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The Interlopers
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Dusk

by James McLindon

2 Males, 2 Females

Synopsis: Dusk is that time of day when, "if you didn't know what time it was, you wouldn't know which is going to win, the light or the darkness." So says Nana, the matriarch of an Irish Catholic family in Cambridge, Massachusetts struggling to decide whether to accept the Church's settlement offer or go to trial over a priest's sexual assault of the family's youngest son. Over the course of one day, the family must face truth and lies, faith and disillusionment; and betrayal, forgiveness, and redemption on their journey toward peace.

Mitzi's Abortion

A Saint's Guide to Late-Term Politics and Medicine in America

by Elizabeth Heffron

4 Females, 3 Males

Synopsis: With humor, intelligence and honesty, *Mitzi's Abortion* explores the questions that have shaped the national debate over abortion, and reminds us that whatever we may think we believe, some decisions are neither easy nor simple when they become ours to make. A generous and compassionate comedy with serious themes about a young woman trying to make an intensely personal decision in a system determined to make it a political one.

THE INTERLOPERS

By Gary Lennon

Dedicated to Jorge Nunez

The Interlopers received its world premiere at The Bootleg Theater in Los Angeles in June 2011.

The production was directed by Jim Fall.

The cast and crew were as follows:

Lou - Diarra Kilpatrick

Michelle - Trevor Peterson

Gertie - Tara Karsian

Ed - R. D. Call

Victoria - Darryl Stephens

Frank - Paul Elia

Mister Alvarez - Leandro Cano

Daniel - Clifford Morts

Understudies: James Burns, Ralph Cole, Jr.

Set Design by Jason Adams

Costume Design by Ann Closs-Farley

Lighting Design by Sohail e. Najafi

Video & Sound Design by Corwin Evans

Choreography by Kristin Campbell-Taylor

Original Score by Mervyn Warren

Stage Managed by Sara Gosschalk

Produced by Jessica Hanna and Alicia Adams

Press Representation by Ken Werther Publicity

Assistant Stage Manager – John Miller

Assistant Costume Designer – Kharen Zuenert

Sound & Video Operator – Heather Young

Wardrobe – Rosey Johnson

Master Electrician – Jenna Pletcher

Light Crew – Matt Fowler, Amber Koehler, Michelle Stann, Justin Preston,

Jon Stoner

Group Sales – Dominik Rothbard

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MICHELLE - a male to female pre-op transgender. Shy. A flower waiting to bloom. Lost and looking to be found. Michelle is someone who feels, "in between worlds."

LOU - a female to male pre-op transgender. A true tomboy. Has a manly swagger and is charming. Has a sense of humor this is contagious. Radiates light and warmth through his hard exterior.

GERTIE - Michelle's mother. A large woman who feels trapped in a body, a marriage and a world that she wants to get out of. A fierce mother with a wicked sense of humor and a need to please others.

ED - Michelle's father. A blue collar conservative who is use to getting his own way. Ed struggles with the world which is moving at such a fast pace. He would like to stop the hands of time and bring them all back to a time when things were simpler. He is living proof that **ARCHIE BUNKER** is alive and well and living in **LOS ANGELES**.

VICTORIA - a bigger than life personality. Funny, flamboyant and chatty. Victoria is a party boy who has been looking for love in all the work places. Victoria is someone who has always looked outside of himself to fix his wounds. It is not until he meets his match, that he slows down enough to realize who he really is and begins to enjoy/accept himself.

FRANK - a blue collar guy. Funny, sees the glass half full. Good guy. Can fix a sink and make a mean martini. Conflicted and a little bit of a showman himself. He enjoys telling a story and having an audience.

DANIEL - a therapist. Altruistic, empathetic, and compassionate. A man who has seen it all and still cares. An adult in a world full of children.

MISTER ALVAREZ - Lou's father, who is an immigration who has had a lifetime of disappointments and a bad time assimilating to his life in the states and the idea that his treasured daughter wants to be his son.

SETTING: In and around Los Angeles, California. Here and now.

THE INTERLOPERS

(Lights up on Michelle, thin and a sharp dresser in grey attire, and Lou, hip hop accessorized, sitting in a waiting room.)

The two keep stealing looks at each other. Both very unsure of themselves. Lou looks at Michelle, then Michelle looks away. Michelle looks at Lou, and Lou looks away. Again. Both very wary of each other. Again, but this time they look right at each other in the eye. Finally one speaks.)

LOU: Who are you?

(Michelle doesn't respond and picks up a fashion magazine and pretends to read. Lou takes a beat, then goes for it.)

