

ENTROPY - A Love Story

By

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Cast of Characters

ALICE:

Our heroine. Late 20s but able to play younger, she must be able to channel her inner people-pleaser as easily as she can the rage of the woman scorned. She conjures the past to understand her present.

JACK:

Our hero. Early 20's. He is that young man with the call of the siren about him who draws people to his flame and then tries oh so desperately to keep that flame going, always fearful that he'll be discovered for the truly injured, uncertain, ultimately lost man that he really is. Jack gets in over his head but somehow has the courage of youth to press on - even as he knows that his actions essentially leads to the downfall of everyone.

CHRISTOPHER:

Early 20's. Jack's best friend. Christopher tries at first to love Katherine, then falls utterly in love with Alice and ultimately discovers that he can no longer rationalize any of their behavior as they all attempt to have their cake, eat it too and pretend that it doesn't hurt at all.

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Cast of Characters (cont'd)

KATHERINE:

Early 20's. Alice's best friend. Katherine is jaded, thinks she is control of every relationship because she's never really met her match. When she does - he happens to be her best friend Alice's husband and that completely undoes her. As this is a memory play and an experimental narrative construct she pulls herself out of the narrative often hoping she might be able to avoid the inevitable painful conclusion.

MOTHER:

Alice's supremely well put together Dr. Laura meets Amy Alkon advice specialist Mother who puts together seminars on how one might be a modern woman and still seek out a chivalrous man. Mother was the single greatest force in Alice's life until Alice met Jack .

Scene

New York City's West Village in and around West 3rd between MacDougal and 6th before K-Mart came to Astor Place and Disney took over Times Square. Dangerous, dingy and absolutely electric.

Time

The early to late 1990s.

ACT I

Prologue

SLIDE: THE BEGINNING

*A podium USL. Two chairs against the wall on SR -
Two chairs on SL. Katherine's guitar is set
DSL. The bed set right of center on the US wall.*

*Alice enters SR carrying a stack of journals. She
freezes when she sees the Audience and turns to
exit SR but stops when she hears -*

ALICE [VOICEOVER , RECORDED]:

"Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by
her sister on the bank ... once or twice she had peeped
into the book her sister was reading but it had no
pictures or conversations in it and what was the use of
a book, thought Alice, without pictures or
conversations?"

*Alice turns back toward the podium. MOTHER enters
SL and meets her there. Alice deposits the
journals on the podium and takes one piece of
paper. Alice turns to the Audience.*

Mother clicks the podium light ON.

ALICE:

It is all right here.

KATHERINE enters SR. CHRISTOPHER enters SL.

Alice holds the paper in front of her and recites.

ALICE:

It's all right here. These pages can deliver me from
my confusion. If I could read them all at once they
would reveal the mysteries of the world. Of my world.

Mother snaps the podium light OFF.

ALICE:

My answer - actually my question the answer comes
later. One step at a time -

JACK enters SR. Mother straightens, alarmed.

MOTHER:

Alice -

(CONTINUED)

The Video Projector comes to life as it will whenever we see 'SLIDE', casting these words onto the upstage wall -

SLIDE: GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO...

Alice, Christopher, Katherine, Jack and Mother all rise up on their toes, holding their breath in anticipation.

SLIDE: WAIT

Everyone drops back to standing. The Video switches to a home video of YOUNG ALICE.

YOUNG ALICE [ON VIDEO]:

"You are my sunshine, my only sunshine, you make me happy when skies are gray, you'll never know dear how much I love you, please don't take my sunshine away."

As Young Alice sings, Jack, Katherine and Christopher walk slowly toward Alice, an air of menace about them.

Mother watches Young Alice until she senses the danger and panics. She rushes to Alice and turns her to face DS then exits SL.

Katherine stumbles into Jack who grabs her arms and holds her as she falls forward slowly throughout the following. Christopher watches Alice, folding into himself as she speaks.

SLIDES: [IMAGE OF NEW YORK CITY]

ALICE:

I can remember that first time before the shadows fell. It's never been like that first time. Late November in a year when winter was cold and it snowed forever. The city had a particular smell like nothing else in the universe - like an old wedding dress from your grandmother's attic mixed with the sharp taste of ice on your tongue. The feel of cold steel at your fingertips. Hot chestnuts on every corner. It was absolutely magnificent.

SLIDE: ALICE!

Jack pulls Katherine back abruptly and exits SR. Katherine exits SR. Christopher exits SL.

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ALICE:

I can just barely see the skyline but I know it from any distance. I know it like the veins in my wrist, the back of his hand. The labyrinth-like streets of the Village impregnated with scents, animated by secrets and memories - not all of them mine. Streets polished to a glossy shine by the feet of the dreamers and the damned. The paint is so thick it has digested whole buildings until all that remains are layers of gray sealing windows shut in overheated bedrooms while fields of laundry hang like flags of surrender on rooftops. The people are like lions, they have to be so courageous.

Christopher enters SL.

CHRISTOPHER:

And careful, lest the pain swallow them -

Katherine enters SL and 'shushes' Christopher.

ALICE:

How did it begin?

Christopher and Katherine point to the slide -

SLIDE: BOY MEETS GIRL

ALICE:

Ah yes. It was early November -

KATHERINE:

October!

Christopher puts a hand on Katherine's shoulder to quiet her.

ALICE:

October. Was it long enough ago? The world as I knew it lay open before me - ripe with opportunity and promise. His name was Jack...

CHRISTOPHER AND KATHERINE:

The Giant-Killer.

ALICE:

Their names were Christopher and Kat -

Christopher steps forward to speak but Katherine cuts him off -

KATHERINE:

They call me *Katherine* that do talk of me.

ALICE:

They were our closest friends. They came close.

Christopher and Katherine turn their backs to the audience.

ALICE:

October. We were innocent. I was. I knew everything. I knew him so well. I was so sure I had the power to remain - untouched.

SLIDE: JACK...

Jack enters SR and sets the chairs SL. Christopher goes off to grab pints for he and Jack. Katherine sets chairs US and takes drinks from behind the bed - one for her, one for Alice.

ALICE:

Meet Jack - the hero to our heroine. The bar was on Second Avenue on that night to remember. Romanticized and sepia-toned as I may have painted it since, I believe this is what happened. Pay attention now. It is all-important, in the end.

Alice joins Katherine. From this moment on she is no longer the narrator - she is the tale.

Both girls seem lighter - another night out before this history has happened.

KATHERINE:

Not even a little.

ALICE:

You don't mean that.

KATHERINE:

Yes I do. I never loved him. I can make him disappear with the power of my mind.

Christopher watches Jack eying the invisible crowd like a predator deciding who he'll eat next.

CHRISTOPHER:

Looking for a tumble?

JACK:

Scoping the terrain for signs of life. Sending out a message in a bottle.

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CHRISTOPHER:

Never can tell what you'll be on about.

JACK:

I know what I want. I'm just not certain I'll find it.

Jack turns to look at Christopher as if he might have what he wants. Christopher quickly drinks.

ALICE:

Six months! You must have seen something in him.

KATHERINE:

I saw fun. Pure, hot, sweaty, awesome fun. It's the sex I love, not the dick behind the dick.

JACK:

I look past their facade to see their innermost selves.

CHRISTOPHER AND ALICE:

Right.

ALICE:

I don't see what's so great about sleeping with some random guy because you like the way he smiles.

KATHERINE:

That's because you've never done it. When I was a virgin, I didn't get it either.

ALICE:

Kat!

KATHERINE:

When you finally do it you'll know what I mean.

CHRISTOPHER:

Ready?

JACK:

Not just yet. The thrill of the chase.

CHRISTOPHER:

It's the thrill of the release, if I know you at all.

Katherine whispers something to Alice that makes them both giggle. Jack's gaze falls on Alice and he grabs Christopher's arm as Alice and Katherine freeze in a romantic light.

Jack speaks in an exaggerated Scottish accent, which Christopher goes along with.

JACK:

Oi! Jimmeh! Gimme the strength te be a savior.

CHRISTOPHER:

Noones a savior 'round here. If y'd try to save, y'd be telling of failure past.

Jack approaches Alice.

JACK:

Cain't give, that's obligations. Cain't render buy or lease. Got to provide. Hoping.

Christopher starts to follow Jack then adjusts his trajectory when he spots his interest in Alice. Alice stands on her chair. Katherine holds her in the glow of a flashlight.

Jack takes the air of a ringmaster directly engaging the Audience.

JACK:

She's not my type of girl. That innocent lamb Catholic schoolgirl thing? That's never been the stuff of my dreams. And yet I run into her on a sideways street heading east when I should have gone west, riding off into the sunset in a world of my own creation and all I can see as I turn the corner are these flickers of light, streaks, bouncing clean off her hair, searing my eyes - and I am blind - and I am thankful. I haven't seen so clearly in years.

Katherine puts the flashlight down, stashes her drink and Alice's paper under the bed then turns her attention to Christopher - both of them aware of the events they are about to relive.

Jack goes back to his chair to retrieve his beer.

JACK:

Actually, we met in a bar on a Friday night in the East Village, the least likely place for an encounter with an angel. We sat in the back amidst the din of pool tables and the elevated voices of the drunk and the righteous. Bono on the speakers - merciful heavens - singing about sacrifice and she looked at me with that light-streaked hair and those wide eyes and asked me -

Alice steps off her chair and grabs hold of Jack's hand to get a better look at his wrist.

ALICE:

Where did you get that tattoo?

JACK:

Los Angeles. California.

ALICE:

What's it say?

JACK:

It's from one of my favorite songs.

ALICE:

(reading) "All of us with wings"...

JACK:

Right.

ALICE:

(thinking) "All of us with wings."

JACK:

See... what I'm waiting for... what I want somebody to tell me ... is if it's ALL of us with wings, or all of US with wings. Though I long for the answer, I don't really want to know.

