup of coffee.

Kevin races in wiping his head.

KEVIN

I can't believe it. An eagle crapped on my head. I need a shower.

Ashley and Chris come out of their room and start down the stairs.

ASHLEY

Good morning, Eric. What a great day.

CHRIS

(grumbling)

Coffee...

Jason enters pulling his shirt back on.

JASON

Was going to take a shower, but Kevin had a hair emergency.

ERIC

Morning. You want coffee?

JASON

Yeah and a shot of Maker's Mark.

ASHLEY

You okay?

JASON

Oh to be young and beautiful and never have to wake up next to Amy.

ERIC

She seemed to be in a mood this morning.

JASON

This morning?

Sara comes out of her room and starts down the stairs. She reacts to the SOUND of a car arriving. HORN honking.

SARA

That can't be the police already. We've barely begun to party.

Jason crosses to the door and looks outside.
Missy comes out of her room to see what the commotion is.

JASON

Well I'll be damned.

After a moment, CARLA enters. She carries one small duffle bag. Jason hugs her. All react with AD LIB greetings.

MISSY

Carla... I can't believe it. We didn't think you'd come.

CARLA

Should I leave?

JASON

No way. This is a terrific surprise.

SARA

You look wonderful. Where have you been? Nobody's heard from you since... since forever.

CARLA

Since Andy's funeral.

SARA

Yeah.

CARLA

It's all right. We don't have to tip toe around the subject. We all know Andy's dead.

Kevin enters drying his hair. He is shirtless.

KEVIN

Does anybody know? Is eagle crap good luck?
(seeing Carla)

Oh sorry.

ERIC

Kevin, this is Carla. Carla, my partner, Kevin.

CARLA

Hi.

Doug enters from upstairs.

DOUG

Oh my god, Carla. How are you? You look great.

Doug hugs her. Carla feels his arms.

CARLA

Wow, Mr. Muscles... You guys haven't changed a bit.

JASON

Well, some of us have. To catch you up, Chris has three wives.

CARLA

You've been married three times?

JASON

Let me rephrase that -- Chris has three wives simultaneously. Missy -- who you know -- wife number one. And Ashley -- who you don't know -- wife number two.

ASHLEY

Ashley... Actually, I'm wife number three. Number two is home minding the kids.

CARLA

Damn, I missed a lot. How many kids?

ASHLEY

Eleven.

CARLA

(to Chris)

Seriously? Three wives and eleven kids.

CHRIS

Yes, ma'am. So catch us up, Carla. What happened to you? You just disappeared on us. No letters, no calls, no emails, no texts, no FaceBook, no Twitter, no ...

MISSY

Okay, okay we got it.

(To Carla)

Soooooo...?

CARLA

I'm not sure I should tell you. It might make you all a little uncomfortable.

Doug crosses over near Kevin

DOUG

We're all friends here. We should be able to tell each other anything.

Brushing Kevin's head.

DOUG (CONT)

You've got something in your hair.

ERIC

(to Kevin)

You going to get dressed?

KEVIN

Okay...

Kevin exits. Eric glares at Doug.

JASON

So what's the story, Carla? You won't upset us, whatever it is. We have the Chris, Missy, Ashley and Paloma revelation. And we were cool with that. So whatever you've got, I don't think it's going to top them.

CARLA

Okay, you want to know why you didn't hear from me after Andy's funeral.

SARA

Could you hurry up. I have to pee.

CARLA

Go ahead. I'll wait.

DOUG

No. Just hold it, Sara. So...?

CARLA

All right... The last time I saw any of you was at Andy's funeral.

JASON

Yeah, we know that part.

SARA DOUG
(fidgety) So...?
Pee...

CARLA
After that... well after that, let's just say I got into a little trouble.

DOUG
Trouble like pregnant trouble?

CARLA
No, real trouble not euphemistic trouble.

SARA
What do you mean?

Carla removes a large baggy of marijuana from her duffel bag. Kevin enters buttoning his shirt.

CARLA
This kind of trouble.

KEVIN
Oh is that what I think it is?

CARLA
Are you DEA or FBI?

KEVIN
No, just G-A-Y and sometimes Y-M-C-A.

ERIC
You do know that's embarrassing?

KEVIN
Yes.

CHRIS
I don't get it. You've been high all this time?

SARA
Really, Chris...?

CARLA
Still as sharp as ever, huh?

ERIC

You got arrested for smoking grass?

CARLA

No. I got arrested for selling grass and a few other regulated pharmaceuticals. For the last seven years, I've been in prison.

JASON

Damn, she topped them.

ERIC

Did Andy know you were dealing drugs? Or did this start after Andy's death?

SARA

Andy would have been so sad to know what happened to you.

CARLA

Andy knew. It was Andy who got me started.

ERIC

I don't believe that, Carla.

CARLA

You calling me a liar, Eric? That's a little cold.

ERIC

Andy and I were pretty close and that's just not the kind of person he was.

DOUG

Andy... close...

ERIC

Shut up, Doug.

SARA

What's going on?

ERIC

Nothing. I'm sorry, Carla. I didn't mean it like that.

CARLA

You guys really don't know, do you?

SARA

Know what?

CARLA

About Andy....

JASON

We know Andy died in Afghanistan serving his country.

CARLA

You sure you want to know this? It's not going to make you happy.

ERIC

Whatever happened, Andy was one of us.

CARLA

Okay...

(a deep breath, then)

The truth is... Andy died in Afghanistan, but not in combat.

ERIC

Yes, he did.

CARLA

No, he didn't. Andy wasn't killed by terrorists or Taliban or whatever you want to call them. Andy was running a drug ring when he was stationed in Afghanistan. He tried to cut in on some other guy's action. Andy was killed by another soldier... an American soldier.

Everyone is shocked except Missy.

JASON

Holy crap...

ERIC

How did we not know? I didn't think it possible that we kept secrets like that from each other. How did we not know?

DOUG

When did this start? When did Andy get involved in dealing drugs?

CARLA

At school. That's how Andy paid his tuition.

SARA

Okay, gotta pee. Don't say anything else until I get back.

Sara runs up the stairs as Amy enters from the outside and stops when she sees Carla.

AMY
(under her breath)

Shit...

CARLA

Long time, Amy...

AMY

Carla...

CARLA

That's it? No hug? Nothing?

AMY

I'm sweaty. Maybe later.

CARLA

I don't think Amy is all that thrilled that I showed up. Right, Amy?

Amy takes a step towards Carla, then thinks better of it. She blows past Carla with a bit of a shoulder bump then leaves the cabin again and disappears into the woods.

ERIC
(to Jason)

What was that about?

JASON

Welcome to my world.

MISSY

I'm going to see if Amy's okay.

Missy exits the cabin. She stays on the porch looking for Amy.

JASON

What's going on with you and Amy, Carla?

CARLA

She's your wife. Ask her.

JASON

Forget it. I don't even care.

Jason crosses to bar and grabs a beer.

DOUG

Okay... so now what?

CHRIS

I don't know about you, but I'm rolling a doobie.

Chris opens a baggy and lays out some grass.
He opens the papers and begins to roll.

JASON

First intelligent idea I've heard today.

Jason joins Chris. Eric is despondent.

ERIC

I still can't believe Andy kept something that big secret.

CARLA

There are a lot more secrets in this group than that.

ERIC

What does that mean, Carla?

CARLA

Nothing. I shouldn't have said it.

KEVIN

Not exactly the that 'best of all possible worlds' you planned on, huh?

ERIC

I don't need your attitude right now, Kevin.

KEVIN

(calling after)

Does that mean the 'Kumbaya' sing-a-long is cancelled?

ERIC

Stop being an asshole.

Eric exits to the bedroom.

CARLA

This is going to be one fun fucking week-end.

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

LIGHTS UP ON:

MUSIC is playing from someone's iPod or iPhone. It's Sinead O'Connor's *Nothing Compares to You*.

It is dark outside as the early night of the mountains has settled in. Everyone is in the room except Amy and Missy. Some are sprawled on chairs or the couch others spread about the floor on cushions. Ashley and Kevin dance in a "feeling the mood" sort of way. Smoke fills the air. A couple of sizable joints are being passed around. A large plate of Oreo cookies is on the table. All the group are well on their way to 'mellow'. Chris is already wasted.

JASON

I hope you all realize that at this exact moment, we are the complete stereotype of Gen X-ers. Pass the Oreos.

Ashley passes the plate to Jason.

ASHLEY

Not me. I think I'm officially a Millennial.

KEVIN

Because she's only twenty-six.

(to Ashley)

I was afraid you'd leave that out.

The song ends. No one speaks for a while. They are lost in the music and the smoke.

SARA

Great song.

DOUG

How come our generation only gets a letter and everybody else gets a name... War Babies; Baby Boomers, Millennials? We get an X like someone too illiterate to sign their name.

Missy enters from the wilderness. She carries a flashlight and looks concerned.

MISSY

I'm a little worried, guys. I can't find Amy anywhere.

JASON

Ah, that explains the peace and quiet.

ERIC

Don't be a jerk, Jason.

(to Missy)

Should we go look for her?

JASON

She'll be back. She does this when she's pissed.

ERIC

What's she so pissed about?

JASON

Who knows. Pissed is what makes Amy, Amy.

ERIC

I still think we should look for her.

JASON

She'll be back. She just needs time.

Chris is very wasted.

CHRIS

We need pizza.

There are multiple AD LIB agreements.

ASHLEY

Do we have pizza?

CHRIS

No.

ASHLEY
Can we order pizza?

CHRIS
No.

KEVIN
We can make pizza.

SARA
How?

KEVIN
I don't know. That just escaped from my brain before my mouth could stop it.

JASON
(stoned)
We have bread and cheese and other things.

KEVIN
And...?

JASON
And we can make bread pizza.

SARA
Oh my God, bread pizza, I so remember bread pizza. It's the best pizza ever. We could do that. Let's make bread pizza.

JASON
Yes...

SARA
I love bread pizza.

CHRIS
Pizza...

CARLA
Yeah, pizza...

AD LIB excited comments about that 'sounding good', etc., but that dwindles down to stoned silence as no one moves from their place.

MISSY
Is anyone going to make it?

KEVIN
Tell me how. I'll make it.

SARA

You take bread and cheese and other stuff and you make a pizza.

This makes Jason laugh and the others giggle at his laughter.

KEVIN

Got it.

Kevin rises from the floor and exits to the kitchen.

DOUG

I'll help.

Doug rises to follow Kevin. Eric puts out an arm to stop him.

ERIC

Sit down, Doug. Ashley can help.

ASHLEY

Okay...

Ashley rises and goes to the kitchen.

DOUG

What are you worried about, Eric?

SARA
(reacting to this)

What's going on?

ERIC

Nothing.

SARA

Doug...?

DOUG

Nothing. If Eric says it was nothing, then it was nothing, because Eric is always right, right Eric?

Doug takes a seat.

CHRIS

Did we order a pizza?

SARA

Kevin is making it.

CHRIS

(in his haze)

Is he making it with pepperoni? 'Cause I only eat pizza with pepperoni. Pizza without pepperoni isn't pizza. It's just... something else, but not pizza.

ERIC

Do you hate us, Carla?

CARLA

That's a strange question.

ERIC

Why didn't you let us know where you were?

CARLA

I didn't think that "the group" would care. I mean, I wasn't really a part of the group. I was just Andy's girl.

JASON

We still loved you, Carla.

CHRIS

(Stoned embraces Carla)

Yeah. We love you, Carla. How's Andy?

The group looks at him as if he has gone crazy.

CARLA

(Without missing a beat)

Still dead.

CHRIS

Oh right, sorry.

ERIC

What did you mean about there being other secrets?

CARLA

I shouldn't have said it. Drop it, okay?

ERIC

No, I'm not going to drop it. I want an answer.

Amy enters in the middle of this.

SARA

I just want to know how someone who hasn't made any effort to stay in touch can suddenly pop in and start hurling accusations at us.

AMY

Forget it, Sara.

CARLA

Good call, Amy.

AMY

Don't start with me, Carla.

CARLA

Or what...?

AMY

What kind of trouble you trying to stir up?

CARLA

Just reliving 'old times'. Isn't that why we're here?

AMY

You've always been a bitch.

JASON

Come on, Amy, let it go.

AMY

I don't want to let it go. You got something to say, Carla, say it.

CARLA

I don't think you want to go there, Amy.

AMY

Try me...

Amy and Carla face off. Eric separates them.
He is angry.

ERIC

Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! This is not how we act with each other. Stop it. Please...?

AMY

Go to hell, Carla.

Amy exits to the porch

DOUG

Is she okay? Maybe you should go after her, Jason.

JASON

Seriously? You're going to give me marital advice?

DOUG

What the hell does that mean?

ERIC

Jason...

Jason drops the joint in an ashtray.

JASON

Fine.

Jason crosses to the front door and opens it.

JASON (CONT)

You going to come back inside?

AMY

Why would you care?

Amy wanders off into the night. Jason returns inside closing the door emphatically.

JASON

Any other brilliant ideas?

Jason sits next to Sara. She passes him a joint. As he takes a hit, Sara strokes his arm to calm him.

Kevin and Ashley enter with a plate of toasted bread covered in cheese, tomato sauce and god knows what else.

KEVIN

Voila! Bread pizza.

Ashley clears a spot on the table and Kevin places the plate of 'pizza' on the table. It's basically toast with pizza type toppings. The group attacks the pizza.

DOUG

Pass me a slice.

CHRIS

Is that pepperoni?

ASHLEY

Jimmy Dean breakfast sausage.

CHRIS

Cool. Pepperoni.

ERIC

If this story about Andy was true, why did he get military honors at his funeral?

CARLA

He didn't.

ERIC

Yes, he did, Carla. We were there. He got the twenty-one gun salute, the bugler played taps and they folded the flag and gave it to his mother.

CARLA

Yeah. All arranged by his uncle from a local VFW post. The military wanted nothing to do with the funeral.

JASON

Are you saying this whole thing was covered up?

CARLA

There was enough bad press about the war without throwing a drug ring into the picture. So, yes, basically it was covered up.

SARA

Did his family know that?

CARLA

I don't think so.

SARA

(to Carla)

But you knew.

CARLA

I knew what he was doing over there and he told me a couple of times that he was in some danger, but it wasn't until later that one of his buddies from over there told me the whole story.

ASHLEY

Either way, it's sad. I'm sorry for you, Carla.

Eric crosses away from the group and collapses
in a chair. His world is crumbling around him.

ERIC

What the fuck...?

LIGHTS FADE.

END OF SCENE ONE

SCENE TWO

LIGHTS UP ON:

It is later that night. Carla sleeps curled up on the couch. Her jeans are tossed aside and she wears panties and a T-shirt. Outside, Missy sits on the porch stairs waiting. Amy wanders back towards the cabin.

MISSY

I was beginning to think a bear ate you or something.

AMY

What are you doing out here?

MISSY

Waiting for you. You okay?

AMY

I'm fine.

MISSY

You want to go back inside? It's getting a little chilly.

AMY

Not yet.

MISSY

You going to stay out here all night?

AMY

Maybe.

Amy sits next to Missy. Amy is clearly upset.

MISSY

You want to talk about it?

AMY

About what? There's nothing to talk about.

MISSY

I don't know. Is everything okay with you and Jason?

AMY

Jason... Why?

MISSY

You guys seem to be kind of at each other.

AMY

It doesn't mean anything. Just the way we are.

MISSY

It seemed cold that he didn't want to come out and check on you.... wasn't worried about you.

AMY

He knows when I'm pissed off that it's best to stay as far from me as he can.

MISSY

Okay.

(pause)

How about what's going on with you and Carla?

AMY

Why did that bitch have to come here? We were good without her.

MISSY

Talk to me, Amy.

AMY

Nothing to say.

A thoughtful pause.

MISSY

Of all the group, I always thought of you as my closest friend. We always helped with each other's problems. I could always count on you... we were always there for each other.

AMY

Yeah.

MISSY

I'm still here for you, Amy. Twenty years doesn't mean much in the scheme of things.

AMY

I'm a big girl now, Missy. I can take care of myself. Okay?

MISSY

Okay...

Missy considers whether she should bring up this next subject, then decides to risk it.

MISSY (CONT)

Does Jason know about you and Andy?

AMY

(Caught off guard)

Me and Andy? There's nothing to know about me and Andy.

MISSY

You know that's not true, Amy.

AMY

Why? What did Carla say?

MISSY

Carla didn't say anything.

(Pause)

Andy did.

AMY

I don't know what he could have told you. Andy and I were close. We had a little fling at school, that's it. Nothing important. I guess Carla still resents that.

MISSY

About the abortion.

AMY

I don't have any idea...

MISSY

Amy, I know the whole story. Andy and I talked about everything. I'm probably the only one besides Carla who knew he was dealing drugs.

AMY

I think you've got me confused with someone else.

MISSY

(Spelling it out)

He got you pregnant when you were a sophomore. He didn't want the baby. You wanted to keep it. He offered you twenty thousand dollars for your tuition if you aborted. You accepted.

AMY

Oh, God...

MISSY

I'm not judging you, Amy. What's done is done. But it's eating you up inside, isn't it?

