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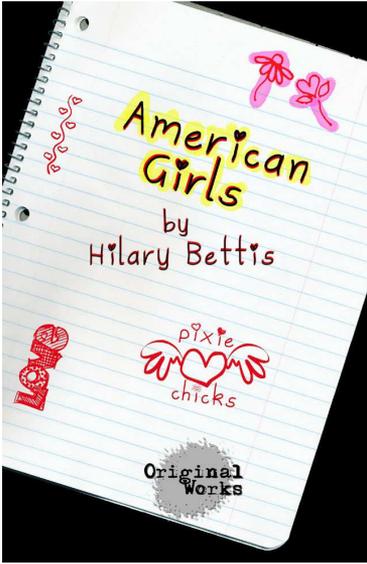
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AMERICAN GIRLS

By Hilary Bettis

Synopsis: In a celebrity driven culture, BFF's Katie and Amanda are at a cross-roads. They are two God fearing Iowa girls fresh out of middle school, but have their sights set on much bigger things. They want fame, even if it means selling their souls to the Devil in the name of the Bible. If they can achieve

their goals the boys will croon with lust and the mean girls will cry with envy. Pastor Jim preaches the Lords way while the girls pursue their Hollywood dreams in the big city. Flush with naiveté the girls journey takes them down a dark and seedy path, putting them at odds with one another and forcing them to grow up much too fast.

Cast Size: 1 Male, 2 Females, (1 Female on video)

“a thought-provoking, squirm-inducing, very funny meditation on sexual politics among America's youth...”

—NYTheatre.com

THE CHALK BOY

By Joshua Conkel

The Chalk Boy opened on September 4th, 2008 in simultaneous productions in New York and Los Angeles. The New York production was produced by The Management at UNDER St. Mark's and had the following cast:

Penelope (Penny) Lauder - Jennifer Harder
Breanna Stark - Kate Huisentruit
Lauren Radley - Mary Catherine Donnelly
Trisha Sorensen - Marguerite French

Directed by Joshua Conkel
Stage Managed by Kelsi Welter

The Los Angeles production was produced by Company of Angels at The Alexandria. The cast was as follows:

Penelope (Penny) Lauder - Sarah Rosenberg
Breanna Stark - Sonora Chase*
Lauren Radley - Amy Golden
Trisha Sorensen - Claire Bocking

Directed by Courtney Sale
Stage Managed by Ricki McKissock

*Jennifer Harder flew to Los Angeles and filled in as Breanna Stark for several of the last performances.

Cast of Characters

PENELOPE (PENNY) LAUDER:

15, maladjusted, melancholy, and on a search for meaning.

BREANNA STARK:

15, Penny's best friend. Introspective and masculine. Wears her heart on her sleeve.

LAUREN RADLEY:

15, a nice Christian girl. Also plays MOM, GILL, and MRS. CHALK.

TRISHA SORENSEN:

15, an athlete and Breanna's best friend.

Also plays MISS MURKOWSKI, JEFF CHALK, and DOCTOR SALISBURY.

Scene

The playing space is defined by several chalkboards of varying sizes that are drawn or moved about to suggest various locations. There should be lots of shadow around the playing space for the actors to move in and out of. Also, there may be a small prop table onstage to hold odd and ends. In general, a few chairs and small props, coupled with sound design, should indicate setting when needed. The play is written to be performed without interruption or blackouts and with actors transforming onstage whenever possible. Let us not be trapped by literalism.

Time

Clear Creek, Washington. The present-ish.

THE CHALK BOY

ACT ONE

(As the audience enters the space there is pop music playing. Two teenage girls are drawing on the chalkboards. They occasionally giggle, dance a little, make a comment to one another, but they pay little attention to us. LAUREN RADLEY is a perky girl-next-door in designer jeans. TRISHA SORENSEN, her friend, is in sportswear and a t-shirt that reads, "Christian Athletes". They are drawing feverishly on the chalkboards now, as if a time limit is upon them. They draw houses, pine trees, roads, a school, a football field, a McDonald's, and, finally, a long creek. As the audience is seated and the music comes down, the girls quickly fix their hair and adjust their clothes one last time. Lauren nods to Trisha as if to say, "let's go" and the play begins. They speak directly to the audience.)

LAUREN: Hello. First of all, we want to thank you all for coming to this event. My name is Lauren Radley and this is Trisha Sorensen and we're here representing the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, of which I am the President. Even though I no longer play Volleyball because it conflicts with the Spring musical.

TRISHA: You all look really nice. I hope you enjoyed the Orangeade in the lobby. I made it.

LAUREN: So before we begin, we wanted to start with a prayer, so let's all of us join hands. Go ahead don't be shy. *(Lauren and Trisha link hands and bow their heads.)* Hi, God. It's me, Lauren Radley. I hope you're well. Please look over me and my family as well as Trisha and her family, lord. Please forgive us our trespasses, lord. We care not what we do. Please look over all the awesome people in the world, lord, and take pity

on the not-so-awesome. Last of all, please help us to understand recent events and gain wisdom from them, lord. Let us reach catharsis through your love or what have you. Okay, thanks. Bye, God.

TRISHA: Bye. Amen.

LAUREN: *(Back to audience)* Okay, so... we're here to tell you about Clear Creek, Washington and the events that unfolded there.

(Trisha writes, "Clear Creek, WA" on the board. As the presentation continues, Trisha hurriedly tries to point out everything that is being discussed on the chalkboards. It is exhausting.)

LAUREN: This is Clear Creek High School, where we go.

TRISHA: There's our football field. GOOOOOOOO Vikings! And there's our McDonald's.

LAUREN: How do you describe a town like Clear Creek?

TRISHA: It's a shit hole.

LAUREN: Trisha!

TRISHA: Well, it is.

LAUREN: Have you ever been to Disney World? It's totally magical, which is why it's called the magical kingdom. But then you leave Disney World and you're in Orlando. Orlando is not magical. Orlando is strip malls and chain restaurants. Clear Creek is kind of like that, but smaller and in Washington instead of Florida.

TRISHA: And there aren't any beaches.

LAUREN: Right. No beaches. We have a creek though. Clear Creek. Which is sort of a misnomer, really, because it's actually full of cheeseburger wrappers and old tires.

TRISHA: Yeah, I guess it used to be different, like there were all these farms and stuff. My grandma can remember when there were no highways here. She keeps a candy dish of pills on her table and drinks a twelve pack of Bud Light every day so...

LAUREN: One thing that's awesome about Clear Creek is we have every restaurant you could ever imagine. They just opened up a Taco Bell slash Pizza Hut on Piney Street, which was really exciting.

TRISHA: Oh. I forgot to draw Taco Bell.

(Trisha begins to frantically draw it.)

LAUREN: You're embarrassing me.

TRISHA: I wish we were there right now! I want a grilled stuffed burrito!