ALICE:

I think it's all of us.

Jack is startled as Alice extends her hand.

ALICE:

I'm Alice.

Intrigued, he takes her hand.

JACK:

Jack. I wanted, in a uniquely desperate fashion, a kiss. Shades of fourteen and thanksgiving break and a girl named - Stephanie. Proust was right - and boring.

SLIDE: MARCEL PROUST, 1871-1922. FRENCH NOVELIST.

CHRISTOPHER:

"Happiness is beneficial for the body, but it is grief that develops the powers of the mind."

Katherine hits Christopher once in the arm to silence him. Jack and Alice are too caught up in the moment to notice.

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JACK:

And she said.

Jack slowly pulls Alice toward him.

ALICE:

I feel like I know you from someplace. I've known you from someplace... for a very long time.

JACK:

She had a smile that could light up the world. And the straightest whitest teeth. This is something new.

ALICE:

This is something strange and new. Let me see your hands, he says. Such small wrists...

JACK AND ALICE:

I am afraid of breaking them.

Jack places Alice's hands on his chest.

ALICE:

How am I supposed to respond to that? For all intents and purposes, I seem to laugh, a little giggle barely audible under the music, but I am gasping for air.

Katherine and Christopher watch with great anticipation.

ALICE:

I am staring at his lips. At his wrists. At his hands holding mine. He radiates this brilliant glow of self-destruction that moves me to say - Take me with you! Take me anywhere! Just don't leave me behind, with the memory of your hands on my wrists!

Jack and Alice slowly move in for a kiss. Christopher and Katherine address the audience.

CHRISTOPHER AND KATHERINE:

"Alice chased the White Rabbit without thinking, and in another moment, down went Alice after it, never once considering how in the world she was to get out again."

Just before Jack's lips meet hers, Alice giggles, and runs off SR hoping he will follow. Jack turns to the audience as he grabs her drink.

JACK:

It will now never be finished.

Jack exits SR, following Alice.

Christopher and Katherine start to speak.

SLIDE: MOTHER

Mother clicks ON the podium light and speaks with the fire of a Baptist preacher [into a megaphone].

Christopher and Katherine grab each others hand and watch in mute terror.

MOTHER:

Are you debased by actions that undermine basic proper manners as you cry 'mercy!' into the dark? Take heart refugees. My newest series, Sense and Sense-ability, will give you the tools you need to navigate this treacherous terrain on your quest for a truer than true love through the applied use of Neo-Feminism!

SLIDE: SENSE-ABILITY...

Mother exits and turns OFF the light.

Christopher realizes he's touching Katherine and drops her hand quickly. He awkwardly gathers Jack's glass, his own glass and the flashlight then exits SR.

Katherine watches him go then turns to the audience.

SLIDE: KATHERINE

KATHERINE:

The only things that are truly cheap in New York are the talk, household items purchased on Canal Street and relationships that begin in a bar. It's hard enough to find someone to love that you can hold onto in the real world. In this city, life is glorified and belittled all at once. You're battling too many elements. Heat, cold, noise, rage, tension, fear, envy, death, the drive for money-money-money, desperate sexual escapades, mad gropes in the dark. Never *mind* the alcohol fueled and perfumed promises of a dark-haired boy you met at the college dive. That's why I remain a free agent. I give my heart to nobody. I had this roommate whose life revolved around a string of one so-called boyfriend after another. She barely knew their last names and yet she fell on her face for this verbally abusive son-of-a-bitch who played her very well. After the smoke cleared she mourned and told me she would take him back in a heartbeat if he would have

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KATHERINE: (cont'd)

her. If he would have her. That's like saving the Chinese food that gave you botulism last week, knowing it can only make you sick again and worse this time and eating it anyways! I have no pity for the extremely weak and the especially stupid. Love is such a fucking waste of time.

Katherine starts off SR then turns back.

KATHERINE:

I didn't like him at first. No, I didn't. I didn't see what was so amazing about him.

Christopher bounds on wearing a hat with a large feather. He speaks in an energetic 'Shakespeare' voice.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:

Good morrow, Kate, for that's your name, I hear.

Katherine is utterly confused until she turns US to see -

SLIDE: THE TAMING OF THE SHREW [PART ONE]

Considering the way he just behaved in the bar, Katherine is all too willing to give him a good fight.

KATHERINE [KATE]:

Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing. They call me Katherine that do talk of me.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:

You lie, in faith, for you are called plain Kate, And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst. But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom, Kate of Kate-Hall, my super-dainty Kate, For dainties are all cates, and therefore, Kate, Take this of me, Kate of my consolation: Hearing thy mildness prais'd in every town, Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded, Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs, Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.

KATHERINE [KATE]:

Moved? In good time: let him that moved you hither Remove you hence. I knew you at the first, You were a moveable.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:

Why, what's a moveable?

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KATHERINE [KATE]:
A join'd-stool.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Alas, good Kate, I will not burden thee For knowing
thee to be but young and light.

KATHERINE [KATE]:
Too light for such a swain as you to catch; And yet
heavy as my weight should be.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Should be? Should - buzz!

KATHERINE [KATE]:
Well ta'en, and like a buzzard.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Come, come you wasp, I'faith you are too angry.

KATHERINE [KATE]:
If I be waspish, best beware my sting.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
My remedy is then to pluck it out.

KATHERINE [KATE]:
Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Who knows not where a wasp does wear his sting? In his
tail.

KATHERINE [KATE]:
In his tongue.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Whose tongue?

KATHERINE [KATE]:
Yours, if you talk of tales, and so farewell.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
What, with my tongue in your tail? Nay, come again,
good Kate, I am a gentleman.

KATHERINE [KATE]:
That I'll try.

*Katherine moves to pick up a chair, ready to throw
it at Christopher.*

*Mother enters SL and clicks ON the podium light,
freezing Katherine and Christopher in their spot.*

SLIDE: LECTURE ONE: YOUNG MANHOOD.

MOTHER:

Young adulthood presents difficulties to the immature mind. There is an urge to marry contrasted with a desire to find one's 'self'.

Jack and Alice enter SL, in love. Alice realizes Mother is lecturing and takes notes.

MOTHER:

Sometimes a young lady that should feel indebted to her elders for giving her a college education may be tempted to pursue sex without marriage, which is - undesirable. At best.

Jack interrupts Alice's note-taking. As he takes up his own lecture, Katherine and Christopher fidget in their chairs and try to get each other in trouble. If Jack spots their antics he gives them a warning look.

JACK:

I make my own rules. I answer to no one.

MOTHER:

Girls want to marry and have children-

JACK:

There are enough children in the world as it is.

MOTHER:

- there is absolutely nothing wrong with that and it should be encouraged - after she's gotten her degree. The boy can overcome his desire to procreate by focusing on his studies and planning for future successes.

JACK:

Early manhood is the age of inspiration, passion and revolutionary ideas!

MOTHER:

It is wise to remember that the fire that burns hottest, burns fastest, leaving nothing but a pile of ashes. The smell of smoke lingers for a very long time and is incredibly difficult to remove from drapes or other fine furnishings one's family might have contributed to make a girl feel at home in a strange town. For example.

Jack moves to sit beside Alice. Mother clicks the podium light OFF and exits SL.

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Jack turns Alice's face towards his -

SLIDE: AYN RAND, 1905 - 1982. RUSSIAN-BORN NOVELIST.

JACK:

"I swear, by my life and my love of it, that I will never live for the sake of another man, nor ask another man to live for mine."

Alice sits, captivated.

SLIDE: WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, 1564 - 1616. ENGLISH PLAYWRIGHT.

JACK:

This above all, to thine own self be true.

Katherine and Christopher applaud with fervor. Unsure of herself, Alice starts applauding as they stop. Alice sags, embarrassed.

SLIDE: GENERAL RULES

JACK:

Know thyself. Adjust thyself. Be thyself.

Jack indicates that Alice should write this down.

JACK:

Adjust your behavior to the prevailing need and you'll find there's no room for self-pity, remorse, guilt or regret. You must be a human being, not a person. Know thyself. Love thyself. Rub thyself.

Confused, Alice turns to Jack as Katherine grabs a megaphone from her chair and says -

KATHERINE:

Masturbation!

Alice reacts.

KATHERINE:

She's a virgin.

Alice stares at Katherine, shocked.

KATHERINE:

Kidding! Not!

Christopher and Katherine snicker. Then Katherine stands and moves US. Christopher follows and resets the chairs, strikes the megaphone.

(CONTINUED)

SLIDE: ANAIS NIN, 1903-1977. FRENCH-BORN AUTHOR.

KATHERINE:

"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."

Jack hesitates then runs his fingers along the side of Alice's face, down her neck.

Alice finds it so pleasurable, she forgets herself.

KATHERINE:

In order to poeticize June -

CHRISTOPHER:

[correcting her] Alice!!

KATHERINE:

In order to poeticize **Alice**, you need to see through the personality to the person. To admire her faults. Add a bit of romance. Change the lighting... soft.

Katherine signals the booth and lights dim.

KATHERINE:

There. It's easier to invest in that picture in your mind. Of COURSE it's easier! That's what I've been saying - !

CHRISTOPHER:

AHEM!

KATHERINE:

And now our heroine.

CHRISTOPHER AND KATHERINE:

The philosopher-king in waiting.

Jack takes the notebook and pen from Alice and his chair and walks away from Alice toward SL.

SLIDE: AWAKENINGS

ALICE:

It's unnerving. If you are asked to consider a school of thought that offers new ideas about the universe it's hard to see where the speaker's coming from.

SLIDE: ROBERT A. HEINLEIN, 1907-1988. AMERICAN AUTHOR.

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JACK:

"A competent and self-confident person is incapable of jealousy in anything. Jealousy is invariably a symptom of neurotic insecurity."

ALICE:

It isn't your system. The words lose meaning before you can grasp them. You get no more from them than you would from a sign in a foreign language directing you to an unknown highway. You suspect the sign means well - but this road does not take you home.

JACK:

"The man who is proudly certain of his own value, will want the highest type of woman he can find because only the possession of a heroine will give him the sense of an achievement, not the possession of a brainless slut."

ALICE:

If you allow yourself to take that road - you can achieve understanding. You can finally grok why they feel what they feel, think what they think, do what they do. That's magnificent - isn't it?

Alice begins to understand which makes her giggle. Her giggles become uncontrollable and infectious.

Jack's gaze drifts to Katherine as Christopher watches Alice.

ALICE:

If I can conceive a notion, I can create it. Anything! Pull it out of the sky - turn the conception into an idea into a reality. Thomas Edison found five thousand ways not to make a light bulb. Five thousand. It doesn't matter whether he was involved in each attempt, pushed the button or pulled the trigger. He conceived the idea. He forged it into a reality. If I can conceive... I can conceive... both literally and figuratively. Figure-atively.

Alice indicates and exaggerates her figure. She giggles. Her laughter breaks the connection between Jack and Katherine and the two exit separately SR. Christopher starts to exit SR then stops to watch Alice.

ALICE:

I can even play on that. If I could perceive the conception - conceive the perception - If I could perceive these events in any kind of order - order the ideas - make an outline. Conception. Literally and figure-atively. Don't you see?

Alice giggles and turns to find Christopher is the only one left. She turns, awkward, and stops to put her journal on the podium before exiting SL.

SLIDE: CHRISTOPHER

CHRISTOPHER:

'I loved her the moment I saw her'. That's what Jack tells me. I believe him - for the most part. The man loves Alice. I can only speculate as to how or why of all the women and all the girls this is the one he falls for. Who is he? The prince of his family, blue-blooded Connecticut stock with right and proper ancestors painted gilded on the walls. He broke his former self in two like some mad scientist taking a potion no one else was willing to. Breathing life into a new world. Breathing slightly unsteadily perhaps though none would ever guess. His hands never shook as he gunned the motorcycle and peeled out of the country club's driveway never to return again. Then this girl comes into his life. Girl is how I see her - untested, unmarked, with a brow of marble, nary a single scar on her person. She enters, always smiling. Is that what he values in her? She is smart enough to understand and simple enough to believe. And so, he falls in love with her. Is it because she isn't capable of arguing with him? With anyone? Jack and Alice. And Katherine. Ah God, Katherine! And I - who am I?

*Christopher tries to answer but is not able.
Katherine enters.*

KATHERINE:

I don't trust your friend.

CHRISTOPHER:

I've never seen him like this.

KATHERINE:

You're not so hot either.

CHRISTOPHER:

Oh yes I am.

The two come together in a kiss and exit SL.

A phone rings.

SLIDE: A POINT OF NO RETURN

On the 2nd ring, MOTHER enters SL and stands at the podium, smoking and drinking wine.

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A disheveled Alice enters SR, breathless.

ALICE:
Hello?

MOTHER:
Hello my darling!

ALICE:
Mother?

MOTHER:
Sweetie.

ALICE:
Hi!

MOTHER:
How's my beautiful, talented, charming girl?

ALICE:
Fine.

MOTHER:
How's life in that glorious city?

ALICE:
Good.

MOTHER:
Marvelous. When can I come see you?

Jack enters and picks Alice up. She waves him off.

ALICE:
Oh - not for a bit. I'm very busy.

MOTHER:
I'm sure you are, you've always been ambitious darling.

ALICE:
Guess what? I got the job.

MOTHER:
Working somewhere safe, I hope. They're paying what you deserve, I gather.

ALICE:
It's work-study. I told you about it last week.

MOTHER:
Oh? I don't remember.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE:

Guess what? I've got a boyfriend.

MOTHER:

Where did you meet him?

ALICE:

Uh - he came to the library to do some research - on robotics.

MOTHER:

And what does he do?

ALICE:

He's an engineering student. I like him a lot.

MOTHER:

Now be careful, darling.

ALICE:

Careful of what?

MOTHER:

What do you really know about this boy?

ALICE:

Mother - he's great.

Mother laughs.

ALICE:

Don't start.

MOTHER:

Well, I'm only trying to stop you from making the same mistake I did when I was your age. Which reminds me, sweetheart - I sent you a book.

ALICE:

Oh?

MOTHER:

I had to get it. It reminded me of you, dear.

ALICE:

Women Who Love Too Much?

Jack chuckles. Alice covers the phone.

MOTHER:

Very funny, dear.

ALICE:

I'm close, aren't I.

MOTHER:

You're close-minded. Just like that man I married.

ALICE:

Mother, you're talking about my father.

MOTHER:

[dramatic sigh] The Lord above knows it.

ALICE:

Mother, I don't love too much. I don't love too little.
I don't love anyone right now.

Jack is stung by this, but Alice's persistent gaze tells him she's lying.

ALICE:

I've gotta go. I have to study. That's why I'm here,
after all.

MOTHER:

I love you sweetie. You know that, right?

ALICE:

Of course. I love you.

Jack knows she's speaking to him.

MOTHER:

Bye bye, sweetheart!

Lights out on Mother as Jack takes the receiver from Alice and hangs up the phone. Christopher enters SR - Jack hands the phone to him without looking. Christopher exits SR, taking the hint.

SLIDE: PERTINENT AND SALIENT THEMES

ALICE:

Hi.

JACK:

Hi.

SLIDE: CHEMISTRY 101

JACK:

Boy meets Girl. Both boy and girl are far too bright for their own good. Boy and girl spend time sharing thoughts on film, theatre, poetry, novels and food. One

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JACK: (cont'd)

night, all are drinking; a festival of depletion. Boy and girl find that drinking together is more fun than not. Surprise! Boy lies down on the floor (is there a better place?). Snuggling ensues. Boy's brain twitches spastically. Jesus fucking Christ I do this all the time. Good lord and pineapples! I've forgotten how to make my MOVE. Girl kindly solves this dilemma by turning her face toward boys. Boy, who does not at this point know what girl is doing in her mind, spends the rest of the evening feeling pretty damn good. Feeling the following - cheek, lips, eyebrow, eyelid, the lid on the world, the southern edge of heaven, roses, shoulders, hands, neck, sides with some substance you see, and don't forget the softest of areas places regions between the floating ribs and the top of the hips the bell, the hull, the stem, keep and core. She is willing to divest herself of her armor. This allows boy and girl to sleep in peace next to each other. Very, very important. This is by no means a complete account. Remember, all of history has already happened...

SLIDE: ALL OF HISTORY HAS ALREADY HAPPENED...

JACK:

The blue-green-copper-oxygen hue that her skin takes when reflecting early morning city light, the sigh that says 'I' - and the alcohol-powered definition and clarification of wants and means... not distressed, just dis-dressed. Nakedness is next to godliness and godliness is next to saintliness and by gum, that's her. Whiskey don't make liars, it just makes fools... Funny - I don't feel foolish.

SLIDE: ECSTASY!

Alice crawls from their bed.

ALICE:

The deconstruction commences. It begins with the shakes. I have no idea where they come from, why they come, but they threaten to rip me apart. Something is trying to shake itself loose from its cage and I welcome the efforts. I want to rip the hair from my head, cause my hands to bleed - to smash the window on Broadway with my bare fists in broad daylight. Commuter traffic and me standing with bloody fists, glass fingers intertwined in shredded hands - to smear lipstick across my face and run naked down the street, yelling 'Fuck me if you can!' laughing! Because I have never felt so free. So good. So human. I wonder how long it will take to get rid of the shakes? This is

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALICE: (cont'd)

deeper than I wished for, this hole. I'll never surface no.

Jack watches her intently, enthralled even as he becomes unnerved by the power of it.

ALICE:

Hearing your breath in my ear like a wolf in pursuit - that single-minded engine - that polished thief - your breath tore through me like a primal scream. And she said I should be careful. You can die crossing the street. You could get hit by a vehicle changing lanes on your way home from another hateful day at work. You could be in the wrong place at the wrong time as a 50-pound bag of cement falls 20 stories onto the roof of your car leaving you an emotional and mental cripple. You could slip in the bathtub - no witnesses! The end. You could get AIDS, diabetes, heart disease, lung cancer, a particularly nasty super virus. You could go blind. You could go deaf. You could just stop breathing in the middle of the night. There are a million ways to die. There is only one way to live. There is only this. There is only you. After only six weeks. So - take me apart, and put me back together. Maybe properly. Maybe not. Keep breathing. And the sun will rise, and we will take things as they come and laugh about them later. And the sun will rise again.

Alice falls into Jack's arms. He stands amazed by her profession of faith, drawing her close.

JACK:

I curse the twenty-six characters that take too long to shape the tongue. A motorcycle ride to the MET on a Wednesday night when fog rose out of the streets like Hamlet's ghost, riding past people sleeping, walking, dreaming, people who have no idea what it means to be alive. It brings life to dreams thought lost and secret hopes for a new marriage. I know this love is profound. It is real.

SLIDE: PANDORA'S BOX

Jack kneels and offers Alice an engagement ring.

JACK:

Possession. How does that sound?

Overwhelmed with joy, Alice accepts, and Jack carries her off as the two kiss, exiting SL.

Katherine runs in SR and heads to the podium. She rifles through the journals, growing desperate.

(CONTINUED)

KATHERINE:

[to the Audience] Don't look at me! I tried to talk her out of it. I can prove it, just hang on -

SLIDE: AFTER THE FIASCO...

Katherine reads the slide. It angers her, and she throws a journal at the wall.

SLIDE: DON'T SAY I DIDN'T WARN YOU.

Katherine, defeated, picks up the journal, restores it to the pile.

KATHERINE:

She's in love. What can I say? There is much to tell, I am only concerned with telling it 'right'. Remember, it is all important - in different ways. There's no knowing what will be gained, what lost. Later... we will see. We will know.

Something is bothering Katherine. Very serious, she works hard to make the audience understand.

KATHERINE:

I fear I've lost my fire. Did I let these men burn it out of me? I want to make it clear - I always had the best intentions...

SLIDE: "WE DON'T SEE THINGS AS THEY ARE, WE SEE THEM AS WE ARE."

KATHERINE:

Right. As I was saying -

Christopher as Petruchio interrupts again.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:

Good morrow, Kate, for that's your name, I hear.

SLIDE: THE TAMING OF THE SHREW [PART TWO]

Katherine surprises Christopher with her eagerness to play the part this time. In fact, she is so eager - she skips ahead -

KATHERINE [KATE]:

In good time: let him that moved you hither Remove you hence. I knew you at the first, You were a moveable.

Off-balance, Christopher tries to save the scene -

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Why, what's a moveable?

KATHERINE [KATE]:
A join'd-stool.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Thou hast hit it: come sit on me.

KATHERINE [KATE]:
Too light for such a swain as you.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Should - buzz!

KATHERINE [KATE]:
Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies.

*Katherine smacks Christopher on the ass - startled
he loses his place and looks off SR to ask -*

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Line?!

JACK:
Who knows not where? -

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Who knows not where a wasp does wear his st -

KATHERINE [KATE]:
In his tongue.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Whose tongue?

KATHERINE [KATE]:
Yours - and so farewell.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
What?! Come again, Kate. I am a gentleman.

KATHERINE [KATE]:
That I'll try.

*Katherine strikes him HARD then turns on her heel
and skips off.*

SLIDE: LOVE!

CHRISTOPHER:
I am euphoric! I write on the back of my Art History
book because I have no paper! Oh! it is fantastic to be
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER: (cont'd)

here - now! Katherine - her and I - together - I love her! I sit staring wide-eyed at clouds streaming past through a skylight and am aware of a beautiful sensation as I join the clouds in their circling about the earth. I feel time move by as if the hands were passing through me - the ticking - her heart. I feel the earth's rotation, I feel it moving in its orbit and all of life moving with me - rings of energy, ripples of motion in a cosmic pond...

ALICE, JACK, KATHERINE AND MOTHER [FROM OFFSTAGE, VARIOUS]:
Amen brother!

CHRISTOPHER:

Nothing is belittled! The terrestrial small and universal large connect as the earth moves around the sun at a million miles an hour matching the movement of the blood in my veins... the pumping of my heart propelling a planet along! Katherine...! Alice... Katherine! I love you!

Christopher grabs his hat and runs off SL, clicking his heels.

Mother brings her chair from SL. Jack sets the table and his chair. Alice sets the plates and silverware then gets her chair from US.

MOTHER:

What an interesting apartment. The shower in the kitchen. Is the toilet in the cupboard?

ALICE:

It's down the hall.

MOTHER:

Now really. You simply can't stay here darling.

ALICE:

But I like it here.

MOTHER:

No daughter of mine would settle for this.

JACK:

She said she was fine.

MOTHER:

Yes but I've known her longer which means I know her better.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE:

Please pass the asparagus.

MOTHER:

I *will* say, this is delicious. When did you have the time to make this darling?

ALICE:

I didn't. Jack did.

MOTHER:

A cook? Well you do impress after all.

JACK:

I guess I do.

MOTHER:

Tomorrow we'll find you another place.

ALICE:

I live with Jack, Mother. We like it here.

MOTHER:

I'll call Sylvia. She'll know where to look.

JACK:

SHE SAID we're staying here. And that's final.

MOTHER:

When you get the new place, I can give you that dining room set. You always loved that dining room set. Ever since you were a little girl. This fish is delightful. You must give me the recipe, dear.

Jack and Mother face off. Alice clears the table settings.

Jack and Mother light their cigarettes, never taking their eyes off each other. They lean in and blow smoke in each other's face.

Insulted, Mother exits SL. Jack carries Alice off SR.

Katherine enters SR as Christopher enters SL. She takes her guitar and takes Jack's chair. Christopher takes Mother's chair - they both move DS of the table.

KATHERINE:

What do you suppose they're doing now?

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER:
Fucking.

KATHERINE:
Don't be crude.

CHRISTOPHER:
You asked.

Beat. Katherine softly sings.

KATHERINE:
*Tell me why the stars do shine, Tell me why the ivy
twines, Tell me why the sky's so blue... and I will
tell you just why I love you.*

KATHERINE AND CHRISTOPHER:
*Because God made the stars to shine, Because God made
the ivy twine, Because God made the sky so blue,
Because God made you, that's why I love you.*

CHRISTOPHER:
Nice.

KATHERINE:
For what it's worth... yeah.

Katherine turns upstage to challenge the wall -

KATHERINE:
What do you have to say for yourself?

SLIDE: COLOR BARS [NO TONE]

Then -

SLIDE: LECTURE TWO. WHEN YOUNG WOMEN ARE NOT PARTICULAR.

Mother turns the podium light ON.

*As she speaks, Jack, Alice, Katherine and
Christopher reluctantly set up their dinner party.*

MOTHER:
A continuous pursuit of thrills and a craving for excitement becomes the drug of the adrenaline addict. Forgetting their worth, the poor soul allows promiscuous petting and cuddling to cheapen them - like a purse in the bargain bin at Walmart. Such a soul may come to appreciate real values too late and when they finally want to give of themselves will discover they have nothing left.

(CONTINUED)

Mother turns the podium light OFF and exits SL.

SLIDE: A MAD TEA PARTY

Alice, Jack, Katherine and Christopher sit around Jack's dinner table. Jack flirts shamelessly with Katherine, who enjoys it in spite of herself.

Alice does her best to ignore it. Christopher watches on with a mix of growing envy towards Jack and new feelings of tenderness for Alice.

JACK:

In five to ten years, everything in the world will be owned by two men. John Reed and Bill Gates. McCitiburger with cheese. And there'll be no more art, no more theatre. There will only be clip art.

KATHERINE:

These people getting caught up in their own spider webs - no - these ropes that hold them in place. It just makes you sick to watch unless you're fifteen years old and rich and beautiful and it's only because they're guilty or something that they stay in place.

JACK:

[to Katherine] You have the most amazing mouth.

ALICE:

More wine anyone?

JACK:

[to Katherine] Smile for me.

CHRISTOPHER:

That was a pretty fabulous meal, Alice.

ALICE:

Oh, that's Jack. He's the chef - but you know that, Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER:

Oh right. Then I have one small criticism to make.

Jack tears himself away from Katherine. Katherine, relieved at the break, exhales and drinks.

JACK:

Oh? What is it?

Christopher says nothing. He simply looks at Jack until Jack realizes he's squaring off.

(CONTINUED)

JACK:

You do not get to do that to me. You do not get to do that to me! I am trying to be polite.

Christopher laughs.

CHRISTOPHER:

You don't take care of yourself.

JACK:

Why should I? Who do I have to impress? What about yourself?

Jack and Christopher glare at one another.

ALICE:

Well, I'm just tired of not having money. I mean honestly, I just wasn't meant not to have money.

Jack laughs cruelly.

KATHERINE:

What's so funny, Henry? Jack?

JACK:

That has got to be the dumbest thing I ever heard. I'm not meant not to have money either, but that doesn't mean I cry about it.

Beat. All are suspended as if hoping they do not have to proceed.

CHRISTOPHER:

Oh God! Are we really going to do this?

Katherine leans across to grab Alice's hand.

KATHERINE:

I have no designs on him June. Alice. I swear.

Jack reaches for Katherine and she turns to respond to him. Their interaction grows more sexual intense throughout the following.

Alice and Christopher attempt to ignore them.

ALICE [AS ALICE IN WONDERLAND]:

"Curiouser and curiouser! How queer everything is today! And yesterday things went on just as usual. I wonder if I've been changed in the night?"

Christopher doesn't know what to do - he grasps for something and comes up with...

CHRISTOPHER [AS RODOLPHE FROM MADAME BOVARY]:

"I just get more and more engulfed in gloom..."

ALICE [AS EMMA BOVARY]:

"You do? I thought of you as being very jolly."

CHRISTOPHER [AS RODOLPHE]:

"But many's the time I've passed a cemetery in the moonlight and asked myself if I wouldn't be better off lying there with the rest..."

Katherine moans.

ALICE [AS EMMA]:

"And what about your friends?"

CHRISTOPHER [AS RODOLPHE]:

"What friends? Have I any? Who cares about me? No wonder we fling ourselves into all kinds of fantasies and follies!"

ALICE [AS EMMA]:

"We poor women don't have even that escape."

CHRISTOPHER [AS RODOLPHE]:

"A poor escape, since it doesn't bring happiness."

ALICE [AS EMMA]:

"But do we ever find happiness?"

CHRISTOPHER [AS RODOLPHE]:

"Yes, it comes along one day."

Katherine COMES.

CHRISTOPHER:

I don't know how you do it.

ALICE [AS ALICE IN WONDERLAND]:

"It was much pleasanter at home - when one wasn't always growing larger and smaller and being ordered about by mice and rabbits. I almost wish I hadn't gone down that rabbit hole... and yet... and yet..."

CHRISTOPHER:

I want you, and one day I will have you. It cannot be denied. I love you, Alice. God, I love you.

Alice and Christopher almost kiss. Jack follows Katherine's look and sees them.

Jack lunges to grab Christopher.

JACK:
Why are you upsetting my wife?

ALICE:
Jack - no!

CHRISTOPHER:
It didn't mean anything.

ALICE:
Jack - please!

JACK: [TO ALICE, SCREAMING]
Lower your voice! The neighbors will hear!

KATHERINE:
Of all places!

Jack lifts Christopher and throws him down.

ALICE:
JACK!

CHRISTOPHER:
I - was *upsetting* your wife.

JACK:
I'm just not nostalgic enough to be interested in authenticity.

KATHERINE:
It didn't mean anything!

ALICE:
We do what we like! We sleep naked here!

KATHERINE:
It didn't mean anything? Oh God!

JACK:
[lovingly, to Katherine] Let it go. Let it all go.

ALICE:
How about a drink?

JACK:
Yes, please.

Katherine runs to Christopher, seeking comfort.

KATHERINE:
I thought of all places, it would be!

CHRISTOPHER: [TO JACK]
You - are unbelievable.

JACK:
In every dick, there is a little bit of human.

Beat.

ALICE:
It's late. Why don't you two stay the night?

Alice grabs Jack's glass and clears the table.

Jack strikes 2 chairs, Christopher strikes the table, Katherine strikes 2 chairs

Alice waits for Jack in their bed. He joins her as Katherine and Christopher sit against the upstage wall in the 'living room'.

SLIDE: THE ATTEMPT AND NOT THE DEED CONFOUNDS US.

JACK:
My dreams have been especially vibrant this week. In one I was in an airplane. We came up on an incredible city that seemed familiar though I had never seen it before. We slipped between two buildings and swung out over water to make our descent but the angle was too sharp. I remember wondering whether the pilot knew what she was doing. And then we were approaching bright blue water, plunging into depths and death. It was stunning.

ALICE:
I had a dream last night. I was in the shower and I was shampooing my hair - only my hair wasn't hair it was a head of lettuce. I began to break pieces of my head of hair off, letting it fall to the ground, getting it washed in the tub water. I got out of the shower, only I didn't know what to do with the lettuce, so I made a salad and served it to our closest friends. Only they weren't our friends at all.

Jack turns to Alice.

JACK:
You're a sweet girl.

ALICE:
I love you.

Jack kisses her forehead, turns and feigns sleep.

ALICE:

Oh no. And now I am alone again beside you, this time because I can't show you this. I have something I can't explain because THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED and it never is. I want to force feed you my way of seeing things open your mouth goddamnit. And is that all there is? These moments of connection? These windows of opportunity where two or three are? Having broken into one window I watch events contract around opportunity limiting my options before I knew I had any. I know where I am supposed to be and what I am supposed to be doing but there are strangers in my living room...

Alice listens for a moment for sounds from her 'living room', where Katherine and Christopher sit wide awake.

ALICE:

I hate following you around and I hate waiting. I want to know everything NOW - Please? I want to sit on our bed and look into your eyes, touching every part of your naked body with my fingertips. I want to make love without ever losing your gaze. I want to go down on you like you've never had it, even from a whore, and I know I can too. I want to stop saying 'I want you'... because I want you... and yet I watch your beautiful body fade from my grasp, I follow you around pushing you away before me.

SLIDE: SHH... LISTEN

Alice leans in to whisper into Jack's ear, as if she were praying.

ALICE:

Want me. Goddamnit, want me so much it makes you a little crazy... and I promise you - I will join you.

Alice slips Jack's arm around her body. Jack shifts to reveal he has heard everything.

CHRISTOPHER:

What do you suppose they're doing now?

KATHERINE:

Fucking -

Mother enters SL and clicks the podium light ON. She appears even more distracted than before.

SLIDE: LECTURE THREE: THE NEW BRIDE.

(CONTINUED)

MOTHER:

If the bride is a stranger in town the husband's friends will call - rather she will call on them. She hasn't called me back in eight days.

Mother pauses - shaken. She snaps out of it.

Jack, Alice and Christopher exit SR seperately.

MOTHER:

A young woman and with bad manners will find plenty of thorns. Oh yes, she shall! Nor should the bride from Northampton - who has married a once Connecticut Yankee in New Yorks' social court - he calls himself a New Yorker - HA - ... - she didn't even defend me when that arrogant son of a bitch -! ... - or she had better take the first train home since she is likely to find New York a very - very - lonely - place.

Mother exits SL. Katherine continues to sit US alone.

Alice enters SR holding a Daisy. She pulls petals from the flower, playing 'He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not' as she sings 'You Are My Sunshine'.

SLIDE: ENTROPY [N.] A QUANTITATIVE MEASURE OF THE AMOUNT OF THERMAL ENERGY NOT AVAILABLE TO DO WORK.

SLIDE: A MEASURE OF THE DISORDER OR RANDOMNESS IN A CLOSED SYSTEM.

SLIDE: A MEASURE OF THE LOSS OF INFORMATION IN A TRANSMITTED MESSAGE.

SLIDE: INEVITABLE AND STEADY DETERIORATION OF A SYSTEM OR SOCIETY.

Christopher enters - touches Alice's arm. She turns to him.

SLIDE: THE TAMING OF THE SHREW [PART THREE].

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:

Good morrow, Kate, for that's your name, I hear.

Katherine stands to answer. Christopher snaps his fingers and casts a dangerous look to silence her. Christopher nods at Alice, encouraging her.

ALICE [KATE]:

Well have you heard - but something hard of hearing. They call me - Katherine - that do talk of me.

(CONTINUED)

Alice waits for Christopher's response. Instead he turns to Katherine.

CHRISTOPHER [AS HAMLET]:
Are you fair?

KATHERINE [AS OPHELIA]:
What means your lordship?

Christopher glares at Katherine. He turns to Alice.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:
Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.

Katherine is devastated.

KATHERINE [KATE]:
MOVED? I knew at the first, you were a moveable.

Christopher and Katherine lock gazes. Alice, confused by the last cannot help but ask -

ALICE [TO KATHERINE]:
What's a moveable?

CHRISTOPHER [CUTTING KATHERINE OFF]:
A joint.

*Alice and Christopher laugh.
In desperation, Katherine grabs a piece of paper from the podium and addresses Christopher.*

KATHERINE [AS OPHELIA]:
My lord - I have remembrances of yours That I have longed long to re-deliver; I pray you now - receive them.

CHRISTOPHER [AS HAMLET]:
I never gave you aught.

KATHERINE [AS OPHELIA]:
My honor'd lord, you know right well you did; And with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd, As made the things more rich -

CHRISTOPHER:
These are NOT MINE! Why don't you check with JACK!

Everyone is startled - most especially Christopher, who turns to Alice.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:

Alas, good Kate, I will not burden thee. For knowing thee to be but young and light.

ALICE [KATE]:

And yet heavy as my weight should be.

CHRISTOPHER [AS HAMLET]:

Ha, ha! Are you honest?

ALICE [AS OPHELIA]:

My lord!

CHRISTOPHER [AS HAMLET]:

Are you fair?

ALICE [AS OPHELIA]:

What means your lordship?

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:

Come, come you wasp - I'faith you are too angry.

ALICE [KATE]:

If I be waspish, best beware my sting.

Carried away, Christopher moves in close.

CHRISTOPHER [TO ALICE]:

Why didn't I meet you first?

Alice sees Katherine and steps away - unnerved.

CHRISTOPHER [AS OTHELLO]:

I have a salt and sorry rheum offends me. Lend me thy handkerchief.

KATHERINE [AS DESDEMONA]:

I have it not about me.

CHRISTOPHER [AS OTHELLO]:

That's a fault.

Christopher backs away from Katherine and turns to Alice. The reality of both women undermines him.

CHRISTOPHER [AS HAMLET]:

I have of late --- but wherefore I know not --- Lost all my mirth...

Katherine leaps to fold him in her arms.

KATHERINE [KATE]:

I'faith you are too angry.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:

If I be waspish best beware my sting.

KATHERINE [KATE]:

My remedy is to pluck it out.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:

If the fool could find it where it lies...

KATHERINE [KATE]:

In his tongue.

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:

In whose tongue?

KATHERINE [KATE]:

YOURS you IDIOT. And so - farewell.

*Katherine looks at Christopher and Alice -
neither move to stop her so she exits SR.*

*Christopher and Alice are very aware of the
distance between their bodies and how little
effort it would take to cover it.*

CHRISTOPHER [PETRUCHIO]:

Nay, come again, good Kate, I am a gentleman.

ALICE [AS KATE]:

That I'll try.

*The two reach for each other and kiss - aching,
happy. Alice breaks from him and runs.*

SLIDE: YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT IS ENOUGH UNLESS YOU KNOW WHAT IS
MORE THAN ENOUGH.

CHRISTOPHER:

William Blake. Rain - and words - and her philosophy.
His philosophy is endearing: Need no one; Be open; Get
married; Fuck around. She is his mountain, his
princess, his guru and fool. But in my head I shift the
players around and Alice takes on a different aspect.
She's larger perhaps. I draw a line with Alice here
that can only be hers. He did not comprehend Alice's
vocabulary as her definitions turned his words into
little knives. He ended hope. And what am I doing now?
Rationalizing their feelings? As if I had the nerve. As
in all beginnings I am scared and excited - ready to be
dropped. That kiss - one kiss- and I stepped into a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER: (cont'd)

Maxfield Parrish painting where everything is so exquisite, brilliant, vibrant... I shall never recover. The smallest details overwhelm me with waves of feeling not imagined possible - wood floors creaking under the weight of a beloved, the cluttered confusion of her disordered desk - the smell of garlic - and on the corner the shattered remains of a car window is suddenly the most beautiful thing I have ever seen. I pocket the squared off shards of safety glass - no sharp edges to scar yourself with. Just like my love for you - scar-free. Don't you see Alice - Katherine... I have forgotten nothing, Jack.

Christopher exits SL, passing Alice as she enters. They pause - but just when she turns to look back at him, he exits.

Katherine enters SR.

SLIDE: FIDELITY.

ALICE:

Oh Christopher. I feel a new fire come into my body but it's wrong. Love is not the same for me as it is for you.

KATHERINE:

I can fuck my friends. It doesn't mean anything.

ALICE:

Then why did you run out? Please don't go!

Katherine stops, and turns back as Jack enters - electric energy between him and Katherine.

Katherine slowly brings her gaze to meet Jack as Alice continues.

ALICE:

If I could only get far enough away from myself - maybe I would see where this river began and where it ends. I have ideas about the ending. That should not be my head thinking - my mouth saying, please make it stop. My stomach, chest, arms, legs, sex say YES and they will suffocate the rest.

Jack takes Katherine's face in his hands.

JACK:

Why didn't I meet you first?

(CONTINUED)

KATHERINE:

Oh, Henry...

Jack takes Katherine offstage as Alice crushes the remains of her Daisy in her hands.

ALICE:

Don't fight, don't twist - don't pull yourself away.
That - doesn't make sense.

Alice exits. The stage is empty. Beat. Then -

SLIDE: THE BEGINNING OF THE END IS ALWAYS DISCREET.

Jack enters quietly, a man with a plan. He will initiate the change he thinks they need to make.

JACK:

In that final scene in Henry and June when Anais Nin rides away from Miller she is sad but she is resigned. He was just a stage in her development that she had to grow out of. I want to believe those romantic notions. Of course I do - EVERYONE does. I've examined my feelings and believe that in theory, it's the ideal relationship. "But in reality...". There's the rub. Aching to find relief for his insane daughter, James Joyce challenged Carl Jung. "Isn't she confronting the same dark depths of the human mind that I, as a writer, am confronting?". "Yes." Jung replied, "But whereas you can come back up, she's sinking to the bottom."

Jack sits on the ground. Christopher brings Jack a pack of cards.

JACK:

Virginia Woolf put rocks in her pockets and walked into a river. It was going to happen anyway - all things inevitable. She simply took matters into her own hands.

Christopher starts to exit SL.

JACK:

Chris -

Christopher steps back in toward Jack.

CHRISTOPHER:

Yeah?

Jack hesitates - but Alice enters SR.

Christopher turns and exits SR.

SLIDE: DO CATS EAT BATS? DO BATS EAT CATS?

SLIDE: OR THE MAN DOES THE WRONG THING ON PURPOSE

Jack lays out a game of Solitaire. Alice sits behind him and plays cute, hoping to join him.

ALICE:

Black four on the red five.

Beat.

ALICE:

Red eight on the black nine.

Beat.

ALICE:

Ooh! Two of diamonds on the ace of diamonds.

Jack turns to her, not amused. Alice smiles and cutely lays a finger over her mouth promising silence. Jack turns back to the game.

ALICE:

I wonder what makes us miss people? Is it something we can control? Is it instinct or learned response? Aha! Does Alice fall down the rabbit hole because her instinct was to follow the rabbit or was her learned response to fall because inevitably, she would anyhow?

Jack stops playing Solitaire. He gathers up the cards and picks a new game.

JACK [AS MAD HATTER]:

"Why is a raven like a writing desk?"

ALICE [AS ALICE IN WONDERLAND]:

"I believe I can guess that."

JACK [AS MARCH HARE]:

"Do you mean you think you can find out the answer to it?"

ALICE [AS ALICE]:

"Exactly so."

JACK [AS MARCH HARE]:

"Then you should say what you mean."

ALICE [AS ALICE]:

"I do. At least I mean what I say. That's the same thing, you know."

(CONTINUED)

JACK [AS MAD HATTER]:

"Not a bit! Why, you might just as well say that 'I see what I eat' is the same thing as 'I eat what I see'! You might just as well say that 'I like what I get' is the same thing as 'I get what I like'!" You are an open book.

ALICE:

I am not.

JACK [AS CATERPILLAR]:

"Who are you?"

ALICE [AS ALICE IN WONDERLAND]:

"I - I hardly know, sir, just at present. At least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then."

JACK [AS CATERPILLAR]:

"Explain yourself!"

Jack flicks cards into the air in front of Alice's face - a la 'fifty-two pickup'.

ALICE [AS ALICE]:

"I can't explain myself, I'm afraid, sir, because I'm not myself, you see."

JACK [AS CATERPILLAR]:

"I don't see."

ALICE [AS ALICE]:

"I'm afraid I can't put it more clearly, for I can't understand it myself, to begin with; and being so many different sizes in a day is very confusing."

JACK [AS CATERPILLAR]:

"It isn't."

Jack flicks another handful of cards up into the air in front of Alice.

ALICE [AS ALICE]:

"Well, perhaps you haven't found it so yet, but when you have to turn into a chrysalis - you will someday, you know - and then after that into a butterfly, I should think you'll feel it a little queer, won't you?"

JACK [AS CATERPILLAR]:

"Not a bit."

ALICE [AS ALICE]:

"Well, perhaps, your feelings may be different, all I know is it would feel very queer to me."

JACK [AS CATERPILLAR]:

"You! Who are you?"

ALICE [AS ALICE]:

"I think you ought to tell me who you are first."

JACK [AS CATERPILLAR]:

"Why?"

Furious, Alice starts off SR.

JACK [AS CATERPILLAR]:

"Come back! I've something important to say!"

Alice stomps back to Jack and waits.

JACK [AS CATERPILLAR]:

"Keep - your - temper."

ALICE [AS ALICE]:

"Is that all?"

JACK [AS CATERPILLAR]:

"No. So you think you're changed, do you?"

Alice is rather tired of this game, but Jack is determined to see it out to the end.

ALICE [AS ALICE]:

"I'm afraid I am, sir. I can't remember things as I used - and I don't keep the same size for ten minutes together!"

JACK [AS CATERPILLAR]:

"Can't remember what things."

ALICE:

The names of my five best friends in elementary school.

JACK:

Lisa, Erica, Tammy, Tasha. There were only four.

ALICE:

Are you sure? I could have sworn there were five.

JACK:

Are you calling me a liar?

ALICE:

No. Why would I do that?

JACK:

You seemed to imply that I was lying.

ALICE:

I didn't mean it that way.

JACK [AS HUMPTY DUMPTY]:

"When I use a word - it means just what I choose it to mean. Neither more nor less."

Alice stares at Jack and grows crazy with the frustration. Fuming - she mocks him.

ALICE:

Neither MORE nor less. Neither more NOR less. NEITHER more nor less. Neither MORE nor LESS!!!

Jack, unable to take it any longer, turns to her, his hand in the air, ready to SWING -

JACK:

ONE OF THESE DAYS, ALICE - !!!

Alice freezes, stunned. She bursts out laughing - and Jack HITS her.

Both are in shock. Jack turns his back to Alice.

JACK:

I think you should sleep with someone else.

ALICE:

Are you sleeping with someone else?

JACK:

I think I need...

ALICE:

Do you need someone else?

JACK:

I think you need me to leave you.

ALICE:

I see.

JACK:

I know you better than you know yourself.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE:

What about me?

JACK:

I think you should sleep with someone else.

ALICE:

I see.

Jack falls backwards into the US wall as Alice walks DS and turns to face him. She speaks his monologue in undertones as she approaches him throughout.

Christopher enters SL - Katherine enters SR - they hold Jack in the beam of their flashlights.

SLIDE: FROM THE ARMY SCHOOL OF LIFE: WHAT DOESN'T KILL YOU
MAKES YOU STRONGER.

JACK:

It will now never be finished. Onward. Word after word, the art of thought is not linear like we're taught in math class. My dream last night - that night will always be last night - was filmed underwater in Prussian Blue. Tight shorts slid well when you raised your hips and said - yes... I think. Damn my black little soul for not believing in GODDAMNIt. My pain cannot be allowed to make me fearful it must make me fear less. Guts and sinews and my hands. Smashing chairs and 1983 Dynax amber computer monitors, I realize panic is essentially a symptom of a collapse of structure and faith. So I aspire to madness. YES. Wiseass jester laughing at the sky because he knows the sky doesn't care. Now I think it's time to get into the rough stuff. 8:30am and the bug won't start. Nothing but Ramses II cigarettes in the kitchen looking forward to a day of labor? When does your blood get up, woman? The Hebrew Ethical Manifesto, in part, as read by the right honorable Reverend James T. Squire: "If not now, then when... If I am not for myself, then who will be for me." When does your blood get up, woman? I should kick myself in the ass and say if you look for pain and rage and anger, expect to find it. Like when I was trying to rationalize my behavior during dinner last Monday... apparently I did everything short of proposing immediate coitus amongst the chair legs... so I said to Chris, if you invite a wolf to dinner, expect wolf-like behavior.

Alice stops moving and speaking. They look at each other.

(CONTINUED)

JACK:

If you look for pain at every station - expect to find it. Expect to find it.

Jack rushes off SR.

Alice turns around and puts her back against the wall in the same spot Jack just stood.

SLIDE: COMMISERATION.

*Alice resigns herself to pick up the cards.
Katherine enters SR.*

The two are not unaware of the tension, both are in need of understanding and are each others only hope for attaining it.

ALICE:

I wish I was Grace Kelly.

KATHERINE:

She's dead.

ALICE:

I know. Isn't that the point? That's exactly the point. She was beautiful, and she's dead. Perfect.

KATHERINE:

I haven't seen him.

ALICE:

Okay.

KATHERINE:

What's really wrong.

ALICE:

Nothing.

KATHERINE:

You've been quiet all day.

ALICE:

I've been thinking. I thought you liked me thinking. I believe you like the silence that ensues.

KATHERINE:

Not this kind of thinking. You've fallen into a hole, Alice. You won't talk about it and you get all worked up over -

(CONTINUED)

ALICE:

Please shut up.

KATHERINE:

Nothing! - I don't think I can do this --

Katherine starts off SR.

ALICE:

Please?

Katherine stops and walks back to Alice.

KATHERINE:

What's the difference between an orange?

ALICE:

I don't know. What?

KATHERINE:

A rabbit. Because a vest has no sleeves.

The two laugh - half-hearted.

ALICE [AS ALICE IN WONDERLAND]:

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

KATHERINE [AS CHESHIRE CAT]:

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to."

Katherine uses her foot to kick one of the cards across the floor. Alice goes scrambling after it.

ALICE [AS ALICE IN WONDERLAND]:

"I don't care much where."

KATHERINE [AS CHESHIRE CAT]:

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go."

Katherine places her foot over a card. Alice scrambles again, trying to pull it out from under.

ALICE [AS ALICE IN WONDERLAND]:

"So long as I get somewhere."

KATHERINE [AS CHESHIRE CAT]:

"Oh, you're sure to do that." If you walk long enough.

Katherine moves her foot and Alice takes the card. Katherine then takes in the scene - seeing that things are not right here.

Alice goes back to collecting cards.

ALICE:

Flaubert spent thirty years on Madam Bovary.

KATHERINE [A LA MAE WEST]:

My God - how did she stand it?

ALICE:

Leave me alone.

KATHERINE:

You had total control!

ALICE:

How do you figure that.

*Katherine kneels to help Alice pick up cards.
Alice reacts by trying to keep them from her at first.*

KATHERINE:

You know how they see you. The hot bitch. The cute girl. The untouchable one. The physical embodiment of a purity. A thing to be cherished and protected.

ALICE:

The virgin whore.

KATHERINE:

The kind of girl you marry.

ALICE:

The kind of girl who looks like she'd be most comfortable in an evening gown. I recognized him the moment I saw him.

KATHERINE:

It's never that easy.

ALICE:

That's what you say. You two seem to fit. I've become a burden.

Alice stands and crosses to a chair SL. Katherine determinedly picks up the last of the cards.

KATHERINE:

Don't be ridiculous. He came as a complete surprise.

ALICE:

I know.

(CONTINUED)

KATHERINE:

I never intended...

Katherine crosses to hand Alice the cards.

ALICE:

I love him best.

Alice grabs the cards out of her hand. Katherine sits abruptly.

ALICE:

I don't know where to begin.

KATHERINE:

Begin at the beginning. Go on till you come to the end: then stop.

ALICE:

Let's go down the list, shall we? The boy who came by force when I was young who let others speak for him. The boy who blushed and ran leaving me bewildered. The one soon after grabbed me while laughter filled the air and I could never find its meaning, foul or fair. Then years pass, and this man-boy pulls strings - and me waiting to be pulled - thinking I knew everything.

KATHERINE:

I'd like something to be passionate about. We're always preaching moderation and detachment. I don't want to be moderate or detached. I want to be full on vibrant, whole, unabashed, headstrong, all-or-nothing, real, entire and completely connected, listening, reading, absorbing, interested, in touch, communicating and comfortable - not separate or isolated or alone. Which is why I feel like I am constantly pouring out and find myself wondering where is the vessel I could be pouring into? If I had that, I wouldn't need to pour endlessly or wonder where I was when I felt empty.

ALICE:

I'd like --- I can't do this right now.

Alice runs to exit SR, leaving the cards on a chair. Katherine turns and stands in the USL corner.

SLIDE: LECTURE FOUR. HOW FAR MAY A GIRL RUN AFTER A MAN?

Christopher enters SR.

CHRISTOPHER:

Alice leaves a message.

Alice enters cradling the phone.

ALICE:

It's me. I just want to talk. Give me a call please?

Jack enters SR.

CHRISTOPHER:

Jack returns it - two days later.

JACK:

Hey. Got your message. I'm out tonight. I'm out tomorrow. I really won't be around till Friday. Hoping it's nothing pressing or important.

Alice exits SR.

CHRISTOPHER [TO JACK]:

What are you doing?

JACK:

It's under control.

CHRISTOPHER:

Don't you miss her?

JACK:

I never miss anybody.

CHRISTOPHER:

I miss her.

JACK:

Of course you do.

CHRISTOPHER:

Jack we weren't meant to move so fast, hurtling away from each other, coming together for a moment - never quite grasping the meaning of it all -

JACK:

Your senses don't tell anybody else anything. And the ocean doesn't give a damn.

*Stung, Christopher, moves to sit in a chair SR.
Katherine crosses DS to embrace Jack.*

KATHERINE:

Hi.

Jack slips out of her hold.

JACK:

I am afraid she'll do something regrettable.

KATHERINE:

Well run to her then!

JACK:

I have to let her go. Those are the rules. It's the only way this works.

Horrified, Katherine backs away from Jack and sits in the chair next to Christopher SR. Jack takes a seat SL.

Alice enters SR. She is not just very drunk. She balances on an edge, between the cosmically absurd and the terminally dark - tempting the fall.

ALICE:

I thought you were special. I thought there were special people left but I was deceived by my own passion. There is no greater deception. And I can say I feel like Woody Allen in 'Manhattan'. Personal integrity, he says, is all we have. But then I remember that Woody had secret relations with Soon Yi for oh so many years and I have to pause. Who the hell are you anyway? You touch me. We kiss. And you know, when the pizza man on 20th and 1st is more attentive than the man in your life, you know there's something wrong. I have to look in the mirror to remind myself that yes, I do exist and yes, I am beautiful - even if you choose not to see it. 'I hope it's nothing pressing or important', he says to my automated voice and I suddenly know he doesn't WANT anything pressing OR important so I am CERTAINLY NOT GOING TO GIVE IT TO HIM. I want to remember this rage, remember this rage, remember this rage because that was NOT me in his bed, that was NOT me in those conversations. I am NOT that small. I'm going to crawl my way out of this hole NOW before I become what I am not. A HYPOCRITE. How hypocritical!

Jack exits SL.

ALICE:

And what am I supposed to do with this soiled love? With these bandages caked hard? Am I supposed to take a trip cross-country down roads you think I ought to see, throwing past lives into the Grand Canyon at 6:56am? Philosopher-king. HA! Somebody wake this girl UP! She took a little too much of the Cinderella potion and now

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALICE: (cont'd)

she's fallen on her face while tripping over the glass slipper. Not only did I leave it out for you, I put my name all over it and attached absolutely no strings and you look at it and say, I hope it's nothing pressing. FUCK YOU for asking me to play by your rules formulated from a set of equations that do not compute with my own private math - you have been selfish. FUCK YOU for telling me you hurt more than I do because you think - that is the biggest bunch of bullshit I have ever heard. FUCK YOU for deciding for me - these were my choices too. FUCK YOU JACK!

CHRISTOPHER:

Feel better now?

Alice glares at Christopher - if looks could kill.

ALICE:

Fuck you too.

KATHERINE:

He's worried about you -

ALICE:

DON'T - you dare.

Alice crashes into her chair SL.

Katherine stands to cross to Alice then thinks better of it and sits on the ground.

SLIDE: THE TAMING OF THE SHREW [PART FOUR].

CHRISTOPHER [AS PETRUCHIO]:

Good morrow...

KATHERINE [AS KATE]:

... something hard of hearing...

CHRISTOPHER [AS PETRUCHIO]:

You lie...

KATHERINE [AS KATE]:

Kate the curst...

CHRISTOPHER [AS PETRUCHIO]:

Sit on me...

KATHERINE [AS KATE]:

Asses...

(CONTINUED)

ALICE:

What would you know about it?

MOTHER:

Oh you have no idea.

ALICE:

He loves me.

MOTHER:

Lie Number Two. From that book I sent darling: '101 Lies Men Tell and Why Women Believe Them'.

ALICE:

Jesus Christ.

MOTHER:

What did you say?

ALICE:

Nothing!

MOTHER:

Don't make fun of your mother.

On uncertain ground, Mother launches into 'lecture' mode.

MOTHER:

Think before you speak. Nearly all faults or mistakes in conversation are caused by not thinking. The first rule for behavior in company is 'Try to do and say only that which will be agreeable to others - '

ALICE:

NOBODY ASKED YOU!

Shocked Mother falls silent and sits in her chair. Alice sees her Mother is hurt, and softens.

ALICE:

What's wrong with me?

MOTHER:

What do you mean? There's nothing wrong with you. You're divine. There's something wrong with him.

ALICE:

I chose him.

MOTHER:

Oh honey, don't let's start that. That isn't going to get you anywhere.

(CONTINUED)

Mother changes her tone, becoming the White Queen.

MOTHER [AS WHITE QUEEN]:

"Consider what a great girl you are. Consider what a long way you've come today. Consider what o'clock it is. Consider anything, only don't cry!"

ALICE [AS ALICE IN WONDERLAND]:

"Can you keep from crying by considering such things?"

MOTHER [AS WHITE QUEEN]: "

That's the way it's done... Don't be in such a hurry to believe next time. I'll tell you why - If you set to work to believe everything you will tire out the muscles of your mind, and then you'll be so weak you won't be able to believe the simplest true things. Only last week a friend of mine set to work to believe Jack-the-Giant-Killer. He managed to do it, but he was so exhausted by it, that when I told him it was raining [which was true] he couldn't believe it, but rushed out into the street without his hat or umbrella, the consequence of which was his hair got seriously damp, and one curl didn't recover its right shape for nearly two days."

ALICE:

You said I was antisocial.

MOTHER:

I said no such thing.

ALICE:

Yes. You did. I was seven years old. You were dating David. We were out at his house for the Fourth of July barbecue from hell. David's son had brought some of his friends over. Rough children. Rude children. The kind that set fire to cars and dogs for fun. I wouldn't talk to them - I just sat and watched from what I thought was a safe and intelligent distance. David reprimanded me for sitting alone. He said, "Why are you so antisocial?". And you know what you did? You turned to me and asked, "Yes dear, why are you"?