AMY

I can handle it.

MISSY

Doesn't seem like it.

(a beat)

You never told Jason about this, did you?

AMY

No.

MISSY

Don't you think a secret that big eventually wears on a relationship?

AMY

I'm not going to tell him, Missy.

MISSY

What will it hurt? If he loves you, he'll understand. If not...

AMY

(Emphatically)

It's my secret. So keep your self-help advice to yourself, okay?

MISSY

Okay. But, there is at least one other person besides me who knows and she seems to enjoy holding it over your head.

There is no response from Amy.

MISSY (CONT)

I'm going to go back to bed. Sorry if I upset you.

Missy returns inside and up the stairs to her room. Amy sits with her head in her hands. She is crying. The tears turn to anger.

AMY

Goddamn, bitch.

Amy jumps to her feet and slams the door open. Carla is awakened by the noise. Immediately, Amy is on her trying to wrestle her into submission. Amy grabs a pillow and is trying to suffocate Carla.

The upstairs doors open and Chris and Doug race down the stairs and break up the fight. AD LIBS from the guys. Doug pulls Amy aside and Chris restrains Carla. Ashley, Sara and Missy watch from above.

Jason, Eric and Kevin race in from the hallway. Amy struggles to get at Carla.

JASON

Amy, stop...

Jason crosses to her and helps Doug restrain her.

JASON (CONT)

Stop it. What the hell is going on?

DOUG

I have no idea. We heard all this noise and the two of them were fighting.

JASON

Does anybody know what this was about?

CARLA

Ask your wife. Ask her what she knows about Andy.

Carla grabs her jeans and pulls them on. She gathers up the rest of her stuff near the couch and stuffs it into her suitcase.

ERIC

Carla, you can't leave. It's the middle of the night.

CARLA

Good. When morning comes you can all pretend this never happened. Isn't that what you're best at?

Missy and Sara descend the stairs.

SARA

What does that mean?

JASON

Why are you so pissed? What did we ever do to you?

CARLA

Pathetic. You're all pathetic.

ERIC

(firmly)

All right. Stop it. Everybody stop it. Carla, put the suitcase down. Everybody go back to bed. Let's wait until morning when we might be able to discuss all of this more rationally.

CARLA

Go to hell. There's enough bullshit in the world. I don't need to put up with yours.

Carla starts to go, but Eric grabs her and takes her keys from her hand. Fighting off Carla, he opens the door tosses the keys outside into the night.

CARLA (CONT)

Asshole!

ERIC

We'll help you find them in the morning, but for tonight you're staying with us and we are going to work this out.

SARA

Work what out? If she wants to go, I'll give her my car.

DOUG

Actually, it's my car.

SARA

(to Doug)

Seriously! We're going to argue pink slips.

ERIC

Enough. I didn't invite you all here to destroy our group.

SARA

How many times do I have to say it? She is not part of the group.

MISSY

Eric is right. What happened to love? Love can keep us together.

Ashley descends to join the group.

JASON

Who the hell are you? Elton John?

CHRIS

Back off, Jason.

MISSY

It wasn't Elton John. It was the Captain and Tennille and it's a very profound song.

JASON

Maybe not as profound as 'Muskrat Love'.

CHRIS

(grabs Jason)

I said back off.

ERIC

(quietly)

Please, stop...

DOUG

Here's what I think. I think if Carla has all these secrets about us, she should just tell us. If we're the people we think we are, we can take it.

(looks at Eric)

No matter what that secret may be. Anybody disagree?

After a brief pause...

SARA

Me. I disagree.

JASON

Yeah, I don't think that's a great idea.

MISSY

I'm not sure.

CHRIS

How about we just let sleeping dogs sleep. That's what I think.

KEVIN

"Lie."

CHRIS

What the hell does that mean?

ERIC

Stay out of it, Kevin.

KEVIN

Too late

(to Chris)

The expression is: "Let sleeping dogs lie."

CHRIS

So you're saying I'm stupid.

KEVIN

Not at all. It was a simple correction. However, there is very clear evidence that a large portion of your blood has been pumped to a location other than your brain.

ASHLEY

(pulling Kevin aside)

I'm going to suggest that you and I remain outsiders. Okay?

KEVIN

No, I like pricking sacred balloons. I think Doug and Carla have the right idea. You created this world of platitudes and sentimentality and it doesn't stand up to the light of reality. I propose if you want to save your group that you get every thing out tonight. Full disclosure. Kind of a truth or dare... only no dares. Anyone...? Do I have to pick? Eeney, meeney...

DOUG

Okay, I'll go first.

ERIC

Don't do this, Doug.

DOUG

Actions have consequences, Eric.

ERIC

There's no point to it.

CARLA

Let him talk.

ERIC

Stay out of this, Carla.

CARLA

You're the one who insisted that I hang around, Eric.

SARA

What am I missing here?

DOUG

You all want the truth. I'll give you the truth. Eric and I had a sexual relationship.

SARA

What? When?

ERIC

It was a drunken one-night stand, that's all.

DOUG

I wasn't drunk and I still want you.

ERIC

It was a long time ago, Sara, and it meant nothing.

DOUG

It meant something to me. It still means something to me.

SARA

How could I have been so stupid? All this time I've been thinking there was something wrong with me. That you didn't find me attractive anymore. It wasn't me at all. Why would you do this to me, Doug? I was beginning to think I was losing my mind. Damn it...

CARLA

Hopeless Hypocrites...

SARA

Go to hell, Carla.

CARLA

Look at the bright side, you may be stupid, but you've got a great ass. I mean, it's not like you got through college on your brains, right?

Sara goes after Carla. Carla gets her in a headlock and is about to ram her into a wall, but Chris and Jason separate them.

JASON

(to Sara)

You okay?

SARA

I'm fine.

KEVIN

See. Doesn't it feel good to get these secrets off your chest? Didn't bother to tell me your little secret, Eric, did you? Anybody else?

CARLA

Still missing one big one, right, Amy?

Amy sits on the couch. She is clearly upset.
Jason sits next to her.

JASON

Amy, whatever happened was a long time ago. Before we were even together so it doesn't matter.

AMY

It does matter.

JASON

(putting his arms around her)

Okay, but you don't have to do this.

Amy angrily shakes Jason off.

AMY

Just let me talk, Jason. For once stop treating me like a backwards child.

JASON

Why do I even try?

Jason backs off. Amy rises and gets in Carla's face.

AMY

Is this why you came here, Carla? To get your revenge on us for never liking you? You probably spent those seven years in prison just waiting for this moment. Well, I got news for you, this isn't the story you think it is.

Amy takes a moment then steels herself.

AMY (CONT)

All right... When I was nineteen, Andy got me pregnant. He knew I was having a difficult time raising tuition so he offered me twenty thousand dollars if I'd get an abortion.

JASON

(Trying not to be surprised)

Okay... I wish you had told me this before, but what can I say... that kind of stuff happened back then. And we are all pro-choice so I don't see the problem.

AMY

The problem is I took the money, but I never got the abortion.

CARLA

What...?

AMY

Didn't see that coming, did you, Carla?

JASON

If you didn't have the abortion, then where is...

(a realization)

Are you telling me that Jake's not my son?

AMY

How stupid are you? Jake is twelve years old. We haven't seen Andy for fourteen years.

JASON

Okay, since I'm so stupid. Why don't you educate me?

AMY

I never got the abortion because I was never pregnant.

CARLA

You selfish bitch.

Carla goes after Amy, but she is held off by
Doug and Chris. Missy comes to Amy.

MISSY

It's okay, Amy. It's going to be okay.

JASON

I don't get it. If you weren't pregnant why did you let Andy think you were? Was it just
for the money?

AMY

No.

JASON

Then why? What did you want?

CARLA

Wake up, Jason. She wanted Andy and she thought she could trap him with this
pregnancy.

JASON

And when he found out you weren't pregnant, did you think he would stay with you?

AMY

I was planning on getting pregnant.

JASON

By Andy?

AMY

Yes.

CARLA

But Andy had no interest in her. She was just another piece of ass.

JASON

So what was I? The consolation prize?

CARLA

More like the check book.

AMY

You happy now, Carla? Any other lives you want to ruin.

Missy puts her arm around Amy.

MISSY

Let it go. It's over and done. You have a good marriage and two beautiful children. Everything else is water under the bridge.

AMY

For god's sake, Missy, do you ever say anything that's not a cliché?

CHRIS

Don't do that, Amy.

AMY

And how would you know if my marriage is good or not? You can't even make your marriage work.

CHRIS

Okay, Amy, that's enough.

MISSY

I make my marriage work as best I can considering.

AMY

Considering that you've been pushed out of the picture by a hot twenty-six year old.

MISSY

It's none of your business, Amy.

AMY

And what's worse, you go along with this ridiculous arrangement because you are so afraid of losing Chris, of being alone. You've always been that way.

CHRIS

Amy, I think you should just shut up right now.

MISSY

At least I love my husband and my children. My situation may not be perfect, but it wasn't about marrying into money.

Eric is getting more and more depressed with the developments.

ERIC
(head in hands)

I don't believe this.

CHRIS
(to Missy)

What does that mean? "Not perfect." Is there a problem?

SARA
What do you think, Chris? You're screwing two women other than your wife.

CHRIS
Is that it?

MISSY
No. It's not the sex. It's feeling pushed aside. I thought I would always be the first -- number one wife -- but Ashley has taken that spot.

ASHLEY
Missy, that's not true. We all respect you.

MISSY
The way people respect a venerable teacher or ancestor? You are young. You are pretty. You make a devoted wife for Chris.

ASHLEY
It's more than that, Missy. We love you.

CHRIS
I'm sorry you feel like that, Miss. Do I show too much attention to Ashley and Paloma?

MISSY
Not Paloma.

CHRIS
So this is about Ashley. Are you jealous of Ashley?

MISSY
For God's sake, Chris... look at her. She's your favorite. Why wouldn't she be? It's natural, but that doesn't make it any easier to live with.

CHRIS
Yeah, she's gorgeous, she's young and has a great body, but you've got a lot going for you, too.

Missy throws up her hands and crosses away.

CHRIS (CONT)

What?

CARLA

Oh, I am so glad I didn't leave.

Chris crosses to Missy who ignores him.

CHRIS

C'mon, Missy, what brought this on? You never said anything before.

JASON

You can't really be surprised, Chris. I mean, excuse me, but what you guys are doing isn't exactly normal.

CHRIS

By whose definition, Jason?

JASON

Look, I know I said I was cool with your arrangement and that we're supposed to graciously accept each others... differences, but I think that's just bullshit PC crap. I mean, are we erasing all boundaries between right and wrong? You want to know how I really feel... I think your marriage is stupid, immoral and criminal.

CHRIS

Okay, so Jason thinks we are stupid, immoral criminals. Anybody else have an opinion they want to share.

(looks around the group)

Anyone...? Come on, how many others were just bullshitting us yesterday. Doug?

(no response)

Carla?

CARLA

I don't give a rat's ass.

CHRIS

Anybody?

KEVIN

It does feel a little third world.

ASHLEY

Outsiders. Remember?

MISSY

But having sex with another man is totally normal?

KEVIN

Oh my goodness. The pot is going after the kettle.

SARA

I don't really understand what you and Missy are doing, Chris. I mean with Amy... I think she was wrong to do what she did, but I understand why she did it.

AMY

Meaning what?

SARA

Meaning, you needed money to stay in school. We all knew you came from a poor family. Andy bought you off.

AMY

That's a little holier than thou considering you've been screwing my husband for the last two years.

JASON

Amy, that's not true.

DOUG

Really?

SARA

(to Doug)

Why would you even care?

JASON

Doug, I swear, I never slept with Sara

CARLA

Oh, this is getting good.

AMY

How about it, Sara? You're so ready to be open and honest. You want to share the truth?

SARA

I never had an affair with Jason.

AMY

And how about every Wednesday for the last two years when you were...

(air quotes)

...playing tennis?

JASON

We were playing tennis. You never wanted to play and Sara was on the university team. She was fun to play with... play tennis with.

AMY

Playing tennis? For three hours, but you were never sweaty because you always took a shower before you came home. You don't think I figured out why?

JASON

That's your evidence? I took a shower? I took a shower at the club because I didn't want to stink up my Tesla. Is that why you're so angry all the time? You thought I was having an affair with Sara. How could you think that about me?

AMY

Really? Look at her... She's fun. She's athletic. She's beautiful. I don't believe you.

SARA

I didn't sleep with your husband, Amy.

AMY

Right. You stick with that story.

SARA

I tried to seduce him. God knows I wasn't getting it at home. I made it pretty clear to Jason that I was available to him. But he never took me up on it and believe me, as miserable as he's been with you, he was tempted.

AMY

Fuck you.

SARA

But he stayed true to you.

JASON

Really, Amy. You're being ridiculous.

AMY

I'm ridiculous? You expect me to buy that Tesla story?

JASON

Yes. Because it's true.

AMY

Go to hell, Jason.

ERIC

(losing it)

Stop it! Stop it, stop it, stop it, stop it...

KEVIN

Take a deep breath.

Pushes Kevin away.

ERIC

No, no deep breaths. I've had it.... I've had it! I've had it! I've had it! I never want to see any of you again. Hide your faces in shame.

(screaming in Jason's face)

Don't look at me! You don't have the right to look at me! None of you has the right to look at me. I don't know you. I don't want to know you. You're whiny, arrogant, narcissistic, despicable little people. You ruined it. It could have been so easy. It was all about trust and you ruined that... you shattered any semblance of trust with the group, with each other, with the entire damn world. It's just sniping and back-biting and... and... and perfidy.

(off Chris's confusion)

Perfidy, perfidy, perfidy...

Eric wanders the room looking into the faces of each of the group. There is a manic, almost insane attitude to his movements.

ERIC (CONT)

Go get out! All of you! Get out! Go crawling back to your selfish lives. We were going to change the world. Bull...Shit. Do you remember? We were going to go forth and right the injustices of the world. But we didn't. Why? Because we are the injustices. We made no effort to change anything. We spouted our bumper-sticker slogans and *namasted* our asses off and hoped things would change because we were putting positive energy into the universe. Hope... pipe-dreams... wish upon a star... all the same thing. Hope changes nothing. Everything that we thought was wrong is now us. Us! The group! Each and everyone one of you... and me. Did we believe? Did we ever believe?

ERIC (CONT)

We created an illusion... an illusion of who we pretended to be and as long as we can point to that illusion, we don't have to do anything because... look... we have an illusion... an illusion that we care because we said we care. It's all an illusion. Hope is an illusion that we cling to to avoid having to act. Hope is the currency of desperation.

(lost shakes his head)

And I am the worst of the lot because I used hope to blind myself... to not see what I didn't want to see. To not do what I didn't want to do. I had the illusion that hope was all that was needed. Illusion...

Eric collapses in a chair, exhausted. Kevin goes to him and consoles him. There is a long embarrassed pause. The various members of the group avoid looking at each other.

Carla picks up her duffel bag and starts to the door.

CARLA

Well, this has been super. We really must do it again.

CHRIS

Where are you going?

CARLA

To look for my car keys, Chris, and then get my ass outta here.

Carla stops and crosses to Amy.

CARLA (CONT)

And you are right, Amy. The entire time I was locked up all I could think of was getting back at all of you for the way you looked down your nose at me. Yeah, you pretended to accept me because of Andy but when you cut down to the quick... you are all a bunch of selfish bitches who never gave a rat's ass about anybody but yourselves.

(to all)

Love ya. Miss ya.

Carla exits. A long empty pause hangs over the group. For a moment, no one moves or speaks.

CHRIS

Well, nothing's going to be settled tonight. Maybe we'll have clearer heads in the morning.

SARA

I don't think this is the kind of thing that gets settled with a 'good night's sleep'.

AMY

I don't think this is the kind of thing that 'gets settled' period.

Amy exits to the bedroom.

SOUND: A car starts up, then peels out spewing gravel.

DOUG

(to Sara)

Sorry...

SARA

Are you? I doubt it.

Doug climbs the stairs to his room. Sara crosses to the bar and gets a water.

JASON

So where do we go from here? Do we stay friends?

MISSY

Can we stay friends? I mean some pretty strong things were said here tonight.

SARA

I don't know.

KEVIN

Unbelievable. There's more whining going on here tonight than an entire season of 'The View'. You're supposed to be a group of educated people.

ERIC

Kevin, don't...

KEVIN

Stay with me on this. You've all read Anna Karenina, right?

He looks around the room to a sea of empty faces.

KEVIN (CONT)

Jason...?

JASON

I was a finance major.

KEVIN

Anybody? Or am I totally on the wrong track.

SARA

I read it. She throws herself under a train because of a failed romance.

KEVIN

Oh great, now you ruined it for everybody.

JASON

What's your point?

KEVIN

My point is the first sentence of the book: "All happy families resemble one another; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." Did you ever wonder why "All happy families resemble one another...?"

(looks around)

I'll wait.

MISSY

Because they share the same beliefs and have developed an inner peace?

KEVIN

Thank you for trying, Missy, but... no. They resemble one another because they are...

(drawing out the next word)

...boring. They have relegated the adventure of living to the unrelenting banality of a fortune cookie or a political slogan. They take no risks, all is predictable. You're not upset because of the varied and risky choices you've made. You're upset because you kept them secret. Secrets build walls. Walls create distance. Distance destroys communities. Now you've shared those secrets, torn down those walls, so you can once again be 'the group'.

(takes a deep breath)

Sometimes my wisdom astounds even me. I'm spent.

Doug descends the stairs carrying a suitcase.

CHRIS

You cutting out?

DOUG

Yeah. No point in hanging around.

MISSY

You'll stay in touch?

DOUG

Why would I do that?

Doug exits. Ashley crosses to Missy.

ASHLEY

Missy, I don't know what to say. I never wanted to hurt you.

MISSY

It's not you. It's stupid decisions. Amy's right. I agreed to this arrangement because I was afraid I'd lose Chris and guess what... I've lost Chris.

CHRIS

You haven't lost me, Miss. You'll never lose me. For life, remember...?

Chris hugs Missy.

SOUND: Car starts and leaves.

ASHLEY

Maybe it would be better if I left.

MISSY

No, we're a family. The family we wanted to be. Letting you leave... that would just be another stupid decision. We'll find a way.

ASHLEY

(to Missy)

You want to take a walk?

MISSY

Yeah.

Missy and Ashley start to the door.

MISSY (CONT)

Sorry that we upset you, Eric, and I'm sorry for what I said about you and Kevin.

Missy and Ashley exit into the night.

CHRIS

Are we over-reacting? I mean, we're still the same group. Like every family, we got a few black sheep.

KEVIN

I think you got an entire flock... this is getting confusing... we have a group, we have a family, we have a flock...

SARA

How about we just say, we have friends.

JASON

In low places?

SARA

If you want.

LIGHTS FADE OUT.

END OF SCENE TWO

SCENE THREE

LIGHTS UP ON:

The room is empty except for Jason who lies on the couch. He can't really get settled and after a minute gets up and goes to the door. He opens it and looks out at the night.

Amy enters from the bedroom. Jason doesn't hear her arrive. She stops halfway across the room and watches Jason. After a moment...

AMY

Looking for an escape route?

Jason turns back towards her.

AMY (CONT)

I wouldn't blame you.

JASON

Fifteen years, Amy.

AMY

I know.

JASON

Why?

AMY

It doesn't work for me, Jason.

JASON

Are you saying you want a divorce?

AMY

I'm sorry, Jason. I shouldn't have married you.

JASON

That's crazy.

AMY

No. It's not. We come from different worlds.

JASON

I don't even know what that means. It doesn't matter where we came from. For fifteen years, we've created our world... our family... so what's going on?

AMY

I'm not who you should be with.

JASON

Is this still about Sara?

AMY

No. I don't think I ever believed that about you and Sara. Maybe at one time, but I knew it wasn't true... or hoped it wasn't.

JASON

It wasn't true. I was never involved with Sara.

AMY

I know. It was just my... my way to protect myself.

JASON

From what?

AMY

From me.

JASON

I am totally lost here, Amy.

AMY

I've been unhappy for so long and it has nothing to do with you. It's my own guilt.

JASON

Are we living on two different planets? Because none of this is making sense to me.

AMY

Missy is right. I did marry you because of your money.

JASON

Okay...

AMY

I know that was wrong...

JASON

So you never loved me?

AMY
(vaguely)

No...

JASON
No, you didn't love me or 'no' what I'm saying isn't correct? I need a full sentence, Amy, because right now I feel like my heart is going to explode.

AMY
I'm trying, Jason. It took me fifteen years to even bring this up, so give me a few minutes to get my thoughts clear.

JASON
Okay... okay, I'll wait.

Amy crosses to the bar, turning her back on Jason.

JASON (CONT)
Can you look at me?

Amy hesitates then turns towards him.

AMY
It's just that I feel shitty about it. It was a bad thing to do. I feel like... I don't know... I tricked you.

JASON
Okay, so you were attracted to me because I have money. I was attracted to you because you have a world class ass. Shallow? Yeah. But something has to attract people to each other, right? It's what happens after the initial attraction that counts.
(moves closer to her)
Why did you stay married to me? It couldn't be for the money. You could have divorced me and walked away with a nice hunk of change.

AMY
I know.

JASON
But you didn't.

AMY
No.

JASON

So why did you hang around for fifteen years then? For the kids?

AMY

No. I mean... yes, but no.

JASON

Glad we cleared that up.

AMY

Why did you marry me? The girl from the wrong side of the tracks. I don't think your family could have approved, right?

JASON

I married you because you are the only woman I ever met with whom I knew I could make a life. And I still feel that way.

AMY

I haven't made it easy.

JASON

True dat.

AMY

I'm really sorry.

JASON

I don't want you to be sorry. I want you to be Amy. The Amy I fell in love with.

AMY

The bitch...?

JASON

Yeah. I love that bitch. I could do with a little less bitch, but I'll take what I can get.

(prompting her)

So...?

AMY

So...?

(pause)

I guess we'll make it work.

JASON

No. That's a shitty answer. That's just another of Eric's 'illusions'. Yeah, marriage always takes effort and compromise, but... "I guess we'll make it work." That's a pretty crappy place to start from. You're either all in or all out.

AMY

I've kept this to myself for so long that I don't know if I can make it better. Kevin is right. About secrets...

JASON

Yeah... They're like some sort of cancer just waiting to destroy. It's hard to be completely honest with anyone, but... Love, marriage, relationships... When you get down to it, it's all about trust. Put the truth out there. The consequences of that are less painful than constantly fearing your secret will be revealed.

After a moment...

AMY

I was in love with Andy.

JASON

I kind of got that.

AMY

I was in love with Andy, but he didn't care about me at all. Once I understood that, I was hurt and wanted to punish him. So...