LAUREN: We'll go after, now shh! *(Trisha freezes. They continue the presentation.)* Anyway, where was I? Oh yeah. Clear Creek is one of *those* towns. You know the ones. They all look exactly alike from the highway at night, forming a dotted line across America's grossly obese belly.

TRISHA: Wow. That's really poetical.

LAUREN: Thanks, Trish. (*To audience*) Clear Creek is where the events you are about to witness took place and it's these events that make Clear Creek a little different than other towns. Beneath its banal exterior, this town hides a nasty secret. Part One. *The Town That Dreaded Sundown.*

(*Trisha writes "Part One" on the board and keeps tally marks for the passing days.*)

LAUREN & TRISHA: Day one.

TRISHA: No big deal. Probably nobody noticed except for, like, his mom.

LAUREN & TRISHA: Day two.

TRISHA: The police are called.

LAUREN: People start looking. The mall. The woods. Police dogs sniff at the wet grass.

LAUREN & TRISHA: Day five.

TRISHA: By this time it's all over the news. People start to walk quicker on the street.

LAUREN: And lose sleep. I haven't slept.

TRISHA: Me neither.

LAUREN & TRISHA: Day seven.

TRISHA: I heard the football players telling faggot jokes on my way to the girls' locker room. I think they're just trying to forget that they could be next, the chickens.

LAUREN: My mother goes bananas. It's like she thinks that somebody is watching her. She's like Jamie Lee Curtis in her own personal *Halloween*.

TRISHA: Right, like your mother could ever wear high wasted bell bottoms.

LAUREN: I know, right?

LAUREN & TRISHA: Day eight.

LAUREN: Paranoia, paranoia, paranoia. The town is on total lockdown.

TRISHA: So much for our youth group trip to Orcas Island.

LAUREN: We'll start on day eight. This is our English teacher, Miss Murkowski, who we think is a paranoid schizo.

(Lauren looks to Trisha expectantly.)

TRISHA: Um. What?

LAUREN: Do your Murkowski for them.

TRISHA: You do it. You're the actress.

LAUREN: Yes, but your Murkowski is funnier.

TRISHA: I think you're being modest. *(To audience)* Lauren played Emily Webb in last year's production of *Our Town* and she was SO good. You don't even know.

LAUREN: Come on.

TRISHA: Ugh. Fine.

(Trisha procures the ugliest pair of glasses ever made and transforms into MISS MURKOWSKI. Lights shift. We are suddenly in a classroom full of teenage chattering. She addresses her class.)

MISS MURKOWSKI: Eyes here, class. Eyes on me. Okey-dokey. I have a very important announcement to read on behalf of the Sheriff's Department, so listen closely. *(She reads from an invisible piece of paper in her hand.)* In light of recent events all persons under the age of eighteen are to go home immediately after school. *(Groans. Murkowski shushes them.)* No, none of that. This is for your protection. *(Reading)* A strict curfew will be in place from sundown to sun up until further notice. Any persons not adhering to the curfew will be subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, a two-hundred dollar fine. The curfew is in effect immediately. Thank you. Sheriff Dick Sparks. Sheriff's Department. Clear Creek County. *(She is finished reading.)* Boys and girls, it is imperative that you be careful out there. These are such dangerous times. As immortal as you might feel, you could be taken just like that. *(Snaps her fingers for emphasis.)* When I was your age I knew a girl, Erica Morielli, and she disappeared. They looked and looked but eventually gave up. She ran away, we told ourselves, girls run away all the time. Two months later they found her in an abandoned freezer. **HER FACE HAD BEEN SCRAPED OFF.** That's when I learned that these things happen all the time and could happen to any of us. Even me, dear old Miss Murkowski. Why, I could be scooped off the

street and thrown into a van. It could happen. Somebody could drive me to a secluded location, like by the old abandoned drive-in off Route 9 perhaps, and they could tie me up and abuse me in more ways than you could possibly imagine. It's a simple fact. I could be abused... sexually. I could be stabbed, starved, frozen, dismembered, thrown into an old well... anything. Ah, but I know how to defend myself. I know a trick. Everybody take out your keys. *(She takes out a set of keys.)* Now, you place a key between two fingers like so. See how sharp and jagged that is? You can use that to gouge out the eyes of an attacker. Now, I want you to shout while you do it. *(She punches at the air and shouts as if in a self-defense class.)* No! *(the teens shout "no" in unison.)* NO! *(Again, the teens echo her.)* NOOOOOOOOOO! *(Silence. Murkowski recovers.)* That's right, boys and girls. If a stranger ever comes up to you, somebody that makes you feel uncomfortable or lays a hand on you, I want you to pop their eye out. POP! Just like a cork. These are our times, boys and girls. These are our times. *(Beat)* Okey-dokey. Mark Temple will now grace us with his oral presentation on Lord of the Flies. Mark, whenever you're ready.

(The lights go back to normal. Lauren applauds as Trisha removes the glasses and becomes herself.)

LAUREN: That was really good! And scary accurate.

TRISHA: Thanks, Lauren.

LAUREN: Moving on. Ladies and gentlemen, we now have the slight displeasure of introducing you to Penny Lauder and Breanna Stark who are-

TRISHA: Total fucking bitches.

LAUREN: Trisha! Try not to curse so much. You are here representing the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, don't forget.

TRISHA: I'm sorry.

LAUREN: *(To audience)* Trish is just upset because Penny-

TRISHA: Shut up, Lauren!

LAUREN: Okay, fine. Anyway, let's just say these are not the most popular girls in school.

TRISHA: They worship the devil!

LAUREN: So this is Penny. *(PENNY appears. Her look is sort of punky promiscuous. She has a backpack.)* Penny is a little white trash and sort of an s-l-u-t, or so I'm told. She doesn't have a dad that I know of but her mom is, like, really young. She teaches my mom's Pilates class at that gym for fat ladies in the mall. *(BREANNA appears dressed in baggy boy's clothes. She has a backpack too.)* Breanna's family is sort of loaded, but nobody likes her because people say she's a lesbian.

TRISHA: It's true. We were always on the same soccer team when we were little and that's how I know. Breanna Stark used to be my best friend but then she tried to grab my tit at an eighth grade sleepover.

LAUREN: You never told me that.

TRISHA: It was before we were friends and I before I made Christ my personal lord and savior.

LAUREN: Oh. *(To Audience)* Anyway, that's enough exposition. We'll be back in a bit.

TRISHA: Kisses, bitches.

(Lauren and Trisha exit. The lights shift as Penny and Breanna begin their scene. A clearing in the woods at dusk. Each girl holds a bottle of cough syrup in their hands. They are in a stare down.)

PENNY: One, two, three... GO.

(Breanna doesn't move.)

BREANNA: Will this work?

PENNY: Yes, I told you it would, now drink it. God!
One, two, three... GO.

(They chug their entire bottles. They gag.)