LOU: Are you looking at me? Because If you're looking at me, I'm looking at you.

(Michelle is surprised by this comment but not interested.)

MICHELLE: No, I'm not looking at you.

LOU: How rude.

MICHELLE: Excuse me?

(... and it is on. The two go at it.)

LOU: I mean, I said that to break the ice...so we could talk. I was being nice. It was an ice breaker to kill the silence.

MICHELLE: I'm fine with silence.

LOU: I'm not.

MICHELLE: Apparently. Sorry, but I'm not a big talker. Can't we just sit here and wait?

(Lou is offended.)

LOU: OK, calmaté chika! I just gotta face the fact that I have to start off my day trying to be nice to a sad, lonely little white girl.

MICHELLE: Wait, you think I'm sad? That's not a very nice thing to say.

LOU: Who said I was nice? I tried nice with you and it didn't work. Anyway, you keep lookin' down at your feet and you don't want to talk and... What am I suppose to think?

(Michelle interrupts Lou.)

MICHELLE: I'm not sad. I'm shy.

(A truce? Not exactly. Lou tries another angle.)

LOU: OK, great, cuz I'm good with shy people.

MICHELLE: Not today you're not. You are batting zero. Can we just sit in silence?

LOU: No, this is a public place and I feel like talking.

MICHELLE: Then talk to yourself, while I wait.

(Lou pulls his chair closer to Michelle.)

LOU: *(deep voice)* I dig you.

MICHELLE: Just my luck. This is not my day.

LOU: I grow on people.

MICHELLE: Yeah, like a tumor.

LOU: No, I'm more like a bottle of wine, I get better as time passes. Let this moment... breathe.

(Lou takes a big deep breath, then exhales. Lou looks toward Michelle, as if asking her to do the same.)

LOU: There. See. Better. No?

(Tiny beat. Michelle looks deep into Lou's eyes.)

MICHELLE: No.

LOU: I don't give up easily. I'm not a quitter. I really dig your spunk.
Like your game of hard to get.

MICHELLE: Trust me, it's not a game. I don't like you. Shoo.

LOU: Ahhh. There's that spunk again.

(Michelle can't believe her luck and ignores Lou and focuses on the fashion magazine. Lou sizes Michelle up. This isn't working. He tries a different tactic.)

LOU: OK, let's see. Who are you? White... girl. Shy. Nineteen, twenty tops. Likes fashion. Give you points for tryin'. Grey isn't your color. In fact it's nobody's color. Try red. Spends a lot of time on the computer, hence no people skills. What? Two, three cats? Ring a bell?

(Michelle looks up.)

MICHELLE: You are so wrong about me. You have no idea who I am.

LOU: Good.

(Lou's response takes Michelle off guard.)

MICHELLE: What? What does that mean? Good?

LOU: *(flirting)* It means... that I'll have a lot of time to get to know you... if I don't know you at all. It's a good thing.

(Beat.)

LOU: ...and I'd like you to get to know me too. All right?

(Michelle pauses to think about this. Then...)

MICHELLE: I think silence would be better.

(Michelle moves two seats away and begins reading her fashion magazine. Lou feels ignored.)

LOU: What? What, am I bothering you? Do I smell? Are you too good for me?

MICHELLE: No, I just had to move because the light was hurting my eyes. The seat was uncomfortable and, well, some stranger was just shouting in my ear... and... as I said... I like silence.

LOU: Strangers are just friends waiting to happen.

MICHELLE: Not really. I don't think so. Not with me anyway. Would you please go harass someone else?

(Lou sizes Michelle up. He lets Michelle have it.)

LOU: No, you moved because you didn't want to be next to me. Is something wrong with me?

MICHELLE: No, really, I didn't. I moved because... because...

LOU: What, what? Explain. I wanna hear it. What lie you gonna say?

(Michelle thinks about telling the truth. Anything to shut this guy up.)

MICHELLE: I moved because, I have a medical condition... that, that...

LOU: Oh, I want to hear this. This is gonna be a good one.... What, spit it out. What condition? You're lying, you just..

MICHELLE: I'm not lying. Will you let me speak? Hear me out.

(Beat.)

MICHELLE: I have a medical condition called Exquisite Sensitivity. For real.

(Without missing a beat.)

LOU: Yeah, right. And I have a horrible case of Terribly Talented and Handsome.

(Michelle laughs. Thinking, this guy may not be so bad.)

MICHELLE: You're funny.

LOU: Thank you. You hear to see the doc?