JASON

So you tricked him with the abortion thing.

AMY

Yes, but he still pushed me away.

JASON

I'm sure that was pretty painful.

AMY

Growing up in the kind of life my family had, the only saving grace was a belief that things would magically get better. That there was gold at the end of the rainbow, that there was a Prince Charming to rescue me. I hung on to that "illusion" for a long time. But after Andy... after Andy, I decided that the fairy tale of falling love was just that... a fairy tale.

A silence as Amy moves closer to Jason.

AMY (CONT)

You were always trying to win me over and when we reconnected at that alumni event, I thought... he's a good guy, he's got money and he's successful. He can give you a really nice life. Go after him and maybe you'll fall in love later.

JASON

Well... it's 'later'.

AMY

You're caring, you're smart, you're funny -- a little corny sometimes but you make me laugh and that's a good thing. You are a good father... and a loving husband.

JASON

Who gave you a blender for Valentine's Day.

AMY

It's a very nice blender... You make me feel safe. You are always on my side. I'm always your first priority. I did fall in love with you, Jason. I am just having a hard time accepting that I deserve you.

JASON

So maybe you should be looking forward instead of backwards. "What's done is done and cannot be undone." That's from something famous, right?

AMY

Macbeth.

JASON

How do you know this stuff?

AMY

I actually went to class.

JASON

So I got beauty and brains in you. I think I made a great investment.

A long silence.

JASON (CONT)

What do you want to do, Amy?

AMY

(asking herself)

Can I still be your wife?

JASON

That question for me or you? Because you already know my answer.

AMY

For me.

JASON

And...?

AMY

And... All in, Jason. I want to be all in.

JASON

Even if I told you I lost most of our money in the market crash?

AMY

Yes.

Jason takes her in his arms. They kiss.

AMY (CONT)

Did you?

JASON

Did I what?

AMY

Lose our money?

JASON

Don't be silly. I was a finance major.

AMY

Because my 'world class ass' covers a lot more of the globe these days.

JASON

And I love to travel.

Amy and Jason return to their kiss.

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF SCENE THREE

SCENE FOUR

LIGHTS UP ON:

It is morning, Chris and Missy are on the couch drinking coffee. Their luggage is next to the door. Kevin enters carrying suitcases.

KEVIN

Morning. Notice how I judiciously did not say “Good morning.”

MISSY

(with a sly smile)

It’s a good morning.

KEVIN

Oh, oh... somebody went out of turn.

Amy and Jason enter together with their luggage.
Amy is on her phone.

AMY

... we’ll be home this afternoon, Jake, so until then, please, do not try to light your sister’s hair on fire again, okay?... Good. Put grandma on.

JASON

(referring to phone call)

Life goes on.

AMY

(on phone)

No that’s okay. Grandma can stay on the toilet. Tell her we’ll be there this afternoon.
Love you...

Ashley descends the stairs with another suitcase.

AMY (CONT)

You got anything to say back to me?... Uh huh... uh huh... tell you what, we’ll talk video games when I get home.... Bye.

ASHLEY

I think that’s it.

Eric enters.

ERIC

Okay, bathroom clean, beds made...

Sara enters with a suitcase.

SARA

Good morning.

AD LIB Good mornings.

SARA (CONT)

Amy...?

AMY

(cutting her off)

I'm sorry, Sara... about all those things I said to you and about the whole Doug thing.

SARA

As far as 'the whole Doug thing'... What can I say? I think I'm going to be a whole lot better now that I know the truth.

AMY

If you need anything...?

SARA

I could use a ride home.

AMY

Of course.

JASON

You going to be okay?

SARA

Who knows... Crap, back in the dating scene at forty.

JASON

You're kidding, right? With that body? You'll be the queen of Tinder.

(to Amy)

Am I allowed to say that?

AMY

All you want. I might even agree to let you swipe right now and then.

JASON

Really?!

Jason looks surprised.

AMY

No. That's a lie.

SARA

Jason loves you, Amy. You lucked out.

AMY

Yeah... I know.

CHRIS

Okay, let's hit the road.

There are hugs and kisses all around.

MISSY

Well, what can I say? We survived.

Chris, Missy and Ashley AD LIB good byes as they exit. Chris pops back in.

CHRIS

Sara... listen, if you need...

SARA

I think you got your hands full, Chris.

CHRIS

Offer stands.

Chris exits.

JASON

We should hit the road, too.

AD LIB good byes.

AMY

Hey, if you guys ever decide to get married, don't forget to invite us, okay?

ERIC

You can be the Maid of Honor.

JASON

I have a very nice blender for your gift.

KEVIN

Re-gifting? Tacky.

AD LIBS of drive safely, stay in touch, etc.
Jason, Amy and Sara exit. Eric wanders around
the room, reliving the reunion.

KEVIN (CONT)

You all right?

ERIC

I really wanted this reunion to be wonderful. But... it wasn't, was it?

KEVIN

No. Pretty much gone to shit. Were you this distraught when you found out Santa wasn't real?

ERIC

I guess I'm just a little disappointed. I didn't want anything to change.

KEVIN

Really? Twenty years ago we were worried that the AIDS epidemic would devastate the gay community, now we're fretting over what to wear when we get married. You wouldn't want that change?

ERIC

Have I been a fool?

KEVIN

Yes.

ERIC

I'm a little embarrassed by my tantrum.

KEVIN

It was a bit over the top.

ERIC

So many illusions.

Eric sits on the couch. Kevin joins him.

KEVIN

There are still some things that are exactly as we perceived them.

(putting his arm around Eric)

Like the illusion of lovers in the moonlight.

ERIC

There is no moon. It's daylight.

KEVIN

I said 'the illusion'.

Kevin lays his head on Eric's shoulder. Eric
puts his arm around Kevin.

FADE OUT

END OF THE PLAY.