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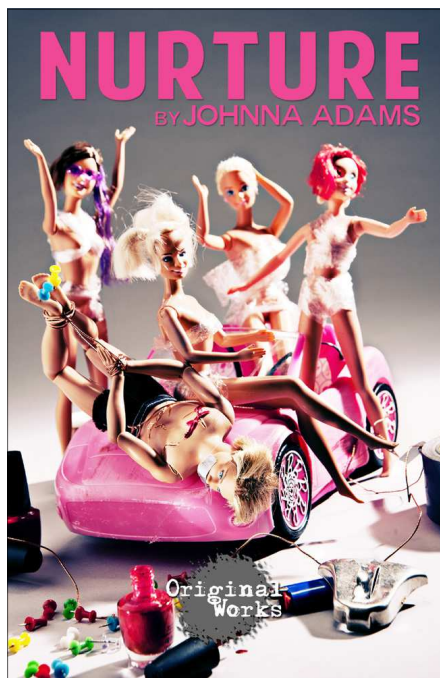
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**NURTURE by Johnna Adams**

**Synopsis:** Doug and Cheryl are horrible single parents drawn together by their equally horrible daughters. The star-crossed parental units' journey from first meeting to first date, to first time, to first joint parent-teacher meeting, to proposal and more. They attempt to form a modern nuclear family while living in perpetual fear of the fruit of their loins and someone abducting young girls in their town.

**Cast Size:** 1 Male, 1 Female

# **Virus Attacks Heart**

**By Shannon Murdoch**

***For JF. Because it mattered.***

*Virus Attacks Heart* was first produced in May 2014 by Pull Together Productions as part of the Planet Connections Theatre Festivity in New York City. The production was directed by Brian Gillespie with the following cast:

Beatrice	Gina LeMoine
Jamie	Luke Wise

*Virus Attacks Heart* received its world premiere in November 2014 at Venus Theatre in Laurel, MD. The production was directed by Deborah Randall with the following cast:

Beatrice	Karin Rosnizeck
Jamie	Joe Feldman

## **Acknowledgements**

Special thanks to Deb, Karin, Joe, Brian, Gina, Luke and everyone involved with the Venus Theatre and Planet Connections productions. You took my words and made something spectacular. Thank you will never be enough. Thanks also to Bailey Jordan Koch, Lily Dorment, Keenan Jolliff and the people of EAT New Works Festival in NYC who helped shepherd this play into the world. This play would not have been possible without the love and support of Juliet Lamont, Kim Weinert and Michael Grigg.

## **CHARACTERS**

BEATRICE                      37 years old, but looks younger.

JAMIE                              19 years old, and looks it.

## **STAGING**

A park bench in a local park surrounded by bushes.

A small bedroom with a double bed. A door to the bathroom. A tall, weathered wardrobe. An open suitcase in one corner. Clothes scattered over the floor.

A single bed in the emergency ward of a small, suburban hospital. A table next to the bed. A plastic chair.

A nightclub in the basement of an industrial building.

## **NOTE ON STAGING**

Settings should be suggested rather than slaves to accuracy to allow for quick transitions between scenes and locations.

# VIRUS ATTACKS HEART

## SCENE ONE

*(The Park Bench. Night. Jamie, dressed in jeans and a t-shirt, stands on the park bench urinating into the bushes. A thick coat lies on the bench beside him.)*

JAMIE: Easy. That's the word. Not simple, but easy.

*(Beat.)*

JAMIE: You can feel words. Did you know that?

*(Jamie waits for a response)*

JAMIE: You knew that. You've got those eyes and sometimes you don't need words when you've got eyes like you have eyes ...

*(Beat.)*

JAMIE: I don't have eyes like that. So I need words. Need them like sleep. And breath. And company. And I have them. Most of them. One day I'll have all of them. I will. You just watch me. With those eyes of yours.

*(A rustling in the bushes right where Jamie is urinating. Jamie abruptly stops.)*

JAMIE: You okay there? ... Hello?



*(Beat. Jamie shuffles down the park bench and continues urinating.)*

JAMIE: Not simple. No. But easy. You understand the difference don't you? ... Most people don't. They'll laugh at you, call you little freak, call you worse. Push you away, get away, get away, get away now, if you try to make them understand the fundamental difference between common words.

*(Jamie stops.)*

JAMIE: I thought you were one of those people. I did. Just for a minute. Just until ... But you're not are you? ... Are you? ... Hello?

*(A rustling in the bushes. Jamie zips his jeans up. He puts his coat on and does up every button.)*

JAMIE: Cushy, soft, easy-going, painless. Not plain, uncomplicated or unproblematic ... Easy. Not simple.

*(The rustling in the bushes stops. Silence. Jamie bounces up and down on the balls of his feet.)*

JAMIE: Boom boom shaka shaka boom ... Are you still there?

*(Silence.)*

JAMIE: Boom boom shaka shaka boom ... I don't have an iPod. I lied about that. But I'm going to get one. Boom boom shaka shaka boom. Again and again and

... Can you say something? Just make a noise or ...  
Come out. Just come out now and we'll ...

*(Jamie jumps down off the park bench.)*

JAMIE: Because I'm ...

*(Jamie walks to the edge of the bushes.)*

JAMIE: ... Hello?

*(Jamie walks into the bushes.)*

## SCENE TWO

*(The Bedroom. Night. Beatrice enters, dressed in a short, peasant-style dress and knee-high boots. An enormous handbag is slung over her shoulder. Her hair sticks out wildly, a few twigs and leaves stuck in it. She stops and drops her handbag on the floor.)*

BEATRICE: *(calling out)* This is crazy isn't it?

*(Beat.)*

BEATRICE: *(to herself)* This is crazy ... *(calling out)*  
I'm mostly okay with crazy. Not kill your mother in her sleep because she never let you cut your hair like Cyndi Lauper crazy. But just a little bit off the centre crazy. The dirt path instead of the smooth road crazy. The stay up all night for no reason crazy. The ... When for a baby moment the thump thump drang of the world stops and for once your voice sounds like song, crazy.

*(Beat.)*

BEATRICE: *(calling out)* That's the crazy I meant when I said This is crazy. *(To herself)* Stop saying crazy ... *(Calling out)* Could I have some water?

*(Beat. Beatrice slowly moves around the room, taking in everything. She picks up a t-shirt from the floor. On the front it has a cartoon lamb spurting blood from a gunshot to the face. On the back it says 'Kill the babies'. Beatrice*

*reads it, thinks about it, and then laughs. She drops the t-shirt back onto the floor and continues walking around. She stops. A moment later, she breaks out into uncontrollable laughter. She loses her balance and falls face first onto the bed. She lays there for a moment before jumping up.)*

BEATRICE: *(calling out)* Water! Did I say that? I need to lose some drinks. I'm completely soaked through.

*(Beatrice falls back onto the bed and sticks one leg in the air.)*

BEATRICE: I said to myself, not tonight. No sweetheart, not tonight.

*(Beatrice unzips her boot.)*

BEATRICE: But she can't be stopped.

*(Beatrice shakes her leg and dislodges the boot from her foot.)*

BEATRICE: That beast of a woman.

*(Beatrice makes large circles in the air with her leg.)*

BEATRICE: All flesh. All muscles. Moving. Left to right. Right to left. And all the places in between.

*(Beatrice expertly flicks her left leg and her boot flies across the room. It hits the opposite wall and falls to the floor.)*

BEATRICE: All flesh and all muscle.

*(Beatrice sits up on the bed, facing away from the door. She dances her hips left to right and right to left. Jamie enters, fully dressed, and stops at the doorway. He watches.)*

BEATRICE: Wonderful, isn't she? And awful. And 723 other things, most of which don't have names.

*(Beatrice stops, falls back on the bed. Jamie quickly exits before she sees him. Beatrice turns over and sticks her other leg in the air. She unzips her boot and repeats the same action.)*

BEATRICE: Inflated, enhanced and completely unbelievable. Hot and cruel and breathing sweet sweet air straight to the blood. Everywhere. Everything ...  
Twelve Drink Beatrice.

*(Beatrice flicks the boot off. It hits the wall and falls on top of the other boot. Beatrice sits up.)*

BEATRICE: *(calling out)* I don't talk like this. This is her ... Just so you know.

*(Beatrice sniffs her arm, then licks her arm.)*

BEATRICE: God, it's coming out of everywhere.

*(Beatrice leaps off the bed and does a series of star jumps.)*

BEATRICE: Twelve Drink Beatrice is the pinnacle of alcoholic achievement. The gold medal. The Nobel Prize. The meat tray at the local pub.

*(Beatrice licks her skin again, pulls a face. She strides around the room, making laps around the bed.)*

BEATRICE: I mean, you tell yourself two drinks Beatrice, with that low, rough voice that says these are the rules. These are your boundaries. Don't you dare test me.

*(Beatrice stops in front of the wardrobe.)*

BEATRICE: But two drinks? Two little, little drinks? Gone in a gulp. Two gulps if you're trying to be lady-like about it. But gone. Gone too soon, and the differences between Two Drink Beatrice and No Drink Beatrice can only be viewed under a pretty hefty microscopic device.

*(Beatrice opens the door of the wardrobe. It's empty with a series of drawers on one side and a shelf at the top).*

BEATRICE: Little, little, Two Drink Beatrice with her hard thoughts clotting the mind. Little, little stupid I shouldn't have worn this dress. I can't wear this dress. What was I thinking? Jesus. I can feel my arse. I can just feel it being everywhere. And I have nothing to say. I never have anything interesting to say, I don't like me, I like nothing about me, starting and ending with my arse but 723 other things, all of which have

names. I need a hole. Just a dark, dark hole. Please don't look at me, please look at me, please do something, because I am little little, stupid stupid Two Drink Beatrice in need of her dark dark hole.

*(Beatrice climbs up on the first drawer, loses her grip, and falls back onto the bed. She immediately gets up and starts climbing up the wardrobe. At no point, does she look like she will make it to the top.)*

BEATRICE: Enter Four Drink Beatrice. Who promises in a clear soft voice that all thoughts, hard or otherwise, are simple knots flicked straight with the twist of one of her fingers. But Four Drink Beatrice is too much. Nothing but a bitch. A sweet bitch, but the bitch burns too hard for the sweet to ever catch the light.

*(Beatrice climbs onto the top drawer. The wardrobe starts to wobble. Beatrice stops and clutches the sides of the wardrobe.)*

BEATRICE: Eight Drink Beatrice snarls at Four Drink Beatrice as she smooths the thoughts and almost makes them disappear. Eight Drink Beatrice remembers all the good stories and none of the bad ... But she's grabby. Grab, grab, with nails that cut deep. Right into the lolly sweet centre of the flesh.

*(Beatrice starts climbing again. The wardrobe continues to wobble.)*

BEATRICE: She needs you. Close. Too close, and she'll grab and dig and grab and dig until you have to physically restrain yourself from slapping her seven ways from Sunday. It's all heading towards disaster, faster than seems possible. The words come too furious. More, more, each one more chiselled than the last. Words that so swiftly, so effortlessly, become an unwieldy axe, slammed right into your face ... So there's nothing to do. Nothing to save the moment ...

*(Beatrice climbs up to the top of the wardrobe and lies on top of it, holding on for dear life.)*

BEATRICE: Except ...

*(Beatrice slowly, precariously, rises to a crouching position on top of the wardrobe.)*

BEATRICE: Here she comes. Do you see her? Swacking her hips and flashing the flesh.

*(Beatrice spreads her arms out and makes circles in the air, as if she is about to take off and fly.)*

BEATRICE: Only after the bad thoughts. And the bitch. And the blood.

*(Beatrice makes bigger circles with her arms. Faster and faster.)*

BEATRICE: When all possible damage has been blooded and the floor is sticky and red with regret, only then



does the sweet sweet bitch with the leaping, fire-fuelled thoughts finally open the doors and enter ... She's skin on skin, breath into the neck, just enough heat to warm but not cook. Just enough, to make you crave. A bit more. Just a little bit more. Please. Please, please, just a little bit more of the beautiful ... Belligerent. Bewildering ...

*(Beatrice suddenly stops.)*

BEATRICE: Beatrice.

*(Beatrice leaps off the top of the wardrobe and lands on the bed, face first. She doesn't move for a long moment. Jamie enters the bedroom, dressed only in his jeans, holding two tumblers of dark, murky liquid.)*

JAMIE: Let's party.

*(Blackout.)*

*(Thumping techno music blasts from everywhere.)*

### SCENE THREE

*(The Nightclub. The music continues to thump and pound. A moving neon light flicks and twists around the space and eventually lands on Jamie. With his coat buttoned up, he jumps up and down on the spot in the rhythm with the music. He is solely and completely in his own body, oblivious to everyone else in the Nightclub.)*

## SCENE FOUR

*(The Bedroom. Night. Beatrice and Jamie sit at opposite ends of the bed, naked, wrapped up in the bedclothes. Silence, except for the hard breathing coming from both of them. Eventually ...)*

BEATRICE: *(barely audible)* Bathroom?

JAMIE: Sorry?

BEATRICE: *(louder)* Can I use the bathroom?

JAMIE: Oh. Sure. Just through there.

BEATRICE: Thanks.

*(Beatrice slowly gets up, stealing some of the bedclothes and wrapping herself up in it.)*

JAMIE: It's dirty. Probably, you'll think it's dirty and I'm a complete pig. No. Not probably. Absolutely. I only just realised. I've never been on my own before. I'm disgusting. Sorry. I would have ... If I had known ... This ... If I had any idea that this ... I would have ...

*(Beatrice stops beside Jamie.)*

JAMIE: Cleaned.

*(Beatrice tries to think of something to say. Instead, she lunges in and kisses him deeply. She pulls away and*

*heads to the door. Jamie watches her. Beatrice suddenly stops at the doorway and spins around, stares at Jamie, a horrified look on her face.)*

JAMIE: What? ... What?

*(Beatrice runs out of the bedroom. The sound of a door slamming. Silence.)*

JAMIE: Boom boom shaka shaka boom ... Did you hear that music?

*(Jamie leans out of the bed and grabs one of the glasses of dark, murky liquid. He sniffs it, pulls a face and puts it back.)*

JAMIE: Boom boom shaka shaka boom ... Do you go there a lot? I'm going to go there. A lot. It's good isn't it? ... Yeah. Yeah, it's fine, excellent, pleasant, agreeable and gratifying ... Boom boom shaka shaka boom ... Yeah.

*(Jamie leans over the side of the bed and grabs a bottle of water. He drinks it all. He throws the empty water bottle under the bed.)*

JAMIE: You cheating on your bloke? ... It's okay if you are. I'm not asking for anything ...

*(Jamie sits up and rifles through the clothing on the floor. He picks up the 'Kill All Babies' t-shirt and puts it on.)*

JAMIE: I'm new around here. I'm all new ... Needed to get out. See the world. Or at least a different part of it.

*(Jamie flops back down on the bed.)*

JAMIE: Family ... You can say anything you want ... I'm not a kid, I'm not a kid, look at me and see how much of a kid I'm not ... Nothing ever changes. It's all around and around and around ... You know what I mean?

*(Jamie sits up, rips off the t-shirt and throws it on the floor and falls back onto the bed.)*

JAMIE: I've got all these sisters. More than you can imagine or can be considered acceptable. They're everywhere, all of the time. Just this solid wall of hair and cackling that consistently proves to be a worthy advocate to normal human reasoning ... Bridget's alright. But the rest of them ... I'm not being mean. I'm really not ... Are you okay in there?

*(Jamie sits up.)*

JAMIE: ... Hello?

*(Beat. The bathroom door opens and slams shut. Jamie falls back onto the bed.)*

JAMIE: It's the laugh on them. That's what belts at the heart ... Belts at the heart. That's a good phrase isn't it?

*(Jamie waits for an answer.)*

JAMIE: *(to himself)* Good phrase ... *(calling out)* Anyway, the laugh.

*(Jamie lets out a high-pitched cackle.)*

JAMIE: No. That's not it.

*(Jamie tries another laugh.)*

JAMIE: Not quite. Closer though ... Anyway, that's all they do. Lock themselves in the bathroom and laugh the time away ... Laugh the time away.

*(Jamie digs under the bed and pulls out a notebook. Writes 'laugh the time away'. He puts the notebook back under the bed.)*

JAMIE: You should see them. Hoarding themselves away, desperately trying to make the ugly less ugly. Go on, I say to them, standing like an idiot outside the door. