

# ***Without Shame***

*by*  
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# Without Shame

A Canadian Drama

## **Production essentials.**

A drama set in a family cottage on a Quebec lake but in English speaking Canada in the late 1980's; single indoor/outdoor set which also has a neighbouring cottage porch and an area for various outside scenes. Running time is about 80 minutes plus an optional intermission.

## **Cast** (In order of appearance)

**Norman Breem:** forties; clean shaven; English born Canadian.  
**Eloise Breem:** forties; Canadian; Norman's wife.  
**Joslin Breem:** teenager; Canadian; Norman and Eloise's daughter.  
**Jack Wellall:** forties; Canadian; Eloise's brother  
**Ann Wellall:** forties; Canadian; Jack's wife  
**Tom Wellall:** late teens; Canadian; Jack and Ann's adopted son.  
**Jane McClusky:** elderly; glasses; walking stick; Canadian; cottage neighbour.



## ACT ONE

*Norman and Eloise in the family cottage. Norman doing a chess problem puts on radio; Eloise reading.*

**The Radio:** ....this item is likely to come before the next Toronto council meeting as early as next week. (Pause) Gay Pride Festival organizers expect their biggest turnout yet as preparations get underway for the event to begin June 25th. The costumes and floats this year will be more spectacular than ever according to Brian Feldhauser the parade organizer. We go over now to Adam Gosnian who is standing-by in one of the workshops where employees of S.K.Sanders Insurance are already busy building their float. (*Sounds of hammering and power saws.*)...

*Norman shuts it off.*

*Joslin enters and gets herself a drink and snack in the kitchen. (See Footnote <sup>1</sup>)*

**Norman:** That really burns me up.

**Eloise:** What?

**Norman:** That whole Gay Pride thing they're planning in Toronto next month.

**Eloise:** That's the way it is in today's world Norm?

**Norman:** Load of queers and dykes prancing around on the streets, they should just stay out of sight. I'm sick and tired of them and their equal rights and gay marriage. Bad enough that thing about Cary Grant but now there's a rumor that Rock Hudson is one of the bath-house bangers brigade.

*Joslin storms out the screen door. Eloise goes to look out after her*

Those were my boyhood idols for God sake. And they're queer as cucumbers. Makes me sick to my stomach.

**Eloise:** You shouldn't be using that kind of language Norm.

**Norman:** Why not? Queer is as queer does I say. Where did Joslin go?

**Eloise:** Looks as though she's going for a walk along the beach.

**Norman:** She'll go anywhere to avoid us.

**Eloise:** She helped us clean up.

**Norman:** Helped you. Never said two words to me. Always rushing off somewhere.

**Eloise:** Don't you remember what it was like to be a teenager, worrying about what your friends think. Preferring to die rather than be seen anywhere with your parents.

**Norman:** No

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<sup>1</sup> Stage directions throughout are for dry reading clarity and not artistic direction.

**Eloise:** No what? You don't remember or your parents weren't quaint.

**Norman:** I don't remember...actually I do remember now you mention it. My Dad was an Army Sergeant Major and I was always a bit scared of him. Pity my daughter doesn't show me the same respect.

**Eloise:** Norm.....

**Norman:** Children don't respect their parents the way we used to.

**Eloise:** Please Norm.....

**Norman:** She needs to be brought into line. She can't.....

**Eloise:** Norm! Please!! We're here for a relaxing weekend. Leave well enough alone can't you?

**Norman:** Well I .....

**Eloise:** Please!!

**Norman:** O.k.! O.k.!

**Eloise:** Anyone would think she was a real problem to hear you go on. You're too hard on her. Too hard.

**Norman:** Sorry I..... I'm sorry El.....I'm still tensed up and tired as well. I'm staring at these chess pieces, my mind all seized up. All that driving on Quebec back roads, no rest stops, getting a flat; having to change a wheel with the jack sinking into the gravel so it wouldn't lift the car and then nearly collapsing on top of me when it did. And when we finally get here there's a big mess. It took hours to clean up. Not a great start to a relaxing Victoria Day long weekend.

**Eloise:** Oh well! Everything's fixed up now, the tea is almost brewed, we can relax. Let's just relax.

**Norman:** Yes, you're right. You're right. I'm sorry.

**Eloise:** .....What was that terrible smell?

**Norman:** When 'your brother', Jack, closed up for the winter he drained the plumbing but didn't put any antifreeze back so the smell from the septic was coming back into the cottage.

**Eloise:** How awful.....I thought raccoons had got in here or something.

**Norman:** Luckily not. But the mess that Jack, Ann and family left all over the place was almost as bad. It took you ages to clean out the fridge. What did you do with all the rotten food?

**Eloise:** I put it in some garbage bags out back.

**Norman:** Chees! I'd better get it in the garbage box. *(Rises)*

**Eloise:** Later Norm, later, just relax.

**Norman:** O.k.. *(Sits again.)* But remind me to do it before dark or we will get raccoons

**Eloise:** Mm! or a bear.

**Norman:** I'll try and behave from now on.

**Eloise:** I didn't mean you silly.

**Norman:** Well I doubt Jack will be back.

**Eloise:** Norm!! Remember Jack is my brother, and you married me, he can't be that bad.

**Norman:** Huh!

**Eloise:** I know you and Jack don't exactly get along but.....

**Norman:** Don't get along. That's the understatement of the year. Jack and I are like.....oh like....chalk and cheese?...no...oil and water?...no....something more cottage like....yes.....the smell of fresh fish mixed with bacon and eggs.

**Eloise:** Ew! That's disgusting.

**Norman:** I like things done properly while he doesn't know the meaning of the word.

**Eloise:** Your only-child English background and him from the Wellall family.

**Norman:** Maybe but you're not like that and Ann's more like Jack. No, they're not like us at all. And seeing the mess they left here my worst nightmare would be to have to spend a weekend with them. Anyway let's just relax and enjoy ourselves.

**Eloise:** Right!!

*(Starts to pour the tea. Norman resumes studying his chess. Off-stage the sound of an approaching car)*

What's that?

**Norman:** Sounds like a car coming down the access road. Who could it be?

**Eloise:** Maybe it's for that old lady next door.

**Norman:** Not likely she never has any visitors.

*Off-stage sounds of the car: pulls up outside; car doors slam. Jack, Ann and Tom crash through the screen door, race across in a line and out of the door towards the rest of the cottage without seeing Norman and Eloise. Norm and Eloise watch the event.*

**Norman:** Did you just see what I just saw.

**Eloise:** Jack, Ann and Tom.

**Norman:** In that order.

**Eloise:** Dad must have double booked the cottage again.

**Norman:** I don't believe this. My worst nightmare.

**Jack:** *(Off-stage: banging bathroom door)*..Wha's going on in there Ann? Come on hurry up. We're bustin' too.

**Eloise:** I sometimes think Dad does it on purpose. We could go back home.

**Norman:** Why should we leave? We were here first.

**Eloise:** What shall we do?

**Norman:** Maybe we should grab our coats and go for a boat ride.

**Eloise:** Great idea.

*They quickly pick up their coats and exit the screen door. Off stage the sound of the outboard starting and leaving.*

**Ann:** *(Enters)* Whew! That's better, We should send a letter to the Quebec government to get a rest stop on that road and maybe a hamburger place as well while they're about it. *(Looks at things on table)*

**Jack:** *(Enters)* Tha's the truth, it'll be their top priority I'm sure. All that bouncing around on Quebec back roads. I only just about made it here.

**Ann:** Me too. Did you hear the boat just then? *(Goes to screen door.)*

**Jack:** Yeah!

**Ann:** Was the door locked?.

**Jack:** No twasn't and 'ere looks like one o' Norm's chess problems.*(Moves one of the chess pieces and looks innocent.)*

**Ann:** There's fresh brewed tea there on the table and Norman's car is over there under the trees. You know I thought I saw someone in here but I was in so much of a hurry.

**Tom:** *(Enters)* Hey-hey! Looks like Joslin's stuff in the bedroom. What's going on?

**Jack:** I think we may have a problem.

*All freeze. Lights cross fade.. **Jane** is sitting in her rocking chair very actively conducting some classical music. **Joslin** enters wiping her eyes with a tissue; approaches, stops and then turns to go again.*

**Jane:** Oh hello my dear. No please don't go. It's so good to see you. *(Starts to get up but slips and staggers.)* Oh Goodness me! *(**Joslin** rushes to help.)* Thank you my dear. *(Sits again. Turns off music. Puts on glasses and peers at Joslin)* So this is very nice. Are you alright my dear?

**Joslin:** Yes th-thank you. *(see footnote<sup>2</sup>)*

**Jane:** Are you sure?

**Joslin:** Yes th-thanks why?

**Jane:** Your eyes are red. Have you been crying?

**Joslin:** Oh the wind b-blew some dust in my eyes j-just now -- have we -- have we met before?

**Jane:** Well .... not that I remember -- then again my memory is not so very good these days. Why? Did you think we had?

**Joslin:** N-no it's just that -- er--

**Jane:** Oh please forgive my familiar manner. Hermit like me can't waste time being too careful and polite....not that I get visitors anyway.....to waste time talking about the weather.

**Joslin:** Yu-you're here alone then?

**Jane:** Yes, not counting the animals.

**Joslin:** Y-you have cats....d-dogs.....

**Jane:** No my dear not pets...wild animals....all around us.....even old Tigger.

**Joslin:** T-t- tigger?

**Jane:** A feral cat. My only companion. He's not here now.

**Joslin:** Oh! Where d-do you live.

**Jane:** Here.

**Joslin:** No I mu-mean where's your home.

**Jane:** Here.

**Joslin:** You l-live her all th-the time.

**Jane:** Uh-huh!

**Joslin:** Wu-wu-winter too!!

**Jane:** Yes

**Joslin:** Wow!!

**Jane:** That should be a cue for a thousand more questions like how to you manage, or why don't you live in town at your age and so on.

**Joslin:** I d-didn't know what to say.

**Jane:** No, most wouldn't. Would you like a drink? There's some berry juice on the table inside and some glasses somewhere.

**Joslin:** Thank you.*(Exits into cottage)*

**Jane:** You could bring me a glass too.

**Joslin:** *( Off-stage)* Wow it's kind of d-dark in here.

**Jane:** Stand still a minute and your eyes get adjusted.

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<sup>2</sup> Adjust stutter to keep character without becoming irritating.



**Joslin:** (*Off-stage*) Oh here they are.

**Jane:** I assume you came in a few minutes ago. I heard the car.

**Joslin:** (*Off-stage*) Yes, my Dad was having one of his rants so I came for a walk along the b-beach. (*Enters with drinks*) And then I saw you...er...c-c-conducting. I thought you were waving to me.

**Jane:** Well I would have if I'd seen you.

**Joslin:** So if it's not rude why d-do you live here all the time.

**Jane:** It's a long story. Sit down my dear, sit down. (*Indicates the other rocking chair.*

*Joslin sits.*) Well now its been a long time since anyone sat in Meryl's chair.

(*Joslin starts to get up again*) No, no my dear you sit down. It's good to see the chair occupied again. Meryl's been gone a while now. Meryl was my partner you know.

**Joslin:** Oh! You were in b-business together.

**Jane:** (*laughs heartily*) You could say that Meryl was my spouse you know.

**Joslin:** Your spouse?

**Jane:** Yes. I was lesbian - still am come to that, I suppose... retired lesbian. He-he-he.

**Joslin:** You're...you are like...you are lesbian. Oh wow! and wow! again.

**Jane:** That shocks you?

**Joslin:** N-no, no! Not at bit. J-just unexpected that's all. You're the first p-person I've ever met in my whole life who like...er...I mean...who is lesbian and can say it right out loud like that.

**Jane:** Yes well Meryl's dead anyway.

**Joslin:** Oh I'm sorry.

**Jane:** Oh that's o.k. it was many years ago now. So you want to hear how I came to live here all year round alone with no mod cons.

**Joslin:** Oh yes p-please. Er - m-mod cons?

**Jane:** Modern conveniences...electricity...phone and all that.

**Joslin:** Oh! Yes I w-would l-like to know if you w-want to tell me.

**Jane:** It's kind of a long story.

**Joslin:** I like stories.

**Jane:** O.k. then. Well! Meryl and I met many years ago. We hit it off right away, both Toronto born and bred, about the same age. We dated and well of course we fell in love and decided to live together. Back then it wasn't acceptable to be lesbian, so we decided to move somewhere we weren't known, and live together pretending we were sisters. I don't know whether people really believed it but at least they were prepared to accept the arrangement. We chose Ottawa, I got a job in retail management and Meryl was in real estate.. We were very happy for many years till Meryl got lung cancer. She smoked like a chimney you know, come to think of it so did I back then. Well Meryl got lung cancer and died (*coughs*)

**Joslin:** Oh p-please d-don't upset yourself....er...I don't even know your n-name.

**Jane:** Well goodness gracious! We haven't been introduced. Whatever were we thinking. You're not supposed to talk to someone unless you've been introduced. He-he-he. I'm Jane. Jane McKlusky.

**Joslin:** Mrs McKlusky, I'm J-joslin. Joslin Breem. (*They shake hands*)

**Jane:** Please call me Jane. Well now where was I? Oh yes. Meryl.....during the funeral arrangements and the lawyers for the will and everything it leaked out somehow, our little secret. Things changed. I would get rude graffiti on my gate. Once I was done my front garden and some idiot shouted “dyke” out of a passing car window. I knew how nasty people could be and I put up with it before but it upset me greatly then...I suppose still grieving for Meryl I was more vulnerable or something. Well anyway, we had bought this cottage several years before so I came up in the spring to stay a while, thinking that during the summer things would get back to normal. Well they didn't. Nothing too explicit but I knew; there were people giving me the cold shoulder at work and other things making life difficult. Meryl had become my support over the years and I couldn't stand it any more, on my own, I just couldn't stand it.

**Joslin:** How horrid.

**Jane:** Mm! Quite rude. Well I had some money put by so in the end I quit my job, sold the house and came up here the following year. It was never intended to be permanent but - well--one year turned into another and so, here we are.

**Joslin:** Oh that's so sad.

**Jane:** Doesn't do to get maudlin you know. Doesn't help at all.

**Joslin:** No, no of course. I'm sorry.

**Jane:** I had many happy years with Meryl, it's those memories that keep me going.

**Joslin:** Memories are so important. Must be hard in the winter though.

**Jane:** The first winter was very rude, I really had no idea how to manage and I was grieving for Meryl, but I survived somehow and as time went on it got easier. I don't have a phone nor even electricity. I get all the heat and cooking I need from the woodstove and daylight from the sun. Moon and stars provide when ol' Mr. sun goes down.

**Joslin:** Wow! What do you eat?

**Jane:** Canned stuff mostly. I grow some of my own vegetables on a bit of a plot over there. Do some fishing. Bit short on caviar right now but apart from that....

**Joslin:** Caviar? Oh - ha-ha.. I see.....ever see a b-bear.

**Jane:** Once...few years ago. It was late fall....string beans did well that year....had more string beans than you could shake a stick at. So I pickled some and froze some and stored them out here on the porch, nature's freezer. I was eating a lot of string beans....quite liked them...problem was they began to upset my tummy. Then I got some kind of flu', aching all over. Well one night my stomach was upset and my sinuses all bunged up. I'd cranked up the wood stove so it was like a sauna and I was sweating it out in my undies, breathing in some menthol in a bowl with a towel over my head, in the kitchen there, when I heard a noise, on the porch.

**Joslin:** Out here?

**Jane:** Yes . Well I opened the door....thought I had a visitor or something...wasn't thinking straight...never get visitors...anyway it was a bear....right there near you.

**Joslin:** Oh my god!

**Jane:** Ha-ha-ha! It was trying to get into the frozen string beans. Well I don't know who was more surprised me or the bear but it made me jump and I slipped over with the wet towel all tangled round my head. I was terrified. Got up, doing a

Fandango trying to get the towel off so I could see and when I did the bear had it's paws over its eyes.

**Joslin:** Oh Jane! I d-don't believe that.

**Jane:** Well I'm not sure but anyway it got up on it's hind legs let out this kind of woofing noise, then turned and ran off. I could hear it crashing through the bush in it's fright.

**Joslin:** I can just picture it. Oh that's fu-funny...

**Jane:** Mm!...funny now but might not have been. Anyway I guess brown bears are no match for an old lady in her undies with a towel round her head. Must have thought I was Lady Macbeth or something. With 'er 'ead tucked underneath 'er arm she walks the Bloody Tower!

**Joslin:** Ha-ha-ha! Oh Jane you're f-fun to talk to .....

**Jane:** When you're as old as I am Joslin being fun to talk to is you're only asset.

**Joslin:** Whose b-being m-maudlin now.

**Jane:** You're right. Ha-ha-ha. Throwing my own words back at me. Atta-girl. Well I've told you all about me how about you tell me about you.

**Joslin:** I d-don't have a whole lifetime of experiences like you.

**Jane:** Of course not but you must have plans, dreams.

**Joslin:** Hm! well I l-love animals. My d-dream would be to qualify as a veterinary d-doctor and have my own p-practice.

**Jane:** Well I shall definitely have to introduce you to Tigger then.

**Joslin:** Yes I'd like that. Well I'd love to s-stay longer b-but I should g-go now my Mum may start to w-worry about me. *(Rises and leaves)* It's b-been nice talking with you Jane.

**Jane:** And it's been lovely talking to you Joslin. I don't get much company here. Please come and see me again if you can.

**Joslin:** I will. *(Turns and waves)* G-goodbye for now.

**Jane:** Goodbye, *(Waves back)* goodbye.

*Lights cross fade. Jane exits. Joslin crosses. Tom enters with radio playing heavy metal rock. Turns it off. Puts it down.*

**Tom:** Hey! Joslin, there you are, that's great now I'll have some company.

*They hug.*

**Joslin:** G-good to see you too Tom b-b-but what are you d-d-doing here?

**Tom:** Ah! Mum and Dad made me come...I wanted to stay home but Dad, you know - *(imitates Dad's voice)* an 'ealthy weekend up at the lake m' boy will do ya good.

**Joslin:** Uncle J-jack and Auntie Ann? B-but we're here for the weekend too...G-granddad must have double b-booked again...and you know that your D-d-dad and m-mine don't get along.

**Tom:** Ah well! We're here. And I doubt anyone will want to go back. I sure as heck don't. That drive's awful. It'll work out.

**Joslin:** Some chance. Your D-dad and my Dad are like a r-red r-rag and a bull.

**Tom:** Well at least you and I can have a good time, like we used to. We can go for boat rides, fishing, hikes, explore and stuff.

**Joslin:** Oh that w-would be fun. Are Gabriel and Angela here?

**Tom:** No they couldn't t come flippin' nuisance. I'm sure glad you're here, it was going to be a pretty dull here for me. Oh it's really great to see you again Joslin.*(Hugs her again.)* How was school this year?

**Joslin:** M-much the same, g-got rid of that witch of a math m-mistress from last year.

**Tom:** Oh right! You mentioned her ....glad that problem went away.

**Joslin:** W-what about you?

**Tom:** Oh like you, mostly the same. Got a really, really cool drama teacher, she rocks. She thinks I show real promise as an actor, got "natural talent", she says.

**Joslin:** You g-got a crush on her?

**Tom:** Noo-o-o! *(Picks up radio to hide embarrassment.)*

**Joslin:** So-oo we'll have to share a b-bedroom?

*They stare at each other for a second then turn to rush off.*

**Tom:** I want the top bunk.

**Joslin:** I w-want the b-bedside table.

*Joslin and Tom exit. Lights cross fade. Joslin enters and crosses to where Jane is sitting in her rocking chair. She waves.*

**Jane:** *(Waves back)* Your back again, that's wonderful. I wondered if you would.

**Joslin:** I said I would.

**Jane:** Yes but eccentric old ladies don't always have too much appeal to young people.

**Joslin:** You're n-not....

**Jane:** *(Holding up her hand to stop Joslin.)* Have you had supper? Can I get you anything?

**Joslin:** No thanks, we had something j-just now thanks.

**Jane:** O.k. That's good. You probably wouldn't like my food much anyway. I don't exactly live like a queen here. Oops sorry!

**Joslin:** *(Sitting in rocking chair.)* Oh you say the funniest things. I wish--I wu-wish..

**Jane:** Mm?

**Joslin:** I j-just wish I could b-be as open and...you know...su-straightforward as you are. It seems so easy the wu-way you d-do it.

**Jane:** Well I've spent so much of my life living a lie I suppose there's a lot of honesty in side me got to come out...anyway I'm too old to play stupid games anymore.

**Joslin:** *(Sighs)* Oh Jane it sounds so lovely.

**Jane:** Why so wistful? Pretty young girl like you, got the whole world at your feet, handsome young men chasing you, I wish I was young again like you, setting out--*(dies off as she notices Joslin's expression.)* What's the matter?

**Joslin:** Nu-nu-nothing. I--

**Jane:** Young lady--Joslin--I hardly know you and I don't see so well anymore but I can still recognize when I've said something hurtful. I'm so sorry if I -

**Joslin:** Oh Jane it's n-nothing you've s-said.

**Jane:** Oh! Good! .....What then? What Joslin?

**Joslin:** I'm lu-lu-like y-you.

**Jane:** Oh my dear! I like you too. You're the Grand-daughter I always wan.....

**Joslin:** No, not I l-like you. I'm like you.

**Jane:** You like me? "me" washed up, reclusive; eccentric, retired, old lady.

**Joslin:** Jane! You're not listening?

**Jane:** I'm sorry..

**Joslin:** I'm lesbian Jane, like you.

**Jane:**..... lesbian?

**Joslin:** Yes.

**Jane:** Oh! Oh Joslin. Oh good heavens. How stupid of me.

**Joslin:** Ha-ha-ha! That w-wasn't as easy as I expected.

**Jane:** My dear little one. I can still remember being your age. So unsure about the acceptable and the unacceptable. You and I should have a tête-à-tête..... do you think?

**Joslin:** Yes! I would l-like that v-very much.

**Jane:** Well it can't be easy for you my dear. It was maybe harder for me, back then, knowing that I was going to have to be as I was for the rest of my life in a world that didn't accept anything off the straight and narrow. I'm sorry these puns keep popping out.

**Joslin:** It's o.k. I l-like them.

**Jane:** So if you're anything like me, you've dated a few boys, they've kissed you but it doesn't get you very excited. Whereas being with girls is much more...interesting.

**Joslin:** Yes. Well a b-bit further along than that.

**Jane:** Could be that you swing both ways?

**Joslin:** I d-don't think so, boys are just like.....I d-dunno.....friends.

**Jane:** Well it's best to be sure about these things..... Mum and Dad know?

**Joslin:** N-no.

**Jane:** Oh? Why not?

**Joslin:** It's complicated.

**Jane:** How so?

**Joslin:** My Dad has s-said some of the m-most awful things. Only today there was a p-piece on the radio about the G-gay Pride P-parade in Toronto and he went into a kind of t-tirade about they should k-keep out of sight; and how Rock Hudson and C-cary Grant were his b-boyhood heroes and they have b-betrayed him.

**Jane:** I see.

**Joslin:** I'm -.I'm su-scared of what he may d-do if I tell him

**Jane:** Do?

**Joslin:** Yes, I'm s-scared that if I t-tell him he'll d-disown me... k-kick me out of the house. And he and Mum will have a b-big f-fight and our whole f-family will f-fall apart and I'll f-finish up on the street.

**Jane:** Mm! How long has this been going on.

**Joslin:** Months, years, forever, I don't remember. I'm scared to tell anyone because it might get back to my Mum and Dad. Oh J-jane I'm so worried.....I don't eat properly. I've even thought about suicide.

**Jane:** Oh my dear girl! That's awful. Does your Mum support him?

**Joslin:** She just t-tells him he's out of date and not appropriate.

**Jane:** It can't go on like this. Your family is important but to be keeping a secret that's hanging over your head and affecting your health. Something must be done.

**Joslin:** B-but what.

**Jane:** Well as a start perhaps you should tell your Mum. Maybe then the two of you can work out how to deal with you're father.

**Joslin:** And w-what happens if she s-sides with my Dad.

**Jane:** Well I can promise one thing. I am not rich by any means but I have a lot more money than my current circumstances would suggest. I will see that you do not 'finish up on the street' as you call it.

**Joslin:** Oh Jane you're so k-kind but I'm n-not sure I have the c-courage.

**Jane:** Of course you do.

**Joslin:** Oh?

**Jane:** Most definitely , you've told me. You found the courage to tell me.

**Joslin:** Y-yes but you're.....

**Jane:** Maybe you were fairly sure of support but each person you tell it -well -.it gets easier...eventually as this deep dark secret you've been carry becomes a bad memory, you can even start to have some fun with it.

**Joslin:** Fun???

**Jane:** Yes fun. Let me tell you another story Meryl and I used to come up here for the summer to live rough. We loved it. Well things are kind of primitive here you know and we used to do all our washing in a big tub over a fire outside. I still do.

**Joslin:** You d-don't have a w-washing machine?

**Jane:** You need electricity for a washing machine Joslin.

**Joslin:** Oh of c-course

**Jane:** Well one time we had left if too long - between washes I mean - and we had to wash everything in one go. So we stripped off and put all the clothes we had in the washtub, lit the fire under it and sat in these rocking chairs in our birthday suits drinking gin cocktails in high ball glasses.

**Joslin:** That's p-pretty funny. L-like something from Alice in W-wonderland.

**Jane:** Oh I haven't got to the funny part yet. Well I suppose we had a bit too much gin, anyway we woke up to this smell of burning and the washing had boiled dry and was burning all our clothes.

**Joslin:** Oh no.

**Jane:** We managed to rescue a few things that hadn't been totally ruined and next day we put them on to go and buy some more clothes but we had these burn marks and holes . Anyway we go into this shop, you know, one of those touristy places that sells everything. There's this 'woman' there as luck would have it with a real attitude. Well we were choosing our dresses and this woman was doing everything to - you know - make us feel we were 'not welcome'. And I could tell that Meryl was getting mad. This woman, she says things like, "Well we can't expect to have twenty year old figure at our age now can we madam", or she would deliberately put back dresses we had chosen, sneaky stuff. Then she says as Meryl's standing in her underwear, "Madame, are you aware there are holes in you're panties....." if looks could kill she'd have died right then. Meryl goes into this kind of flouncing pantomime, "Yes I'm so sorry--.you see my lover," and points to me, "she's so passionate. I can't stop her once she gets going and she has ruined so many pairs of my panties with scorch marks." And she makes a few suggestive hip movements. Well this woman she turned fifteen shades of red and fled to the back of the shop and we never saw her again. The manageress had to come out, all apologetic, and finish serving us. When we got back to the car we laughed. Oh my! Did we laugh. Well it could have been..... awful.

**Joslin:** Oh I wish I could have b-been a f-f-fly on that wall.

**Jane:** Well, so you see. Eventually you'll be strong enough to fight back.

**Joslin:** I can't imagine d-doing something like that. So strong.....

**Jane:** Oh my Meryl was a card, I still miss her sometimes.....

**Joslin:** She must have been quite the lady, I wish I had known her.....Jane, did it really happen exactly like that?

**Jane:** More r'less. I embellish things sometimes, they improve with the telling. Why do you ask?

**Joslin:** I d-d-don't know, something about it....

**Jane:** You have an old head on young shoulders Joslin.

**Joslin:** I hope not.

**Jane:** It means you are more mature than you should be for your age.

**Joslin:** Oh!

**Jane:** Meryl and I talked about that incident quite a bit afterwards. Initially we had thought that...well when we were in Ottawa as 'two sisters' we would always have a certain way of behaving in public but when we came up here we would let it all hang out. That's why we loved it we could just be the loving couple we were with no pretensions. When we went to buy those dresses we were still in that mode and assumed that this woman caught on that we were a lesbian couple.

**Joslin:** Where was this shop?

**Jane:** Exactly. We had decided to drive away from Ottawa and find a dress shop and had driven for hours, a long way into Quebec. We were rather scruffy, Anglophone and she could have just been giving us the gears because we were poorly dressed bumpkin tourists looking for cheap dresses or something like that. We'll never know. But you're quite right the story doesn't quite hang together on the face of it, but I swear it was what happened.

**Joslin:** Oh J-jane I didn't m-mean.....

**Jane:** It's perfectly o.k. my dear. Perfectly o.k. You...you are so....worldly. It is so refreshing to be able to talk openly about things and that is something I'm sure you want as well.

**Joslin:** Oh yes.

**Jane:** That's good then. Things get complicated enough as it is, I sometimes wonder how we all manage to survive.

**Joslin:** I think it's because we weave a tapestry of acceptable lies.

**Jane:** A tapestry of acceptable lies. Joslin, you are an amazing girl. I wish....I so wish you were my Grand-daughter?

**Joslin:** Well I could be, I suppose, a kind of surrogate Grand-daughter.

**Jane:** That would be lovely then. Just lovely. I can help you the way my Grandmother helped me through my teenage years into adulthood. She was no nonsense north country English and her voice is still inside me sometimes. It was she who helped me to be myself; to live without shame. So you can come over here and sit in that chair and talk to me whenever you like. While I'm still here.

**Joslin:** I w-will I p-p-promise.

**Jane:** Well my dear it's been wonderful talking to you but I'm afraid it's getting near to my bedtime now and so...

**Joslin:** Oh I'm s-sorry I d-didn't realize how late it was.

**Jane:** Please don't apologize I have loved every second of you being here but these old bones they need their rest. (*Joslin rises to leave*) Don't forget your promise now.

**Joslin:** I won't. Thank you Grandmamma

**Jane:** Oh that's music to my ears Joslin.

**Joslin:** Goodbye for now.

**Jane:** You be brave now little one. Be brave.

*Lights cross fade. Jane exits. Joslin crosses to where Norman and Eloise are playing cards. Eloise lays down her winning hand.*

**Norman:** You've won again!! I don't believe it. If I didn't know you better I'd suspect you of cheating. (*Joslin enters*) And where the hell have you been?

**Joslin:** I've just b-been over t-talking to Jane.

**Norman:** Why can't you spend more time with us?

**Joslin:** Well I don't like b-being shouted at for one th-thing.

**Norman:** Well you haven't been here.

**Joslin:** You're shouting at me now.

**Norman:** Only because you haven't been here.

**Joslin:** Is this an argument or a c-c-contradiction.

**Norman:** Don't get sassy with me young lady.

**Joslin:** At least Jane l-listens to what I have to say.

**Norman:** Meaning I don't.

**Joslin:** I d-don't think you've g-got any idea who I am.

**Norman:** And what is that supposed to mean.

**Joslin:** Oh forget it. (*Storms out slamming door.*)

**Norman:** Joslin come back here. (*Rises*) Joslin.....JOSLIN.

**Eloise:** Norm.....Norm.....NORMAN.

**Norman:** What?

**Eloise:** Just forget it and let things cool off. You're both angry and you might say something you'll regret.

**Norman:** I suppose you're right. Well I've just about had enough having the tar beaten out of me at cards and it's getting late anyway.

**Eloise:** Yes let's call it a day.

*Norman and Eloise move to exit towards the bedrooms. Lights down.*

*Lights up. It is dark Norm, Eloise and Joslin are sleeping in the lounge*

**Eloise:** You awake Joslin

**Joslin:** Yes

**Eloise:** You o.k. sweetheart.

**Joslin:** I don't know which is worse Uncle Jacks snoring or this sofa.

**Eloise:** Ha-ha-ha.. Yes, you're Dad's worst nightmare.....but I didn't just mean tonight.

**Joslin:** Oh!

**Eloise:** We never talk anymore. We used to have those long chats in the kitchen but....

**Joslin:** Yes I used to enjoy those Mum.

**Eloise:** I worry about you sweetheart there's something....

**Ann:** (*Off-stage*) Oh what a beautiful



morning. *(Enters puts on lights)*  
Oh what a beautiful day. I got a  
wonderful feeling.....

**Norman:** Ah! Ooh! What's that?  
WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?

**Ann:** Norm! What are you.....Why are you all sleeping in here?

**Norman:** What time is it?

**Ann:** Abo-u-u-ut *(squints at wristwatch)* quarter to six, uh give or take---

**Norman:** WHAT! I don't get up at that time when I'm working.

**Ann:** O-o-o-h Jack likes to be up and about good and early, best part of the day and all that. I'm going to cook breakfast. You want some? You're welcome. I always.....

**Norman:** At six in the morning, no thanks. Come on El, we can go back to bed now hopefully `your brother` is getting up.

*Norman and Eloise pick up their bedclothes and exit to the bedrooms*

**Ann:** .....make plenty.

**Joslin:** A-aunty.....I c-could eat some but I need to catch up on my sleep too.

**Ann:** I'm sorry about your Uncle Jack Joslin. His snoring used to bother me but I guess I got used to it.

**Joslin:** Oh well it's not like I've got school or anything.

*Lights down. Ann and Joslin exits.*

*Lights up. Eloise is cooking, Norman enters.*

**Norman:** Ah there's nothing like getting up late with the smell of breakfast cooking and coffee brewing in the morning. I'm going to enjoy this.

**Eloise:** Me too. Fresh air gives me an appetite. Lay the table would you.

**Norman:** Are we alone. Where are all the others.

**Eloise:** Not around. Boat's gone and fishing gear's gone as well.

*Joslin enters, gets a pop from the fridge and takes her coat.*

**Norman:** Gone fishin'. Excellent we have the cottage to ourselves.

**Joslin** Tom g-got up early, he said he was t-taking Uncle and Auntie to a fishing spot Jane'd t-told me about.

**Norman:** Want some breakfast?

**Joslin:** Ate earlier Dad.

**Norman:** Well come sit a minute. Drink you're ....

**Joslin:** I p-promised to do something for Tom.

**Norman:** Joslin...

**Joslin:** S-sorry. *(Goes through screen door.)* B-back soon won't be long. *(Stands in sight unseen by Norman or Eloise, putting her coat on.)*

**Norman:** Huh! She'll go round and spend hours talking to that goddamned old dyke next door but she can't spend five minutes with her own family. *(Joslin exits)*

**Norman:** I thought coming up here she'd spend more time with us. Back home she's always hiding in her room, on the phone or going out. I don't remember the last time she sat and had supper with us. Now up here it's exactly the same, she'll spend time with anybody but her own parents.

*Joslin crosses downstage running, crying and holding a tissue to her face, exits.*

**Eloise:** (*Goes and looks out after Joslin*) Did you ever consider that it was us.

**Norman:** Us! What do you mean, us?

**Eloise:** Oh I don't know Norm? Being a teenager with all your hormones pulling you this way and that. We have to try harder. The days when your Dad and mine ruled the home with an iron hand, those days are gone Norm. I don't know if that's good or bad, some sociologist will have to figure that out, but that's the way it is and we have to live it.

*They begin their meal*

**Norman:** How can I try harder when she's not here?

**Eloise:** Norm you are difficult to talk to sometimes. There will come an opportunity, it'll be like the light shining through the crack as a door is opened, and if you don't do something right away the door closes again. She's not going to walk in one day, plunk herself down and say, "Well now, it's been a while. How about we catch up?" like one of your old buddies from England.

**Norm:** Mm! You're right on that. She has such an attitude anywhere near me I can almost feel the temperature drop a degree or two and that immediately gets my hackles up.

**Eloise:** You're going to have to bridge that gap Norm, she can't, she just can't.

**Norm:** She's not a bad kid really I suppose, she hasn't got into any drugs or any of the other stuff we hear about from friends. Have you had a chat with her lately.

**Eloise:** No I haven't. I'm not trying to pretend it's easy for me either but.....

**Jack** (*Enters carrying two large bundles of fish.*) Mornin' all, what a great fishing spot, that lady next door sure knows this lake. (*He dumps the fish on the counter in the kitchen and prepares to clean them.*) We're catching fish as fast as we could put new bait on our lines. And these are just the big un's, we threw all the small fry back. Boy is this gonna be good for supper tonight.

**Eloise:** Phew! What a smell.

**Jack:** Nothing like the smell of fresh fish.

**Norman:** ...mixed with bacon and eggs. I suppose it would be too much to ask if you could do that outside.

**Jack:** . Outside? Not likely. Why'd I do it outside it's nice an' warm in here an' the kitchen...

*Norman rises angrily and comes towards him carrying his breakfast plate. Ann enters.*

**Norman:** Jack!! We arrive at this cottage and have to spend hours cleaning it up because you left it in a big mess; we are kept awake half the night by your

snoring; we move in here and out of our comfortable beds to sleep; we are just getting some shuteye in here when you have to have your ridiculously early breakfast and wake us up again; we crawl back to our beds and when we do get up to get OUR breakfast, you return and stink up the place cleaning fish that should be cleaned on the cleaning table down at the beach.

*Threatening move.*

In summary the reason you should clean your darned fish outside is it would avoid you getting a plate of bacon and eggs dumped on your head.

**Jack:** You gone nuts.

**Eloise:** No Norm!! Brother Jack get that fish out of here.

**Ann:** Jack, just get that smelly fish out of here now. What are you thinking?

**Jack:** O.k....o.k. I know when I'm outnumbered. (*Picks up the fish and exits.*)

**Ann:** I'm sorry Jack's just....well he's a bit impetuous. He doesn't mean....

**Norman:** A bit. He's like a wasp in a candy factory.

**Ann:** I'm sorry, really I am.

**Norman:** Yes well you're being sorry doesn't make up for spoiling my breakfast.

**Eloise:** Calm down Norm, calm down for heaven's sake.. Ann we can't go on like this. This is only Friday. There's going to be bloodshed before the weekend's out if something isn't done.

**Ann:** Yes you're right. Suppose we all get together for a little talk...establish some...er...ground rules. (*Eloise nods and Norman makes some non committal gesture.*) O.k. You guys finish your breakfast and I'll go and find the others. Maybe we can call a truce and try and all get along better.

*All freeze. Lighting shift. All exit. Lights shift. Joslin enters.*

**Joslin:** Hi J-jane

**Jane:** (*sitting in her rocking chair*) Hello Joslin

**Joslin:** We've j-just been out fishing and we caught lots of fish. Would you l-like some?

**Jane:** That would be very nice.

**Joslin:** How are you today?

**Jane:** Oh quite well thank you. (*Tom enters*) .Hello.

**Tom:** Hey! Hello Mrs. McKlusky.

**Jane:** Jane, call me Jane. I never was a Mrs. And you are?

**Tom:** Tom-.Ooh! I forgot the fish--(*Exits again.*)

**Jane:** Thank you . How kind. Fresh fish would be nice.

**Joslin:** Does it go with pickled string beans.

**Jane:** Those are long gone. But my diet is rather Spartan these days, lot of stuff out of cans. Well it is nice to see you both. You sit down and I'll go and see if I've got any more of that berry juice you like. (*Exits into cottage.*)

**Joslin:** (*Looking off stage left*) There's a c-cat.

**Jane:** (*Off-stage*) Oh! That'll be Tigger.

**Joslin:** Here Tigger, (*Makes encouraging noises*)

**Jane:** (*Enters with juice*) Oh he won't come.

**Joslin:** He's run off.

**Jane:** Yes he's a wild one and very nervous.

**Joslin:** He's-.is it a he or a she.

**Jane:** Oh very much a he.

**Joslin:** He l-looks adorable.

**Jane:** Yes he is cute but don't let his looks fool you. He'll scratch and bite if you try and pick him up.

**Joslin:** Oh!

**Jane:** He suffers you stroking him though...once he gets to know you. He lives wild.

**Joslin:** Where d-did you find him.

**Jane:** He just turned up here one day in the winter, half frozen and starving. I found him sleeping out here on the porch one morning. I gave him some food, I guess sleeping in the rough gets harder and harder the older you are, I should know, and he's no spring chicken. Actually come to think of it he's an old cat like me. Ha-ha-ha!

**Joslin:** Oh Jane!

**Jane:** Anyway over several days feeding him and letting him sleep on the porch here I coaxed him inside with some food. Then I made a big mistake, I closed the door. He jumped three foot in the air onto the counter top and then jumped clean through the kitchen window bug screen and all.

**Joslin:** So th-that's why you c-call him Tigger.

**Jane:** Yes. I didn't see him for a week after that and had almost given up seeing him again and then he was back sleeping on the porch again. I leave that basket over there with a blanket in it, he deigns to sleep there when it gets cold enough. He's probably gone around back. I leave water and food back there, he prefers to eat alone. If you want to see him again you could go back there.

**Joslin:** Oh I will, thanks.

*Joslin exits as Tom enters with fish.*

**Tom:** Here's your fish Jane, I'll put them inside. I cleaned them down on the beach.  
(Exits into cottage)

**Jane:** Thank you Tom that's very good of you. I shall enjoy those for supper. There's some berry juice in there I poured for you.

**Tom:** (Off-stage) Whoa it's dark in here.

**Jane:** Stand still a moment your eyes will adjust.

*Tom enters with drink*

Thank you Tom - very thoughtful of you.

**Tom:** Well we had already had plenty for supper so. You know. It was Joslin's idea to bring them over here on our way back for lunch.

**Jane:** Where did you catch them.

**Tom:** Joslin showed me this place she said you'd told her about.

**Jane:** Ah! My old fishing hole.

**Tom:** Lot of weeds there.

**Jane:** Yes. You need the right tackle. Plenty of fish there though.

**Tom:** I guess, and other stuff too.

**Jane:** Other stuff?

**Tom:** Joslin thought she'd got a bite but when she pulled it in, it was a pair of ladies panties tangled up in fishing line. Ha-ha-ha.

**Jane:** What did you do with them?

**Tom:** Threw them back. They were disgusting.

**Jane:** I'm sure. Rather large?

**Tom:** Yes

**Jane:** Ha-ha-ha. They were mine.

**Tom:** What?

**Jane:** They were mine, or most likely mine.

**Tom:** Yours! What's a pair of your panties doing in your fishing hole?

**Jane:** Well one summer it was very hot, it was sweltering, and I was so hot I didn't know where to put myself. I had a skinny dip on the beach, then I just put my underwear back on and paddled to my fishing hole. This lake is deserted so I figured nobody would see me. Anyway I'm an eccentric old bird, ha-ha. Who cares if they do?

**Tom:** My Dad would just laugh but I'm not so sure about Uncle Norm.

**Jane:** Yes. So there I am fishing, in my underwear, with a big straw hat. Well I go to cast and somehow the hook gets caught in my panties. It stuck in me a bit and stung. Stupidly in trying to pull it out I tipped the canoe. Well I went one way and the fishing rod went the other and I finished up in the water with the hook still in my panties and the line all tangled round my legs. I had to take my panties off to get free. Then I had to collect up my things and get back in the canoe. Have you ever tried to get into a canoe in the middle of the lake Tom.

**Tom:** Er...can't say I have. Must be difficult I would think.

**Jane:** You're supposed to climb over the stern. Hopefully getting more of you in, than out and with luck the pointed part doesn't spoil your reproductive opportunities.

**Tom:** Huh-ho!

**Jane:** Well I couldn't do it. Not for lack of trying mind you. I'm glad there was no-one there with a camera, flying in the wind like that. Eventually I swam with the boat to some low branches and got in that way, a passing troop of monkeys would have felt right at home. Anyway I got my fishing rod and hat but the panties were gone. I had to paddle back without them, that was a few years ago now.

**Tom:** Ah! that's pretty funny Jane.

**Jane:** So they're still at the bottom of the lake.

**Tom:** Yes, women's underwear must be indestructible.

**Jane:** Have to be really. He-he-he.....So Tom tell me about yourself.

**Tom:** Not much to tell really

**Jane:** Girlfriend?

**Tom:** Nothing serious.

**Jane:** I should hope not. What about brothers and sisters?.

**Tom:** Oldest, brother Gabriel is studying at Queen's. Youngest, sister Angela is in junior high.

**Jane:** Angela as pretty as Joslin?

**Tom:** Oh yes definitely.

**Jane:** Must keep you and your brother busy protecting them from all the young men.

**Tom:** Oh! not so far. Bit young for that.

**Jane:** Well you know how these randy young guys are Tom. (*Minnie Mouse voice*) Oo-ooh! How wude of me!! I shwood be ashwamed of mysewf!

**Tom:** Ha-ha-ha-ha! Jane you're a real sport.....We'll do our bit when it's needed, I guess.

**Jane:** Good. Good..... So there's four of you, how nice.

**Tom:** No-no. Gabriel and Angela not here. Gabriel stayed in Kingston and Angela's away on some school trip.

**Jane:** Yes, yes, but I meant you have two younger sisters Angela and Joslin and an older brother Gabriel that makes.....

*Off, sound of cats yowl.*

**Joslin:** *(Off-stage)* OOOW!

**Tom:** What's that.

**Jane:** Oh dear! Sounds like Tigger.

**Tom:** Tigger?

*Joslin enters holding one hand in the other. There's a lot of blood.*

**Jane:** Oh Joslin what happened.

**Joslin:** You wer-were right Jane.

**Tom:** Let's look at that. *(Inspects wound)* Mm! Needs a bandage.

**Jane:** Oh dear I'm afraid I don't have much in the way of first aid, I have an old clean tea towel you could use. *(She goes inside)*

**Tom:** Does it hurt much.

**Joslin:** Stings. Seems to b-b-bleed a lot.

**Tom:** Don't worry it's not too serious so long as we get it cleaned and dressed. Have you had tetanus shots

**Joslin:** Y-yes, I th-th-think so.

**Tom:** Good, that's the main thing.

*Jane enters and gives Tom the tea towel. Tom wraps Joslin's hand.*

I think we had better go back. We have a first aid box at the cottage.

**Jane:** I am so sorry.

**Joslin:** D-don't worry Jane. It was my fault. You d-did warn me. I was stroking him and he seemed fine so I t-ried to p-pick him up and cuddle him and he t-took a swipe at me and r-ran off.

**Jane:** How rude.

**Tom:** Come on then let's go

**Joslin:** Bye for now

**Jane:** Goodbye. I do hope it will be alright.

*Jane gets a bottle of gin and a glass and sits back in her rocking chair thinking and drinking. Lights go black and then fade up where Jack and Ann are sitting. It is now late afternoon.*

**Jack:** I'm getting' hungry, seems like hours since lunch.

**Ann:** It is hours, get yourself a snack.

**Tom:** *(Enters)* Hey! Joslin and me, we're going for a bit of a hike Dad.

**Jack:** S.a real good job Joslin was here Tom. I felt a bit bad makin' you come up here by yourself.

**Tom:** I'm glad you did Dad. We're having a great time, just like we used to.

**Jack:** That's good. I'm glad. You have a good time then. Take care of her Tom, don't go rock climbing or anything, she might knock that finger again.

**Tom:** I won't Dad I promise. See you later.. *(Exits)*

**Jack:** You wanna do somethin', there's still time before supper.

**Ann:** I dunno, I'm happy reading....what time is it.

**Jack:** Dunno 'bout three thirty, four.

**Ann:** I'm worn out, up early and all that fishing this morning. I'd like to go lie on the beach only it's not warm enough.

**Norman:** *(Enters)* We're going on a little boat ride before supper.

**Eloise:** *(Enters)* The casserole is in the oven El, it'll be fine, I'll take it out when we get back. We won't be long.

**Ann:** O.k see ya later.

*Norman and Eloise exit. Sound of the boat motor being started and disappearing*

**Jack:** Well!....guess we won't be goin' for any boat rides.

**Ann:** Don't be such a grouch Jack, we used the boat this morning and Tom and Joslin used it before lunch, fairs fair....

**Jack:** 'suppose....Well I'm not gonna sit on my thumbs for two hours there must be something--

**Jane:** *(Off-stage)* Oh good heav'ns-.stupid-- *(Bangs on door, Jack opens. Jane slips, Jack catches her.)* Oh I'm sorry I've losht my glashes.

**Ann:** Are you alright. Here let us help you. *(She and Jack help Jane into a chair.)*

**Jane:** Mishter Breem my glashes.....fell off outshide somewhere....could you get them please?

**Jack:** Er I'm not.....uh! oh! of course I'll go an' find'em. *(exits)*

**Ann:** You alright...er..you

**Jane:** Ah'm.fine-.few drinks-.thasall.

**Ann:** I see. You must be Jane from over the way there, Tom and Joslin mentioned.....

**Jane:** Yes Jane McKlushky thas'me. I came to make sure little Joslin wash alright.

**Ann:** She's fine. It wasn't that serious....

**Jane:** That's good. Mishes. Breem there is something I have to say.

**Ann:** Mrs. McKlusky I'm not ----

**Jane:** No! No wait, you muss hear me out. I mus'shay it now while I can. Joslin is a very worried little girl...fact she's worried sick. . Ash you may know I'm a lesbian and can still remember what it wash like with my mother and father, shpecially my father. He would shout ad me, say nasty, horrid things, n' make me cry then Mum would blame me. They didn'tunderstand, didn'tundertstand at all, they were very unkind. I cannot stand by and see thad'appen to anyone else. You can' let thad happen, you jus' can't. Joslin'eeds you....she is going to face.....she is going to fashe... *(Gasping breaths.)* Oh damn!...damn....s'not coming out the right at all...stupid...stupid old woman.

**Ann:** No-no you're not....just upset.....but Mrs McKlusky.....

**Jack** *(Enters)* I can't find'em anywhere. You must have left them back.....

**Jane:** *(Leaving)* Thank you kindly for looking Mishter Breem, I'll probly find them on the way back somewhere. I mus'go. *(Staggers to door.)* She needs you Mishes. Breem, needs your s'pport sho desperat'ly, sho very very desperat'ly, that ish what I came to say. You mus help her, you mus.*(Exits)*

**Jack:** *(Looking after her.)* What the heck was that all that about? She's really loaded.

**Ann:** Oh good heavens Jack.

**Jack:** What's the matter, you alright?

**Ann:** I'm alright.....Let me think a minute.

**Jack:** Why? What's happened? Why you lookin' so .....

**Ann:** Jack .....I think we have a big problem.

**Jack:** A big problem-.us.

**Ann:** Yes us.

**Jack:** I thought we were all over that. In fact I.....

**Ann:** No-o-o....not that sort of problem.

**Jack:** Oh!--. What then?

*Jane enters downstage.  
Takes a few steps then stops, composes herself, fishes her glasses out of her pocket and puts them on then crosses in a deliberate drunken gait and exit.*

**Ann:** That was Jane from the cottage over the way there.

**Jack:** I assumed, can't be too many old ladies wanderin' the Quebec wilderness. Why's this a big problem for us.

**Ann:** Will you shut up a minute and listen while I think.

**Jack:** Sorry.

**Ann:** As you saw she was drunk and upset. She thought you and I were El and Norm.

**Jack:** Huh! Well she didn't have 'er glasses and we never see her.

**Ann:** Yes.

**Jack:** So-. 's that it?

**Ann:** No! No that's not it.....Jack I think Joslin is gay.

**Jack:** Wha'?

**Ann:** Putting two and two together....I might be making too much out of it but I don't think so....Joslin has told Jane she's a lesbian, probably because Jane is and she felt comfortable telling her...and what's more Joslin's scared to tell her parents, especially Norm, because of how they'll react and she's told Jane that too.

**Jack:** Oh 'n the name of.....you sure?

**Ann:** I think so, in fact the more I think about it the more it makes sense. Jane's been sitting over there getting pie eyed and worked up about it and decided she had to do something.

**Jack:** So she blundered o'er here and mistook us for El and Norm-- Uh-oh! Whad 're we gunna do. Norm'll go ape.

**Ann:** Poor little Joslin, she must be so worried, I thought there was something wrong.

**Jack:** Poor girl.....Ann, I...I can't hardly talk to Norm 'bout -. 'bout anything let alone gays or lesbians. If it's even mentioned he goes off into one of his rants.

**Ann:** Yes! I'll just have to talk to El.

**Jack:** You sure?

**Ann:** What else?

**Jack:** -----dunno? Pr'aps..... nothing?

**Ann:** Jack, we have to do something. They're family.

**Jack:** S'pose, but how'd you like it if El told you that Tom ---.or--or Angela were....

**Ann:** Not much, n'fact I'd be ashamed for not knowing already..... come to think of it I bet El suspects already.

**Jack:** Suspects?



**Ann:** Yes, but worried. Scared to-.you know--discuss it because....

**Jack:** Yes, I see what you mean--Norm ...Whew! Whad'a situation... When y' going to do it?

**Ann:** Sooner the better.

**Jack:** After supper maybe?

**Ann:** Yes, if I can get El alone.

**Jack:** O.k. Let me think.....s'for sure Tom and Joslin'll be off doing somethin'--. so if'n I can get Norm to come with me.....

**Ann:** Huh! That'd be some trick!

**Jack:** Oh I've 'n idea.

**Ann:** Well don't do anything rash. We don't need ....

**Jack:** Don't worry I'll be the soul of discretion.

**Ann:** O.k. then. I'll wait for you're cue. Right after supper?

**Jack:** Right after supper it is.

*Lights cross fade to where Norman is rowing and Eloise is at the stern.*

**Eloise:** S'nice when the motor stops and there's just the sound of the water and the birds.

**Norman:** Nice for you maybe all relaxed and waxing poetic.

**Eloise:** I'll row for a bit if you like.

**Norman:** I'm just joking, it's not that hard and the exercise will do me good. I'm quite enjoying it. *(Stops rowing. Wild peaceful sounds.)* You're right it is peaceful, reminds me of when we use to go walking by ourselves off the beaten track.

**Eloise:** Yes. Oh! We were so energetic in those days Norm, so - so into things - we used to have so much fun.

**Norman:** Yes.

**Eloise:** You remember that time I broke the tip off one of my cross country skis.

**Norman:** Oh yeah! And we taped our legs together like they do in a three legged race.

**Eloise:** Falling down and laughing all the way back.

**Norman:** That was very innovative, I always meant to write about that to some outdoor magazine .

**Eloise:** And when you put camping gas instead of BBQ starter on the charcoals.

**Norman:** Oh my God! I singed my eyebrows.

**Eloise:** Not to mention an impromptu trim to your beard and moustache.

**Norman:** That's right I'd forgotten about them.

**Eloise:** You used to be so much fun.

**Norman:** Just young and foolish El!

**Eloise:** I suppose.

*(Norman resumes rowing.)*

Do you think Joslin is o.k.?

**Norman:** What do you mean o.k.?

*(Eloise is lost in thought.)*

El?

**Eloise:** Hm! Oh I worry about her.

**Norman:** She's a teenager..... just a bit mixed up is all.

**Eloise:** Do you remember when she was born Norm? Do you remember putting your arms around me and that little baby in the nursery; your tears mingling with mine.

**Norman:** Mm! Yes.

**Eloise:** And she'll be a young woman soon.

**Norman:** Hmm!

**Eloise:** Her time as our little girl is coming to an end.

**Norman:** I suppose!

**Eloise:** We mustn't push her away Norm, soon enough she'll be a young woman setting out on the world. and if we push her away -- Oh I hear all these awful stories about girls of her age running away, living on the streets or worse .....

**Norman:** What's brought all this on? You don't think...-

**Eloise:** I don't know what to think Norm but things aren't right.....The Shermans.....

**Norman:** Go on.

**Eloise:** After Billy Sherman...after his...

**Norman:** Uh-huh. after his suicide?

**Eloise:** Yes. Well I talked to Mrs Sherman,..... she said she had suspected something was wrong but they just put it down to the usual teenage angst. She says she wishes so much that they had done something.

**Norman:** You think.....

**Eloise:** I don't know what to think Norm. Our situation is nothing like theirs but I just wish we could be more.....

**Norman:** Go on .... more what?

**Eloise:** I don't know, more like we used to be, more easy going, more fun. Joslin can't join in your chess problems or reading philosophy. There's nothing wrong with them but young people want a Mum and Dad who can have a laugh. Whatever you say about Jack he gets on so well with Tom and his kids.

**Norman:** Yes I know! Well then....how about I grow my beard and moustache again.

**Eloise:** No Norm I never liked your beard and moustache that much.

**Norman:** You never said. How so?

**Eloise:** Well it was your pride and joy when I met you and one of my girlfriends had broken up with her boyfriend because she had insisted he shave his off.

**Norman:** You must have really loved me.

**Eloise:** Big ox of course I did – still do.

**Norman:** O.k. I won't grow my beard and moustache back. Tell the truth they were a bit of a pain.

**Eloise:** I always wondered.

**Norman:** Eating soup is the big test, if a man can eat soup without getting it in his moustache then he's a better man than I am gungadin.

**Eloise:** And your beard always used to tickle me when we were...you know.

**Norman:** I saw a film once where a girl said that it drove her crazy.

**Eloise:** Me too but not that way. Let's just say I was glad when you shaved it off.

**Norman:** I see Well now let's make sure I have my instructions right. More fun but absolutely no soup in my moustache or beard to tickle your ear..

**Eloise:** Are you teasing me?

**Norman:** Me! Do I ever tease?

**Eloise:** I hope so, it would be more like the old you.

**Norman:** Well say hello to the new old me.....sans beard and moustache.

*Norman rows in silence for a few seconds.*

**Eloise:** I still love you Norman.

**Norman:** I know. I love you to El. I will try from now on. I promise.

**Eloise:** Oh Norm that would be great.....I hate to say it but we should be getting back in a few minutes.

**Norman:** I suppose.

**Eloise:** There isn't any more time this weekend but we must come out like this again next time we're up, not just so you can get away from Jack but because it's so, so...

**Norman:** ...peaceful. Peaceful and natural. Like things should be. Yes we should, you're right. Well we'd better change places and I'll start the motor or your casserole will be spoiled.

*Lights fade. Lights up on **Ann and Jack**; at the supper table.*

**Jack:** Whad'a great casserole.

**Ann:** That was you're third helping pig.

**Jack:** So I recognize a good thing'n I find it.

**Ann:** It was good. I must get the recipe.

**Eloise:** (*Enters*) Well Northern Pike are always best either in a casserole or made into croquettes.

**Jack:** Croak-its. Tha' Frenchy things like frogs legs.

**Ann:** Fish cakes Jack. You ass.

**Jack:** Oh, maybe we can have some of those tomorra then.

**Eloise:** If you catch some more fish.

**Jack:** No problem.

*Norman enters*

**Ann:** I thought Tom and Joslin wanted to use the boat tomorrow to spend the day and explore the lake.

**Jack:** --.yes I'd forgotten that. Oh well 'nother time. (*Yawns and stretches then gets up crosses to one of the kitchen cupboards*) Ya know Norm I've the perfec' thing for digesting El's superb casserole.

**Norman:** Really! What's that.

*Jack pulls out a bottle of single malt whiskey and a couple of cigars.  
Shows them to Norman*

**Jack:** Whadaya think. Single malt and cigars down on the beach.

**Norman:** Excellent Jack, excellent.

**Ann:** Why don't you two guys enjoy your cigars and whiskey while El and I clean up in here.

**Jack:** How'bout it.

**Norman:** Sounds good to me. I'll get my sweater.

*Jack and Norman exit to get their sweaters from the bedroom*

**Eloise:** I've never seen Brother Jack be that nice to Norm. Seems odd. If I didn't know better I'd think he wants to get him alone. Whatever could it be about. How very strange.

**Ann:** Actually El it's me that wants to have a talk with you.

*Jack and Norman enter in sweaters.*

**Jack:** Let's go sit on the dock.

**Norman:** Good idea! We can drag the muskoka chairs over there.

*Jack and Norman exit to the beach with the cigars and whiskey*

**Eloise:** You want to talk to me, what about.

**Ann:** Would you like some tea.

**Eloise:** Um! well yes ...yes... if you like.

**Ann:** Let me put the kettle on ..... then we can have a chat.

**Eloise:** I'll clear a space.

*(They begin discussion during the business then sit.)*

So what's all this about. Sounds serious.

**Ann:** It is rather.

**Eloise:** It's not about our family tête-à-tête.

**Ann:** No, no, nothing to do with that.

**Eloise:** That's good. I thought Jack and Norm were starting to get along better.

**Ann:** Oh yes they are-.they are.

**Eloise:** Good.

**Ann:** Yes..... You know the old lady in the other cottage down the beach a ways.

**Eloise:** Jane, Jane McKlusky. Of course.

**Ann:** You know her well.

**Eloise:** Not really, we went over once years ago but she never comes over here and we've never been back either, she's a strange one living rough like that.

**Ann:** And you know she's a lesbian.

**Eloise:** Yes, she told us....that's another reason we don't go over. Norm doesn't have any time for 'queers and dykes', as he calls them.

**Ann:** Hmm!

*Eloise waits for Ann to collect her thoughts.*

She paid us a visit before supper.

**Eloise:** Old Mrs. McKlusky here.....

**Ann:** Yes. She came over very drunk and mistook Jack and me for you and Norm.

**Eloise:** What? How? I mean I know --

**Ann:** She'd lost her glasses on the way over and was in quite a state.

**Eloise:** Oh!.

**Ann:** And she said a lot of things to me thinking I was you.

**Eloise:** Really, like what?

**Ann:** I hope this isn't going to come as too much of a shock.

**Eloise:** A shock?

**Ann:** Yes.

**Eloise:** What could Jane say that would shock me?

**Ann:** About Joslin.

**Eloise:** Oh?..... Oh!

*Ann just looks at El.*

I think I'm beginning to understand.

**Ann:** I suppose because Jane is a lesbian Joslin confided in her that she's a lesbian too.

**Eloise:** Joslin told Jane.....

**Ann:** Yes, and Jane came over here all in a snit to tell you off for not supporting Joslin because she'd said that she's terrified of telling you and Norm.

**Eloise:** I knew there was something, I just knew it.....Oh dear!.....Oh Ann...

**Ann:** It's o.k. El-.it's o.k.

**Eloise:** I've been so worried.

**Ann:** Of course. and Joslin -- she must be worried sick El.

**Eloise:** Of course, poor Joslin, my little girl..... I've been in denial. How could I...

**Ann:** Don't blame yourself El. I don't know what I would have done in your place.

**Eloise:** Thank you

**Ann:** .....least I can do.

**Eloise:** You're like an older sister Ann.

**Ann:** I am an older sister..... So you haven't talked to anyone about this?

**Eloise:** I didn't know what to do. Teenagers can be so -er--.volatile. And I've tried talking to Norm but I'm worried sick what he will do. So now Joslin had to find comfort from a complete stranger. Oh I'm so ashamed.

**Ann:** You don't have anything to be ashamed El it's a perfectly normal ...

**Eloise:** I mean I'm ashamed of myself for not doing more....for not helping her. Oh poor little Joslin.

**Ann:** Of course.....but you have to do something El.

**Eloise:** I know?

**Ann:** You could start by letting Joslin know you'll stand by her...she....

**Eloise:** Yes. Yes of course. Why didn't I see that before? Whatever Norm does I must...

*Jack and Norman enter. Eloise quickly composes herself.*

**Norman:** It's got too cold outside even with a sweater Mind if we join you?

*Ann looks at Jack who lifts his arms in resignation. Norman sits on the sofa with his glass of whiskey and begins to re- light his cigar.*

*Lights down.*

## INTERMISSION

*(See footnote<sup>3</sup>)*

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<sup>3</sup> There are no production imperatives to make an intermission essential.

## ACT TWO

*Lights. It is the next day. Norman and Jack are sitting reading.*

**Norman:** Tom and Joslin must have left real early. El and I weren't even up.

**Jack:** Yeah! Ann made them a picnic lunch and they were off. *(Rustling through a magazine, throws it down. Gets up and goes over to look through screen door.)* Wish I was with them tho'm sure I'd cramp their style. Hey Norm 's that old tractor still in shed.

**Norman:** I suppose so. Dad used to use it and I used it a couple of years back, had a heck of a job getting it started and it's not been used since as far as I know.

**Jack:** How 'bout we see if we can get it goin'.

**Norman:** Nnn! I don't know!

**Jack:** Come on!. We might be able to get it to go 'tween us.

**Norman:** Whatever for.

**Jack:** Well 's got all kinds of attachments, we could--.you know---fix up the beach a bit or----or---- fill in the potholes on the driveway.

**Norman:** Jack, I came up here for a rest not to mess around with a filthy old tractor and anyway I'm really enjoying this book.

**Jack:** Oh have it your way but I'm gettin' fidgety and there's one thing I can't stand is being fidgety.

**Norman:** *(Mutters)* God no.

**Jack:** Wha'?

**Norman:** I said Good! Go! I'm going to stay here and read. The shed key is in the utility closet over there.

**Jack:** What the hell's it doin' there.

**Norman:** I don't know Jack, it's always been there. Where do you think it should be?

**Jack:** Don't see why it has to be locked up anyway. This place is in middle of nowhere, whose going to drive hours out to steal 'n old tractor.

**Norman:** Well maybe there's a local gang that specializes in stealing old tractors and fixing them up to resell them back to unsuspecting cottage owners cheap.

**Jack:** Right!! *(Takes the key and exits. Off-stage)* Tractor key's not in the ignition....you know where 't is.

**Norman:** Hanging next to the shed key in the utility closet.

**Jack:** Shit! *(dull metallic bang)* O-o-ow.

**Norman:** You alright.

**Jack:** Yeah! *(Enters holding head)* Banged my 'ead on the shed roof getting off the damn tractor. Why didn't you tell me the tractor key was next to the shed key.

**Norman:** How was I to know you hadn't got it, anyway it gives you something to do.

**Jack:** Very funny Norm, very funny. *(Gets key from utility closet, also goes and opens the fridge and does something audience can't see then exits.)*

**Norman:** *(Imitating Jack's voice)* Ya know where the charger is? There's not a spark a life in the battery.

**Jack:** *(Off-stage)* Ya know where the charger is? There's not a spark a life in the battery.

**Norman:** It should be hanging up in the shed there somewhere.

**Jack:** Oh I see it. *(dull metallic clang)* O-o-ow!! Is there any power out here.

**Norman:** No you have to run the cord out of the bedroom window.

*Jack comes in holding head and carrying a cord and goes towards the bedroom. Eloise enters from Bedrooms.*

**Eloise:** Jack your bleeding.

*Norman looks over*

**Jack:** Oh! S'nothing, banged my head...bleeds really easy. 'll be fine, wan't to get this damn tractor started.

*Jack exits to the bedrooms. Eloise exits to outside.*

**Norman:** Make sure you plug it into the outlet nearest the door otherwise. *(Lights out)* you'll blow a fuse.

**Jack:** *(Off-stage)* Where's th' 'lectrical box.

**Norman:** In the utility closet.

**Jack:** *(Enters .)* I don't believe this! *(Fiddles in the utility closet, lights go on again.)*

**Norman:** Maybe you should stay in the utility closet it might save a lot of walking around.

**Jack:** Oh-ha-ha-de-ha. *(Exits through exterior door) (Off-stage.)* Flippin charger doesn't work. *(dull metallic bang)* O-o-w. *(Enters holding head.)* Why didn't you tell me the charger didn't work.

**Norman:** I thought it had been fixed. I did almost the same thing two years ago...finished up using some booster cables from the car.

**Jack:** Including having to go backwards and forwards ten times and blowing the fuses and banging your head.

**Norman:** I think I managed to avoid banging my head, more than once anyway.

**Jack:** If you weren't family I'd kill ya.

**Norman:** There's some booster cables in the trunk of my car, here's the keys. *(Fishes out his car keys)*

**Jack:** Thanks. Now you think I'll be needing anything from the utility closet 'fore I go.

**Norman:** Hard to say. Maybe you should take it with you.

**Jack:** Ha! *(Exits exterior door)*

*Sounds off-stage of moving car and connecting the booster cables.*

*Norman goes to the utility closet and takes out a pair of ear protectors and goes and stands by the exterior door. Tractor cranks and starts with an ear splitting roar and stops again.*

**Jack:** *(Off-stage)* Shees! There a big hole in the muffler.. *(Dull metallic bang)* O-o-ow-shiboleth.*(Enters, sees Norman holding the ear protectors.)*

**Norman:** I only remembered when I heard the roar of the tractor. Scout's honor.

*All freeze. Lights down.*

*Lights up. It is an hour or so later; Norman is studying a chess problem. Sound of tractor approaching and stopping. Jack enters taking off ear protectors..*

**Jack:** Y'know got the beach cleaned up a bit and built a bonfire if we wanted a cook out down there later.

**Norman:** Excellent Jack, excellent. *(Absorbed.)*

**Jack:** Well I'm goin' to go get cleaned up.

**Norman:** Rightio.

*Jack exits towards bedrooms leaving door open.*

**Jack:** *(Off-stage)* Hey Norm y'know where the shower hose attachment thingy is.

**Norman:** It was used this morning. Isn't it in the bathroom there somewhere?

**Jack:** *(Off-stage)* Cant see it.

**Norman:** I really don't know then Jack. Maybe one of the girls did something with it.

**Jack:** *(Off-stage)* Oh well, I'll just have to have a bath.

<p><i>(Off-stage) Sounds of bath filling up.</i></p>	<p><b>Ann:</b><i>(Off-stage)</i> Wanna play a little badminton.</p> <p><b>Eloise:</b><i>(Off-stage)</i> It's been a while but why not.</p>
<p><b>Jack:</b> <i>(Off-stage in bath gives a very loud and off key rendition.)</i></p> <p>Der's an awld Man cawld the Mississippi Dat's an awld Man Ah don' like to be.</p>	<p><i>Laughs and shouts throughout.</i></p> <p><i>(Off-stage) as Ann and El play</i></p> <p><b>Ann:</b> <i>(Off-stage)</i> Whoops!!</p> <p><i>.The shuttle hits the screen door. Ann collects it. Waves to Norman. Norman waves back half heartedly.</i></p>
<p>Der's an awld Man cawld the Mississippi Rollin on down, rollin' to the sea.</p>	<p><i>Norman goes looks out of screen door goes over and closes the inside door and goes back to his chess.</i></p>
<p>Awld man river, dat awld man river he don't say nutton but he must know sometn he just keeps rolling he keeps on rollin' along.</p>	<p><i>Norman looks round muttering inaudibly.</i></p> <p><i>Norman hands on ears</i></p>
<p>He don't plant cotton and don't plant taters and them as plants'em is soon fo <i>(tails off</i> <i>Restarts with gusto)</i></p> <p>He don't plant taters and don't plant cotton and them as plants'em is soon forgotten. But old man river he just keeps rollin' alooooong.</p>	<p><i>Norman gets up angrily and crosses to the door to the bedrooms. As he crosses.</i></p> <p><b>Ann:</b> <i>(off-stage)</i> Jack must be really happy to be singing like that..</p> <p><b>Eloise:</b> <i>(off-stage)</i> Yes everything is so lovely.</p> <p><i>Norman stops and hands</i></p>



	<p><i>on head goes back and sits again.</i></p>
<p>You and me we sweat and strain.      Bodies all aching and racked with pain.      Tote that barge move that bail      you get's a little drunk and you      lands in jail.</p>	<p><i>Norman jumps up and rushes to open the door, it is half way open.</i></p> <p><b>Eloise:</b> (Off-stage) This is so much fun      Ann. Norm's happy, Jack's happy.      What a great weekend this is      turning out to be.</p> <p><i>Norman changes his mind again and starts to close it.</i></p>
<p><i>Jack's best imitation of Michael Jackson</i></p> <p><i>OOH – OOH! OOH – OOH!      OOH – OOH! OOH – OOH!</i></p> <p>She was more like beauty queen from a      movie scene      I said don't mind, but what do you mean      I am the one      Who will dance      on the floor      in the round      Wooooooh!      She said      I am the one      who will dance      on the floor      in the round</p>	<p><i>Norman starts to open it, his indecision starts by wagging the door but it gradually morphs into frustrated break dance steps Michael Jackson style between the door and his chess in time to Jack's singing leaving the door open.</i></p>
<p>She told me her name was Billie Jean,      as she caused a scene      Then every head turned      with eyes that dreamed of being      the one      Who will dance      on the floor      in the round</p> <p>People always told me be careful what you      do      Don't go around breaking young girls'      hearts</p>	<p><i>Ann comes to retrieve the shuttlecock and looks through the screen door and sees Norman. She beckons to Eloise and they stand watching.</i></p> <p><i>Norman makes a spin, sees the girls and freezes facing the audience. He half turns to check that he saw what he saw and scuttles off to sit at his chess pretending he's not</i></p>

And mother always told me be careful who  
you love  
Be careful what you do 'cause the lie  
becomes the truth

*there..*

**Ann:** *(Stepping inside and shouting.)* Jack!

**Jack:** *(Off-stage)* Wha’

**Ann:** Keep it down will ya.

**Jack** *(Off-stage)* Right.

*Lights down.*

*Lights up. Norm, El, Jack and Ann are playing Scruples. They hold various cards. It is early evening.)*

**Norman:** *(Reading)* You are at a local store making some small purchases. You have known the store owner many years as an honest hard working woman and the prices in the store have always seemed reasonable to you. You offer the cashier a ten dollar bill to pay and she gives you change for twenty. Do you tell her the error? *(Pause looking round.)* Ann I think this is a question for you.

**Ann:** No

**Norman:** Haha. I don't believe you but I'm not going to challenge because that's what's on my answer card I win. *(Gives her his cards and gets up.)* Excuse me a minute I have to go. *(Exits)*

**Jack:** Well at least Norm's happy now he's winning.

**Eloise:** Yes, Norm loves to win. *(lowers voice)* God Jack I thought I was going to have a bird when you popped that question. My heart has only just stopped thumping and it must have been ten minutes ago. Did you make that up?

**Jack:** Yes. It was a flash of inspiration to try and ..I dunno...

**Eloise:** I understand. Thanks for helping.

**Jack:** I'm not sure that it helped much. He still doesn't know.

**Eloise:** No but at least it got the subject a bit of an airing.

**Ann:** You were taking a bit of chance there Jack, I didn't know you had it in you.

**Jack:** Is that a compliment or an insult.

**Ann:** Compliment, my heart also skipped a few beats when you read out the question. It's almost identical to our situation and then you directed it at Norman.

*Sound of toilet flushing and hand washing.*

**Eloise:** Look out we'd better change the subject before he comes back.

**Ann:** This is one of the original editions, did they change it much now it's got so famous..

*Norman enters.*

**Jack:** Dunno, bet the questions are more politically correct.

**Eloise:** Yes, they wouldn't put anything in that was that controversial.

**Norman:** Politically correct or not, it's a good job I answered the way I did to you're question about Joslin being gay Jack or you could have won instead of me.

**Jack:** Would you really lie about it?

**Norman:** I don't know. When I play I don't think about what I would or would not do if it was a real situation, I only think about how to win.

**Jack:** Well now we're not playing and I'm asking.

**Norman:** Ugh! Queers, dykes, transvestites, pedophiles, pimps, drug dealers, they're all the same.

**Jack:** Jeess Norm! Ach! I have to go too now, mus'be auto suggestion. *(Exits)*

**Ann:** Norm that's a terrible thing to say. No wonder gay rights activists get so radical.

**Norman:** Who cares, they're an abomination, let them rot.

**Eloise:** Oh Norm this is 1980's not 1950's.

**Norman:** Maybe so but....now you mention it how did that question get into the game. *(Reaches for Jack's cards.)*

**Ann:** *(Collects up the game)* Oh for heaven's sakes let's just forget the whole thing. We're here to relax not solve the problems of the flippin' world.

**Eloise:** *(Getting up, touching Ann as she goes by to the exterior screen door.)* I am starting to worry about Joslin and Tom. They said they'd be back before dark and the sun is going down.

*Lights cross fade. All exit.*

*Lights go to black and there is the sound of the rapids*

**Tom:** *(Shouting over sound of rapids)* Hold on Joslin, hold on we're nearly there. Just a little bit further----

*As lights fade up to the light of the setting sun. Tom is laying Joslin down, they are both wet. He tries to revive her and gives up. Sits with his head in his hands.*

**Joslin:** *(Sitting up.)* Tom?

**Tom:** Joslin! Oh that's a relief. I thought you were unconscious.

**Joslin:** I was. W-where are we?

**Tom:** On a rock in the middle of the rapids.

**Joslin:** Oh my head. *(Holds head)*

**Tom:** You must've bumped it when the boat went over.

**Joslin:** How d-did we g-get here?

**Tom:** I dragged you here.

**Joslin:** W-where's the b-boat?

**Tom:** *(Points upstage)* Down there, probably smashed to bits by now. We were lucky to get tossed out over there so I could pull you up here out of the water.

**Joslin:** I feel s-sick.

**Tom:** Try drinking some water.

**Joslin:** Is it safe?

**Tom:** Should be o.k. I hope so I've swallowed enough..

**Joslin:** Me too I think. *(She crawls, puts her head down and slurps some water.)*

**Tom:** Any better

**Joslin:** N-not really.

**Tom:** Let's take a look. Ooh! Wow! You've got a nasty bump there. It ought to have a cold compress. I know ---my shirt sleeve *(Takes off shirt)* Ahah---aagh!.

**Joslin:** W-what's the m-matter

**Tom:** I think I've hurt my ankle. *(Continues to take off shirt , rip off the sleeve, wet it and put round Joslin's head heavily favoring his left leg as he does so.)*

**Joslin:** You must have wrenched it saving me..

**Tom:** It was a near thing, I only just grabbed you otherwise you would have gone with the boat. *(Puts coat back on.)*

**Joslin:** You saved my life?

**Tom:** Mm! well no more than you would have done for me.

**Joslin:** I-I-I...-

**Tom:** We're not saved yet. Thank me later.

**Joslin:** W-what d-do you m-mean.

**Tom:** Well we're stuck on this rock -- middle of the rapids in a ravine -- dense bush either side of that, you've bumped your head -- I've strained my ankle. Even if we got off here, we're miles from the cottage -- don't have a boat -- it's almost impossible to walk through the bush here -- assuming we don't get lost, which is more than likely. We don't have any food.

**Joslin:** Oh!. Is it really that b-bad Tom?

**Tom:** Yeah well! We do have fresh water, which I guess is about the only thing in our favor. Hopefully Dad and Uncle will figure out where we are and come help us. May take a while that's all. It's not even dark yet and we only promised to be back before dark. They won't start looking till it's nearly dark and then it's too late. We may have to spend the night here.

**Joslin:** *(Shivers)* I'm c-c-cold.

**Tom:** Me Too. Well we wanted an adventure. This is just a bit more adventure than we expected. Cheer up. I expect Dad and Uncle will find us soon. *(Looking upstage)* What's that.

**Joslin:** What?

**Tom:** In that mess of driftwood.

**Joslin:** I d-don't see anything.

**Tom:** I do *(Crawls upstage, picks up his radio and comes back)* Hey-hey! Well things are looking up, we can have music.

