

Stupid, Fat, Ugly

By

Dave Osmundsen

2014

4 Arnold Court  
Pompton Plains, NJ, 07444  
(973) 557-0656  
Osmundsend@yahoo.com

## STUPID, FAT, UGLY

### CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

**MANDY**, mid-twenties. Attractive, but in a homier way. Has a hard time leaving her comfort zone.

**ERIC**, early twenties. On the larger side of fat, his attempts at charm mask something much more desperate.

**TREVOR**, mid-twenties. Essentially the ideal gay-handsome, great career, but of course, has a dark side.

**RICHARD**, mid-sixties. Has lived through the best and worst of the gay community.

**KORI**, late-twenties/early-thirties. Tough but wise, honest but nurturing. Preferably a different race from the actress playing Mandy.

### TIME/PLACE

Various locales throughout New York City, autumn of a recent year.

Prologue

Lights up.

At stage left, MANDY looks on her phone. At stage right, TREVOR types on his phone. Center stage, ERIC lies on the ground.

TREVOR

Hi Mandy,

My name is Trevor. I'm glad I found you on here. I was a friend of your brother Eric. I wanted to write you and say that I'm sorry about what happened to him. I wasn't sure if you were coming to New York to identify the body, but if you are, and you're not busy, I'd be more than happy to talk to you about him. Please message me back when you read this. My condolences, Trevor.

(MANDY stares at the message. A moment. She then writes a message back to TREVOR.)

MANDY

Hi Trevor, Thank you for your message. I'm at the airport now and should be in New York this afternoon. Let me know when you're available. I do want to meet and talk about Eric. Mandy.

(Lights change. MANDY moves to center stage, where ERIC's body is lying on the ground. We hear a slap.)

(With the slap, the lights change to something more sterile. We are now in a morgue. MANDY looks down at ERIC. Silence.)

MANDY

Yes. That's him.

(MANDY closes her eyes. We hear another SLAP. Pause. Then another. Then another.)

MANDY

I'll take him back home.

(MANDY closes her eyes again. Another SLAP.)

You like girls!  
 MANDY

(SLAP. ERIC wakes up and reacts to the slap. We are back in Wisconsin, three years before.)

Mandy, please-  
 ERIC

(SLAP.)

MANDY  
 You like girls! Not boys! Boys don't like boys, unless they are faggots, and you're not a faggot!

Mandy-  
 ERIC

MANDY  
 I don't want to be a faggot's sister!

Please, stop-  
 ERIC

(SLAP.)

MANDY  
 Not until you say you like girls. Just say you like girls.

ERIC  
 I'm not gonna lie to you!

MANDY  
 I'm not asking you to lie. Just tell me you like girls.

ERIC  
 But I've tried, I've really tried-

MANDY  
 Try harder! You ask girls out?

ERIC  
 They don't want to go out with me.

MANDY  
 You haven't been asking the right ones.

ERIC  
 No, they all know about me.

MANDY  
I'm gonna tell mom and dad about this-

ERIC  
No!

MANDY  
They need to know.

ERIC  
Please-

MANDY  
They can't not know their only son is a faggot!

ERIC  
Don't-

MANDY  
Mom! Dad! Eric's a faggot!

ERIC  
Mandy! Mandy NO!!!

BLACKOUT.

1

Scene One

1

(The subway. Rumbling. MANDY is sitting next to KORI. MANDY looks at KORI for a few moments. KORI looks at MANDY and shoots her a smile. MANDY looks away. Pause.)

KORI  
Deep in thought?

MANDY  
What?

KORI  
You look like you're thinking of something brilliant.

MANDY  
Uh... thank you?

(Pause. KORI looks at MANDY. MANDY looks away.)

KORI  
You from around here?

(CONTINUED)

MANDY  
No. Wisconsin.

KORI  
Oh... Here for a vacation?

MANDY  
Yeah.

KORI  
You going uptown or downtown?

MANDY  
Downtown. I hope I'm on the right train...

KORI  
This is it.

MANDY  
You sure?

KORI  
I've lived here seven years. I'm sure.

MANDY  
Thank you.

(KORI holds out her hand.)

KORI  
I'm Kori.

(MANDY looks up and sees KORI's hand. She doesn't shake it.)

MANDY  
Mandy.

(Silence. Subway rumbling.)

KORI  
So you here with anyone, Mandy?

MANDY  
No.

KORI  
Lone traveler. That's very bold of you.

MANDY  
I'm only here for a few days...

Til when?

KORI

Tomorrow. Then I'm flying back.

MANDY

Shame... There's a lot to see here, and you don't-

KORI

I'm not really here for sightseeing.

MANDY

Visiting family, then?

KORI

No.

MANDY

Friends?

KORI

It's none of your business what I'm here for.

MANDY

Excuse me. I was just curious about you. No harm in asking.

KORI

Actually, there is harm in asking when the person you're asking things doesn't want to be asked. It's an invasion of personal space.

MANDY

You were the one looking at me.

KORI

I wasn't-

MANDY

You were the one who had that "please fuck me" face.

(MANDY gasps.)

MANDY

No I wasn't. I was looking at... that...

(MANDY looks around.)

No Smoking sign over there.

(KORI laughs.)

(CONTINUED)

OK. Right. KORI

I was! MANDY

People clearly don't take much interest in you. KORI

Excuse me? MANDY

People don't take much interest in you. KORI

That's rude. MANDY

Wasn't trying to be rude- KORI

Then saying I'm not interesting is an awful way to not be rude. And it's wrong- plenty of people take interest in me. MANDY

Like who? KORI

Like my boyfriend. MANDY

Who's your boyfriend? KORI

Someone from back home. MANDY

What does he do? KORI

He's an engineer. MANDY

What kind? KORI

Chemical. MANDY

Where does he work? KORI



MANDY

He works for a construction company.

KORI

What do they construct?

MANDY

I don't have to tell you every single detail of my life.

KORI

I just want to know more about you. I'm intrigued.

MANDY

Well... Don't be.

(Pause.)

KORI

Well I think you're very attractive. In a unique way. You just have an ebullient look.

MANDY

...I'm sorry, you're making me extremely uncomfortable.

KORI

Because I'm telling you you're attractive? Would you rather I say I'd fuck a blob fish before you?

MANDY

No, it's just... I mean thanks for the compliment, but...

(The subway train slows down and stops. MANDY gets up.)

West 4th Street. This is my stop.

KORI

Mine too. Where are you going?

MANDY

To meet somebody.

KORI

I'll walk you there.

MANDY

I'd rather you didn't. It's a very personal thing.

KORI

You sure you know where you're going? I don't want you to get lost.

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

I have a map on my phone. I should be fine.

KORI

At least for the company.

MANDY

I'm sorry, I'd rather...

KORI

Alright.

(KORI pulls out a card and gives it to MANDY.)

KORI

At least take my card. In case you ever need anything...

(MANDY looks at the card.)

MANDY

"Cuddle-Buddy"?

KORI

I cuddle with people. It comforts them. Makes them feel better. I do in and out calls, so I can come to you, or you can come to me.

MANDY

Uh huh...

KORI

I'll give you a free session some time.

MANDY

...thank you.

(MANDY leaves. KORI leaves the subway too, leaving a card on the seat next to her, because who knows?)

(TREVOR at a bar. He has a drink. He looks at his iPhone. ERIC enters with a crate full of glasses. He takes a few empty glasses off the bar and puts them into the crate. He then approaches TREVOR.)

ERIC

Hi! Are you done with your drink?

TREVOR

It's still like, half full.

ERIC

Oh... OK. Just thought I'd ask.

(Pause. TREVOR continues looking at his phone. ERIC continues to look at TREVOR.)

ERIC

You want some water, or...?

TREVOR

I'm good.

ERIC

I can get you some for free.

TREVOR

Water *is* free.

ERIC

Right...

(Pause. ERIC continues looking at TREVOR.)

ERIC

So... what do you do?

(A moment. Then another. TREVOR suddenly looks up from his phone.)

TREVOR

What?

ERIC

What do you do? For like work?

TREVOR

Oh. I'm a Marketing Consultant for a production company.

ERIC

Oh cool. I'm a bar-back here, so...

TREVOR

Yeah I could tell.

(TREVOR continues looking at this cell phone. ERIC doesn't leave.)

(CONTINUED)

You here with anyone? ERIC

I'm actually on a date. TREVOR

Oh. ERIC

*(TREVOR looks around the bar.)*

He was just here... He said he wanted to change some music on the jukebox. TREVOR

What did he look like? ERIC

I don't see him... TREVOR

How long has he been gone? ERIC

Like ten minutes. TREVOR

Maybe he left you. ERIC

...maybe... TREVOR

*(TREVOR, extremely disappointed, retreats into his cell phone.)*

I'm sorry... that's gotta suck for you. ERIC

It happens. TREVOR

*(Pause.)*

You OK, or...? ERIC

I'm fine. TREVOR

*(Pause.)*

(CONTINUED)

ERIC  
You're very attractive.

TREVOR  
Thanks.

ERIC  
Like, sexy attractive.

TREVOR  
Thank you.

ERIC  
Your date is a moron for leaving you.

TREVOR  
Yeah well...

ERIC  
No accounting for taste.

TREVOR  
Thank you.

ERIC  
He sounds like one of those oversexed gays.

TREVOR  
Where would you get that idea? You don't even know him.

ERIC  
...actually... that's true. I'm sorry, I'm socially awkward.

TREVOR  
It's OK.

ERIC  
I should really get back to work anyway...

TREVOR  
Yeah.

(ERIC stands up. He goes to leave.  
He stops. He turns to TREVOR.)

ERIC  
I'm sorry... that was just... I really think you're attractive, and I think we should tell people they're attractive when we find them attractive. Put a little more good in the world, you know? Give out more compliments.

Sure. TREVOR

So... can we start over? ERIC

I don't know, can we? TREVOR

Sorry. May we start over. ERIC

Why not. TREVOR

(ERIC offers his hand.)

I'm Eric. ERIC

(TREVOR shakes his hand.)

I'm- TREVOR

(MANDY interrupts the scene.)

Trevor? MANDY

Yeah. Mandy? TREVOR

Yeah. Hi. MANDY

Hi. TREVOR

(Awkward pause. Neither of them moves. ERIC recedes in the background and exits. )

Thanks for seeing me. MANDY

No problem. TREVOR

(Pause. MANDY sits in the empty seat. TREVOR sips from his drink.)

(CONTINUED)

MANDY  
It's nice to meet you.

TREVOR  
Yeah same.

(MANDY looks around.)

MANDY  
This is... a nice place.

TREVOR  
It's whatever. It's a bar. Want a drink?

MANDY  
No thanks. I don't really drink.

TREVOR  
OK.

(Pause.)

MANDY  
I just spoke to the manager. He said Eric was a nice boy, and was sad to hear he was gone. He offered me a drink on the house, but I turned it down because I don't really drink, like I said, so...

TREVOR  
He was a good person, yes...

(Pause.)

MANDY  
I've never been to a gay bar. We don't have a lot of them where we're from. I mean, there are some in Madison, which is about half an hour away from us...

TREVOR  
I'm from New Jersey, so I've always been close to the city...

MANDY  
Ah...

(Awkward silence.)

MANDY  
Thank you so much for reaching out.

TREVOR  
You don't need to thank me.

MANDY

I was glad to see that Eric had friends. He and I actually haven't spoken in three years. After he ran away, he cut off contact with all of us.

TREVOR

I see.

MANDY

I tried to find him on Facebook, but I think he blocked me.

TREVOR

Hm...

(Pause.)

MANDY

Did Eric ever... talk about me? Or my parents?

TREVOR

A few times.

MANDY

What did he say? Do you remember, or...?

TREVOR

He said you were the Queen Bitch of Wisconsin.

MANDY

OK...

TREVOR

And that's like Sesame Street compared to what else he's said about you.

MANDY

I don't think I'd want to know.

TREVOR

Good, because I'd go to Hell for repeating it.

(TREVOR sips his drink. Pause.)

He also told me you told your parents about him. When he came out to you.

(Silence. MANDY looks down.)

MANDY

...I was young. I know, there's nothing I can say that could possibly make up for that, but... When I told my parents Eric was dead, they kind of just... brushed it off. I asked them if they wanted to come. They said they didn't feel like flying out here, but... I think they're grieving in their own way.

(CONTINUED)



TREVOR

Translation: They're homophobes.

MANDY

No, they just... They're very religious, especially our dad, so...

TREVOR

Uh huh. Sure. I'll be a bigoted asshole and call my son a faggot failure, not speak to him for three years and cheat on my wife, but I'm religious, so it's totally OK.

MANDY

He wasn't supposed to tell you that.

TREVOR

This is New York. Not Bumfuck, Wisconsin. Who's gonna care?

MANDY

I care. It's my family you're talking about.

(Pause. TREVOR takes a sip from his drink.)

TREVOR

You're right. Sorry. Sometimes I get really caught up, and...

MANDY

Yeah. Well... I know I reacted badly to Eric being gay.

TREVOR

You've already identified his body. Why are you still here? To make up for being such a, to use your brother's term, bitch?

MANDY

Oh. Nice. That's *exactly* what I came to New York to be called.

TREVOR

You didn't have to come here.

MANDY

I might not have, if I knew I was going to be called a bitch.

TREVOR

So why did you? You wanna feel better about yourself?

MANDY

No, I just want to find out what exactly happened to Eric.

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR

You want to know what happened? New York was too much for Eric, he couldn't handle it, and...

MANDY

...what do you mean, couldn't handle it?

TREVOR

...

MANDY

...

MANDY

Trevor. Did my brother...

Pause.

TREVOR

What?

MANDY

...kill himself?

Pause.

TREVOR

I don't know. I wasn't there when it happened.

Pause.

MANDY

The cops said he fell out a window. But who just *falls* out of a window?

TREVOR

Crazy things happen.

Pause. MANDY shakes her head.

MANDY

He made such a bad decision-

TREVOR

Being gay is not a decision!

MANDY

I wasn't talking about that. I meant moving here, without telling us. He should've stayed with us.

TREVOR

You would've made him live with people who didn't love him.

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

Doesn't seem like it wasn't any different over here.

(Silence. MANDY looks away from  
TREVOR.)

So... The guy at the morgue said Eric stayed at this place  
up on 33rd and 10th.

TREVOR

Yeah.

MANDY

With this guy named Richard Mooresome.

TREVOR

Yep.

MANDY

Do you know anything about him, or...?

Pause.

TREVOR

I know he lived alone, at least when Eric met him. He had a  
husband once, but he died last year. Eric also told me he  
was an art collector. Used to be a curator. Had all sorts of  
interesting... art in his apartment.

MANDY

OK...

TREVOR

He also had very... Uh...

MANDY

What?

TREVOR

...Richard had very specific uh... terms. For Eric staying  
with him.

MANDY

...what were they?

END OF SCENE.

Scene Three

(A New York apartment. Day. Decorated with various figurines and photography books. The doorknob jingles. RICHARD, a gay man in his sixties, enters. ERIC enters behind him, with a backpack. ERIC puts his backpack down. RICHARD sits on the couch.)

ERIC

Wow. It's like a museum in here.

RICHARD

I've been collecting these little tchotchkes for years.

(ERIC goes to the window. Tries to look down, but can't.)

ERIC

I can't look down.

RICHARD

Scared of heights?

ERIC

Yeah...

(ERIC goes to the bookshelf. Examines it.)

ERIC

You have lot of books too.

RICHARD

You like to read?

ERIC

I do, yes.

RICHARD

Are you interested in photography?

ERIC

Sure. Kind of. I never really put much thought into it...

RICHARD

This one's my favorite.

(RICHARD pulls out a photography book entitled "Normal Nudes: Men.")

Take a look.

(ERIC takes the book and looks through it.)

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

They're like... not models.

RICHARD

Technically they are.

ERIC

Yeah, but... Usually when I see guys who are shirtless, they have like six packs and pecs. Here they actually have stomachs. Like I can actually believe they eat more than one meal a week, you know?

(RICHARD laughs.)

RICHARD

Yes. I like the book for the same reason.

(Pause. RICHARD takes the book, turns to a page, and shows ERIC.)

What do you think of this one?

(ERIC looks at it.)

ERIC

He's alright...

(RICHARD laughs.)

RICHARD

Just alright?

ERIC

I mean, he's a little fatter than everyone else, and to be honest, his lips are a bit too big. And he kind of has man boobs. And a beer belly. But other than that...

RICHARD

He's my late husband John.

ERIC

Oh. Sorry...

RICHARD

Didn't have the best body, but never had a problem showing it... Would walk around here naked all the time.

ERIC

Is that why...

RICHARD

Mhmm...

(RICHARD takes the book and looks at the photo of his dead husband.)

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

How'd he die? If you don't mind my asking.

RICHARD

He had lung disease. Over forty years of smoking. I told him it would kill him, but he kept right on doing it.

ERIC

I see...

RICHARD

At least he's in a better place now.

ERIC

Yeah.

(Pause. RICHARD continues looking at ERIC.)

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to bring it up-

RICHARD

No, it's my fault. I showed you the photo.

ERIC

I prolonged it, though.

RICHARD

It's fine.

(RICHARD smiles, closes the book, then puts it back on the shelf.)

Now. Sit down. Let me get to know you better.

(ERIC sits down. RICHARD looks at him.)

ERIC

...what do you want to know?

RICHARD

Where are you from?

ERIC

I'm from Wisconsin, originally.

RICHARD

Ah. What part?

ERIC

About half an hour outside Madison.

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

OK.

ERIC

Small town called Johnson, don't think you've ever heard of it.

RICHARD

Can't say I have. I'm from Kansas myself.

ERIC

Oh, cool.

RICHARD

How long have you been in New York?

ERIC

A few months. I moved out after I graduated high school and lived in a shelter in Madison. I worked at a restaurant until I was able to get my own place.

RICHARD

What about your parents?

ERIC

Oh... I didn't really get along with them. They were the ultra-conservative Christian types, you know?

RICHARD

Yes, unfortunately. Do you have any siblings?

ERIC

One older sister, but she was like the Queen Bitch of Wisconsin. She hit me when I came out to her. And told our parents, who said I was an abomination, that they love me but not the choice I made... As if I would've made this choice, you know?

RICHARD

Hm... So why New York? It's much more expensive than Madison.

ERIC

I mean... it's New York. It's like, the mecca for misfits. Everyone's accepted, no matter how weird you are. At least, that's how it looked according to "Rent". I snuck into that movie three times, and I just wanted a weird, odd, quirky community like that where we could just go out to dinner, dance on tables, and not worry about paying the bill. Just that bohemian life seemed so... thrilling, you know?

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

Yes I do. So much has changed, though. Places like the "Life Cafe" in that movie are being replaced by a new Starbucks every day. And the rents are getting more expensive, as I'm sure you've noticed.

ERIC

Well yeah, but... It's not like I'm totally broke or anything. I still have some money left over from working back home, and I'm a bar-back at Gibbons down on Minetta Lane. I'm staying at a shelter until I find a place to stay. I saw your ad on Craigslist and I thought, "free rent? I can do that."

RICHARD

You did read the stipulations though.

ERIC

...I did.

(Pause.)

You want me to uh...

RICHARD

Yes.

ERIC

OK.

(ERIC slowly removes his clothes and stands in front of RICHARD. We only see his backside. His hands cover his crotch. Silence as RICHARD observes.)

ERIC

I know I don't have the best body...

RICHARD

Let me see your cock.

ERIC

I...

RICHARD

I won't touch it. Just let me see it.

(Silence. Then ERIC lets his arms hang at his side. RICHARD nods in approval.)

(CONTINUED)



Turn around.  
RICHARD

(ERIC turns around, covering his crotch as he faces the audience. He faces RICHARD. Pause.)  
You don't have such a bad body.

ERIC  
I could lose a few pounds...

RICHARD  
Wouldn't be a bad idea. But what you have isn't so bad. Dare I say, it's even quite lovely.

ERIC  
Thank you.

RICHARD  
But I can't touch you. Nor can you touch me. I just want to look, not touch.

ERIC  
I understand.

(Pause.)  
...you want me to do anything else, or...

RICHARD  
Nope.

ERIC  
Can I put my clothes back on now?

RICHARD  
Sure.

(ERIC starts putting his clothes back on.)

ERIC  
So... is that good enough? Can I stay here, or...

RICHARD  
It'll do. Bedroom is just that way, bathroom is across from it.

ERIC  
Thank you so much.

RICHARD  
No problem.

(CONTINUED)

(ERIC exits, taking his stuff with him. RICHARD remains sitting on the couch. MANDY enters from the bedroom carrying ERIC's backpack.)

RICHARD

Did you get everything?

MANDY

Yes. Thank you. He didn't have much stuff, did he...

RICHARD

No.

Pause. MANDY looks around.

MANDY

You have a nice place.

RICHARD

Thank you.

MANDY

It's like a museum.

RICHARD

Yes, I've spent years collecting little tchotchkes.

(MANDY goes to the book shelf. She examines it.)

MANDY

Lot of books too.

RICHARD

You like to read?

MANDY

Yeah. I majored in English in college, so...

RICHARD

Oh. What do you do now?

MANDY

Just retail for now. Not sure if I want to teach, or write, or...

RICHARD

I see.

(Pause.)

Do you want something to drink? Tea or coffee?

(CONTINUED)

Tea would be nice, yes.

MANDY

(RICHARD goes offstage into the kitchen and begins making tea. After looking at the bookshelf for a little while, MANDY pulls out a book- "Normal Nudes: Women." She looks at it.)

(RICHARD calls from offstage. MANDY is startled by his call. She slams the book shut and returns it to the shelf.)

What kind of tea do you want? We have lavender, rose, chamomile...

RICHARD

Chamomile would be nice.

MANDY

Sure.

RICHARD

(Pause. MANDY looks at the book, then pulls it back out. She examines it some more. She calls to RICHARD.)

How long have you had it? The apartment, I mean.

MANDY

About twenty years. My husband and I moved in in 1995.

RICHARD

(MANDY winces at the word "husband".)

I see... What does he do?

MANDY

Right now he's decomposing in the Green Hill Cemetery.

RICHARD

Oh. Sorry to hear that.

MANDY

Thank you. It's been a year since he died. He was 76. Lung cancer. Over forty years of smoking.

RICHARD

(CONTINUED)

I see...

MANDY

(RICHARD reenters and sees her with the book.)

RICHARD  
It got to a point where the doctors said it would never get any better, so we decided to just... Put him to sleep, as it were. Better that way. I couldn't stand to see him suffer like that...

(RICHARD trails off.)

MANDY  
I see. I'm sorry to hear that.

RICHARD  
Thank you.

(Pause.)  
You like that book?

(MANDY puts the book back on the shelf.)

MANDY  
I was just looking. Sorry...

RICHARD  
No, no. It's alright. Glad someone's looking at them.

MANDY  
I was just curious...

RICHARD  
It's one of my favorite photography books. I like it when the models look like they eat more than one meal per day.

MANDY  
Yeah. They don't look like thin mints, which is refreshing...

(RICHARD laughs.)  
Not gonna lie, I'm kind of surprised to see this one here.

RICHARD  
Why? Can't a gay man appreciate women too?

MANDY  
I mean, yeah, but...

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

I think everyone, male or female, should feel as beautiful as possible in the body they're given in, and should be able to appreciate other bodies as well.

MANDY

Uh huh.

RICHARD

There are a lot of naturally beautiful models in there you'll like, I'm sure.

MANDY

Oh I'm not... Um...

RICHARD

Oh. Sorry. I thought...

MANDY

No, it's not... I mean... It's not that I don't like, it's just... I mean... it's come into my mind more than once. I mean, I'll see a girl every once in a while and think, "She's really pretty", but wouldn't want to jump into bed with her. I mean I've thought about it, but... I'm sorry. I'm not comfortable talking about this, can we...

RICHARD

Oh, sure. Sure... So.

MANDY

So.

RICHARD

Eric.

MANDY

Yeah. Eric.

(Pause.)

RICHARD

He was a very nice boy.

MANDY

Thank you. Glad someone thought so.

Pause.

MANDY

Did you ever meet his friend Trevor?

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

No, but I knew he and Eric were very close...

MANDY

...how close, exactly? Do you know?

RICHARD

They were good friends. I don't think they ever dated-

MANDY

Trevor said they didn't.

RICHARD

Eric was in love with him, actually. I could tell.

MANDY

Oh...

(Pause.)

He's kind of a... I really hate using this word, but he's a bitch. He said Eric couldn't handle New York.

RICHARD

Unfortunately, Trevor's somewhat right. Eric did his best, but you gotta have a thick skin to survive here, and... Sad to say, Eric didn't have it.

MANDY

How?

RICHARD

Well... New York can be a tough city. Like it or not, appearances do count here, and...

MANDY

You're saying Eric was ugly.

(A moment. RICHARD stops, then slowly shakes his head.)

RICHARD

No, that wasn't what I was saying.

MANDY

I mean, he obviously wasn't a supermodel, but...

(Pause.)

When we were in high school, the football team called him a Fat Fag a lot. I didn't believe them- you know high school football players. I told everyone, classmates, teachers, that he wasn't gay. I defended him.

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

He told me you outed him.

MANDY

...I... yes. I did. Go ahead. Tell me I'm the Queen Bitch of Wisconsin. That's what he did, apparently.

RICHARD

You were young. We all do stupid things when we're young.

(The tea kettle goes off in the kitchen. RICHARD gets up and exits. MANDY looks at the bookshelf once again. RICHARD reenters with the tea cups. He gives one to MANDY.)

RICHARD

I'm having chamomile too.

MANDY

Oh...

(Pause. They sip their tea.)

I'm sorry, but I need to ask, if you two ever...

RICHARD

No. Oh, no. No no no no no. He was too young for me.

MANDY

I mean, considering the terms you set for him...

RICHARD

I promise nothing happened between us. Sexually, at least. I notice a lot of insecure young gay men nowadays who aren't comfortable in their bodies, so I do it to help them get comfortable in their bodies. It gives them self-confidence. The free rent helps too.

MANDY

I see...

(Pause. Both sip their tea.)

I want to know what, exactly, Eric experienced. We didn't know anything about his life here. Trevor said I was being selfish, but it's not selfish to want to know what happened to your dead sibling. Is it?

RICHARD

It's not. But you'll never know what exactly he experienced.

MANDY

I know. Doesn't mean I can't try though, right?

(CONTINUED)

Well...

RICHARD

(Pause. Tea sipping.)

Sometimes when someone close to you dies, you don't want to confront the guilt, which I think is what Trevor is experiencing.

RICHARD

Why would Trevor feel guilt?

MANDY

He's the one who told Eric to...

RICHARD

...to what?

MANDY

...Eric told me that Trevor told him to kill himself.

RICHARD

...

MANDY

(RICHARD puts his tea down. Pause.)

Something else you should know...

RICHARD

What?

MANDY

One night. This wasn't the night he died. But the night before. Eric came home. He had been out with Trevor. And he didn't want to undress. He had no problem doing it up til this point, but I had to demand him to. When he did, there were... marks all over him. Bruises too.

RICHARD

(MANDY is stricken.)

Did he say what happened?

MANDY

No. He did not.

RICHARD

I see... Where were you? The night he died?

MANDY

(CONTINUED)



RICHARD

I was getting drinks with a dear friend. Eric had fallen by the time I returned.

MANDY

Do you think it was... on purpose?

RICHARD

I'd rather not think about it. If that's OK. I'm sorry.

MANDY

OK...

(Pause.)

MANDY

Can I ask a pretty morbid question?

RICHARD

Of course.

MANDY

...did Eric fall out of that window over there?

(MANDY points to a window in the room. RICHARD turns and faces it.)

RICHARD

I reckon so.

(MANDY gets up and walks over to it. She looks outside the window then looks down at it. She leans dangerously out of the window. Silence.)

Be careful.

MANDY

I am. I'm just... trying to imagine what it was like. For him to fall out of here.

RICHARD

Uh huh...

(Silence as MANDY tries to do this. RICHARD looks after her. As MANDY looks out the window, ERIC enters. He is clothed.)

ERIC

I'm heading out.

RICHARD  
Where are you going?

ERIC  
Not sure. I'm just gonna meet up with Trevor at a diner and we'll see where the evening takes us, I guess.

RICHARD  
You've been seeing Trevor a lot lately.

ERIC  
He's a good friend...

RICHARD  
...is that all?

(Pause.)

ERIC  
...I mean, yeah. He's been really nice.

RICHARD laughs.

ERIC  
What?

RICHARD  
When are you gonna tell him?

ERIC  
Tell him what?

RICHARD  
You know what I'm talking about.

ERIC  
No, I...

RICHARD  
Eric, your face beams every time you talk about him.

ERIC  
What? No it doesn't-

RICHARD  
If you're in love with him, you can say it.

ERIC  
I don't know if I'm in love with him, but I... I mean, I would... get with him. Not sure if that's the same thing, but...

RICHARD

Why don't you ask him?

ERIC

...I mean, do people do that? Do people just ask?

RICHARD

It has to happen somehow. Sometimes two people see each other and *know* it's gonna happen. But some people need a little more nudging.

ERIC

I feel like if Trevor wanted me, he would've told me by now. Not that I would blame him if he didn't. I mean, look at my body.

RICHARD

Oh, please. I wouldn't let you stay here if your body was completely hideous. John had the same exact body type, and we were together for forty years.

ERIC

But that was you guys. I don't know what it will be like with Trevor. I don't want it to be awkward.

RICHARD

It'll only be awkward if you make it awkward. Just ask him. The worst he can say is no.

ERIC

That *would* be the worst thing.

RICHARD

But you'll never know until you ask. Now go on. Have fun. And be safe!

ERIC

I will! See you later.

RICHARD

Bye bye now.

(ERIC exits out the door. Pause. RICHARD turns around and steps towards MANDY. MANDY pulls back into the room.)

MANDY

It's a long way down there...

RICHARD

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

(Pause.)

MANDY

Well... I guess I should go then.

RICHARD

Alright.

MANDY

Thank you for the tea. And... thank you for letting my brother stay with you. It means a lot to me that someone here cared about him.

RICHARD

It was my pleasure.

(MANDY nods, takes ERIC's backpack, and exits.)

4

Scene Four

4

(MANDY and TREVOR. MANDY tries to call TREVOR. A few rings. TREVOR looks at his phone, but doesn't pick up. MANDY leaves a voice-mail.)

MANDY

Hey Trevor. It's Mandy. Please call me back when you get this. Thank you.

(MANDY hangs up.)

(TREVOR listens to the message. After he puts his phone down, muffled club music and soft club lights come on. ERIC enters.)

ERIC

Where are you going?

TREVOR

I could've sworn I just saw him go down here...

ERIC

Who are you looking for?

TREVOR

Maybe he went in the bathroom?

ERIC

Who?

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR

Nobody.

ERIC

If it was nobody, you wouldn't have come down here looking for them.

TREVOR

I don't think he's down-

ERIC

Who is it? Is it that guy you were out on that date with when we met?

TREVOR

Yeah. And his name is Carey.

ERIC

Carey, yeah... the one who left with the jukebox, right?

TREVOR

Ugh...

ERIC

Why are you focused on him? There are so many men dancing upstairs who are probably just as hot and just as amazing as Carey.

TREVOR

I know...

ERIC

So why don't we go upstairs and meet them?

TREVOR

In a minute. I could actually use a break from the dance floor anyway...

ERIC

OK...

(TREVOR takes out his phone. ERIC looks at him.)

ERIC

You OK?

TREVOR

...

ERIC

...wanna talk, or...?

(CONTINUED)

(TREVOR puts his phone down.)

TREVOR

No, I'm fine. It's just like, I do everything that a gay guy should, I go to the gym, I have a good job, I have my own place, but it's like not enough for people. Or maybe it's like, I want too much. But I don't think it's really bad to want something too much, because if you don't want something, then why are you bothering to live, you know?

ERIC

I don't know if I...

TREVOR

And like, I want sex, I want intimacy, I want it for a long period of time, but no one else wants it... At least, not how I want it. You know?

ERIC

What do you mean, how do you want it?

TREVOR

Like... unconditional. Exclusive. And it just pisses me off how much people say they want intimacy, then shy away from it when they get it. You know?

ERIC

Yeah. I really do.

TREVOR

I'm sorry, I don't mean to rant, but...

ERIC

No. If you need anything, you can talk to me.

TREVOR

Thanks, Eric.

(TREVOR looks at ERIC. ERIC looks at TREVOR. Suddenly, TREVOR breaks free of ERIC's glance, and sees Carey. He gasps, turns to ERIC and grabs his face.)

TREVOR

Don't say anything.

(TREVOR suddenly takes ERIC's face into his hands and kisses him. TREVOR lets go of ERIC. There is a moment of awkwardness between them.)

(CONTINUED)

ERIC  
...wow.

TREVOR  
...yeah.

ERIC  
...what... what was that about?

TREVOR  
I saw Carey, and...

ERIC  
You want him to know you can have a good time without him?

TREVOR  
Yeah.

ERIC  
Good. You're such a good guy, Trevor. You deserve so much better than Carey...

TREVOR  
Yeah... I do.

ERIC  
...that actually felt really good.

TREVOR  
Thank you.

ERIC  
Like... really. It did.

TREVOR  
Don't mention it.

ERIC  
That's actually the best kiss I've ever had. Ever.

TREVOR  
Really?

ERIC  
Yeah. And the only too, but... It just made me feel so... good about myself.

TREVOR  
You make me feel better about myself too.

(Pause.)

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

I... I want to ask you something, Trevor.

TREVOR

What's up?

(ERIC smiles, then recedes. TREVOR looks at his cell phone for a few moments. Considers calling MANDY back. He doesn't. He exits.)

5

Scene Five

5

(Later that night. MANDY's hotel bedroom. MANDY goes through ERIC's backpack, pulling out a few t-shirts, a refillable water bottle, a few pairs of underwear, and a change of pants. There is also a wallet with no cash in it. MANDY looks at the items, then heaves a heavy sigh. She puts the items back in the backpack, and puts it on the floor. She then turns her light out and goes to sleep.)

(In the dimness, we see ERIC enter the room and approaches MANDY. He whispers to her:)

ERIC

Mandy?

(MANDY stirs.)

Mandy?

(MANDY sees ERIC.)

MANDY

Eric?

ERIC

I need to ask you something.

MANDY

Anything.

ERIC

...do you think I'm beautiful?

(CONTINUED)



MANDY

Why do you ask?

ERIC

There was an assembly in school today about how everyone is beautiful, and that the most important thing we could do is tell everyone that. So the guy who spoke told all of us to tell someone they were beautiful.

MANDY

That's nice.

ERIC

No one said it to me.

MANDY

That sucks.

ERIC

Yeah.

MANDY

I think everyone has something beautiful inside of them.

ERIC

What do you think is beautiful inside of me?

(Long pause.)

MANDY

...you have the kindest heart of anyone I know.

ERIC

Took you a while to think of that one.

MANDY

I'm sure there are other things too.

ERIC

It would probably take you a million years to think of all of them.

MANDY

You're kind, you're caring, you're smart...

(Pause.)

ERIC

...there's something I need to tell you.

MANDY

What is it?

(CONTINUED)

ERIC  
Promise you won't tell anyone.

MANDY  
I won't.

ERIC  
Because a lot of people at school suspect, and I don't want to let them know they're right.

MANDY  
Oh...

ERIC  
Have you heard the rumors? Or...

MANDY  
People have told me. About you. That you're... But I don't believe them. They're just nasty rumors meant to harm. Those kids are not doing what God wants them to do. God wants us to spread light and joy, not lies and hatred.

ERIC  
OK.

MANDY  
...so what did you want to tell me?

ERIC  
...they're not rumors. Or lies. I am... gay.

(MANDY slaps ERIC.)

ERIC  
Ow! That hurt!

MANDY  
You're not gay. You hear me? You're not gay!

(MANDY slaps ERIC again.)

ERIC  
I am, Mandy. I-

MANDY  
Shut up! I defended you to everyone at school. What am I gonna tell them?

ERIC  
You don't have to tell them-

MANDY

I'm not gonna be wrong! What am I gonna tell Mom and Dad!?

ERIC

No, please don't-

MANDY

You like *girls*.

ERIC

Please stop-

MANDY

You like girls! Not boys! Boys don't like boys, unless they are faggots, and you're not a faggot!

ERIC

Mandy...

(During the following line, ERIC exits, leaving MANDY alone in her room.)

MANDY

I don't want to be a fag's sister! I don't want to be a fag's sister. I DON'T WANT TO BE A FAG'S SISTER! I don't want to be a...

(MANDY stops. She looks around the empty hotel room. Pause. She hugs herself in loneliness, but it isn't enough. She gets up and goes to her purse. She rummages through it, and pulls out the business card that Kori gave her earlier. She considers it, then takes her phone and makes a phone call. She waits.)

(KORI enters in another part of the stage and picks up her phone.)

KORI

Hello?... hello?... Hello, who's there?

MANDY

...Is this Kori?

KORI

Who's this?

MANDY

This is Mandy.

(CONTINUED)

KORI

Who?

MANDY

From the Subway earlier today? I don't know if you remember...

KORI

From the sub- Oh yeah! How're you doing? Everything alright?

MANDY

... I'm a... alright. I just... I'm sorry I'm calling you this late.

KORI

Trust me, you're not the first to give me a phone call at one in the morning.

MANDY

OK... I wanted to apologize for earlier today. About what I said.

KORI

It's OK. I totally understand.

MANDY

I don't usually have women hit on me, and I was very uncomfortable.

KORI

No, I get it. Sometimes I'm a bit forward. I know I need to tone it down.

MANDY

Yeah...

KORI

I'm glad you called. Now I can say I'm sorry for making you uncomfortable.

MANDY

Apology accepted. So now that we've both apologized to each other, I have to ask you something.

KORI

What is it?

MANDY

Um... It's going to sound crazy.

KORI

You don't know *half* of my clients. If I told you some of the shit I have on them!

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

That's OK. I was... wondering if you could come to my hotel room? I know, it's probably the most ridiculous request you've ever received, and for all I know you're probably a serial killer, but...

KORI

Far from it. Far from being the most ridiculous request and far from me being a serial killer.

MANDY

Still, you never know...

KORI

Smart girl. You're smart for thinking of that.

MANDY

Thank you. I'm just... I'm really lonely. And I need someone...

KORI

Well I'd be happy to be there for you. Just one question.

MANDY

Yeah?

KORI

What about your boyfriend?

MANDY

...oh. I don't really have one. I was just telling you that so you would get away from me.

KORI

Well then. Hopefully you're not lying about not having a boyfriend now.

MANDY

I promise. I'm not.

KORI

Alright, good to know. So where are you staying?

MANDY

The Edison on 46th. Do you want me to pay for your transportation, or...?

KORI

You don't have to. This is a free session. I said I'd give you one. Remember?

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

Right. You did.

KORI

OK. So I'll see you in about thirty.

MANDY

Yeah. Great. See you then. Bye.

KORI

Bye.

(MANDY hangs up the phone. She looks up.)

MANDY

What the hell am I doing?

(ERIC and TREVOR enter in another part of the stage.)

ERIC

Please, Trevor!

TREVOR

I don't know if we should. We haven't known each other that long.

ERIC

We've known each other a month. And some people do it after a week. A day, even.

TREVOR

That doesn't mean we should.

ERIC

I'll do anything. I'll pay you-

TREVOR

I'm not a prostitute!

ERIC

I'll do something else for you then. Buy you dinner.

TREVOR

No, not gonna happen.

ERIC

Can't you at least try?

TREVOR

Can't you try with someone else?

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

I don't trust anyone else as much. You're the only friend I have in this city.

TREVOR

Why don't you ask that old guy you live with?

ERIC

Richard? Ew, no, he's like sixty. And he already sees me naked. And I live with him. It would get awkward.

TREVOR

And you don't think it would get awkward between us too?

ERIC

Only if we let it! Please, Trevor. I've never done it before, and I want to do it with you. Please. At least try?

TREVOR

...you're crazy, Eric.

ERIC

Please, Trevor. You don't even have to have your eyes open. You can think about whoever you want. You can think about Carey! Just as long as I get rid of my virginity-

TREVOR

Why do you want to lose your virginity so bad? It's really not a big deal.

ERIC

To you it isn't. You lost it when you were what, seventeen?

TREVOR

Sixteen.

ERIC

So at this point it's like second nature to you. For me, it's like I've gone through everything that's supposed to make me an adult except for having been with someone like that.

TREVOR

It will happen when it happens. You're rushing into it-

ERIC

You think you're the only person I've wanted to have sex with? I can't tell you how many people I've asked to do it with me-

TREVOR

You can't just ask someone to do it with you!

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

But it's supposed to happen somehow!

TREVOR

Yeah, by consent. By two people wanting to be with each other. Not by one of them asking the other because they're desperate.

ERIC

You think I'm desperate!?

TREVOR

How else would I describe it?

ERIC

I just want to be with someone! And I want to be with you. Because I like you. And I want to show that I like you.

TREVOR

It's really nothing special anyway.

ERIC

But if it's how people are born, then it's gotta be *something*.

TREVOR

But two men doing it can't-

ERIC

Well an expression of love. Or something. Please. I just want to experience it once in my life.

(Pause. TREVOR considers.)

TREVOR

Fine. You really want to know what it's like?

ERIC

Yeah. I do.

TREVOR

OK.

(A moment. TREVOR stares at ERIC, then brings him offstage.)

6

Scene Six

6

(Dual setting, both bedrooms. Just beds and nightstand lamps beside them.)

(MANDY enters her hotel room with KORI. Pause.)

(CONTINUED)



MANDY  
So I guess we just go to the bed?

KORI  
Yep.

MANDY  
OK.

(The two climb into MANDY's bed.  
KORI puts her arm around MANDY.  
MANDY is visibly uncomfortable.  
Awkward pause.)

MANDY  
...this all you do?

KORI  
Yeah. I don't try any funny shit. Unless people wanna pay extra.

MANDY  
Oh... I don't want you to do anything more than this.

KORI  
Yeah I figured.

(Long pause.)  
I'd tell you you look more beautiful than before, but you'd tell me to stop.

MANDY  
I already said I was sorry about that...

KORI  
Nah, I get it. You're not used to people telling you you're beautiful, then this scary lesbian tells you you're the most beautiful girl on the planet... It can be a little jarring.

MANDY  
Yeah...

(Pause.)  
So... how do you know a client's not like... a murderer or something?

KORI  
Usually I meet with them in public first. Go over the terms with them, set boundaries, that kinda stuff. Then if we can agree on something, we go ahead and cuddle.

MANDY

Have you ever had to turn down someone?

KORI

I generally don't. But I'd be lying if I said I wanted to cuddle the bubbles out of *all* my clients.

(KORI tightens her arms around MANDY. MANDY begins to ease into it.)

I don't wanna talk about that though. That OK?

MANDY

Yeah, it's fine.

(Pause.)

I'm still kind of not used to this.

KORI

Used to what? Being touched?

MANDY

By a woman.

KORI

It's OK.

MANDY

...I don't know why I'm feeling this way.

KORI

What way?

MANDY

Like... that I'm really attracted to you, and that I want to... know more about you. But at the same time I don't. Because what if I go in too far? You ever fear that with any of your clients? That you're going too far with them?

KORI

No. I know my limits. And I expect my clients to know theirs.

MANDY

I see... It's like, you never think you have the capacity for something, but then all of a sudden you do, and...

(MANDY turns around and faces KORI.)

Is it bad I kind of want to kiss you right now?

No. KORI

MANDY  
Can I kiss you though? Is it against the rules, or... I don't know how this works. I've never done anything like this. Or you charge extra for that, right?

(KORI laughs.)

KORI  
You can kiss me if you want to.

(A moment. Then, MANDY closes in and kisses KORI. They stop. Start again. Stop. Start again. The kiss slowly progresses into something much more passionate. Clothes start coming off, and the two realize they are going to be doing A LOT more than just cuddling.)

(Meanwhile, on the other side of the stage is TREVOR's bedroom. ERIC and TREVOR enter and climb into the bed.)

MANDY/ERIC  
Just be gentle.

KORI/TREVOR  
Of course I will.

ERIC  
Just don't... ram it in, I guess.

TREVOR  
I'm not gonna do that.

MANDY/ERIC  
Promise?

KORI/TREVOR  
...promise.

(Both couples kiss one another. MANDY and ERIC then pull away from their respective partners.)

MANDY/ERIC  
Sorry.

Why? KORI/TREVOR

It's just... MANDY

This is... ERIC

Wrong. MANDY/ERIC

What's so wrong about it? KORI

You're the one who wanted to do this. TREVOR

If it was wrong, neither of us would be here. KORI

...I've never done anything like this before. MANDY/ERIC

It's OK. If you're really uncomfortable doing something, just say so, and I'll stop. KORI

I know you're nervous. But if you say you want to do something, you should at least try to do it. TREVOR

I'm just afraid of how it will feel. MANDY/ERIC

It'll feel great. I promise. KORI

It'll feel fine. TREVOR

You promise? ERIC

Yeah. Now come on. You wanted to do this, let's just get it over with. TREVOR

(KORI smiles, gently leans toward MANDY and kisses her. KORI pulls away from MANDY. She looks at her in awe. A moment. Then MANDY kisses KORI. They continue making out.)

(CONTINUED)

(TREVOR and ERIC kiss too.)

(Both couples turn their lamps out. The rest of the scene takes place in (almost) total darkness. We hear some fumbling, then:)

Shit...  
TREVOR

What?  
ERIC

It's down.  
TREVOR

Why don't I try...  
ERIC

(We hear fumbling from ERIC and TREVOR, and MANDY moaning in pleasure.)  
Nothing?

No.  
TREVOR

What else could we do, then?  
ERIC

...there might be something else I could do...  
TREVOR

What is it?  
ERIC

You're not gonna like it.  
TREVOR

What?  
ERIC

You said you wanted me to be gentle.  
TREVOR

I do, but...  
ERIC

No. This wouldn't involve me being gentle at all.  
TREVOR

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

What, are you one of those people who get off of hitting people?

TREVOR

...

ERIC

...Oh.

MANDY

Could you...

KORI

Could I what?

MANDY

Do it a little... more?

KORI

What do you mean, more?

MANDY

I guess... rougher?

KORI

Sure. I can do that.

MANDY

Ah! Too much, too much, a little less, little less... there you go. That's perfect. Oh...

ERIC

...you can try it, if you want.

TREVOR

I don't want to hurt you.

ERIC

I'm already as vulnerable as I can be around someone. And God knows I've been hit before. If I'm hurt, I'll let you know.

TREVOR

...

ERIC

Trevor, just do it!

(A really long moment. TREVOR hesitates, then we hear him slapping ERIC across the face. Another moment.)

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR  
No, I'm sorry, I can't-

ERIC  
Please.

(A few moments. TREVOR heaves a few breaths. He then slaps ERIC again. He continues slapping Eric.)

MANDY  
Can I... try that on you?

KORI  
Of course.

(Slapping and fumbling.)

MANDY  
Sorry, I've never-

KORI  
Don't apologize. Just don't stop.

(MANDY continues. KORI just smiles.)

ERIC  
Is it hard yet?

TREVOR  
I have a semi.

ERIC  
Call me names.

TREVOR  
What?

ERIC  
Call me names. Maybe that'll make you hard.

TREVOR  
That's way too far, Eric.

ERIC  
Don't worry about insulting me. I can take it. I promise.

TREVOR  
...

(Long pause as TREVOR considers. He slaps ERIC again, and says:)

Stupid.

TREVOR

(Long pause. TREVOR slaps ERIC again.)

Fat.

(Pause. Slap.)

Ugly.

(Long pause. When ERIC speaks, he should be on the verge of tears, but not breaking down just yet.)

Don't stop.

ERIC

(MANDY and KORI. MANDY gets up from the sheets.)

Sorry...

MANDY

No. It's OK.

KORI

I think I like... getting it better.

MANDY

What, do I smell down there?

KORI

...uh...

MANDY

(TREVOR slaps ERIC.)

Pig!

TREVOR

I mean you're not exactly the White House yourself down there...

KORI

Sorry...

MANDY

I think I liked what I was doing before better too...

KORI

(MANDY moans. TREVOR slaps ERIC.)

(CONTINUED)



Stupid! TREVOR

There... That's much better. Yeah... KORI

Pig! (Slap) TREVOR

Are you hard yet? ERIC

Yeah. TREVOR

...what are you waiting for? ERIC

You have a- TREVOR

No condoms. We're doing this bareback. ERIC

Eric, that's not- TREVOR

Trevor! ERIC

You're being a fucking moron! TREVOR

You're being a wimp. ERIC

Oh, you think I'm a wimp? TREVOR

Yeah! ERIC

You think *this* is wimpy? TREVOR

RETARD! (TREVOR punches ERIC.)

Yeah... yeah... KORI

(CONTINUED)

MANDY  
Don't stop... please don't stop!

KORI  
I never will, baby.

(TREVOR punches ERIC again.)

TREVOR  
BASTARD!

ERIC  
Fuck me...

TREVOR  
Oh I'm gonna fuck you, you stupid bull, I'm gonna-

(MANDY starts to orgasm.)

(TREVOR enters ERIC and fucks him  
incredibly hard. ERIC screams, but  
TREVOR covers his mouth. He growls  
the following:)

You stupid fat ugly pig, this is exactly what you wanted,  
and now you're getting it, so shut the fuck up, you giant  
shit, so I can fuck your brains out, because no one else  
will, no one else will want to, no one else, and you are  
going to LOVE it when I fuck you! Say it! SAY YOU LOVE IT  
WHEN I FUCK YOU!

ERIC  
I LOVE IT!

TREVOR  
YOU LOVE IT WHEN I WHAT?!

ERIC  
I LOVE IT WHEN YOU FUCK ME!

TREVOR  
SAY IT AGAIN!

ERIC  
I LOVE IT WHEN YOU FUCK ME!

(MANDY and TREVOR reach orgasm.  
KORI kisses MANDY.)

(TREVOR continues, until the sounds  
of ERIC crying increase in volume.  
TREVOR slows down, then stops. ERIC  
continues crying. TREVOR pulls away  
from ERIC.)

(CONTINUED)

(Both couples turn their lights on. KORI and MANY relax into each other. TREVOR puts his hands to his face in shame. ERIC cries.)

TREVOR

Eric? Eric. I'm sorry. I didn't mean... But you wanted it, so...

(ERIC continues crying. He slowly gets up and puts on his clothes.)

(MANDY and KORI relax in bed together.)

MANDY

Wow... I never thought it was possible to feel something like that.

KORI

It is, baby.

(ERIC has finished dressing and leaves the room in tears. TREVOR is left alone. Lights dim on him. Lights stay on KORI and MANDY.)

KORI

Well then.

MANDY

That was... a thing.

(KORI laughs.)

KORI

Yeah it was.

MANDY

So... do you wanna stay, or go, or... I don't know how this works.

KORI

I could do either.

MANDY

I mean, if you were charging me, I think I'd owe you twice your normal rate.

KORI

Twice? More like thrice, considering what just...

(CONTINUED)

Sorry...

MANDY

Nothing to be sorry for.

KORI

(KORI cuddles up to MANDY. MANDY's mood dampens.)

You OK?

KORI

Yeah. Yeah it's fine.

MANDY

You can totally talk to me about it, if you want.

KORI

...it's pretty personal.

MANDY

(Pause.)

MANDY

...my little brother killed himself. At least, I think he did. I'm still not sure.

KORI

Oh my God. Sorry to hear that.

MANDY

It happened a few days ago. He fell out a window.

KORI

...were you and your brother close, or...?

MANDY

No, not really. We weren't really close when we were little, and by the time we got to high school, we barely talked to each other.

KORI

I see.

MANDY

So... I was really just here to identify the body. I'll probably take it back to Wisconsin to have him buried. Not sure how my parents will react to that...

KORI

Why not?

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

Eric- my brother- was gay, and they kicked him out of the house for it.

KORI

Do they know about you, or...?

MANDY

No. It's never come up between us, so...

KORI

...how long have you known? That you liked girls?

MANDY

...I guess a while? I mean I've dated a few boys, and they were nice, but... I never thought to date a girl.

KORI

Not even in college?

MANDY

No. Then again I didn't really like any of the girls at my school, so...

KORI

Gotcha.

MANDY

When I was in high school, I'd pray to God to not make me a lesbian. And... I'd...

KORI

You...?

(Long pause.)

MANDY

It kind of just became this thing that I knew was in me, but I didn't make a big deal out of it, because it's no one else's business, you know?

KORI

Fair enough.

MANDY

I mean, I had some crushes in girls back in high school, but they were like, friend-crushes, you know?

KORI

Yep.

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

Plus high school would've been the worst time to tell my parents. My dad cheated on my mom with one of the choir women at church.

KORI

...Damn.

MANDY

I mean, they're alright now. Somehow they made up for it.

KORI

That's good, I guess. Although I wouldn't have stayed with a cheater.

MANDY

My dad called my brother a "faggot failure" when he found out about him.

KORI

No offense, but your dad sounds like a dick.

MANDY

He's my father, and I respect him. That's all I'm gonna say.

KORI

Mm...

MANDY

Do your parents know... about you?

KORI

They know I'm a lesbian, yeah. They're chill with it. My mom baked an anniversary cake for my first girlfriend and I's one month.

MANDY

Really?

KORI

Yes! She was so happy for me...

MANDY

...can I ask you something?

KORI

Anything.

MANDY

What made you... want to do this?

(CONTINUED)

KORI

Uh...

MANDY

I'm sorry if that's too personal.

KORI

No, you're fine. It's just... not something I usually tell people.

MANDY

...tell me?

KORI

...I had a friend in college. Brilliant girl. All A's. Good at everything she did. I liked her a lot. But she had depression. One night, she called me saying she needed a friend. She was having a panic attack- her boyfriend hit her. So I went down to her room, and she was crumpled on her bed. She talked about how much ugly was in her, how her eyes, hair, skin, everything was ugly. And my first instinct was to touch her. She didn't push me away, so eventually I started hugging her. And... I started cuddling with her. She took about an hour to cuddle me back, but once she did, it was the safest place I've ever been. Next morning, she told me she was going to kill herself, but she didn't want to. She asked if we could cuddle again, so we started cuddling a few times a week, and... now she's a lawyer. So I figured, if I can help her get over her sadness, why not try with other people? So...

MANDY

That's... such a good story.

KORI

Thank you.

MANDY

Do your parents know about... what you do?

KORI

Yep. They say as long as I don't get hurt...

MANDY

That's great. Really. It's great you have such a supportive family.

KORI

Yeah...

MANDY

My mom wouldn't like this. Me being with a woman. It was hard enough for her when she found out about Eric.

(CONTINUED)

KORI

How'd you react when he came out?

(Pause.)

MANDY

I just... I don't know why I... I slapped him... and told him I didn't want to be his sister.

(MANDY cries. KORI comforts her.)

KORI

Hey, hey...

MANDY

I'm sorry. I'm such an awful person...

KORI

Sh... Sh...

(MANDY's crying recedes.)

MANDY

I don't want this night to end.

KORI

What would you do if it didn't?

(Pause.)

MANDY

I would... I would cuddle with you. All night. No sex, since I think we're pretty exhausted from that.

KORI

What about tomorrow?

MANDY

We could go out for breakfast at a diner somewhere. Have pancakes, or waffles, or French Toast, whatever... I'd pay.

KORI

Sounds delicious. What else?

MANDY

We'd go to a park if it's nice. Or go see a play if it's rainy.

KORI

We could go to the park if it rains. You ever been kissed in the rain?

(CONTINUED)



MANDY  
No.

KORI  
Well let's hope it rains tomorrow, then.

(They kiss.)

MANDY  
This all sounds so... great.

(KORI takes MANDY's arm and brings her close to her face. They kiss. Lights fade.)

(The lights shoot back up, KORI and MANDY are lying in bed together. TREVOR is still in his bed.)

(ERIC stares down at KORI and MANDY. He is beaten and scarred from his encounter with TREVOR. MANDY wakes up and faces her brother. She doesn't speak- she's too afraid to.)

ERIC  
Feels good, doesn't it?

MANDY  
I...

ERIC  
No, you don't need to say anything.

MANDY  
I need to explain this. It's... it's just an experiment.

ERIC  
You've been in bed with her for five hours. I seriously doubt that's experimentation.

MANDY  
I...

ERIC  
So I can't sleep with guys, but you're free to go around sleeping with girls?

MANDY  
No, Eric- that's not it at all!

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

You're the one who smacked me and told me I liked girls.

(ERIC gangs up on MANDY and starts smacking her.)

YOU LIKE BOYS! YOU LIKE BOYS!

MANDY

Stop it Eric-

ERIC

You didn't stop for me, I'm not gonna stop for you! YOU LIKE BOYS! YOU LIKE BOYS!

MANDY

NO! I liked being with this girl... but that doesn't mean I don't like boys. And this isn't anything more than something I was curious about-

ERIC

What if I was curious about girls? You wouldn't have thought much of that.

MANDY

I'm sorry-

ERIC

That's not gonna be enough. Considering all the shit I had to go through over here-

MANDY

If you kept in contact, if you talked to me about it-

ERIC

You wouldn't have understood.

MANDY

But I want to, Eric! But you're not letting me. You never let me!

ERIC

Maybe that's because you didn't let yourself.

(ERIC starts to exit.)

MANDY

Eric! Eric, please I- I'm trying to understand. I want to understand what happened to you. Eric- Eric!

(ERIC exits. MANDY looks after him. KORI wakes up.)

(CONTINUED)

You alright? KORI

Yeah I'm fine... MANDY

(Pause.)

You have a nightmare, or... KORI

No. Not really. MANDY

(Pause.)

I'm sorry to ask this, but... Could you leave? KORI

(KORI looks down.)

OK... KORI

(Pause. KORI gets out of bed. MANDY does too. The two put their clothes on, slowly and silently. When they're done, the two face each other.)

So... You feel any better? KORI

...somewhat. MANDY

Somewhat? KORI

It's not your fault... MANDY

Oh... KORI

(Pause.)

I just... Look, let me give you some money... MANDY

(MANDY grabs her purse and digs into it.)

(CONTINUED)

Mandy- KORI  
  
(MANDY pulls out a few twenties from her purse.)  
  
Take this. MANDY  
  
No, I told you, this was a free- KORI  
  
Please. MANDY  
  
(KORI takes the money and pockets it. Pause.)  
  
Alright. KORI  
  
(Pause. KORI is about to leave, but:)  
  
You're really good at what you do. MANDY  
  
Thanks. KORI  
  
No problem. You made me feel very good tonight. MANDY  
  
Good. I'm glad. KORI  
  
It's just... I'm not here for pleasure. I'm here for something else. MANDY  
  
OK. KORI  
  
I'm sorry. I feel like such a bitch. MANDY  
  
You're not. KORI  
  
No, I am. Because you were really good, but... MANDY

(CONTINUED)

...but...? KORI

I just... I don't know. MANDY

You don't know. KORI

No. I don't. MANDY

Can I give you some advice? KORI

Sure. MANDY

Cuddle more often. KORI

That's not really a priority for me right now. MANDY

For you, it should be. You were so insecure, shy, and awkward when I met you, but the moment I started touching you, you became this beautiful, adventurous risk-taker. But now that we've stopped cuddling, you turned right back into who you used to be. KORI

I'm not any of those things- I just have more important things to do. MANDY

Like what? KORI

Like find out what happened to my brother. MANDY

Fair enough. But what I saw in you last night... you should let that out more. KORI

No. What happened last night was not me. Nor anything resembling me. MANDY

It was, though. And if you cuddled more, you'd- KORI

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

Maybe I don't feel completely comfortable with myself, much less with other people-

KORI

You were more than comfortable last night.

MANDY

(Continuous)

And you didn't give me anything I *needed* last night. I just needed myself, and that's it.

KORI

If you cuddled more you probably wouldn't have told your brother you didn't want to be his sister.

(Pause.)

What do you think he needed more? A hug, or a slap like you gave him?

MANDY

Get out of here.

KORI

What if, someday in the future, you have a kid and they tell you they're gay? Are you gonna slap them too?

MANDY

You think I haven't learned from my brother-

KORI

All I'm saying is, if you just hugged Eric instead of bitch-slapping him, he probably wouldn't have killed himself.

MANDY

Don't blame me for what happened. If you think I don't feel any guilt for what happened, you are dead wrong.

KORI

...alright. Whatever. I'm just sick and tired of people saying they want comfort, then shying away from it.

(KORI pats her pocket.)

Thanks for the money. Have a nice life.

(KORI leaves. MANDY is left alone. She takes a few deep breaths to take in what just happened. She composes herself, then calls TREVOR. TREVOR's phone rings. He hesitates, then answers.)

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR  
Yeah.

MANDY  
Trevor. Hi. Did you get my voice-mail yesterday?

TREVOR  
I did.

MANDY  
We need to talk. In person. Can you do that now?

TREVOR  
...can we do it over the phone? It's six in the morning, and I gotta get ready for work...

MANDY  
No. I need to have this conversation face to face. I can wait til your lunch break, if that works.

TREVOR  
I had plans...

MANDY  
Cancel them.

TREVOR  
...alright. I can meet you at that bar we met at. 1:00 sound good?

MANDY  
Perfect. I'll see you then. Got it?

TREVOR  
OK.

MANDY  
Great. See you then.

(TREVOR hangs up. Immediately, his cell phone rings again. He looks at his phone, and picks it up. It is ERIC.)

TREVOR  
Hey...

ERIC  
Hi...

TREVOR  
...you get home alright?

ERIC  
Yeah...

TREVOR  
Good. Good...

ERIC  
...you have a good time last night?