MOTHER:

I don't remember that.

ALICE:

It happened.

MOTHER:

I never said that.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE:

Lie Number 102.

MOTHER:

What?

And then, Mother laughs, loud and strong.

ALICE:

That is not funny. That is NOT FUNNY!

MOTHER:

No, it's not funny. It's sad.

Alice has no response. Lights OUT.

NOTE - this should be the only actual BLACKOUT in the show.

Lights UP. Alice and Mother sit in the exact same position. Then they stand - Alice exits SR. Mother exits SL.

Katherine enters SL. Christopher enters SR. Alice changes into a more professional dress. Jack enters SR and moves one chair to SL. He sets Alice's chair at center and waits.

SLIDE: S = K.LN (W)

CHRISTOPHER:

In the first year we learned - the greater the level of disorder, the greater the entropy.

SLIDE: $K = 1.38066 \times 10^{-23} \text{ JK}^{-1}$ [BOLTZMANN'S CONSTANT]

CHRISTOPHER:

The 2nd law of thermodynamics.

KATHERINE:

Die Energie der Welt ist konstant; die Entropie der Welt strebt einen Maximum zu.

CHRISTOPHER:

Inadequately translatable as "The energy of the world is constant; the entropy of the universe is continually increasing".

KATHERINE:

Many of the processes taking place around us are irreversible.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER AND KATHERINE:

The play is the thing to catch the conscience of the queen - and king ...

SLIDE: ALL RIGHT, EVEN THIS.

Alice sits in her chair at center. She tries to light her cigarette but none of her matches will ignite. She tosses the duds aside.

Jack tentatively moves to touch her neck the way he did previousl. When Alice feels his touch she freezes and sits up. Jack stands behind her.

JACK:

Our house is burning.

ALICE:

I know.

JACK:

It's beautiful.

ALICE:

Ashes swirl into the sky as the ceiling falls in.

JACK:

So beautiful.

ALICE:

Everything we had is gone.

JACK:

Not everything.

Jack presents Alice's ring.

JACK:

I saved it for you.

ALICE:

How thoughtful.

Alice tries again to light her cigarette. Jack kneels beside her with a lighter. Alice looks at him before accepting.

ALICE:

I really know you now. I want to make that clear.

JACK:

Of course. But don't you want it? To remember me by?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE:

I don't see why you did it.

JACK:

When something decays, there is no choice but to set it on fire. What are you thinking about?

ALICE:

Dreams. I am suffocating in our room but the windows are open and the curtains dance wildly in a breeze that knocks over furniture and tears pictures from the wall. The air cannot reach me - you are in its way.

JACK:

I am in your way.

ALICE:

Yes.

JACK:

I see.

ALICE:

You treat me like a child.

JACK:

Only when you act like one.

ALICE:

Not only.

JACK:

And you hate that.

ALICE:

YES.

JACK:

Did it ever occur to you that I treat you like a child because you let me?

ALICE:

Never.

JACK:

You should consider it.

ALICE:

You're the weak one.

JACK:

I made it perfectly clear I was never going to do anything I wasn't willing to do - with or without you.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE:

Well it wasn't enough.

JACK [AS KING]:

"I didn't say there was nothing better, I said there was nothing like it."

Alice pauses - then kisses him. The two embrace.

ALICE:

You came as a complete surprise...

JACK:

And yet - not one at all.

And though the two quote Alice in Wonderland, they drop all artifice in this one instance.

ALICE [AS THE KNIGHT]:

"Let me sing you a song to comfort you."

JACK [AS ALICE IN WONDERLAND]:

"Is it very long."

ALICE [AS THE KNIGHT]:

"It's long, but it's very, very beautiful. Everybody that hears me sing it - either it brings the tears into their eyes, or else - "

JACK [AS ALICE]:

"Or else what?"

ALICE [AS THE KNIGHT]:

"Or else it doesn't."

Each character hopes they won't have to wrap it up but are compelled to do so. No one is comfortable.

Christopher enters from SR.

SLIDE: IN ACTUAL FACT, NOTHING HAS HAPPENED.

CHRISTOPHER:

They were too polite to say goodbye. Too polite to point out that everything had gotten so messy, disgusting, unbearable. Oh, the pain! They danced around it. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger...

Christopher cannot help but laugh.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER:

They told me everything BUT what was necessary. That isn't even the problem, really. The turning point, the fatal flaw, the thing that makes it all a tragedy or as close to such a thing as I have personally felt - NO... that is a lie... The thing that makes this all a tragedy is that I knew him well enough to see through their bullshit and they knew me well enough to see that I saw. At least she did. It was like I was the audience and the actor. I was the actor in the moment feeling the words move through me like the wind never could and the audience watching the action from a safe distance in my - own - little - world. We live in memories. I hope she picks a few good ones.

Katherine, bereft of her self-righteousness, eters SL and looks at these people in her life.

KATHERINE:

Who the hell are you? Christopher - Jack... Alice.

Christopher crosses to SR and finds the pack of cards. He sits on the ground and attempts to make a house of cards until he next speaks.

Katherine climbs onto the chairs on SL.

KATHERINE:

I wanted to rip you apart - to sink my teeth into your skin and rip and not only out of love. Out of some of the deepest feelings of hate, a fresh new spring of it surging out of caverns I had long thought dark and empty... abandoned... forsaken... etcetera. I wanted to scream at you until you could hear nothing but the ringing in the echo I would leave behind. Did you learn nothing from me?!

ALICE:

Only everything.

Alice breaks her embrace with Jack. Throughout the next, Alice separates from him and moves to the podium. She picks up her journal and holds it.

KATHERINE:

The hum of a heater... with vibrations... running solidly... down... my... arm. Soothe the silence - fill the distance - reach the clock - left - ticking... They say that love and romance are just elaborate ruses concocted to cover up our animal instincts to fuck like bunnies. Their exact words. No kidding.

Alice takes her Mother's place and begins her own lecture.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE:

How did it begin?

Jack takes over for Alice is at a loss.

JACK:

Like some kind of train wreck. The train drives along its track for days into weeks into years, never a single incident. Then one day... Derailment. Only one of two things could cause such a disaster. Mechanical or operator error - or - another train gets diverted onto the same track. Another train veers left when it should have gone right - when it has always gone right - and the two collide with a BANG! Oddly the BANG! leaves no visible scars. Leaves no real survivors either - but it makes one hell of a good story.

Jack turns to Alice, and concedes authority.

JACK:

How did it begin?

ALICE:

With a handshake. A handshake was all it took. And the trains careened downhill from there into the abyss. No brake ever invented for that kind of emergency. No life-saving flotation device for that kind of splash. I could still smell him in my bed. No matter how many times I washed the sheets - there he was.

KATHERINE:

"Well, thought Alice, after such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of tumbling down stairs! How brave they'll all think me at home! Why, I wouldn't say anything about it even if I fell off the top of the house."

ALICE:

Which was very likely true. Boy gets girl. Boy loses girl. Boy gets girl. Funny how the girl only partly fits into the equation.

Christopher tosses the cards down and stands.

CHRISTOPHER:

I have faced the reality that I cannot give you what you want; that you cannot give me what I want. And I think a gloss is unnecessary. Alice, Katherine - Jack. I flail - flail - and like a whimpering child discover that all my energy is wasted. A waste. Fuck words.

Christopher exits SL.

KATHERINE [AS CALIBAN]:

"You taught me language: an my profit on't is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you for learning me your language."

Katherine exits SR.

SLIDE: AND SO GOODBYE...

Alice and Jack turn to look at the slide then at each other. Jack summons up the courage to continue.

JACK:

There was a lunar eclipse on Sunday.

SLIDE: "SOMETHING THAT'S SO CLOSE... IS STILL SO FAR OUT OF REACH."

ALICE:

I came out of our building, and almost ran headlong into Tom Petty, awestruck in the presence of nature in a precarious moment. I lost my sense of direction - headed south instead of east. Towards the deli, for some cigarettes and licorice. Some beer. Some sense of something other than the taste of garlic in my mouth, the sweat drying on my body. Your body pressed against me, and you're gone. I feel so empty. The harder I try to retain that warmth emanating from your hands... the closer I get, the colder I get when you are no longer there. And I am freezing - and it's 82 degrees outside.

JACK:

What with the lunar eclipse, and the bumping into Tom Petty, I am faced once again with the size of the world... it's shape. Taking the beating of a couple thousand million trillion years the earth has changed it's shape. I stare at the portion of the world visible beneath my feet. I am shape-shifting. God - there is so much to change...

Jack moves the chair, restoring it back to SL, mirroring the way the stage looked at the start.

ALICE AND JACK:

There is too much to do - but no one else ever seems to notice...

JACK:

So I'm fucked if I know why I try sometimes. This time, I fancy the end... thank you very much.

(CONTINUED)

Jack exits SR without looking at Alice, though it is clear he will always want to. Alice equally wants him to look back - and to leave.

Alice starts after him then stops herself and turns to the audience as lights dim around her.

ALICE:

These are the questions I ask myself. Not only, are these my thoughts, but why are these my thoughts? Staring at the portion of the world beneath my feet on the way to the deli, to get cigarettes and beer. Some licorice. My heart breaks in ways the books never yet told. It rips and tears. My heart is raw meat, strands of life bleeding, dripping out and now, re-arranged after all that tearing - I have to do my best every day to shove my heart back into my chest. It doesn't fit anymore. From this moment on, my heart shall always beat the wrong way. [Beat] We were young. We were innocent. It was enough.

Alice crosses back to the podium and puts her journal down on top of the pile. She clicks the podium light OFF and exits SL.

SLIDE: THE END

SLIDE: THANK YOU VERY MUCH, AND GOOD NIGHT

Phil Dumesnil's version of "You Are My Sunshine" plays out for the bows to the end.