MICHELLE: Yeah.

LOU: First time?

MICHELLE: Yeah.

LOU: Don't worry. He's cool. You'll like him. It's not gonna hurt.

MICHELLE: Are you here to see him too?

LOU: No.

(This answer surprises Michelle.)

MICHELLE: Then why are you here in his waiting room?

LOU: My father is the janitor of the building. I brought him his lunch and on my way out I saw you sitting here by yourself and you looked like you... I don't know... you could use the company... Like you wanted to talk. Like you needed to talk. You looked pretty from far away... and I wanted to get to know you. So...

(Michelle takes a beat.)

MICHELLE: Pretty? I'm not pretty. Don't start lying.

LOU: I'm not. You are. You are pretty to me.

MICHELLE: Really? For real? You thought I was pretty?

LOU: From far away ...yeah...just kidding...Yeah, really. Look at those eyes. Beautiful...and those feet.

(Michelle can't help but be taken in by the flattery.)

MICHELLE: And what do you think up close?

LOU: I think I was right. You're the whole package. A little crazy, but who isn't? I'd like to get to know you. You open to that?

(This is very hard for Michelle to say.)

MICHELLE: You know I'm a man right? I got what you got in your pants.

(Lou studies Michelle. For real? Yep. Michelle is a man in a dress. SURPRISE! No problem here. Lou pumps out his chest, sure of himself.)

LOU: Nobody's got what I got in my pants.

MICHELLE: Trust me. I do. I'm built like an African American from the waist down... I've got a huge penis. I know gross.... gross.

LOU: You got my attention. Wow. Keep talkin'.

MICHELLE: And I'm not gay.

LOU: Really, how is that possible? You're a dude in a dress? Explain.

MICHELLE: I'm not a homosexual. I'm not attracted to men. I like women. I'm a pre-op transgender.

LOU: Whoa, Wait up. This is good. So, you're a guy who likes to dress up as a girl... but you don't like guys... you like girls?

MICHELLE: Yes, that's right. That's me.

LOU: Freaky. So ultimately..you'll be some sort of... strange dyke?

MICHELLE: Right, sort of. If I'm lucky. If the operation goes well.

LOU: Crazy. You realize you're going about this the long way right? I mean you could just be a heterosexual man who sleeps with women.

MICHELLE: But then I wouldn't be a woman.

(A moment of silence between them.)

MICHELLE: So you still interested in getting to know me?

LOU: Shit, I'll do a guy. I ain't scared. I'm an equal opportunity employer. Know what I'm sayin'? I swing both ways. I don't like labels. I'm not gender rigid. I don't like being stuck in a box. I like love. All of it.

(They stare at each other for a beat. Love? Did he say love? A Mexican standoff, then...)

LOU: Do you believe in love at first sight?

MICHELLE: No, I don't... and I'm not buying what you're selling here ok? I'm not going to have sex with you.

(Lou is offended.)

LOU: I didn't ask you to. Who do you think you are rejecting me before I even asked...

MICHELLE: Oh, I'm sorry. I just thought that...your rap was all about getting in to my pants.

LOU: I'm just talking here. Chill. Chill. Mamita'. It ain't all about sex. Relax mami'... I'm talkin' friends to start. You know until you can't resist my rap and you throw yourself at me crazily and I have to pry you from my leg.

(Michelle laughs. She is starting to enjoy this conversation and opening up.)

MICHELLE: Ain't gonna happen. Trust me.

LOU: We'll see... anyway, most friendships outlast marriages right? My uncle is on his third wife. So, you wanna hook up? I mean be friends? For now? Friends?

MICHELLE: Sure.

(An awkward moment between them.)

MICHELLE: You are so... so... up front. Different. Honest, it's nice.

(This silences Lou... for a few seconds. Michelle feels bad.)

MICHELLE: I'm sorry, did I offend you?

LOU: No, no, not at all.

MICHELLE: Then why'd you get all quiet?

(Lou sits silent for a few beats and then he goes for it.)

LOU: I guess I should tell you the truth about me, if we're gonna be friends.

MICHELLE: The truth? What? What are you saying?

LOU: My father isn't the janitor of this building. I'm a pre-op female-to-male transgender.

(Michelle is surprised... and wants to say something but Lou rattles on.)

LOU: I was testing to see if I could pass. I look like a guy right? Damn. I look good. Right? You know I do. I look fine! If you were into guys you would be all up in my shit. You know it. I'm fine. No?

(Michelle looks Lou up and down. The wait is killing Lou.)

LOU: You'd like me, right?

MICHELLE: Yes. You make a good looking guy.

LOU: That is an understatement. Look at my arms. Muscles. You can call me muscles.

MICHELLE: Ok, muscles. You're a hot guy.

LOU: And I wasn't lying when I said nobody's got what I got in my pants... I got a nine inch stuffed sock in my pants. I like to think big.

MICHELLE: Charming. Very interesting. I guess it's important to shoot for the moon... even if you land on the roof.

LOU: Now you're talkin'. You bought it right? You ain't just being nice.

MICHELLE: No, I bought it. You pass. The whole package.

(Lou is so excited that he passed for a man. He can't stop himself from rattling on.)

LOU: The testosterone is working. Right? It's like floating around the room. I'm manly no? You like my side burns? I've been shaving for two weeks now. We'll be in group together. My name is Lou. My full name is Luis Shakeem Miguel. I'm half Mexican and half Black. I use Lou for short.

MICHELLE: Good idea.

LOU: Use to be Louisa. What's your name?

MICHELLE: Michael. I mean Michelle. I'm sorry. I'm still getting used to the change. Nice to meet you Lou.

LOU: I like the way you say my name....Lou. I could get use to that.

MICHELLE: It's a beautiful name. It's simple. I like that. Lou.

LOU: You can say it soft now, but you'll be screaming it soon enough.

(Lou laughs at his own joke.)

MICHELLE: I don't think so.

(Just then Victoria, an exuberant pre-op male to female blows into the room like a hurricane, ruining Lou's rap with Michelle.)

VICTORIA: Heeeey! Hey Lou, aren't you lookin' manly, and whose this girl? You making friends?

LOU: This is Michelle.

VICTORIA: Hi Michelle.

MICHELLE: Hello.

LOU: She's here to see the doc.

VICTORIA: OK, then we'll be in group together. The more the merrier.

MICHELLE: What's your name?

VICTORIA: My name's Victoria. Vic for short. My good friends call me Boozy Linda. It's a long story... so I drink a little. Shoot me. Everyone's got a vice. Right?

MICHELLE: I guess.

VICTORIA: You guess?

MICHELLE: Yeah, I actually don't drink at all. I don't go out much, so...

VICTORIA: Boo you not going to the rally downtown to revert DOMA?

MICHELLE: I'm afraid to say it, but wasn't planning on it.

VICTORIA: WHAT?! How you can complain that we don't have equal rights and you ain't doin' nothin' about it.

MICHELLE: I wasn't complaining.

VICTORIA: That's your first problem. You should be. You young ones these days are amazing. You all need to get political.

LOU: Oh, no, here we go.

VICTORIA: Shut up and listen and learn, boo. Learn your political history of what we're doing here. Live your politics. Some of you young people's points of references only go as far back as to Transamerica, the movie, and honey we've been around a lot longer than that. I want to make sure you kids know your history... so I talk...

LOU: A lot.

VICTORIA: That's right because I'm a citizen and I'm not going away.
I will be heard.

LOU: Amen.

VICTORIA: Amen is right, you could make fun of me all you want, but you KIDS could learn alot from me. Cuz I see getting my dick chopped off as a political statement. It's not some cute whimsical cause. Some easy decision. I mean I'm a big believer of living your politics. I don't support homophobic companies. No, no mam, not me and you shouldn't either. I don't order pizza from Domino's because the CEO is a Klu Klux Klan donator crackhead. Same with the guy who owns Carl's Jr. So no double-double cheese burgers will cross these gorgeous Max factor lips... because the chairman has publicly come out against gays. No Donna Summer albums for me, even though I gasp at "Last Dance." OH, I know Ms. Summer retracted what she said after she missed all those gay dollar bills coming her way, but, I still don't forgiver her. No... if that song comes on and I'm out at a club dancing... I won't dance, so don't ask me. I go to the bar and drink. I sit it out and it hurts but... I sit it out in protest to her beliefs... I spend my dollars where there is love. I support companies that support me.... For me it's HBO, Avis, and Tylenol PM... because I have had a hangover or two in my day. They all support gay-lesbian -bi-transgenger issues. My favorite gay friendly sponsor is Absolute Vodka...because I'm a lush and I get to live my politics...every weekend. BAM! You feel me? I can be political and get drunk...with a martini. I like that! A lot. It gives me pleasure. I go where I am celebrated, NOT where I am tolerated. No baby, not for me. Some people think putting on a dress and a wig is a big joke. Honey, it's not. It's a political statement. Those guys in the seventies who were in wigs on roller skates in nuns' outfits were our heroes... my heroes. ROLLERIEENA was PATTON honey. It's their shoulders I'm standing on. That we're standing on...and those bitches had wide shoulders... I'm tellin' ya'... because without them mustachioed wig wearing hos... I couldn't have gone to my high school prom in a dress...and Honey... I did... and I looked fabulous. FIERCE. They loved me. PRADA! All up and down. I had an easy time coming out because I was never in. I mean look at me. No, I'm serious, look at me. Good, huh? And it's only gettin' better. Good genes.