BREANNA: It's hard to drink. Harder than Vodka.

PENNY: John Stratton said it, like, totally fucked him up.
Like he couldn't even walk.

BREANNA: Wow.

PENNY: I know, right?

BREANNA: Should we have done that? I have a quiz tomorrow.

PENNY: What quiz?

BREANNA: In Algebra II.

PENNY: There's no quiz in Algebra II.

BREANNA: Yeah, there is.

PENNY: Shut up. No there isn't.

BREANNA: Yeah, there is. I told you like twenty times.

PENNY: When?

BREANNA: Like twenty times. Plus we have a curfew.

PENNY: Like I give a wet shit about quizzes and curfews.

BREANNA: You should listen to me more often.

PENNY: You should be less boring. You know all the guys at school said they'd never even talk to you if you didn't give oral?

BREANNA: Who said that?

PENNY: Lots of guys.

BREANNA: Which guys?

PENNY: I can't say.

BREANNA: I don't give oral.

PENNY: Yes huh.

BREANNA: I do not.

PENNY: Do too.

BREANNA: Who?

PENNY: Mark Temple.

BREANNA: Just once.

PENNY: So?

BREANNA: So what?

PENNY: So you give oral, that's what.

BREANNA: Only once!

PENNY: But if you didn't then no guys would talk to you and that's my point. You're boring and sometimes I don't even know why I'm friends with you.

BREANNA: So don't be.

PENNY: Maybe I won't. Maybe I'll go hang out with Trisha Sorensen like you used to.

BREANNA: Go ahead. Everybody would just make fun of you because everybody knows that Trisha pooped her pants at the Hot Springs and wiped her butt with a newspaper.

PENNY: That's just a rumor.

BREANNA: How would you know?

PENNY: Because I'm the one who made it up.

BREANNA: Penny!

PENNY: What? She's a bitch.

BREANNA: You are such a whore.

(Penny gives Breanna a Charlie horse.)

PENNY: Don't ever call me that!

BREANNA: Sorry! God. *(Rubbing the spot.)* That really hurt.

PENNY: I meant it to.

BREANNA: God.

PENNY: Well...

BREANNA: What?

PENNY: You shouldn't have called me that. And stop saying "god" after everything. It's so annoying.

BREANNA: Sorry. *(Beat)* People threw food at her in the cafeteria. We all called her "shit stain."

PENNY: What do you care? I thought you hated her.

BREANNA: I do, but what did Trisha Sorensen ever do to you?

PENNY: Nothing. I don't know. Shut up.

BREANNA: Tell me.

PENNY: Okay, okay. Stop giving me the third degree.
God! So remember when you and me and stubby and
Trisha and Jeff were at The Olive Garden last Spring?

BREANNA: Uh huh. What?

PENNY: I let Jeff Chalk finger me under the table and-

BREANNA: Oh my god, gross!

PENNY: And I didn't want Trisha to tell anybody! She
was the only one who knew.

BREANNA: Penny, I've known her, like, my whole life.
She wouldn't tell anybody.

PENNY: Now she won't.

BREANNA: Gross.

PENNY: Shut up, Breanna.

BREANNA: You are nasty.

PENNY: I said shut up!

BREANNA: Fine, jeez. I don't see why you let Jeff do
that. Do you like him or something?

PENNY: I don't know.

BREANNA: You deserve better. Somebody who laughs at your jokes. Somebody who likes you for you. *(The cough syrup high kicks in at this precise moment.)* Somebody who likes the way the setting sun bounces off your golden hair. *(Beat)* I feel dizzy.

PENNY: Yeah, well you just drank a whole bottle of cough syrup. Dizzy is the goal, I guess.

BREANNA: I can see everything breathing.

PENNY: You retard.

BREANNA: Why are you so mean to people?

(Penny's high kicks in.)

PENNY: Who knows why anybody does anything?

BREANNA: Do you see that? Everything is breathing.

PENNY: Yeah. Wow! Breanna?

BREANNA: Uh huh?

PENNY: I think we should do it now.

BREANNA: Okay.

PENNY: Do you have the stuff?

BREANNA: Yeah.

PENNY: Then let us begin. *(Something strange is happening with the lights. Eerie music. Penny pulls an ornate dagger from her bag.)* We start by drawing a pen-

agram in the earth with the sacred dagger. *(She hands the dagger to Breanna who uses it to carve a pentagram into the ground as Penny retrieves five white candles from her own bag. She sees Breanna's work.)* That's a Star of David, dummy. Do it over!

(Breanna erases the circle with her sneaker and quickly draws it again as penny lights each candle and places it at each of the star's points. Breanna unfolds a purple cloth and they kneel on it.)

BREANNA: *(Chanting)* This purple cloth is for protection.

PENNY: This purple cloth is for protection. *(She lights a black candle.)* Visit us, spirits. Bless us with your patronage.

PENNY & BREANNA: With this candle we invoke thee. *(Penny pulls a metal bowl from her bag. Breanna pulls a plastic bag full of garlic from hers.)* We offer you this bowl of garlic.

BREANNA: Speak with us.

(Penny pulls a goblet from her bag. She looks to Breanna.)

PENNY: Did you bring the ceremonial wine? *(Breanna pulls a box of wine from her bag and pours some into the goblet. Penny uses a needle to prick her finger and then squeezes it into the goblet.)* Breanna, give me your finger. *(Breanna timidly offers her finger and lets out a tiny yelp as Penny pricks it. She lets it drip into the goblet.)* Okay. Lie down. *(Breanna lies with her head in Penny's lap. Penny calls to the heavens while the music reaches a crescendo.)* We call the spirit of Jeff Chalk.

Speak through this girl, Jeff. If you have left this mortal coil, enter our circle! Speak through his girl, Jeff Chalk! So mote it be! So mote it be! SO MOTE IT BE!

(The music stops. Pause.)

BREANNA: I don't feel good.

PENNY: Be serious.

BREANNA: I am serious. I think I'm gonna barf.

(Breanna crawls to the edge of the stage and vomits.)

PENNY: Idiot. You broke the circle. God!

BREANNA: Sorry. It's all that cough syrup.

PENNY: You can't handle your drugs. The cough syrup was supposed to enhance it.

BREANNA: I'm sorry.

PENNY: This sucks.

BREANNA: We can try again.

PENNY: It's no use. We're not powerful enough. We need four so we can call the corners.

BREANNA: Call the what now?

PENNY: CORNERS. Don't you read any of the books I give you? I swear... You have to call upon the powers of the North, South, East and West. Like in *The Craft*.

BREANNA: Right. *(Pause. Penny turns from Breanna and sulks.)* Penny, you hardly knew him.

PENNY: It seems that way but you don't know everything. Ever since that time at The Olive Garden I just... I love Jeff Chalk. I mean, I think I love him, kind of.

BREANNA: Wow.

PENNY: Right? And now I might not ever... I mean, I might not ever be able to talk to him again. If he ran away he might not come back. And if he's...

BREANNA: Don't.

PENNY: Well, he's been missing for over a week.

BREANNA: Search and Rescue is looking.

PENNY: So? Did they ever find me all those times I ran away? Search and Rescue didn't find me and I was just at Foot Locker. What if he's dead?

BREANNA: You're better off without him. Guys are shit. I hate how girls are supposed to be these, like, flavorless non-people, these meek little things, just so we can be some dude's cum bucket and squirt out his awful babies.

PENNY: You've never been in love.

BREANNA: Maybe I haven't. But anyway, I'll never wear high heels.

PENNY: Don't be stupid. God!

BREANNA: Sorry. What will make you feel better?

PENNY: I don't know. I think my high wore off.

BREANNA: I know what we can do-

PENNY: I'm just gonna go home.

BREANNA: We can go to Albertson's and do whippets!

PENNY: I don't wanna.

BREANNA: Come on.

PENNY: Who are you taking to the Harvest Dance?

(Breanna gives Penny an incredulous look.)

BREANNA: What? I'm not going to that.

PENNY: If Jeff is alive... I mean, do you think if he comes back he'll ask me to the Harvest Dance? You're right. He's alive. Everything is gonna be fine. I'm gonna marry him some day.

BREANNA: It's dark. We should leave.

PENNY: Penelope Chalk...

BREANNA: I'm barfing to death.

PENNY: Mrs. Jeffrey Chalk...

BREANNA: LET'S GO.

PENNY: All right, already. God!

BREANNA: *(As they exit.)* I think you're still high.

(They are gone. Lauren and Trisha enter. They continue their presentation.)

TRISHA: See? Total freak show.

LAUREN: Okay, now I don't want you to think I'm a b.i.t.c.h. because I would never make fun of somebody for being poor, but Penny Lauder lives in one of those manufactured homes they advertise on television.

TRISHA: It's so sordid.

LAUREN: You don't have to be mean.

TRISHA: She makes my skin crawl.

LAUREN: *(While retrieving a pair of sweat pants and a remote control.)* I know. Here. Help me get into these sweat pants. *(Trisha opens the sweat pants and helps Lauren step into them. Lauren puts a scrunchy into her hair.)* Penny's mom always wears sweat pants. Like, always. And her hair is always pulled back into a scrunchy. She'd actually be really pretty if she'd only try. She's really young for a mom. Like, thirty-one or thirty-two. She went to Clear creek High School with my second cousin Rachel who said she was actually really popular.

TRISHA: Who knew?

LAUREN: Here is a picture of what life is like in the Lauder household. Part Two.

(Trisha writes "Part Two" on the board. Dance music and lights shift. We are in the Lauder's living room. Lauren has transformed into MOM, who is furiously doing Pilates before the blue glow of the television. She hears a noise and stops exercising.)

MOM: Hello? *(She turns off the music with the remote control. A floorboard creaks.)* Is somebody there? Penelope is that you? Hello?

(Penny enters with Breanna. Mom is frightened and jumps.)

PENNY: Yes, it's me. God!

MOM: You scared the shit out of me. I almost bludgeoned you with the remote control.

PENNY: Sorry.

MOM: Hello, Breanna. How is your mother?

BREANNA: She's sort of been-

MOM: Penelope, do you know what time it is? What the hell were you thinking?

PENNY: It's just eight.

MOM: There's a curfew. You think I don't know? Let me tell you something, I know everything. I got eyes on the back of my head and ears like a fox so don't you try anything.

BREANNA: Sorry, Mrs. Lauder. We were just doing one of our spells and lost track of time. Won't happen again.

MOM: You see that it doesn't. And I don't like this witch stuff, Penelope, not at all. I told you that already.

PENNY: Wicca is my religion, mother.

MOM: You're a Lutheran and you know it. Witchcraft or whatever is a, I don't know, a hobby.

PENNY: I'm not a Lutheran and neither are you.

MOM: I am so a Lutheran!

PENNY: Oh yeah? When do you ever got to church?

MOM: I go plenty.

PENNY: Like when?

MOM: PLENTY.

PENNY: And when exactly did you decide to become a Lutheran again? When did you have that great epiphany that you should be a Lutheran?

MOM: You think you're *so* cute.

PENNY: Well?

MOM: You know that Grandma and Grandpa are Lutherans and their parents before them. Don't change the subject.

PENNY: I can't remember what the subject is.

MOM: I'll tell you, miss smarty pants. You just waltzed through my front door after curfew when something absolutely bonkers is happening in this town. That's the subject. And what if you'd been caught? Picked up by the police? They'd fine me. Deem meet an unfit mother and take you away maybe. You want that? And don't call me "mother". It's passive aggressive the way you say it and I don't like it. My name is Mom.

PENNY: I'll call you Mom if you call me Penny.

MOM: Fine. Have it your way. But I'll have you know Penelope was married to Odysseus. I mean, she was only a queen for Christ's sake.

PENNY: I know, I know. Jesus! What's for dinner?

MOM: I didn't cook. (*Penny glares at her.*) I was too nervous! You had me biting my nails, girly. Anyway, from the looks of that gut I'd say you've had enough. If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times. If you don't stop gaining weight no boys will ever ask you out.

PENNY: Mom, please...

MOM: I say these things out of love. Do you want to die alone? Hmm? If you keep eating garbage do you know what will happen? One day you'll put on that special little black dress and you'll take a look at yourself in the mirror and it'll look like you're trash bag full of hamburger meat. I promise you that.

PENNY: Stop nagging, please. I'm hungry and so is Bre-anna.

MOM: Well, Breanna lives in that great big house up on Hillcrest so I'd bet she's got food there. In a two thousand dollar stainless steel fridge!

BREANNA: (*Quietly.*) They bought it at Sears.

MOM: As for you... microwave some popcorn. NOT the Butter Lover's.

PENNY: Breanna is staying the night here.

MOM: I didn't say she could do that.

PENNY: Please?

BREANNA: If it's okay.

PENNY: You can't send her home in the dark. Kids are dropping like flies.

MOM: That's not funny.

PENNY: I didn't mean it to be.

MOM: That poor boy is out there in the dark somewhere tonight. Think about that.

BREANNA: We're really sad about Jeff.

MOM: Bless your heart. See, Penelope? Why can't you be more like your friend here? At least she knows how to act like a lady.

BREANNA: Wow.

PENNY: Can she stay the night or not?

MOM: I'm sorry, girls, but it's a school night. I'll drive you home, Breanna. I have to go out anyway. I'm all out of Crystal Light. Just let me get cleaned up.

(Lauren, as Mom, exits.)

PENNY: Brown noser.

BREANNA: Stop.

PENNY: Well, you are.

BREANNA: I was being polite. You want her to like me, don't you?

PENNY: Like you, not hump you. She practically gets wet every time you come here.

BREANNA: Gross!

PENNY: Tell me about it.

(Pause)

BREANNA: I don't want to go home.

PENNY: I know. This sucks.

BREANNA: I don't want to be alone. I want to sleep with you. I hear noises at night. A man. When I'm lying in bed I can hear his footsteps in the driveway. Footsteps in the gravel.

PENNY: There's no man in your driveway.

BREANNA: I know what I hear.

PENNY: Look, I wish you could stay too, but you can't.
Anyway, we need to think of a way that we can help
find Jeff. Like something nobody's thought of.

BREANNA: I don't really think he's alive.

PENNY: What?

BREANNA: I'm sorry, but I don't. I was trying to make
you feel better, but I don't believe it. Not anymore.

PENNY: God, Breanna!

BREANNA: Well, you know what happens to people
who disappear around here just as well as I do.

PENNY: Shut up.

BREANNA: Are you mad?

PENNY: Yes.

BREANNA: Do you hate me?

PENNY: Yes.

BREANNA: I'm sorry.

PENNY: It's fine.

BREANNA: Maybe I'm wrong and he's okay.

PENNY: No. You don't get to do that. You don't get to take things back when you upset somebody.

BREANNA: Okay. Then I think Jeff Chalk is dead. I think something really shitty happened to him and now he's dead. Happy? Man, I let you walk all over me and I never say anything just because I want you to like me, or whatever.

PENNY: Dumb bitch.

(Lauren, as Mom, enters with her car keys.)

MOM: Okay. Let's go. Penelope, I want you to lock the doors behind us, all right?

PENNY: Okay.

MOM: And I want your homework started by the time I get back. Do you understand? *(Penny and Breanna are locking eyes.)* Look at me. HEY! Grades are important. I don't want you to ruin your life the way I ruined mine.

PENNY: Okay, okay.

MOM: I'll be back in a half an hour. Love you! *(Lauren, as Mom, exits.)*

PENNY: *(Quietly.)* Get. Out. Of. My. House.

(Breanna sheepishly leaves. Penny paces back and forth slowly thinking.)

PENNY: Mrs. Chalk. Mrs. Penelope Chalk. Penelope Louis Chalk. Penelope Lauder Chalk.

(She continues to pace and talk to herself as Trisha enters and observes her. Penny doesn't see her.)

TRISHA: *(To audience.)* Charming. *(During the next few lines she sets up for the next scene, placing a television and chair. She puts on a men's track jacket and baseball cap, but does not transform.)* So this is sort of a sub section of Part Two. Let's call it Part Two A. *(She adds an A next to where "Part Two" is written.)* Around this time it's pretty common for us girls to sleep over at each others houses in big groups. Even on school nights. Not because we're all bull dykes like Breanna Stark, but because it just feels safer. Fun fact. The noise that Breanna heard was actually her own eyelashes brushing against her pillow case and not a man's footsteps in the gravel like she thought. She never figured that one out. I know this because I'm the narrator and I'm whatchamacallit... omniscient. *(She sits down in the chair with the television in her lap.)* Anyways, this is the dream that Penny had that night.

(LIGHTS SHIFT TO: We are somewhere dark and surreal. Strange noises drift quietly from the shadows. Trisha has transformed into JEFF CHALK. Jeff Chalk sits in the chair with the television in his lap. He dully flips through the channels, transfixed. Penny, who has been pacing through all of this, notices him.)

PENNY: Jeff?

JEFF CHALK: I can't get ESPN down here. It totally sucks.

PENNY: Where are we?

JEFF CHALK: A hole. A basement?

PENNY: Are you hurt? Something is different about you.

JEFF CHALK: I'm bored. I've been spending most of my days asleep. Waiting for something to happen. Nothing ever happens around here. I guess this is something though, isn't it?

PENNY: I don't understand. Is someone holding you here or--

JEFF CHALK: He gave me this tv to watch. No cable though. I've been watching a lot of *M.A.S.H.* That shit is always on.

PENNY: You know, you're more popular than ever. Suddenly everybody thinks you're like the greatest guy who ever lived. I got called into the principal's office to talk to the police. They don't have a fucking clue.

JEFF CHALK: I'm kind of lucky when you think about it. When I get out of here I'll be like a total celebrity. In the papers and shit.

PENNY: You're already in the papers. Listen, I was wondering... do you like me?

JEFF CHALK: You seem sad a lot of the time.

PENNY: I am. Aren't you?

JEFF CHALK: Not really. Wanna watch *The Price is Right*?

PENNY: Sure. (*She watches television with him.*) When it happened the first time I couldn't tell if you really liked me at all. I'm still not sure.

JEFF CHALK: Ssh.

PENNY: What you did, I've never let anybody do that to me. And I really like it when we meet by the creek but I don't know why we have to keep it a secret.

JEFF CHALK: This dude comes down here sometimes. He's okay. At first I thought this was all some kind of gay thing because he asks to touch my face all the time. That's it. Just touch my face. I thought it was creepy at first, but now I'm used to it. I mean, as long as he doesn't do anything else. It's funny, I'm so used to being told what to do. I guess I was used to it. Down here though... I mean, at least he asks me first. The guy loves me. Not in a gay way. I think he's just lonely. Anyway, he gets me whatever I want as long as I let him touch my face and I talk to him when he wants, and like that. (*He smacks the side of the television.*) I'm thinking of asking for cable. Man, it's gonna be awesome when I go back. Things will be different because I'm different. Something different finally happened to me.

PENNY: I wish you'd touch me like that. I'd like it.

JEFF CHALK: I'm watching my show.

PENNY: Come back with me.

JEFF CHALK: I can't. Everything is gonna be different now.

(*Penny exits. LIGHTS SHIFT TO: Trisha gets out of Jeff drag as Lauren enters and joins her. They continue speaking to the audience.*)

LAUREN: So here's the 411 on Jeff Chalk. He's not especially smart.

TRISHA: Or very interesting.

LAUREN: He's athletic.

TRISHA: He's all body.

LAUREN: Yeah. That body is... wow.

TRISHA: He's cute.

LAUREN: He's gorgeous.

TRISHA: Tell them about the horse girls.

LAUREN: There are these girls at school we call the horse girls. They're girls who live on farms, usually. They have greasy hair and Target jeans and are really quiet. Thing is, they all love horses. They sit there and draw horses in their notebook all day long, never talking to anybody.

TRISHA: There's five or six of them. Kelly Sanders is one.

LAUREN: I'm secretly kind of one of them. I mean, I love horses. My grandparents have this ranch in California. It's amazing there. When I was twelve I fell in love with this horse named Foggy. I'd, like, groom him and ride him and whisper all my stupid secrets to him. I felt so close to him, even though he was sort of quiet and aloof as horses tend to be. He was my best friend that summer, which must sound totally queer.

TRISHA: Horses are a metaphor! (*Lauren glares at her.*)
Sorry. Sheesh.

LAUREN: Anyway, one day I was leading Foggy through a field when I slipped in mud and fell. It was quick as lighting and I guess the impact of my little body hitting the dirt must have spooked him. He reared up his front legs and came down on me. Hard. His hoof hit me right on the ear. And I was wearing these really cute earrings I got for my birthday too. It was shocking because I'd trusted him so much, you know? I was like, F you, Foggy! I didn't go near him for the rest of the summer. But I wanted to. Because he was so beautiful. And the fact that he was all aloof and dangerous made me want to be near him even more. And, really, that is sort of how Jeff Chalk is.

TRISHA: He's also a shoe-in for Prom King in a couple of years.

LAUREN: Oh, and also, this one time, Jeff got a bloody nose in P.E. when Stubby hit him in the face with a volleyball and I saw Penny Lauder pick up the bloody tissue and put it in her pocket.

TRISHA: You lie.

LAUREN: For real.

TRISHA: What did you do?

LAUREN: Nothing, but it was really weird. I was P.O.'d at her. Like, really mad.

TRISHA: What she did was vomit worthy.

LAUREN: No, actually. Because I didn't want her to have it.

TRISHA: I'm dying. This is a train wreck.

LAUREN: Let's move on. Day twelve. Part Three.

(Trisha brings the tally on the board to twelve as-- LIGHTS SHIFT. BOOTY SHAKING MUSIC AS: Lauren and Trisha are dancing like women in a hip hop video, much too suggestively for girls their age.)

TRISHA: The Harvest dance, bitches!

LAUREN: Trisha! No cursing! Oh! And Penny and Breanna are friends again. That's just how it is here. Go with it.

(The music fades into a slow jam as Trisha and Lauren fade into the dark corners in the background. On either side of the stage's rear, they slow dance with their backs turned to the audience. Their arms are crossed over their breasts and their hands caress their backs, creating the illusion they are each a couple slow dancing. Penny and Breanna enter and awkwardly sway back and forth to the music.)

BREANNA: Some dance. What kind of dance ends at 4:30 in the afternoon anyway?

PENNY: I love the theme. "Under the Sea". Ha!

BREANNA: Yeah, these butcher paper starfish make me feel like a mermaid.

PENNY: Look at Ashley.

BREANNA: Just because she's got huge jugs she thinks she's better than everybody.

PENNY: I would never wear that dress. What a skank.

BREANNA: I know. You could get hepatitis just from looking. I can't stand her.

PENNY: Me neither. Wait, who is she dancing with? Is that--

BREANNA: It's John Stratton. I thought he liked you. Guess not.

PENNY: Whatever. I don't care.

BREANNA: Me neither. Why are we here, anyway? I'd rather be doing, like, anything.

PENNY: I know, right? I wish Jeff were here.

BREANNA: I know.

PENNY: I had a dream about him, you know. I dream about him all the time now.

BREANNA: That's messed up.

PENNY: Do you think he would ask me to dance? If he were here, I mean?

BREANNA: You'd probably have to ask him. Guys suck that way.

PENNY: I think he would.

BREANNA: Maybe. We should cast a spell to make Ashley's breasts fall off.

PENNY: We can't do that. It would come back to us three times fold.

BREANNA: I know. It would just be fun, is all. Anyway, I know you and Jeff had some sort of... connection. But I think you're only hung up on him because he's gone now and the whole town's obsessed with him.

PENNY: That's not it. Anyway, why not obsess over him? He is the most popular guy in school.

BREANNA: Since when does that matter to you?

PENNY: I don't know. It's just... why does it have to be just *us* all the time, you know?

BREANNA: Oh.

PENNY: No, I mean, you're my best friend. But there are other people in the world besides just us.

BREANNA: Yeah, but we hate them.

PENNY: Yeah, but what if we don't have to. Seriously, sometimes it just feels like this whole town is just me and you and, like, two other people. Maybe we should broaden our horizons.

BREANNA: I don't want to. We both grew up here. We have fifteen years of experience that says we're better than them. We're getting out of here. Just look at how powerful our magic has gotten in the past six months.

PENNY: What magic? Nothing ever works.

BREANNA: You're so cynical.

PENNY: Whatever.

BREANNA: Seriously, Penny, I think you're really special. I think there's this sweet, sensitive, gorgeous person inside of you that nobody notices. But I notice. I just wanted you to know.

PENNY: Wow. Thank you.

BREANNA: I'm serious. I wish you saw yourself the way that I see you. *(Pause)* Quiet! Here comes Trisha Sorensen.

(Trisha dances downstage from her shadowy corner.)

TRISHA: What's up, ladies?

PENNY & BREANNA: Hey, Trisha.

TRISHA: Some dance, huh?

BREANNA: Yeah, it's awesome.

TRISHA: Have you guys seen Mark Temple?

BREANNA: No. Thank God.

TRISHA: Oh, right. I forgot you gave him a bj.

BREANNA: I did not!

TRISHA: Oh. I'm sorry. Was I not supposed to know that? Well, I know a lot, Breanna Stark.

PENNY: Leave us alone.

TRISHA: I'm not doing anything. Anyway, if you see Mark tell him I'm looking for him. I think he's avoiding me.

BREANNA: I can't imagine why.

TRISHA: Hey...

BREANNA: Hey what?

TRISHA: You didn't happen to hear a rumor about me, did you?

BREANNA: No, not at all.

TRISHA: Whatever. I'm gonna go find Mark. Kisses, bitches.

(Trisha retreats to her shadowy corner and continues to impersonate a slow dancing couple.)

BREANNA: I hate her.

PENNY: You and everybody else.

BREANNA: Let's hit the snack table. I want some calamari.

PENNY: I'm not allowed.

BREANNA: You're not fat.

PENNY: Tell that to my mom.

BREANNA: She hates fat.

PENNY: I know. God! It's like she's pushing me to purge.

BREANNA: Well, do you want to dance?

PENNY: What? With you?

BREANNA: Sure.

PENNY: We can't do that. What would people say?

BREANNA: What do you mean? Lots of girls are dancing together.

PENNY: *(Looking around.)* Okay, I guess. *(They begin to awkwardly slow dance.)* I'm glad we're friends again.

BREANNA: Me too. Let's never fight again.

(Breanna lays her head on penny's shoulder. They slow dance for a minute. Lauren approaches them.)

LAUREN: Hi, guys.

PENNY & BREANNA: Hi Lauren.

LAUREN: It's weird that Jeff's not here, isn't it?

PENNY: Yeah.

LAUREN: I kind of wanted him to ask me, but...

PENNY: I think a lot of girls did.

LAUREN: Yeah, well. Anyway, I want to ask you something. This is kind of awkward. Did either of you spread a rumor that Trisha had an accident in her pants?

PENNY: What? No.

LAUREN: No, I know. That's what I told her too, but... she thinks you did it, Breanna.

BREANNA: Me?

LAUREN: Because you're not friends anymore. Her feelings are really hurt. I mean, she's actually really sensitive.

BREANNA: Right.

LAUREN: Can I ask you guys another question? You don't have to answer.

PENNY: Okay.

LAUREN: Are you guys really witches?

PENNY: Yeah.

LAUREN: Oh. Well, I want you to know that you're always welcome at youth group. It's really fun. We meet at the flagpole in the lawn every morning if you ever---

BREANNA: Thanks. *(To Penny.)* Let's go.

PENNY: Okay.

LAUREN: Anyway, bye. Have fun!

(Penny and Breanna exit. Trisha approaches Lauren.)

TRISHA: Why were you just talking to Breanna and Penny?

LAUREN: I wasn't.

TRISHA: Then what the fuck was that I just saw? I thought I told you not to talk to them.

LAUREN: Who are you cursing at right now? Seriously, it must be someone else.

TRISHA: You're supposed to be *my* friend.

LAUREN: I am.

TRISHA: Then why were you just chatting it up with that carpet muncher and that trailer trash?

LAUREN: Look, I was just trying to find out if they were the ones who spread that rumor about you.

TRISHA: I already know that they were.

LAUREN: How?

TRISHA: Because Emily Grey, from my Lacrosse team, told me that Penny told her. I told you that already. Man, I'm gonna kick Penny Lauder's ass!

LAUREN: Did it ever occur to you that people wouldn't spread rumors about you if you were a little nicer to them?

TRISHA: I AM NICE. I mean, I try to be nice but some people make it really hard. They're such freak shows! Especially Breanna. God, I hate her! It's like, she knows this person who *used* to be me, but isn't me anymore. You know? I wanna be like, *you don't know my fuckin' life, bitch!*

LAUREN: I think they're kind of interesting.

TRISHA: What? I'm gagging.

LAUREN: I know they're going to hell and everything, but at least they don't care what anybody thinks of them. That's more than I can say for some people around here.

TRISHA: Fine. Hang out with them. Sacrifice cats. See if I care. I'm gonna go find Mark.

(Trisha exits. Lauren looks to the audience.)

LAUREN: That's terrific. You try to help somebody on they poop on you. Anyway, Part Three, I guess. Day fourteen. Two weeks in.

(She brings the tally on the chalkboard to fourteen and writes "Part Three". LIGHTS SHIFT. CREEPY MUSIC... Behind the football field Penny and Breanna play with a Ouija board.)

BREANNA: Stop moving it.

PENNY: I'm not moving it.

BREANNA: Well, I'm not moving it.

PENNY: I know. (*Suddenly putting on her mysterious voice.*) It's the spirits. They're all around us, called upon by our magicks.

BREANNA: Creepy.

PENNY: Do not fear the spirits, Breanna.

BREANNA: Okay.

PENNY: Now ask your question.

BREANNA: Now? Just, like, ask?

PENNY: Ask.

BREANNA: Okay. Um... spirits? Does John Stratton like Penny--

PENNY: Breanna!

BREANNA: -- Because he was dancing with Ashley.

PENNY: You can't ask the spirits that! God!

BREANNA: Why not?

PENNY: Because it's totally trivial, is why.

BREANNA: It's not trivial to me.

PENNY: Ask them something else.

BREANNA: Fine. *(Pause.)* I can't think of anything.

PENNY: Let me. *(Mysterious voice.)* Spirit world, tell me... is Jeff Chalk still alive.

(As the indicator begins to move they read its answers in unison. The lights dim. Music.)

PENNY & BREANNA: Yes.

PENNY: Did he run away?

PENNY & BREANNA: No.

BREANNA: Was he abducted?

PENNY & BREANNA: Yes.

PENNY: Where is he now?

PENNY & BREANNA: U-N-D-E-R-G-R-O-U-N-D. Underground.

BREANNA: Buried?

PENNY & BREANNA: No.

PENNY: In a cellar?

PENNY & BREANNA: Yes.

PENNY: Will somebody find him?

PENNY & BREANNA: Yes.

PENNY: When?

PENNY & BREANNA: S-O-O-N. Soon.

PENNY: Soon? Soon, *when?*

PENNY & BREANNA: S-O-O-N.

PENNY: When the fuck is soon? Today?

PENNY & BREANNA: Yes.

PENNY: Is he okay? (*The indicator begins to spin around on the board furiously, not landing on anything.*) IS HE OKAY?

BREANNA: Penny...

PENNY: I said, is he okay? The indicator lands on "goodbye".

BREANNA: Goodbye. Shit, Penny. That was really creepy.

PENNY: Oh my god. Jeff is alive.

BREANNA: Penny--

PENNY: My dream wasn't a dream. It was a prophecy.

BREANNA: Prophecy?

PENNY: Like when you see the future?

BREANNA: I know what it means.

PENNY: Don't you see? This means our magic is getting stronger.

BREANNA: Quiet. Here comes Trisha Sorensen.

(Trisha enters with Lauren behind her.)

TRISHA: Well, well, well. If it isn't he bitches of Eastwick. Sacrificing cats?

LAUREN: Trisha...

TRISHA: *(To Lauren.)* Quiet, you.

BREANNA: What do you want, Trisha?

TRISHA: Nothing. I just thought I smelled cheap hair product out here. Now I know why.

BREANNA: Just leave us alone.

TRISHA: I'm not bothering anyone. Am I bothering anyone, Lauren? *(Lauren opens her mouth to respond but Trisha cuts her off when she notices Penny sitting pensively.)* Why is she being so quiet?

BREANNA: Lauren, get her away from us, please.

TRISHA: *(To Penny.)* I know it was you who started that rumor about me. I just want you to know I plan on telling everybody about Jeff Chalk and the Olive Garden. I mean *everybody*.

BREANNA: You tell anybody that and I'll beat the shit out of you.

TRISHA: Excuse me?

BREANNA: You heard me.

TRISHA: Protecting your pig dyke girlfriend? You want to fight me?

BREANNA: That's what I said.

TRISHA: I'd like to see you try, hag.

BREANNA: Bitch.

TRISHA: LESBO. God, what happened to you? You used to be normal. I can't believe I was ever friends with you. Consider your membership to the secret society of super awesome sisterhood officially revoked.

BREANNA: I don't care.

TRISHA: WE TOOK A BLOOD OATH.

(Penny comes between them.)

PENNY: You know what? I'm sorry. I started that rumor and I shouldn't have so... I'm sorry.

TRISHA: What?

PENNY: Yeah, I was scared you would tell people about Jeff and I guess I just sort of freaked out. I'm sorry. Friends?

LAUREN: See, she apologized Trisha. Let's just go now.

TRISHA: (*To Penny.*) What are you trying to do?

PENNY: Nothing. I'm just apologizing.

TRISHA: You're up to something. I can tell.

PENNY: I'm being sincere. I swear.

LAUREN: (*Placating Trisha.*) See, that's nice. (*To Penny.*) Apology accepted, Penny.

TRISHA: Will you just shut the fuck up, Lauren? You're always *blah, blah, blah* and I'm sick of it. You think you're so much better than everybody else.

LAUREN: No I don't! I... you know what? No. That's it. I can't help you anymore, Trisha. God knows I've tried, but I just... You're a heathen, plain and simple. AND EVEN JESUS HAD LIMITS. I'm leaving.

(*Lauren exits. Trisha calls after her.*)

TRISHA: Good riddance! (*Back to Penny.*) You think you're so cool. I don't know what Jeff saw in you.

PENNY: Jeff?

TRISHA: Jeff. *Jeff*, Jeff. He told me he was going to ask you out.

BREANNA: You're an asshole.

TRISHA: I'm totally one-hundred percent serious. That was before he disappeared, of course. Poor Penelope Lauder. The one boy who liked her disappeared and then she spent the rest of her life alone with her cats and her Satanism and her pig dyke life partner.

BREANNA: Shut up, shit stain!

PENNY: Jeff was going to ask me out?

TRISHA: Maybe he was and maybe he wasn't.

PENNY: Was he?

BREANNA: Get out of here, Trisha.

TRISHA: No!

(Breanna grabs her by the hair and yanks her as hard as she can. She does not let go.)

BREANNA: I said... Get. Out. Of. Here.

(Breanna throws Trisha to the ground, releasing her.)

TRISHA: You're gonna be sorry you did that. Just wait until you hear what I just heard, you stupid bitch!

(Trisha retreats into the shadows, where she begins to transition.)

BREANNA: What a fucking asshole.

PENNY: I had to get rid of her. I don't feel good.

BREANNA: Penny, what's wrong?

PENNY: I have a funny feeling, I guess.

BREANNA: What kind of feeling?

(Trisha suddenly reenters the light as MISS MURKOWSKI.)

MISS MURKOWSKI: Penelope! Breanna! What did you do to Trisha Sorensen? I just saw her crying!

BREANNA: Nothing, she--

MISS MURKOWSKI: -- Never mind that now. Come with me into the gym. Something has happened.

(LIGHTS SHIFT AND... We are in the gym. Anxious chatting fills the air.)

MISS MURKOWSKI: Okey-dokey. Listen up, boys and girls. Eyes here. Eyes on me. *(The chattering doesn't stop so she blows into a whistle. It stops immediately.)* Listen to me. I hate to be the bearer of bad news. There's been a break in the Jeffrey Chalk case. I want you all to be on guard. Mrs. Chalk was collecting her mail, when...

(Lauren, as Mrs. Chalk has appeared in a bubble of light. She is dressed in a bath robe and holds a manila envelope. She opens the envelope and peers inside. She screams. She puts her hand in the envelope and slowly lifts its contents. It is a human finger. She faints. Her light goes out.)

MISS MURKOWSKI: Police and search parties will continue to look for the rest of Jeffrey, but I regret to inform you he is presumed dead. (*Strangely, Miss Murkowski begins to speak in gibberish.*) Blah blah blobbity-blah. Blah blah blah... blah. (*In the meantime,*) blah blah blobbity-blah...

(*Miss Murkowski's gibberish begins to fade out until--*
LIGHT SHIFT...In the car. Lauren, as Mom, drives Penny and Breanna home. She is in a panic.)

MOM: Right here in our own town! Breanna, I want you to try calling your parents again as soon as we get to the house.

BREANNA: I just don't know where they could be. I hope they didn't go away for the weekend without telling me again.

MOM: They wouldn't do that, sweetie.

BREANNA: Sure they would. They do it all the time. They go to, like, conventions.

MOM: I went to a science fiction convention with my sister last year. She just loves *Star Trek*.

BREANNA: Yeah, not that kind of convention.

PENNY: Breanna's parents are swingers.

MOM: Penelope!

PENNY: What? It's true.

MOM: That is not true. Is that true, Brenna?

BREANNA: Yes.

MOM: Rich people are crazy.

PENNY: Mother!

MOM: I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Breanna. I'm just a little anxious. I need a Valium or something.

PENNY: At your stress level a person needs black tar heroin.

MOM: PENNY. Do you understand what's happened? Right here in our own town? You girls don't know how lucky you are to be young and healthy. Each day of life is a gift. It's a cliché, but it's true. (*To Penny.*) And you! You were a blue baby, Penelope, blue as a damn Smurf and you almost died.

PENNY: Please don't tell this story. It's so gay.

MOM: Penelope!

PENNY: What? God!

MOM: You're cousin Seamus is a gay and I don't think he'd like to hear you talk that way.

PENNY: What guy would sleep with Seamus? He has a birthmark on his face that makes him look like a burn victim.

MOM: Well, I don't like it.

PENNY: Just please don't tell the story. I feel awful

BREANNA: I'd like to hear it.

PENNY: God!

MOM: You were blue. I don't know what causes it, something to do with nitrates in the blood or some such thing, but you sure were blue which apparently really bad in infants. Not to mention your umbilical cord was strangling you as you emerged from the womb... blah blah blobbity blah...*(Her language begins to devolve into gibberish as something strange happens to the lights. Penny stares out her window.)* Blah blah blobbity blah blah blah...

(Slowly, as if in a dream, Trisha appears in a bubble of light as Jeff Chalk. She is missing a finger. She waves at Penny slowly. Penny, confused, waves back. Trisha as Jeff Chalk disappears as the lights go back to normal.)

MOM: Blobbity blah blah blah. So, yeah, you're lucky to be alive, Miss Tough Stuff. And I'm lucky too.

BREANNA: That is such a sweet story.

MOM: Bless your little heart.

PENNY: I don't feel good.

MOM: What's wrong? Did you eat too much at school?

PENNY: I'm gonna be sick.

MOM: What?

BREANNA: Oh my god.

PENNY: Pull over.

(The car stops. Penny gets out and runs to the edge of the stage and vomits. Mom calls to her.)

MOM: Are you okay, honey? *(Penny wipes her mouth but doesn't answer.)* Penelope?

PENNY: Yes, I'm fine. Penny gets back into the car.

MOM: Do you want to lie down in the back seat?

PENNY: I said I was fine. Just drive. God! *(Mom starts the engine. They drive in silence for a way.)* I'm gonna have a baby.

(Mom and Breanna stare at her.)

MOM: What did you just say?

PENNY: I'm having Jeff Chalk's baby. I don't want to talk about it.

(Silence. Trisha enters and speaks to the audience.)

TRISHA: Go have some Orangeade. Come back in ten minutes.

(LIGHTS FADE OUT.)

END OF ACT ONE