TREVOR  
Eric.

ERIC  
No really. I want to know if you had a good time last night.

TREVOR  
...it was-

ERIC  
Was hitting me as great as you thought it would be?

TREVOR  
What-

ERIC  
You've wanted to do it for a long time, didn't you.

TREVOR  
Eric, you're being completely irra-

ERIC  
Irrational? You're the one who called me ugly. And a pig.  
And a retard.

TREVOR  
I'm really sorry for what I did. But...

ERIC  
What was it for? Were you taking out your anger towards  
Carey on me?

TREVOR  
No, but...

ERIC  
Because I think you were.

TREVOR  
Well maybe if you didn't ask me to fuck you, it wouldn't  
have happened.

(CONTINUED)



ERIC

...are you blaming me, or...?

TREVOR

No, but... I shouldn't have gone through with it either. The whole thing was a mistake. We shouldn't have done it.

ERIC

Well we did, so...

TREVOR

Well... I'm sorry. I really am.

ERIC

Are you, though?

TREVOR

Do I have any reason *not* to be sorry?

ERIC

No. You left bruises on me, Trevor. And I'm still sore from how you rammed into me like a fucking jackhammer.

TREVOR

Oh, come on. You wanted to get fucked, you said you *needed* your virginity to be taken, and that's exactly what you got. And when I started hitting you, you didn't tell me to stop. If you just told me, I would've stopped. But did you tell me to stop? No! You told me to keep going. You told me to call you all those things. You wanted to be-

ERIC

You know what's sick and twisted about you, Trevor? You're actually *turned on* by doing shit like that.

TREVOR

Are you saying you weren't?

ERIC

I wasn't at all.

TREVOR

If you really wanted to stop it, you would've stopped it.

ERIC

I only let you keep going so you could get hard. I didn't want you to continue!

TREVOR

Then why didn't you stop me!?

ERIC

I don't know! I didn't think you'd...

TREVOR

What? What didn't you think I'd...?

ERIC

I didn't think you'd want to be with me.

TREVOR

Uh huh.

ERIC

Did you want to be with me? At all?

TREVOR

...no. I didn't.

ERIC

...I see.

TREVOR

I was just horny. And yes, I was mad that Carey didn't want me.

ERIC

...

TREVOR

You have no idea how sickened I am with myself. It's just... I didn't want to show this side of myself to you.

ERIC

Uh huh... Trevor?

TREVOR

What?

ERIC

...do you really think I'm stupid, fat, ugly...?

(Pause.)

TREVOR

You've done stupid things. You could definitely lose some weight. And you're not the most attractive guy I know. But you're a good friend.

ERIC

...that's supposed to make me feel better?

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR

...

ERIC

Why were you even friends with me?

TREVOR

...you really want to know why.

ERIC

Yeah.

TREVOR

Because you make me feel better about myself.

(Pause.)

ERIC

...fuck you, Trevor. You're a fucking douchebag! You don't even deserve to exist, or have sex, or be happy, or-

TREVOR

You know what!? Why don't you just fucking kill yourself!? Everyone will be happy- your parents, your sister, Richard, and me. And I think you'd be happier too, since it's basically impossible for you not to be a whiny bitch on this planet. I hope that, if there is such a thing as a next life, you are not such an annoying, needy, clingy, and miserable little- no, make that GINORMOUS- shit, because that's what you've been ever since we met. So why don't you just do us all a favor, and put yourself, and the rest of the world, out of our fucking misery!?

ERIC

...

(Heartbroken, ERIC hangs up. TREVOR hangs up.)

7

Scene Seven

7

(TREVOR at the bar. MANDY is with him.)

MANDY

And you said that to him?

TREVOR

...yeah. I did.

(MANDY shakes her head.)

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

I can't believe you.

TREVOR

I can't believe myself.

MANDY

Well you actually started hitting him and called him a pig. You'd *better* start believing you did it.

TREVOR

I didn't want to-

MANDY

But you did it anyway. You're sick, you know that? Really sick.

TREVOR

You hit Eric when he came out.

MANDY

As if you're any better!

TREVOR

I told him I didn't want to! But he insisted, and I didn't want to say no, and... It just came out of me. I'm sorry.

MANDY

Sorry's not going to be enough.

TREVOR

You should really tell yourself that too.

(Pause.)

MANDY

I'm just trying to make sense of what happened.

TREVOR

Here is what happened: He came out to you because he trusted you. And after he told you not to tell anyone, you hit him, told him he liked girls, and told your parents, who told him he was an abomination and a disgrace. Maybe if you showed just the *TINIEST* bit of compassion, he wouldn't have ran away from you and not said where he went.

MANDY

I'm doing all I can now.

TREVOR

But he's gone, Mandy.

Pause.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TREVOR (cont'd)

Look. You think I feel absolutely no guilt about what happened, you're dead wrong. I just... when Richard called me to say what happened, I...

MANDY

...you?

TREVOR

...I didn't know what to say.

MANDY

You should've said you were sorry. But you didn't even think to say that, did you?

TREVOR

...

MANDY

...

TREVOR

...

MANDY

Of course not. You know, I was glad Eric had a friend. I just wish that friend wasn't you.

(MANDY gets up and leaves.)

TREVOR

Mandy!

(But she is gone.)

I... I'm...

(TREVOR takes his wallet out. He pulls a card out. He takes his phone out and dials a number. He puts the phone to his ear.)

Hi... Is this Kori?

8

Scene Eight

8

(RICHARD's apartment. MANDY buzzes. RICHARD enters and presses the intercom.)

RICHARD

Yes?...Oh. OK, send her right up.

(CONTINUED)

(RICHARD releases the intercom, then goes to the kitchen to make tea. A few moments. Then a knock on the door. RICHARD enters and answers it. MANDY enters.)

RICHARD

Hi Mandy. I was just going to make some tea. Did you want Chamomile again?

MANDY

Sure. That would be great.

RICHARD

OK.

MANDY

I found out how Eric got the bruises. That Trevor guy apparently likes it really rough, and went a bit crazy on him.

RICHARD

Ohhh, I see...

MANDY

Yeah. I'm glad I don't have to see him again.

RICHARD

Hm...

(RICHARD goes into the kitchen. MANDY goes to the bookshelf and picks out "Normal Nudes: Women" and looks at it. She looks at it for a few minutes, then RICHARD enters.)

RICHARD

Still looking at that book?

MANDY

Yeah. It's not bad.

RICHARD

No it isn't.

(RICHARD and MANDY sit down.)

So. You ready to go back to Wisconsin?

MANDY

Yeah. I'm ready. New York definitely isn't the place for me. Nor was it the place for Eric. I'll be glad to bring us both home.

(CONTINUED)

Hm...

RICHARD

(Pause. MANDY goes to the window. She looks down.)

MANDY

You know... Eric was always afraid of heights.

RICHARD

Hm...

MANDY

I guess it's kind of poetic justice that he got over his fear one time to end his life...

RICHARD

Yes...

MANDY

...

RICHARD

...

MANDY

...

MANDY

Richard? What is it?

RICHARD

It's nothing, nothing...

MANDY

Richard.

(Long pause. This is hard for RICHARD to get out.)

Did you... Richard. Did you... did you kill my brother?

RICHARD

No. But... I watched him...

MANDY

Watched him...? I thought you said you weren't in the apartment that night...

RICHARD

No. I was home.

(Lights shift. The middle of the night.)

(CONTINUED)

(RICHARD sits alone on the couch in the dark. ERIC enters. He is wearing a t-shirt and boxer shorts. He goes to the window.)

RICHARD

You want some water, or...?

ERIC

...that would be good. Wine would be better.

(RICHARD goes into the kitchen and brings out a bottle of wine and glasses. He pours for them.)

(Holds a filled glass out to ERIC. ERIC takes it and downs it. He clutches his stomach.)

RICHARD

If you're going to throw up, do it in the bathroom.

ERIC

No, I'm fine, I just... shouldn't have drunk all that so fast.

RICHARD

That would've been a smart idea. Some drinks are meant to be downed. None of them are alcoholic.

ERIC

Well I don't drink much. I'm not a lush or anything.

RICHARD

Good for you.

(RICHARD sips his wine.)

So. What are you doing up?

ERIC

Just thinking...

RICHARD

You ready to tell me what happened last night?

(ERIC shakes his head.)

You have to tell me eventually, Eric. Did someone beat you up on the street?

ERIC

No.

(CONTINUED)



RICHARD  
Who was it?

ERIC  
...a friend.

RICHARD  
Was it Trevor?

ERIC  
...I really don't want to talk about it.

RICHARD  
You're gonna have to talk about it eventually.

ERIC  
Well I don't want to right now. It's only gonna hurt me, and I don't wanna be hurt anymore. I just want to love someone. Is that so hard?

RICHARD  
In the gay world, unfortunately, it is.

ERIC  
Why?

RICHARD  
It's what happens when you put a group of people who are bound by their sexuality together- more are going to think of only sex.

ERIC  
You managed to find love.

RICHARD  
Only after years of searching. And then I had to watch him suffer at the end of his life...

ERIC  
And you're attractive. For an old guy. I'm fat, and ugly, and I feel like *I'm* suffering every day because-

RICHARD  
You're suffering because you don't want to do the minimal amount of exercise that could get you to lose some weight. You weren't here in the eighties, when something was happening to us, and we didn't know what was happening, and *no one* was talking about it. Men were dying, gorgeous men, who were rendered horrid and ugly and were skeletons of their former selves. You mention how much you're suffering because you don't like how you look. At least you *have* them, as God originally intended, even if they are, quite frankly, fat.

ERIC

Why did you call me fat!?

RICHARD

You called yourself fat. Whatever you call yourself, you give permission for other people to call you too.

ERIC

That's bullshit.

RICHARD

That's the way it goes. And you don't have to be fat, you know. You could always go jogging, or running.

ERIC

I don't want people to see my body jiggle.

RICHARD

Then what do you want me to say!?

ERIC

That I'm beautiful! That I'm worth loving! That I can find someone who won't care what I look like, will care how I feel, and won't tell me to lose weight.

RICHARD

Tell me something- would you rather have a good looking boyfriend or an ugly boyfriend?

ERIC

...does personality count?

RICHARD

Not here.

ERIC

...if I loved them, it wouldn't matter.

RICHARD

You have to make a choice.

ERIC

I shouldn't have to, because it's a hypothetical question that shouldn't have any bearing on-

RICHARD

Which would you rather have?

(Pause as ERIC ponders the question.)

(CONTINUED)

ERIC  
...the good-looking one.

RICHARD  
So would many other people. But that's not what most of them get.

ERIC  
It's what you got.

RICHARD  
Yeah well... luck of the draw.

ERIC  
...is that all love is?

RICHARD  
It can be. If you don't do anything about it.

ERIC  
I see...

RICHARD  
...you want a hug?

ERIC  
Yes.

(Pause. ERIC and RICHARD look at each other. RICHARD sips his wine, then opens his arms. ERIC goes into his arms. They embrace. After a few moments, ERIC kisses RICHARD. RICHARD quickly pushes him off in disgust. ERIC sprawls across the floor. ERIC stands back and looks at him. He looks down in shame at what he's done.)

ERIC  
...I'm sorry.

RICHARD  
...you know my one rule is to never touch you.

ERIC  
I know.

RICHARD  
And that you're not supposed to touch me.

ERIC

I know...

RICHARD

You know I'm going to have to kick you out.

ERIC

Yes.

(Pause.)

I just don't know where else I'm gonna go.

RICHARD

I can recommend a few shelters nearby.

ERIC

But I don't want to stay in one.

RICHARD

Then figure it out.

ERIC

I can't.

RICHARD

You have to.

(ERIC starts crying. RICHARD watches. ERIC crumples on the floor. RICHARD doesn't do anything.)

ERIC

I can't... I can't do this anymore.

RICHARD

You chose this, Eric.

ERIC

But I didn't choose to be gay. If I wasn't, my sister wouldn't have anything to tell my mom and dad, and I wouldn't have been thrown out. I wouldn't have to rely on shelters and strangers to have a roof over my head. And if I wasn't fat, I wouldn't be begging for... I wouldn't be... I wouldn't hate myself so much.

RICHARD

You don't have to hate yourself, Eric.

ERIC

But I do! I can't help it.

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

You have to.

(ERIC goes to the window and looks outside it.)

ERIC

I just... I want a home. And I don't know where or when or how I'm gonna get it.

(ERIC begins leaning outside the window.)

And I'm already tired of searching for one.

RICHARD

*(He doesn't really mean it:)*

One day you won't have to. It'll get better.

ERIC

People have been telling me that all my life. When I was in elementary school, my teachers said middle school would be better. In middle school, I was told high school would be better. In high school, I was told college would be better. I didn't even go to college, because I was tired of being told that the next stage of my life will be better. When will things *actually* get better so I can stop being told they will get better!?

(RICHARD doesn't respond. ERIC continues leaning outside the window. Long pause. RICHARD looks at ERIC.)

This is pathetic. I can't even completely lean out the window to...

RICHARD

Eric.

ERIC

I can't... I can't do... Please help me.

(Long pause. ERIC turns to face RICHARD. RICHARD deliberates, the nods. ERIC turns around and leans further and further out the window... and then we hear the crush on the ground.)

(RICHARD turns around. Terrified. The tea kettle goes off offstage. RICHARD and MANDY stand still for a few moments. The kettle continues. RICHARD walks offstage. The tea kettle is silenced. He reenters.)

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

Why couldn't you let him stay with you?

RICHARD

He broke my rules.

MANDY

All he did was kiss you. That was no reason to let him kill himself.

RICHARD

He asked me to help him.

MANDY

Maybe he meant "help him" as in help him get through whatever he was going through.

RICHARD

That's not the "help me" I heard.

MANDY

What sort of mindset were you in to hear that!?

RICHARD

He wanted me to.

MANDY

That's no excuse. You let my brother die. You. Let. My. Brother. Die.

RICHARD

...

MANDY

What do you have to say for yourself? And why you didn't tell me about this when we first met? Let me guess: You didn't want to deal with the guilt? If you didn't want to do that, then you shouldn't have done it. It was completely avoidable, whether my brother gave you permission or not. I almost respected you. You made my brother feel beautiful when the world made him feel like he was the ugliest boy on the planet. And then I find out you do this...

RICHARD

I saw how unhappy he was. I couldn't bear to see him like that. I can't bear to see anybody like that. I couldn't bear to see John suffer like that, I-

MANDY

That doesn't mean you let him fall out a fucking window!

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

Well maybe if you didn't reject him, he wouldn't have done it.

MANDY

Stop it. Don't turn this on me.

RICHARD

Well you were partially responsible for it. You were part of the problem. At least I was doing him a favor. You think things are going to get better for someone like Eric? All he needed to do was lose some weight, and he would be halfway attractive, and he had a job, he wasn't paying rent, he could've afforded a gym membership. But he didn't. He's responsible for his own unhappiness.

MANDY

...I am going to call the police on you.

RICHARD

And what are you going to say? I didn't technically kill him. And in any case, you weren't even there for him when it happened. Only when he died did you suddenly decide to care. You had the opportunity to stop all this. But you didn't. So this is on you. Understand? This is on you.

(MANDY, appalled beyond words, shakes her head, exits, and slams the door behind her.)

9

Scene Nine

9

(MANDY alone on the stage. Silence. Then, a cacophony of sounds that slowly builds and crescendos:)

(TREVOR saying "stupid, fat ugly", and his slaps.)

(MANDY saying "You like girls! Not boys!" and her slaps.)

(RICHARD saying "You were partially responsible for it. You were part of the problem. I hope you can live with yourself.")

(ERIC screaming "You like boys! You like boys! YOU LIKE BOYS!")

(The speed and volume of everyone's lines increases and increases until MANDY can't take it anymore. She screams.)

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

STOP! I KNOW I'm guilty! I know I'm a hypocrite! I know I'm hideous, and ugly, and stupid! But I don't want to keep being reminded of it! I just want to be forgiven! Is that so much to ask for? I just want to be-

(ERIC suddenly enters.)

ERIC

Mandy?

(MANDY takes in the sight before her.)

MANDY

Eric.

ERIC

I need to ask you something.

MANDY

Anything.

ERIC

...do you think I'm beautiful?

MANDY

Why do you ask?

ERIC

There was an assembly in school today about how everyone is beautiful, and that the most important thing we could do is tell everyone that.

MANDY

I think everyone has something beautiful inside of them.

ERIC

What do you think is beautiful inside of me?

MANDY

...you have the kindest heart of anyone I know.

ERIC

Took you a while to think of that one.

MANDY

I'm sure there are other things too.

ERIC

It would probably take you a million years to think of all of them.

(CONTINUED)



MANDY

You're kind, you're caring, you're smart...

(Pause.)

ERIC

...there's something I need to tell you.

MANDY

What is it?

ERIC

Promise you won't tell anyone.

MANDY

I won't.

ERIC

Because a lot of people at school suspect, and I don't want to let them know they're right.

MANDY

Oh...

ERIC

Have you heard the rumors? Or...

MANDY

People have told me. About you. That you're... But I don't believe them. They're just nasty rumors meant to harm. Those kids are not doing what God wants them to do. God wants us to spread light and joy, not lies and hatred.

ERIC

OK.

MANDY

...so what did you want to tell me?

ERIC

...they're not rumors. I am... gay.

(ERIC begins to cry. MANDY stares at her brother for a few moments. She doesn't know what to say. At first, she seems to be getting angrier. But then she calms down. She goes to her brother, and hugs him. ERIC hugs back, and cries into MANDY's shoulders. They hold each other for a long time. Eventually, MANDY lets go, and ERIC smiles.)

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

It's OK, Eric. It's OK.

ERIC

You know what really happened, though. Are you sorry for it?

MANDY

You'll never know how sorry I am.

ERIC

No I won't.

MANDY

But... I just want you to understand I never meant to hurt you.

ERIC

I wish I could believe you.

MANDY

You have to believe me. If I can just change things-

ERIC

Can you change the last year of my life? Can you change the fat jokes the jocks threw at me in high school, the homophobic slurs, the loneliness? Could you change Trevor? Or Richard? Is there some way you can make all that better now!?

MANDY

...I wish there was.

ERIC

Wishing there was isn't enough.

MANDY

I just want to know what you went through.

ERIC

You can't, Mandy. You were never hit. You were never made fun of. You were never fat. You were never ugly. Our parents never hated you.

(Pause.)

You know... When I saw you with that girl-

MANDY

Kori. Her name is Kori.

ERIC

When I saw you with her... I just thought... What did you do to deserve that? Why couldn't I have the same thing? What prevented me from having that? Can you answer that for me? Why did you get all that and I didn't?

(CONTINUED)

(Pause.)

Eric? MANDY

What? ERIC

(MANDY approaches ERIC and hugs him. He returns the hug. They stay like this for a few moments, then MANDY kisses ERIC on the cheek. She looks at him.)

I'm so sorry. If you can find it in your heart to forgive me... You don't have to. But if you do, then I'll have done what needed to be done. MANDY

(A long moment. ERIC begins to leave, but MANDY holds him back. ERIC begins to break down in tears. MANDY holds and comforts him.)

Yes. ERIC

Yes...? MANDY

Yes. I... I forgive you. For everything. ERIC

(A light hits ERIC. Beautiful music starts to play. ERIC looks around him in wonder, basking in the light. ERIC and MANDY stand back and face each other. MANDY looks at the light-bathed ERIC in awe.)

Wow. MANDY

What? What is it!? ERIC

Oh my God! MANDY

What!? ERIC

(CONTINUED)

Eric! You're beautiful!

MANDY

(ERIC smiles. The light begins to intensify, overtaking the stage. The beautiful music grows louder.)

You are too, Mandy! You know, she's right.

ERIC

Who?

MANDY

You should cuddle more!

ERIC

(The lights continue to intensify and the music continues to increase in volume as ERIC exits into the light. When he's completely gone, the lights and music are cut except for a spotlight on MANDY. She smiles brighter and easier than we've seen her do in this entire play.)

(MANDY then reaches for ERIC's backpack. She closes her arms around it and gives it a long, loving embrace.)

(Stage right, we see KORI sitting on her couch. TREVOR then enters. He slowly and tentatively sits next to her. A moment. She opens her arms to him. He falls into her embrace and quietly weeps. She strokes his hair.)

(MANDY reinforces her embrace.)

(Stage left, RICHARD drinks tee and looks at the photo of his husband in "Normal Nudes: Men". He has a distraught, worried, and devastated look on his face. He heaves a heavy sigh.)

(MANDY once again reinforces her embrace. She then takes a deep breath.)

(Tableau.)

(CONTINUED)

(MANDY releases her breath.)

(BLACKOUT.)

END OF PLAY