MICHELLE: Yeah, you're beautiful.

LOU: And so talkative.

VICTORIA: Don't start with me cuz I will take you down.

LOU: Chill.

VICTORIA: You get me talking and I can't shut up. Whew, I worked up a fierce thirst. I'm thirsty. I'm going to the bar. I need a drink.
BYE!

MICHELLE: Nice to meet you.

VICTORIA: Nice to meet you to. Keep your eye on Lou. I seen the way he be looking at you. It's nasty!

LOU: Mind your own bidness.

(Victoria walks off stage like she is on a runway.)

MICHELLE: Is she always like that?

LOU: Yes... and it gets worse.

(A silent beat.)

LOU: What's wrong?

MICHELLE: I'm a little nervous...

LOU: That's probably because you not use to being around such a handsome man, like me.

MICHELLE: I thought we were over that.

LOU: Never, this is some quality FDA approved shit you looking at right here.

(They both laugh and there is a silent beat. They stare at each other in the awkward silence and then...)

LOU: Okay. One last question and I'll leave you alone.

MICHELLE: Okay.

LOU: You can't tell I have tits, right?

(Michelle laughs.)

MICHELLE: No you can't.

(Lou steps close to Michelle.)

LOU: Touch em. G'head. Touch me. I want you to. I promise I won't hurt you. Go ahead.

(Michelle hesitantly reaches out to touch Lou as...)

(A woman, Gertie, steps in to a pool of light at center stage.)

GERTIE: I feel like I've let go of everything... including my appearance. I mean look at me. I've never been this heavy before in my life... never. I'm the size of a house. Some people say that I'm NOT heavy, but for me this is heavy. They say that I am thin, and that it is all in my head. To that I say fuck you. Try fitting into my pants. Others say I have body dismorphia. I don't think so. I think I have a thing for doughnuts and a very slow metabolism. I don't know what size I am now, but I use to be a petite zero. Uhhhh, I know, can you imagine? Gorgeous. I want to go back and look at my life and find that moment that I gave up on myself... the moment I threw in the towel and gave up on myself. It's there ...it's always there. I woke up this morning completely freaking out about turning fifty... and I'm only forty-two. I created eight years of anxiety in a blink of a second. I feel like I'm losing it. I feel like I'm losing my mind. I'm getting the operation the last Tuesday before the holidays. It's sort of a Christmas gift to myself I just feel like after it, I'll be a different person. The person I'm supposed to be... the person you see before you isn't me. This body is on loan from someone else...and I want out. I want to give it back. I can't wait to give it back. I feel like my soul has osteoporosis and my low-self esteem has calcified and this operation will be an archeological dig to the real me. To my skinny healthy self. Underneath all this blubber is a beautiful person... a five-eleven super model named Bertha Izogra. She's exotic. (Continued)

She's exciting. She's got small tits. She's got an accent. She's not this. That's the real me. I tried out for The Biggest Loser and I didn't make it. Do you know how humiliating that was. So shaming. I couldn't even be a loser. What is the universe telling me, cuz I'm listening... but I'm not understanding. I'm not hearing it. Anyway, so much for taste... I hate NBC. I have to get the operation before the end of the year so my insurance will cover it and also so I'll be back on my feet for when Michelle...I mean Michael my son gets his sex change operation. It's funny but I'm not upset about the procedure at all. I mean Michael's, not mine. The gastric bypass is nothing. It's like getting a tooth pulled these days. It's Michael's procedure I'm worrying about. I guess I've been waiting for it. For the other shoe to drop. I understand what it feels like to be trapped in someone else's body...a body that isn't yours. Michael is growing up fast. I mean I knew Michael, my son... I mean Michelle was different ever since he was born and he started making backless beaded gowns for our salt and pepper shakers. Oh my god. They were beautiful. Gorgeous. BUT my husband didn't think so and he gave Michael a hard time and Michael hasn't picked up another needle and thread since. I think it's a shame. A waste of talent. My husband is cold. He has no compassion... no understanding of the situation. He doesn't eat veal. I mean how can you trust someone who doesn't eat veal? Veal is my downfall...veal is my friend... anyway. It is destiny. That is how I feel bout Michael's sex change. Who are we to say what is right for him? Who are we to impose our sense of what a man is on him? I say get out of his way or I'm afraid he'll stop speaking or worse. I say when the world gives you lemons, you make lemonade, right? We have to get out of his way. Not with my husband though. He ain't having it. Trying to explain my son's situation to my husband is pointless. It's like having resealable lids on ice cream cartons. Ridiculous. Silly. Pointless. I mean, really...whose gonna use them? Right? I will stand by my son as he turns in to my daughter and I will love every pound of her. Every pound. I'm just scared for Michael and my husband though. They are like two trains running on the same track heading for a collision course.

(Michelle walks up to Gertie.)

MICHELLE: Mom, they're ready for us.

(Gertie blesses herself and follows Michelle into a room.)

(Michelle sits on a couch with his father, Ed. Gertie sits in between them.

The therapist, Daniel, unassuming in every way, sits opposite them in an armchair. An uncomfortable silence fills the room. Finally.)

DANIEL: Who are you?

ED: I'm Edward O'Brien.

DANIEL: No, who are you?

ED: I'm Ed. Gertie's husband -- nice guy.

DANIEL: No, who are you? Go deeper.

ED: I'm a plumber from the Bronx... whose now a Californian.

DANIEL: That's a big transformation. Must have been a big adjustment for you. Like Michelle's adjustment. Now, who are you? You. Go deeper.

ED: I'm the father of my only son, Michael, who wants to be a woman.

DANIEL: Please refer to your child as Michelle in here.

ED: I will refer to my only son as God made him. Understand me? He's my son. You're just a headshrinker. Back off buddy.

DANIEL: Why can't you respect Michelle's wishes?

ED: Why can't he respect mine?! I want him to stay as a man! He's not respecting my wishes, is he?

(Silence. They all look at each other. The feeling is where do we go from here. Daniel, always a professional, tries to continue.)

DANIEL: Let's continue. Deeper.

ED: I'm telling you to back off buddy. I'm warning you. Are you crazy? Are all of you people crazy? Haven't you heard a word I said? I don't think any of this is helping him. I think it's making him worse... and we're sitting here playing these stupid word games.

DANIEL: Words have meaning.

MICHELLE: Please try. Please. Dad, please. For me?

(Ed takes a second to compose himself. Daniel takes the opportunity to push forward.)

DANIEL: How do you feel?

(Ed has had enough. He speaks his truth.)

ED: I feel stupid for sitting here in this ridiculous office playing this stupid word game because I have a son who wants to be a fuckin' woman. That's how I feel!

DANIEL: And that upsets you.

ED: Yes!! Are you retarded? Are you a moron!? Of course I'm upset. I should punch you in the face for bringing me here! For talking my son in to being a woman!

DANIEL: I did not talk your son into anything. I'm here to counsel...

ED: Fuck you and counseling.

MICHELLE: There you go Dad. Great. G'head. Ruin everything.

ED: I will ruin everything for a son who will do anything to upset his parents.

MICHELLE: This isn't about you.

ED: No, then who is it about?

MICHELLE: It's about me and you understanding that I've been living a lie.

ED: No, I'll tell you what it's about. It's about a kid who got everything he fuckin' wanted as a child. A kid who didn't have to ask for anything because his father went out and busted his hump day and night to make sure there was food on the table, and books in your bag and clothes on your back, and this kid pays his father back by growing up

to be a fag who wants to cut off his cock and balls and replace it with a CUNT! That's what this is about. This is about a kid who couldn't just be normal. No. Too easy. So he becomes a fag and no that's not bad enough, no. That I might be able to deal with. No, this is about a kid who has to go further than that to humiliate his parents and become a fuckin transgender circus freak. That's what you're gonna look like you know. A fuckin circus FREAK!!! Did this fuckin headshrink tell you that? People are gonna stare at you and point and make fun of you. Did he tell you that? It's gonna be a miserable fucking life! Did he tell you that?! Did he tell you that you'll never pass as a woman?! Did he? That you will always look strange. That you will be ugly!! That people will be always be pointing and whispering about you....about my son....do you want that? I don't want that for you. That's why I'm fighting you. That's why I'm here! I'm trying to protect you from making the biggest mistake of your life. You're not strong enough for that kind of life, Mikey. You are soft. You are weak. You will wind up going off a roof... mark my words... It's a tough world out there kiddo. Wake up! If you go through with this do you realize how hard it is going to be to find love out there? Do you?

(Ed waits for an answer. He looks at his son. Michelle lets the truth out.)

MICHELLE: Yeah, I do Dad. Having been your son all these years, I do. It can't be any harder than that.

(That hurt Ed, but he naturally defends himself.)

ED: Yeah, it can...and it will...mark my words...it will be. Trust me you had it easy with me. Another father would have killed you. I'm telling you think about this...this is the biggest decision in your life.

MICHELLE: I know that... and I've made my choice.

ED: There's no goin' back. This isn't like the time you changed your mind about the color of your bedroom three times in a year. Or the time you made me buy you three pairs of the same shoes and then you never wore them once!! No! No, this is about your low-hangers being cut off! Snip! Gone. See ya. Bye.

DANIEL: Mister O'Brien, I'm going to have to ask you to please choose your words wisely with Michelle.

(Ed turns to Daniel.)

ED: And you!! You should be ashamed of yourself. Talking to these confused kids into going in for surgery. He's an immature child fa Chrissake. He doesn't act his age. What does he know about what he wants?!

(Michelle stands up to his father.)

MICHELLE: I know I want to be a woman. That's it, Dad.

ED: What makes you so sure in ten years you won't change your mind about this?

(Michelle is silenced by his father. Then.)

MICHELLE: I can't explain it but I'm sure. You're going to have to trust me on this.

ED: I can't accept that answer. I won't...and I won't accept you as my daughter.

(Conversation over. A standoff.)

DANIEL: Then you'll lose your child. Are you willing to chance that?

ED: Yes. Then I'll have to live with that.

(Ed takes a beat and turns to Michelle.)

ED: *(to Michelle)* I won't allow this. God won't allow this. God loves you Michael. God love me, he won't...

(And Michelle cuts Ed off.)

MICHELLE: Yeah, God loves you and everybody else thinks you're an asshole.

(That's it! Ed goes after Michelle. Ed throws Michelle up against a wall. Daniel tries to separate them.)

DANIEL: Please stop! Don't!

MICHELLE: Let him! Let him!

(Just before Ed is going to strike Michelle, Ed composes himself. Ed is afraid he will kill Michelle if he hits her. Ed pushes Michelle away from him. Daniel stands between them.)

MICHELLE: Couldn't go through with it? That's not gonna be my problem.

ED: Get away from me! I want you to get your stuff and get out of my house. Take everything with you, because I don't want to see you again. The next time I see you I hope you're in a coffin. You are dead to me. Do you hear me?! I hate you.

MICHELLE: I'd rather be hated for who I am than loved for who I'm not.

ED: Take your fortune cookie bullshit down the street...and take this pathetic excuse of an therapist with you.

DANIEL: I will not let you insult me in my own office.

(Beat. Trouble? Ed makes a choice.)

ED: *(to Daniel)* I'm gonna get outta' here before I do something I regret to you...before they need to call you a fuckin' ambulance.

(Ed turns to Michelle.)

ED: And you....you, are NOT a woman!

(In a split second, Ed snatches Michelle's wig off her head...and holds it in his hand for a second. No one moves. All eyes are on Ed.)

ED: And you never will be! No matter what you do.

(Ed throws Michelle's wig on the floor and walks out of the office.)

(After a silent beat, Michelle, Gertie and Daniel share a look then Gertie picks up the wig off the floor and hands it to Michelle. Gertie turns and heads out of the room.)

LIGHTS come up on Daniel at center stage.)

DANIEL: I'm not very popular with parents...as you can imagine...but I do this job because I truly believe I am helping people become their true selves. Aren't we all here on this big scavenger hunt to the real you...the real me... Be all you can be and all that....see, I don't believe what these kids are doing is wrong...in fact I believe it is their fate... their destiny. Most people don't know that...all fetuses are essentially female...no matter what the chromosomes are. The male brain and reproductive organs develop at some point in utero. Now we believe that TRANSEXUALISM happens when the masculinization of the brain fails to take place. That doesn't mean the child is born a homosexual...it just means that the child was born with male genitalia and a female brain or vice versa with a female to male transgender, like here with Lou.

(LIGHTS come up on Lou and his father SAMUEL ALVAREZ seated on a couch.)

LOU: That's right. That's what's up. That's what I been trying to tell him. It's God's fault.

(Daniel smiles and continues.)

DANIEL: It is that simple. These kids were born in the wrong body. I identify with them and their yearning to have an authentic journey... in their struggle to be whole. No. I'm not a homosexual. I am a heterosexual man. Happily married. I have two kids... one boy and one girl. Perfectly healthy... thank God. I just believe we are all in the same boat... we are all is some sort of transition...aren't we? I mean we all came from water to air...from four legged beasts to two legged humans....we are all always changing and evolving right? From boy to man... girl to woman... employed to unemployed. A lot of trans-genders say that gender is not what's between your legs, it's what's between your ears. Some don't feel the need to have the operation to legitimize themselves, but Lou does. Lou wants the operation and would love for you to get behind him on this. I mean if your true name was George and everyone called you Martha . It would piss you off? Wouldn't it?

LOU: YES. It pisses me off. I been sayin' that. I'm not Martha. I'm Lou.

DANIEL: *(to Mister Alvarez)* Their dilemma is a matter of biology, not a choice....and science answers the question how not why? I'm interested in the why, that's why I am here. They know their true selves. The body doesn't lie. Most people spend their entire life not knowing who they are. And in this case Lou is not going to let that go. Trust me these kids aren't so different than you and I. Your child loves you. Let him be who he is. Lou is a good kid Mister Alvarez. Don't be threatened by Lou's choice. Do you understand what I'm saying?

(Mr. Alvarez takes a few beats before he speaks... in broken English.)

MR. ALVAREZ: I no speak good English. You talk too fast... but I do know... what I have is a daughter. That's all. I will not come back here Doctor. And if you keep talking to her... yo llama lo La Policia. I will call the cops. Please stay away from my daughter. I no want trouble. Louisa, vamos.

(Mr. Alvarez gets up and walks off stage, Lou follows leaving Daniel alone.)

(The lights fade and then center on a beautiful white suit hanging on center stage and then we see Lou admiring the suit.)

(Michelle sneaks up behind him.)

MICHELLE: Hey Muscles.

(Beat. Lou turns around.)

MICHELLE: You like that?

LOU: Damn, you know I do. I love me some clothes. Look at this white suit. Check it out. Wide lapel. Brown buttons. It's on. It's the man. You got that right.

MICHELLE: It's very Al Pacino in Scarface.

LOU: It's very me. It has my name all over it. I'd like to get that suit and wear it home from the hospital... when I get the operation. My pops seeing me in that suit might bring him around.

(Beat. They both stare at the suit. PING! Light bulb moment for Michelle.)

MICHELLE: Get it. You'd look handsome in it.

LOU: That is way too expensive. It's over three hundred dollars. I can't afford that...not even on lay away... white girl... I got the operation to save for... I'll just get a nice new pair of chinos. Let's keep walking before I talk myself into robbing the place.

MICHELLE: Maybe we could pool our funds?

LOU: Forget about it. Let's just check out people.

(Lou holds out his soda to Michelle.)

LOU: You want some?

MICHELLE: No, I'm not thirsty.

LOU: I'm not talking about the soda, I'm talking about me. You want some of this?

MICHELLE: Don't start with that stuff. I thought over the last 3 months we made progress.

LOU: We did, you crazy about me, now.

MICHELLE: You are like a dog on a bone.

LOU: You have no idea.

(Michelle laughs.)

MICHELLE: I like your shirt.

LOU: Thanks. I like your shoes.

MICHELLE: What is this obsession with my feet?

LOU: It's not an obsession... it's... you got some pretty feet. I love open-toe clogs. Not everybody can pull that off.

(Avoiding the compliment.)

MICHELLE: ...and you have two left feet. If you want to be ready for that wedding you are going to with your father, and you want to dance right, you have to practice harder.

LOU: Look, I'm giving it my best shot.

MICHELLE: Explain to me why someone with so much flavor like you, cannot salsa dance? I thought your people had the moves... on both sides.

LOU: If you haven't noticed. My DNA is a little off. The only salsa I know comes with chips.

MICHELLE: Well, if you want me to teach you to dance...you have to practice in between lessons.

LOU: With who? My pops?

MICHELLE: With a broom. Serious, work harder.

LOU: OK... ok, I will. C'mon, lets walk.

(Lou unconsciously takes Michelle's hand as they begin to walk. Michelle pulls her hand away.)

LOU: What? You don't wanna hold my hand? You embarrassed to be with me?

MICHELLE: No, it's not that. It's just... ya never know. There's so many different people around. We could get into trouble. Bikers. Punks. Accountants. I don't want any trouble.

LOU: Screw them. Be proud. We're just two people just like them. If you want to hold hands, hold hands. You don't need their permission. Take a risk. Without risk there is no reward.