**Joslin:** J-just wh-what we need.

**Tom:** Hey don't be a grouch. I'll only play it loud enough to hear over the rapids honest.

**Joslin:** Yeah right! How did it survive?

**Tom:** I don't know. Maybe I should go down and see if there's anything else I can salvage.

**Joslin:** D-d-don't leave me.

**Tom:** O.k. O.k. I won't. I doubt there's anything anyway, but if we're still here tomorrow I'll have to do something.

**Joslin:** T-tomorrow then?

**Tom:** O.k. tomorrow. Lets see what's in my pockets *(Starts to pull things out-small knife, soggy tissues, some small change, drops some, )* You haven't seen a candy machine nearby have you.

**Joslin:** Yeah! I w-wish.

*A small piece of paper falls out. Joslin picks it up and glances at it as she hands it back to Tom.*

A love note?

**Tom:** Ha! Some chance. Just a shopping list.

*Puts it to one side and then pulls out a package of reefers.*

**Joslin:** W-what's that.

**Tom:** Joints.

**Joslin:** You mean you su-smoke-.

**Tom:** Yes. Promise you won't tell Mum and Dad.

**Joslin:** What makes you think they d-don't know already.

**Tom:** They probably do but they haven't said anything yet. It's just a dirty little secret.

**Joslin:** Oh you've got one too...to-to-hide. *(Going to say 'too' but covering it up with her stutter.)*

**Tom:** Yeah! *(Looking in package)* Well a couple of them survived and what's more important. *(Pulls out a Bic and lights it)* Fire.

**Joslin:** That's g-g-good

**Tom:** Yes, I can make a fire with that driftwood later.

**Joslin:** That w-would be n-nice. Ooooh!

**Tom:** You might feel better if you had a nap.

**Joslin:** I do feel groggy, p'raps you're right.

*They lay down. Lights cross fade to **Eloise and Ann** in the cottage. It is dark outside. **Ann** is standing looking out of screen door and returns to sit.*

**Eloise:** How long have they been gone now?

**Ann:** Five minutes more than the last time you asked.

**Eloise:** And how long is that.

**Ann:** About two hours now, maybe a bit more.

**Eloise:** This waiting is killing me. I do hope they'll be alright.....What'll we do if they don't come back.

**Ann:** Being so cheerful must keep you going.

**Eloise:** Sorry but ...Well?

**Ann:** Well what?

**Eloise:** What shall we do if----

*Noises outside. **Jack and Norman** enter. They are both soaking wet and exhausted.*

**Ann:** You're soaking wet both of you- Get those clothes off. El get a hot shower running.

***Eloise** exits. Sounds of shower off-stage.*

**Jack:** Ann we're o.k. just---

**Ann:** No arguments. *(Starts undressing him.)*

**Jack:** I wish you were always this passionate.

**Ann:** Smart arse. Come on help, I don't want you getting pneumonia, your shivering.

*(Shouts) El come and help. (Jack starts to help himself and exits. Ann turns and starts to undress Norman)*

**Eloise:** *(Enters)* What's this an orgy. *(Helps undressing Norman)*

**Norman:** Don't make me laugh I'm too tired.

*When Norman is partly undressed.*

**Ann:** Now get yourself into that hot shower pronto. (She pushes him out) Get some hot soup on El, I'll get rid of these wet clothes.

**Eloise:** Right.

**Ann:** So I guess I don't have to answer your last question.

**Eloise:** Thank the Lord.

**Ann:** They obviously didn't find them. I wonder what happened. They're both soaking wet and exhausted.

**Eloise:** I don't know, they'll tell us when they've showered. But what about Joslin and Tom?

**Ann:** Let's wait and hear what they have to say El, maybe they know.

*Jack enters in a blanket.*

**Jack:** Boy ----feels better already. Is that soup?

**Eloise:** Yes I was just heating it up.

**Ann:** What happened Jack.

**Jack:** I think we've found'em.

**Eloise:** You have.

**Ann:** You have.

**Jack:** I think they're o.k.

**Ann:** Your not sure.

**Jack:** s'hard to explain without starting at the beginning.

**Ann:** Well start at the beginning then. We've worried ourselves sick for two hours so we can wait a few more seconds. Start at the beginning for God's sake.

**Jack:** Well we got Jane's canoe out an' took it down the lake in the direction we last saw them goin' after they waved to us this afternoon at the beach there. Norm was doin' pretty good for a newby. There was no sign of 'em. Any way down near the bottom of the lake where it starts gettin' narrow, there's a bit of a current. We got near the rapids.

**Eloise:** The rapids!!

*Norman enters in a dressing gown.*

**Jack:** Yes, but wait for the rest. Well we tried gettin' the canoe into the side out of the current but it was rocky and a lot of low branches and – well -- the canoe tipped over. Norm took a header...

**Norman:** ...and if it hadn't been for Jack here grabbing hold of stupid me who hadn't got a life jacket on I would have drowned.

**Eloise:** Oh my God!

**Jack:** Ah! You wouldn't have drowned.

**Norman:** I was going down choking when I felt your hand grab my shirt Jack. I nearly passed out. You saved me.

**Jack:** Well maybe....anyway we managed gettin' the canoe righted and bailed it out but we were both soaked and that water's damned cold, it was almost completely dark anyway, so we came back right away paddling 's fast as we could to keep warm.

**Eloise:** But what about Joslin -- and Tom

**Jack:** I'm coming to that. We're pretty sure we saw a fire through the trees. And I could swear I heard Tom's radio.

**Eloise:** You think they've camped for the night. The little so and sos I'll give that Joslin a piece of my mind.....

**Jack:** Whoa! hold on El. The river does a sort of turn just there so it's hard to see but the fire looked as though it was in the middle of the rapids, must be on some rocks. A very strange place to camp if they decided to do such a foolish thing without any equipment. And Tom wouldn't be that stupid. No they're not there, if it is them, by choice.

**Ann:** If it's them?.

**Jack:** Well we tried to shout but couldn't make ourselves heard over the top of the noise of the rapids and the ghetto blaster.

**Ann:** Tom's Ghetto Baster?

**Jack:** Hope so. We couldn't take the canoe any closer. We were wet and exhausted so we decided we would have to come back and get dried out and rested 'n go back with some rope 'n equipment to get'em.

**Eloise:** Oh! But you think it's them.

**Jack:** The Ghetto Blaster was playing heavy metal rock?

**Ann:** Oh so it must be them. Now I'm not quite so worried but still, when are you going to go.

**Jack:** I dunno I – er - we hadn't decided. Soon as possible 'course. But going in the dark's very risky, we might have to wait till morning.

**Ann:** Will they be alright?

**Jack:** It's not like it's winter and they've got a fire and they're young. Not like us two old codgers.

**Norman:** Old codgers?*(laughing)*

**Ann:** Did you talk to Jane?

**Jack:** What for?

**Ann:** She's lived on this lake all year round for years. She might know a thing or two. Like where we could get help for instance.

**Jack:** I didn't think o' that. I just sort of rushed in and asked if she had a boat we could borrow 'n when she showed me the canoe we kind of jumped in and left 'n a hurry. I never thought to ask her -- you know -- silly.

**Eloise:** Never mind Jack you've done great, both of you.

**Ann:** Maybe I should go round and talk to her.

**Eloise:** I'll come with you Ann. You two rest up and eat your soup. There's some more over there if you want. Back soon.

*Eloise and Ann exit.*

**Norman:** You think they'll be alright Jack.

**Jack:** Don't know for sure, no more'n you Norm. We can only do our best get back soon's possible. Like we agreed when we set out to come back, us drownin' or getting hypothermya 's not gonna to help them.

**Norman:** You're right. But if we don't go till morning they'll have to spend the night together.

**Jack:** Ah! won't be so bad. They're young, they've got a fire, got each other. I expect Tom will let Joslin smoke one of his reefers.

**Norman:** What? You let him do drugs..

**Jack:** Ah! lighten up Norm. I don't know officially of course. It's just marijuana and pretty mild marijuana at that. Tom's a good boy.

**Norman:** Now I'm really starting to worry.

**Jack:** Why's that?

**Norm:** Tom is seventeen Jack, a great lad, but he's adopted remember, he and Joslin are not cousin's by blood. People behave differently if they think their lives are in danger and I don't know about you but I still remember being seventeen and ...

**Jack:** Aah! tell you's nothin' to worry about.

**Norman:** Really! How can you be so sure, Tom's a good boy, but an angel?

**Jack:** Course not.

**Norman:** Well then.

*There is a long pause as Jack considers his next statement.*

**Jack:** Norm. You think saving your life an' all gives me any special privilege-

**Norman:** Privilege?

**Jack:** Yeah! Like being able to tell you something a bit personal without you getting mad at me.

**Norman:** Why would I get mad?

**Jack:** Well It's about Joslin.

**Norman:** Joslin. What about Joslin?

*Eloise enters to get her jacket. The men don't see her.*

**Jack:** You know she's been going over seeing the old lady next door.

**Norman:** Mrs McKlusky! Yes, says she's fun to talk to. What's that got to do with it?

**Jack:** Not sure you're ready for this Norm.

**Norman:** Chees! Jack just say it for God's sake.

**Jack:** You know that question I asked you in the Scruples game.

**Norman:** About my daughter being gay. What about it?

**Jack:** Well it wasn't hyperthetical Norman. Joslin is gay.

**Norman:** Huh! What in heck's name makes you think that?

**Jack:** Yesterday your neighbor Jane burst in here drunk while you 'n El were out.

**Norman:** Mrs McKlusky

**Jack:** Yeah! And she tore us off a strip about not supporting our daughter. She mistook us for you and El.....seems Joslin....I suppose because Jane is, you know, lesbian, well she told her she is.

**Norman:** She is what, I'm confused.

**Jack:** I'm not making a very good job of this. Joslin told Jane that she's lesbian too.

**Norman:** My Joslin a lesbian. What are you saying? That stupid old woman.....-

**Eloise:** (*Goes to him.*) Oh please don't get angry Norm, please, please don't get angry.

**Norman:** My Joslin.....lesbian. I can't believe it.

**Eloise:** (*Fast, non stop*) Jack and Ann told me last night Norm. I'd suspected for quite a while, she never has any boyfriends --- always one special girlfriend. I didn't know what to do. I just didn't know what to do. And I wasn't sure and well, I was scared of what you would do? Oh Norm.....

**Norman:** Do---.Me!!

**Eloise:** Yes, you're so, you know, --- some things you've said.....



**Norman:** My little Joslin, a dyke, I can't believe it.

**Jack:** That old lady really tore Ann off a strip.

**Norman:** ..interfering old busy body....

**Jack:** Norm, I dunno whether saving a person's life gives'em any rights but I tell you this Joslin's still you're daughter and she still loves you and she needs you're support- maybe even more than, well, if she was straight, and wasn't in danger.

*Norman stares at Jack speechless. Ann enters out of breath, she's been running. She stands in the open doorway.*

**Ann:** Where'd you get to I thought you were just coming back to get a coat.... What's going on?

**Jack:** I just told Norm about Joslin.

**Ann:** (*Gasps*) Oh! Well! Well that's good, that's very good but.... well.... I'm sorry to say this, but we haven't got much time.

**Jack:** Wha' do you mean?

**Ann:** Jane says that the bottom end of the lake is really treacherous. Quebec hydro have a spillway on the other side further down. At peak period the water flow increases and the rapids get deeper and faster. It may wash them off the rocks they're on.

**Eloise:** Oh no.

**Jack:** When 's this peak period.

**Ann:** Jane says it varies a lot; twice a day; can be any time.

**Norman:** So waiting till daylight is not an option. Come on Jack, we'd better get going. Let's get dressed.

*Jack and Norman exit towards bedrooms. Lights cross fade as Joslin lies beside Tom. It is now dark. Tom is trying to get a fire started, he lights his shopping list and puts it in the fire which lights.*

**Joslin:** (*Waking just in time to see the shopping list go up in flames.*) Oh!

**Tom:** You alright?

**Joslin:** Oh yes I think so. (*Sits up, waking up*) Ooh! This rock is hard.

**Tom:** Feeling better.

**Joslin:** A b-bit.

**Tom:** Only a bit.

**Joslin:** Well quite a b-bit actually. My head has stopped throbbing.

**Tom:** That's good. It'll get quite cozy here by the fire. Come closer.

**Joslin:** I'm hungry.

**Tom:** Me too.....Suppose you know something that could maybe destroy another person's life but there is nothing anyone can do about it. Do you think you should tell them?

**Joslin:** Wow! W-what a question. Well p-personally, if it was me that was going to get d-d-destroyed I would certainly prefer to know, maybe I c-could just enjoy life more b-b-before it happened or something like that.

*(Tom studies the fire reflectively.)*

So w-was that purely hypo-hypothetical or was it about us.

**Tom:** I've been looking at the rocks and driftwood and stuff around us.

**Joslin:** Uh-huh!

**Tom:** I'm pretty sure this area gets flooded quite often.

**Joslin:** Maybe it's just spring run off.?

**Tom:** I hope so but I don't think so. I know so.

**Joslin:** Oh no! What'll we do Tom.

**Tom:** We need to think about getting over to the side.

**Joslin:** But it's a rapids in a ravine and we don't have any ropes or anything. We would just get swept away and your leg.....

**Tom:** Your right, your right! Ah! Maybe I worry too much. We'll just have to face that problem when it arrives.

**Joslin:** How is your ankle b-by the way.

**Tom:** Swelled up pretty bad, I had it in the water for a while to try and stop the swelling but now I can't rest my weight on it.

**Joslin:** Oh I'm s s-sorry to hear that.

**Tom:** What a couple of cripples we are, you with a broken head and me with a broken ankle. Still all good adventures require the heroes and heroines to have injuries, it allows them to demonstrate there inner strength.

**Joslin:** I think I'll p pass that one.

**Tom:** Yeah! me too.

*(Pokes fire.)*

I really need to have a pee.

**Joslin:** Well you c-could just g-go down there. I p-promise I won't look.

*Tom struggles upstage and stands facing away from the audience but can't keep his balance hopping around on one leg*

**Tom:** Ow! Ouch! I can't do this .

**Joslin:** Well s-sit down then.

**Tom:** Oh good idea! (Sits.)

**Joslin:** *( After a few seconds silence.)* You imitating Niagara Falls.

**Tom:** I haven't started yet.

**Joslin:** What! Why n-not.

**Tom:** I don't know, I'm not used to peeing sitting down.

**Joslin:** I do it all the time.

**Tom:** Don't make me laugh...oh there we are that did it.

**Joslin:** Glad I could help.

*Tom struggles back and sits beside Joslin again.*

**Tom:** Sure you don't need to go.

**Joslin:** N-no way I'm hanging mu-myself out here in the open with every-wu-one watching.

**Tom:** Everyone?

**Joslin:** Yeah ! All the little animals out th-there in the d-dark that we can't s-see but they can s-see us.

**Tom:** They don't care.

**Joslin:** M-maybe not but I d-do and I'm not g-going to unless I get really d-desperate all the same.

**Tom:** You mind if I smoke.

**Joslin:** N-no go ahead. *(Tom lights up.)* What does it feel like?

**Tom:** Yeh! It makes me feel all mellow and kind of sleepy but I don't want to close my eyes but it's different for everyone, some people get dizzy or giggly or all sorts of things.

**Joslin:** Could I try?

**Tom:** You think you ought?

**Joslin:** Whose to know? We may be dead tomorrow.

**Tom:** Hah! *(Hands her the joint and she takes a drag but breaths out immediately)*  
You need to inhale and hold it there for a second or two before you breath out to get the best effect. *(Joslin tries again, coughs.)* That's better. This is fairly mild stuff, should be alright for you.

**Joslin:** Does it make you hungry like they say.

**Tom:** It does me. Hm! perhaps this's not such a good idea.

**Joslin:** We'll just enjoy our celebration meal all the more t-t-tomorrow, after our rescue .

**Tom:** I guess.

*(They smoke a little more.)*

*(Slowly, dreamily.)* It may get cold later even with the fire. And there isn't that much wood anyway I don't know if I can keep it going all night.

**Joslin:** We'll just have to weep with each other.

**Tom:** Huh!

**Joslin:** *(giggles)* I mean we'll have to bare a shed. I can't peak proply

**Tom:** Share a bed? Joslin if we sleep together for warmth I promise – er - I promise nothing, um! that I won't do anything - you know.

**Joslin:** Won't worry Tom I'm a lesser bein' *(giggles)*

**Tom:** Huh?

**Joslin:** *(very carefully)* I am a lesser bein'. *(giggles even more)*

**Tom:** What do you mean you're a "lesser being".

**Joslin:** Not a besser lein' *(loses control of herself in giggles)*

**Tom:** *(They giggle together and then gradually calm down)* Joslin what were you trying to say.

**Joslin:** You d-don't have to worry about d-doing anything I d-don't find b-boys attractive.

**Tom:** You're.....

**Joslin:** Yes. *(Very slowly and carefully)* I'm a lesbian.

**Tom:** Oh! Ooooooh!

**Joslin:** B-but I like you T-tom, a lot, I love you, like a b-brother.

**Tom:** Well I am. A cousin is a like a brother.

**Joslin:** Yes. Oooh! *(Holds head in hands)* Dizzy.

**Tom:** I love you too Joslin. It's really great to have you as a friend.

**Joslin:** Even if I am - you know.

**Tom:** Yes. Makes no difference at all we are just like brother and sister.

*(Disposes of joint.)*

Well we had better try and get some sleep. It may get very cold later and we won't be able to.

**Joslin:** O.k.

*They move together and hold each other for warmth and lie down.*

**Tom:** I'm glad you told me Joslin.

**Joslin:** Uh-huh.

**Tom:** Mum and Dad know?

**Joslin:** No.

**Tom:** They don't?

**Joslin:** N-no, I haven't t-told them.

**Tom:** You told me

**Joslin:** Yes

**Tom:** That's so cool.

**Joslin:** So you g-going to tell me about your l-love note.

**Tom:** What love note?

**Joslin:** *(Sitting up again.)* The one you y-used to start the f-fire.

**Tom:** *(Sitting.)* What makes you so sure it wasn't a shopping list.

**Joslin:** Shopping lists don't start, 'Under grim ice...?'

**Tom:** Oh!

**Joslin:** Well come on I've told you my big secret the least you can do is to tell me your little one.

**Tom:** Mm! *(Sigh!)* Uh! Well, it was a haiku.

**Joslin:** A what?

**Tom:** A haiku, it's a kind of Japanese poetry.

**Joslin:** You write poetry!!

**Tom:** Promise you won't tell anyone.

**Joslin:** Why n-not.

**Tom:** I told a couple of guys and they laughed at me and .....well things were a bit difficult until I told them I ....I told everyone.....

**Joslin:** You told them you didn't like poetry anymore.

**Tom:** Mm! bit stronger than that.

**Joslin:** P-poetry's beautiful Tom.

**Tom:** I know but sometimes you have to lie just to keep your friends.

**Joslin:** And now you've burnt it.

**Tom:** Oh that's o.k. I know it by heart.

**Joslin:** You do! Would you say it for me?

*(Tom looks away)*

Please Tom! Please.

**Tom:** *(Looks back)* O.k. For you. Haiku are short so it's traditional to repeat them. Ready. *(Joslin nods)*

Under grim ice; on massive mountain; chuckling alpine spring erodes; unimpressed.  
Under grim ice; on massive mountain; chuckling alpine spring erodes; unimpressed.

**Joslin:** That is so neat.

**Tom:** You really think so?

**Joslin:** Yes. It p-paints a p-picture in my m-mind and is fun as well.

**Tom:** I'm glad you like it.

**Joslin:** Oh definitely. D-do you know any m-more?

**Tom:** Not by heart but I've written lots of it at home.

**Joslin:** That's very c-cool Tom. *(Hugs him.)*

**Tom:** I don't really feel sleepy any more.

**Joslin:** Me n-neither.

**Tom:** If you don't want to answer this it's just fine but...well...why haven't you told your Mum and Dad.

*(Joslin frowns in concentration for a few seconds.)*

I'm sorry I shouldn't have asked just forg....

**Joslin:** No. no. Tom It's p-perfectly o.k. It's j-just I don't really know where to begin. I've known for years I was different and then I realized what I am. But anyway it's bu-been quite a while now and...well...my Mum, she ...well...I think she has g-guessed anyway but my Dad.....

**Tom:** What about your Dad?

**Joslin:** Suppose you had a s-son Tom and he was g-g-gay but your wife was one of these fundamental Cu-christian b-b-believers and you had to choose between your wife or your son.

**Tom:** Oh! You haven't told you Mum because you're worried .....

**Joslin:** I'm w-worried w-what it will d-do to our family Tom. M-my Dad has s-s-said some of the m-most awful things in the p-past about 'queers and d-d-ykes' as he calls them. It's not j-j-just me, that's b-bad enough, if he disowns me or something, ---it's w-w-what it will d-do to them ---to all of us...Oh Tom it'll d-destroy us. I know it w-will, I j-just know it will....

**Tom:** Take it easy Joslin, take it easy. *(Consoles her.)* Maybe just talking about it we can figure it out together.

**Joslin:** Oh I wish we could Tom. And it helps that someone else knows and is on my side.

**Tom:** I can't believe ...Your Dad. It is so---Ugh!....

**Joslin:** To be f-fair Tom when my Dad g-grew up in England homosexuality was a c-c-crime, it was condemned as immoral b-by the church, it was regarded as a n-n-national security risk for anyone in a government p-position to be found out, they could go t-to jail. Psychiatric t-text books listed it as aberrant behaviour. People of his g-g-generation have had to c-come a long way.

**Tom:** Wow! How come you know all that?

**Joslin:** Why d-do you think?

**Tom:** Yeah! I see what you mean.

**Joslin:** My head is hurting Tom, it's throbbing again.

**Tom:** O.k. Maybe we should try and get some sleep.

*They start to lie down again.*

After we get out of this mess Joslin I promise to help you all I can. You won't have to face it all alone any more.

**Joslin:** Oh thank you Tom. That is s-so sweet. I n-need all the f-friends I can get.

*Lights cross fade to Ann and Eloise in cottage with wine.*

**Ann:** Hope for the best El, Norm didn't completely blow up.

**Eloise:** No, but it was a rather unusual situation. I don't know what I am going to do if Norm cannot accept Joslin being lesbian. Awkward even for me to say it, to completely embrace the idea and move on. I can understand why Joslin has behaved they way she has. She is so wise for her age.

**Ann:** She sort of has to be. A survival skill.

**Eloise:** Poor Joslin. Do you know any parents with gay children.

**Ann:** No, afraid I don't.

**Eloise:** Joslin must know some – yes of course that's obvious now, I need to somehow make contact with them and find out how they cope. This is going to put a lot of stress on us even if Norm does accept it.

**Ann:** I hope he does.

**Eloise:** Yes but I will stand by Joslin whatever and that means....

**Ann:** It's the right thing to do El. Easy to say of course but if there is anything Jack and I can do.....

*There is a knock at the door. Ann goes to open it.*

Mrs. McKlusky - Jane.

**Jane:** *(enters)* I hope you don't mind me coming round only I was worried after you came and told me what was going on. *(Sees Eloise:)* Oh I'm sorry I didn't know you had visitors..... *(She looks from one to the other confused.)*

**Ann:** It's alright Jane. That is Eloise, Eloise Breem.

**Jane:** *(Eloise gets up to greet her)* Eloise Breem. *(Looks at Ann)* Is Joslin your daughter.

**Eloise:** No she's mine. *(Shaking hands)*

**Ann:** And Tom is my son, Tom Wellall. We're *(indicates Eloise)* sisters in law.

**Jane:** Oh dear! Oh dear! What have I done?

**Eloise:** It's alright Jane, really it is.

**Jane:** It is?

**Eloise:** Yes. Ann told me about your visit and well I'm so grateful.

**Jane:** Grateful?

**Eloise:** Why don't you join us?

**Jane:** Well I don't know I only came ---- Oh! This is embarrassing. What a stupid meddling old woman I am.

**Eloise:** Jane, may I call you Jane.

**Jane:** Please.

**Eloise:** Jane, what you call "stupid meddling" has started a series of events and they have all worked out for the best. Both myself and Norman, Joslin's Dad now know about her 'secret'. And I am determined to help her all I can. You have freed me up from some sort of paralysis I was in. If you hadn't intervened, well who knows what would have happened. I want to thank you so much.

**Jane:** So you've talked to Joslin.

**Eloise:** Not yet, but I will, God willing they all come back safe.

**Jane:** Oh I'm so glad. I feel so bad about coming over here – er - in that rude way. I don't know what you must think of me. And then to mess things up as well.

**Eloise:** Jane, you did what your heart told you, you had to do, and it all worked out for the best. Can I get you a glass of wine.

**Jane:** Well thank you, thank you very much.

*Ann pours another glass of wine and give to Jane.*

**Ann:** *(Lifting glass)* To....to

**Jane:** To everybody's safe return.....to all of us. So what news is there.

**Ann:** As soon as I got back from your place and told them what you had told me Jack and Norman set off in your canoe again to attempt a rescue.

**Eloise:** And we got everything we could think of ready for when they come back and have been sitting here ever since.

**Jane:** Mm! It'll take them nearly three quarters of an hour to paddle down there and then some time to rescue them and then over an hour to paddle back so they won't be back for a while, assuming all goes well.

**Ann:** You must know this lake really well.

**Jane:** I do, I feel bad that I didn't talk more to your husband when they come over to borrow the canoe. Those kids would all be back here safe by now if I had.

**Ann:** Don't blame yourself Jane it wasn't your fault. Jack rushes at things, he always does, good heart, lots of energy but not too much thought sometimes.

**Jane:** All the same. I'm sorry. Did they take some equipment?

**Ann:** Some ropes, flashlights, life jackets, I'm not sure what else. We didn't come equipped for rescue missions.

**Jane:** Quebec Hydro had the bottom end of the lake roped off with signs warning people at one time but it's very isolated here, I guess it fell down over time. It's very dangerous down there. Just the current and the rapids let alone the Hydro spillway. No point in being maudlin though we shall have to be brave and hope for the best.

*Lights cross fade. Norman is frantically paddling bow and Jack stern in moonlight. They are working and breathing hard.*

**Jack:** Take'er easy Norm, take'er easy. We need to save ourselves. We're no super heroes. If we're too tuckered out when we get there we won't be able to help'em.

**Norman:** I'm terrified we're not going to get there in time.

**Jack:** Me too but we mustn't get panicky. That's what happened last time.

**Norman:** You're right, you're right. *(Slows down)* You got a plan.

**Jack:** Well hopefully we can somehow get a line across to them and get them off.

**Norman:** Suppose they're injured.

**Jack:** They can't be so badly injured they couldn't get themselves out of the water so hopefully they'll be able to help themselves a bit at least.

**Norman:** I wish I was more like you Jack.

**Jack:** Jeess' Norm I nearly fell out of the boat. Be careful what you're saying.

**Norman:** I mean I wish I could just take things as they come the way you do.

**Jack:** Ah's just an act. Hold up Norm we should to take a bit of a break.

*They rest*

I can hear the rapids.

**Norman:** Yes me too.  
What would you do in my place?

**Jack:** How'd y'mean.

**Norman:** You know with Joslin, you're so good with your kids I thought maybe....

**Jack:** Yeah now, I'm sure I can hear the rapids. We must be gettin' close.

**Norman:** *(After a second.)* Jack?

**Jack:** I don't know what to say Norm. You just have to be there for her.

**Norman:** That's what El keeps telling me but it's not been that easy for me, or her I suppose, and now the divide we've got to get across has become the grand canyon.

**Jack:** You're a good man Norm you just got things out of wack that's all.

**Norman:** I never thought of quee...gays and lesbians as real people somehow. They were always in films or on television. It's different when you have to deal with it first hand, my own daughter....

What you told me --- well it was a hell of a shock Jack. I still haven't really taken it in. I can't take it in. What the hell am I going to do?

Some of the things I've said in the past.....

**Jack:** What's past is past Norm, it's what you do now that counts.

**Norman:** I don't know what I'm going to do Jack. I don't know how to begin.

**Jack:** Don't beat y'self up too much.... sometimes these things work out on their own some once your hearts in the right place.

**Norman:** Once my heart's in the right place....She's my little girl. Ah I can't take it in.

**Jack:** I'll help any way I can you know, it's just....I don't like to interfere.

**Norman:** Of course.....I'm sorry I baited you Jack.

**Jack:** How's that?

**Norman:** You know. When you were working on the tractor.

**Jack:** Well I'm not sure who was baiting who?

**Norman:** What do you mean?

**Jack:** Well I never really banged my head you know.

**Norman:** What?

**Jack:** I just used big piece of wood to whack on the shed roof.

**Norman:** But your head was bleeding.

**Jack:** I put a some ketchup on my hand and rubbed it on the top of my head.

**Norman:** I'll be....

**Jack:** Yeah! If El hadn't happened to come in at that exact moment I was goin' to find some excuse to come over and talk to you and let you gloat.

**Norman:** I don't believe it.

**Jack:** Yep! And I saw all the stuff in the utility closet first time I opened the door but I was tryin' to get you off you're arse.

**Norman:** Well you did succeed in that.

**Jack:** Heh!. Pretty good acting... you think.

**Norman:** Better than you're singing.

**Jack:** Yeah, s'pose, never was a good singer.. Ann tells me your some hot dancer though. He-he-he.

**Norman:** Yeah! Sure had me going.....We need to get going again. It can't be far now

**Jack:** Yup just round the next corner. We're close to where we went over last time --- better try to get over the other side.

*They resume paddling.*

**Norman:** Thanks Jack....thanks so much for everything.

**Jack:** Pas problem Norm. S'what family's for.

*Lights cross fade back to the cottage. Jane, Eloise and Ann are all laughing, some wine has been consumed.*



**Jane:** *(Standing)* At that Mother got proper blazin'  
"And thank you, sir, kindly," said she.  
"What waste all our lives raising children  
to feed ruddy lions? Not me!"

**El:** Oh Jane. That's super..

**Ann:** There was no wrecks and nobody drowned,  
Fact, nothing to laugh at at all. Ha-ha-ha.

**El:** North country English have a weird sense of humor.

**Jane:** Call a spade a spade I suppose.

**El:** You know I think we've missed out.

**Jane:** How so?

**El:** You have been over there all these years and us over here and...

**Jane:** Well I'm not dead yet you know.

**El:** Of course....

**Ann:** What was that?

**El:** What?

**Ann:** I thought I heard something. *(Goes to screen door.)*

**Jane:** Anything?

**Ann:** No, just my wishful thinking.

**El:** So you're Gran must have been a big part of you're life.

**Jane:** Yes. Very much so. She knew nearly all Stanley Holloway's Monologues but  
more than that she helped me so much, I can still hear her Yorkshire accent telling  
me what I should and should not do. Aah!

Mrs. Breem, El I don't know how to put this but.....

**Eloise:** It's about Joslin.

**Jane:** Yes. Does she have a Gran.

**Eloise:** Norm's mother is still alive in England but we don't see her much and my mother  
died in a car crash six years ago now.

**Jane:** Oh I'm so sorry.

**Eloise:** That's o.k. As I say it was six years ago, just good memories now.

Jane I don't mind but you had some reason to ask that?

**Jane:** Yes but I don't want to presume...

**Eloise:** I know how much Joslin means to you Jane and you to her. I assume you don't  
have a grand-daughter?

**Jane:** It's not really my place to....

**Eloise:** For Joslin to have the kind of support you can give Jane would be wonderful, not  
just for her but for me as well especially if Norm.....if Norm....

**Jane:** We don't know yet El, from what you said, we don't know. Different people have  
different ways of dealing with life's problems, sometimes life's problems have a  
way of dealing with people.

**Eloise:** Oh I hope so. I do so hope so.

**Jane:** It has been a long time since I was part of the "real world" but I assume it hasn't  
changed much.

**Ann:** It has but then it hasn't, if you know what I mean.

**Jane:** Yes! When I was a teenager life was very difficult for me. I've often thought about my parents situation. If I could only be as wise as my Gran was. Of course back then I was completely self centered and blamed my parents for everything.

**Eloise:** Joslin hasn't done that. (*Going to screen door*) I can hear something now or I'm going out of my mind. (*Sits again.*)

**Jane:** If we don't distract ourselves a bit we will go out of our minds with worry. Shall we play cards.

**Ann:** I hate cards. Tell us another story Jane.

**Jane:** Well I...

**Eloise:** Yes please Jane, it'll help us to pass the time. Was there another situation with Meryl...

**Jane:** Lots Let me think....Oh Yes. There's the one about Mickey and Minnie Mouse.

**Eloise:** Mickey and Minnie Mouse?

**Jane:** Yes.....Office Christmas parties were always a problem for Meryl and me. I assume you know what I mean.

**Ann:** Yes of course, back then....

**Jane:** Exactly. Well later we just wouldn't go but earlier on we used try and be 'sociable' but it was always difficult. Anyway one year somebody had suggested a costume party, which were popular at the time. Well Meryl and I went as Mickey and Minnie mouse. The costumes had these big heads you put on. Meryl was, how shall we say, less well built than I was so she strapped herself up to hide her um feminine parts and looked like a man dressed as Mickey Mouse. I was Minnie. We talked in squeaky voices; the works; so we were completely incognito, so to speak.

**Eloise:** I wish I could have seen that.

**Jane:** Yes we were quite the pair hamming it up. Well, people often got drunk at these parties and some things that went on....anyway that's another story...well in my office there was this good looking guy, Willy something or other, he had a reputation as a heart breaker, not a nice guy at all. Well I was coming back from the washroom, one of those places where both the men's and ladies were along a corridor and he waylaid me and started making drunken romantic overtures, he thought I was someone else, he put his arm across to corner me there.

**Ann:** How awful.

**Jane:** Yes pretty rude although I didn't feel threatened...just well embarrassed. Meryl meanwhile, thinking I was gone a long time, came to look for me and found us. At the same time a couple of women came out behind me and a man came in behind Meryl so Willy was more or less trapped. Well for anyone except Meryl that would have been the end of it. But this was Meryl and she was never one to pass up an opportunity. She put her arm across the same way he had to me, Meryl was quite big so he couldn't escape. She began to berate him in her best Mickey Mouse voice wagging her finger at him; (*standing imitates*) "So we've caught you wed handed Big Bad Wolfie. What do you mean messing around with my wife? You should be ashamed of yewself. I've a good mind to weport you to Walt Disney himsewf. How dare you interfwere in the happy love lives of two wespectable mouses. Oh it's kwite shameful, kwite shameful. If I hadn't found you I dwead to think what would have happened. Oh my! oh my!"

**Ann:** Oh Jane that's priceless.

**Jane:** She went on like that seemed for quite a while, I even started to act up (*She flaps her hands on her mouth and does little quarter turns in mock horror.*). Was he embarrassed, he blushed and squirmed and looked as though he wanted the ground to open up and swallow him. Finally he ducked under her arm and ran.

**Eloise:** Serves him right.

**Jane:** He never lived it down, girls, presumably the ones he had ill used and their friends, would pass his desk and say, "Morning Wolfie," in a Mickey Mouse voice.

**Ann:** Just deserts.

**Jane:** Mm! He quit a few weeks later. Meryl and I laughed about that for a long time.

*Faint sound of an outboard motor approaching.*

She even used her 'Mickey Mouse' voice to express mock indignation at something or other. She would somehow make us both laugh at awkward situations. Once we were.....

**Eloise:** What's that.

**Ann:** Now I do hear something. Sounds like the outboard motor on the boat.

**Eloise:** What? Could it be Tom and Joslin?

**Ann:** I hope Jack and Norm haven't gone on some fools errand.

*Eloise and Ann jump up and rush out of the screen door. Jane follows slowly and stands at the screen door. The outboard motor gets louder.*

*(Off-stage)* It's them, it's them, Oh thank God. thank God. They're all safe.

**Eloise:** *(Off-stage)* Hey--Hey there.

*The motor approaches and stops. Flashlight beam flashes on Jane.*

**Jack:** *(Off-stage)* Lookout, you'll tip us all out. I'm wet enough as it is.

**Eloise:** *(Off-stage)* Tom you're hurt.

**Tom:** *(Off-stage)* Ah! I'll be o.k. Help Joslin.

**Eloise:** *(Off-stage)* .Oh good heavens you're all soaking wet. Come on quickly inside

*Joslin and Eloise enter.*

**Joslin:** Jane!

**Jane:** You've hurt your head as well now. What a wounded warrior you are.

**Joslin:** I'm fine Jane, I'm fine thanks...now. Had some sleep on the way back.

**Eloise:** Come on, we can chat later, let's get those wet clothes off.

*Eloise and Joslin exit to the bedrooms and Ann enters with Tom who is leaning heavily on her to save his ankle.*

**Jane:** Tom! Your leg?

**Tom:** S' only a sprain, not too serious.

**Ann:** Come on, out of those wet clothes.

**Jane:** Perhaps I should go

**Ann:** No Jane please stay.

**Tom:** Yes! Please stay Jane.

**Ann:** Come on you.

*Tom and Ann exit to the bedrooms. Jack and Norman enter.*

**Jack:** Hello Jane. Need t' get these wet things off Norm.

**Norman:** We'll have to wait till the kids have showered. You should go first you're soaked.

**Jane:** I'll get you some blankets. *(exits to bedrooms)*

**Norman:** Thanks Jane. I don't feel too bad myself. You cold?

**Jack:** Not really, not yet, wrestlin' that engine kep' me warm.

**Norman:** Great idea of yours jerry rigging it on the canoe like that.

**Jack:** Yeah, worked pretty good.

**Norman:** I'll say, got us back in half the time. **(Jane enters with blankets)**

**Jack:** Thanks. Good thing the engine being where it was.

**Norman:** Thanks Jane. What made you think it would be down there?

**Jack:** I didn't. When Tom got his radio he thought there might be other stuff, like their lifejackets, I could get. Boy was I surprised when I scramble down 'n saw the engine still in one piece..

**Norman:** You think we could get the boat back?

**Jack:** I dunno, 's pretty badly stove in and hauling it back up over the rapids somehow would be quite a chore. Getting that little engine up was bad enough.

**Jane:** Don't even think about it. It'll be gone by the time you can get back. *(Gives Jack and Norman a glass of whisky)*

**Jack:** I suppose. Wow what's this?

**Jane:** I saw the whiskey bottle in the cupboard there. I hope you don't mind.

**Norman:** Mind!!! Jane you're an angel of mercy. Would you like one?

**Jane:** Oh no - no thanks not my - well yes perhaps I will if you don't mind. *(Goes to get herself a glass)*

**Ann:** *(Enters)* Come on then you two let's get those wet things off. *(She shepherds Norm and Jack out, sees Jane pouring a whiskey.)* There's some gin and tonic in the fridge if you prefer.

**Jane:** That's too kind of you.

**Ann:** Nonsense, *(Takes away whiskey and puts on side and gets gin and tonic.*

*Eloise, Joslin enter. Joslin in fresh clothes and bandages on her head and hand.*

**Ann:** Gin and tonic El

**Eloise:** Well I - thank you perhaps I will.

*Tom hobbles in freshly dressed.*

**Ann:** Tom?

**Tom:** Any whiskey left.

**Ann:** Here *(Gives him the glass she took from Jane then looking at Eloise)* Joslin? For medicinal purposes wouldn't you say El.

**Eloise:** Well we don't have any brandy. Would you like a gin and tonic Joslin?

**Joslin:** Yes p-p-please.

**Eloise:** I'm quite sure this will be the first time the demon drink has passed your lips.

*Joslin grins at her. Ann fixes drinks.*

So Tom how can I ever repay you for saving Joslin. She tells me that if it hadn't been for you she would most likely have drowned.

**Tom:** Uh! When the boat went over things happened too fast to think Auntie, I just reacted.

**Joslin:** Well I'm j-jolly grateful anyway.

**Tom:** You're welcome but what Dad and Uncle Norm did coming across those rocks like that, now that was really something.

**Ann:** What did they do?

**Tom:** Well they roped themselves together, like mountaineers and scrambled and waded down one side of the rapids till they got where they could throw a line to us. I held one end of the line and Uncle held the other while Dad came over to help Joslin get back.

**Joslin:** We had wondered earlier whether to try and get off by ourselves. I'm sure glad we didn't the current would have swept us away for sure. The only thing keeping me there was that line being held by the guys. And I don't think I'll need to drink any more water for a week.

**Tom:** Then after Dad had gone down and got the engine he and Uncle helped me across, that was scary, I went under a couple of times with my ankle hurting like a bitch, oops sorry, but I got across somehow. Then Uncle pulled Dad over holding the engine over his head, I don't know how he did it, boy is he strong or what.

**Norman:** (Enters) He's a real hero. He saved all of us.

**Jack:** (Enters) We all worked together guys, I did my bit you all did yours. But how in heck's name did you get in that fix in the first place Tom.

**Jane:** The Bore.

**Jack:** Wha'

**Jane:** The Bore wave from the spillway was it.

**Joslin:** So that's what it was.

**Tom:** Now I know how such a great day could go bad so quickly.

**Ann:** I'm lost can you start at the beginning.

**Tom:** We were rowing down at the bottom end of the lake and beginning to think we had better start the engine and come back like we planned to get back well before dark. This weird wave came from nowhere. A Bore Wave you call it.

**Jane:** Yes, it's like a storm surge but it's caused by the hydro spillway.

**Tom:** It must have been three foot high at least. It turned the boat sideways and pushed us along in front of it. After I recovered a bit I used the oars and got us over the wave but by then we were in a fast current. I tried to start the engine but I was in a bit of a panic and it wouldn't start and we got pulled onto the rapids.

**Joslin:** I was scared silly, I'm not very good in boats.

**Tom:** We tried to fend off the rocks with the oars but we got turned sideways then flipped over.

**Joslin:** I banged my head. I vaguely remember Tom holding on to me and pulling me out of the water laying me down. I passed out

**Tom:** Luckily we were thrown out near a flat rock and we managed to get out of the water but it was like a sort of island so we couldn't get off.

**Joslin:** Just us and Tom's Ghetto Blaster.

**Tom:** That's right I'd forgotten about it. That's my best radio. Can we go back and try and get it tomorrow Dad.

**Jane:** It'll be washed away, may be gone even as we speak.

**Norman:** I'll buy you a new one Tom, an even bigger one.

**Tom:** Gee thanks Uncle.

**Eloise:** Wow what a story.

**Ann:** What an adventure.

**Jane:** And it all ended well.

**Jack:** You know! I think this calls for a proper celebration.

**Eloise:** How do you mean?

**Jack:** Well we brought some fireworks 'n some stuff to cook on the beach. We never planned on a quiet weekend you know. *(He winks at Norman who reacts.)* We could all get toasty warm by a bonfire, let off the fireworks - have a cook out - you know raise a little hell.

**Tom:** Yahoo Let's go...*(Forgets and tries to get up)* aha agh! *(Joslin helps him)*

**Jack:** I'll get the fireworks. *(to Tom as he exits.)* You o.k.

**Tom:** Ah!. I'll manage. Come on Joslin you can be my crutch. *(They exit to beach)*

**Norman:** What a great idea Jack. I'll go get the bonfire started. *(exits to beach)*

**Ann:** Come on El let's break out the wieners and buns. Jane you go down and get yourself a front row seat.

**Jane:** I can take something.

*Ann Eloise and Jane take stuff out of kitchen and exit to beach.*

*Jack comes from bedrooms with big box of fireworks and exits to beach.*

*(Offstage) Shouts and sounds of party getting underway on the beach. bonfire crackles and reflects in the screen door. A jumping cracker goes off to laughter and shouts of glee.*

**Norman:** *(off-stage)* Now we need your Ghetto Blaster, Tom.

**Eloise:** *(off-stage)* We could use ours from the bedroom Norm.

**Norman:** *(off-stage)* Nah! It's too small.

**Eloise:** *(off-stage)* Be better than nothing.

**Norman:** *(off-stage)* O.k. then. No you stay there. I'll go.

*Norman enters screen door and exits towards bedrooms*

*Joslin enters and stands waiting.*

*Sounds off of toilet flushing and washing hands then Norman enters carrying radio, he doesn't see Joslin. He goes to the utility closet and pulls out some batteries and begins to insert them in the radio.*

**Joslin:** Dad!

**Norman:** Joslin!!

**Joslin:** Dad. C-can we t-talk a m-m-minute.

**Norman:** Of course sweetheart. Of course.

**Joslin:** D-dad I have s-s-something I n-need to tell you.

**Norman:** O.k.

**Joslin:** Sitting on that rock and realizing how life sometimes hangs b-by a thread and that you haven't told the p-people you love how much you love them and that there are secrets that shouldn't b-be secret.

**Norman:** Yes knowing your life was in danger was transformational for me too.

**Joslin:** Dad I love you d-dearly. You always told me I was your special little girl.

**Norman:** You still are Joslin.

**Joslin:** Dad the reason I have b-been avoiding you, and Mum, is b-because I was afraid. Whenever the subject of g-gays or lesbians comes up you...well...you.

**Norman:** go off into a rant.

**Joslin:** Yes. Dad I'm lesbian. I have been sure of it for a long time but I couldn't tell you, or Mum for that matter. I thought you might disown me or something.

**Norman:** Yes I know Joslin, I know.

**Joslin:** You know?

**Norman:** Yes. I'm ashamed that I had to find out in the way I did.

**Joslin:** Oh Dad - How did you----.

**Norman:** Jane came over.

**Joslin:** Jane?

**Norman:** Yes. She was so upset Joslin, so angry with us.

**Joslin:** Oh no!

**Norman:** Yes. But without her.....So I'm more than a bit ashamed I had to be told about my own daughter by someone I hardly know. I'm ashamed of some of the things I have said in the past....but mostly I'm ashamed that I didn't give you the support you need, that you couldn't come and talk to me. That you were so worried that it would destroy our family you couldn't tell either your Mum or me about your lesbian identity because of what I might say.....What I might do. I'm so sorry Joslin. So very sorry.

But as Jack so rightly said what's past is past and if you can forgive me and if it's not too late I want with all my heart to be here for you from now on. You're my little girl and you always will be. I love you so much Joslin and I will support you in any of the choices you make in your life in any way I can. I promise.

**Joslin:** Oh Daddy.....Oh I was so su-sus-scared. (*sobs*)

**Norman:** There there Joslin. It's o.k. now. It's o.k.....

You don't need to be scared any more.....

No more worry.....Not any more, that's all over. ....

I'm going to help you all I can from now on.

**Joslin:** Uncle Jack t-told me it would be o.k. but I d-didn't completely believe him.

**Norman:** Jack?

**Joslin:** Yes. I w-was helping him with the f-f-fireworks and he just looked at me and said, "G-go and tell your D-dad, everything will be alright. I p-promise you." And Tom was right there smiling and nodding and winking at me, so they must have talked. Oh Daddy! I w-wish we were that close.

**Norman:** Mm!, seems everyone knew 'cept me.

**Joslin:** S-saved the b-best till last.

**Norman:** Oh Joslin, my sweet kind ever thoughtful little lesbian. I must have done something really good in a previous life to deserve someone as good as you.

**Joslin:** Oh Daddy.

**Eloise:** *(Off-stage)* Hey Norm where's that radio. *(Enters)* And where's.....

*Norman beckons. All three embrace. Whoosh of a rocket going off and a big bang with the colors on the backdrop.*

**Jane:** *(Off-stage)* Oh that's beautiful, just beautiful.

*A chorus of cheers and applause from off-stage.*

*Lights fade to black.*

*END OF PLAY*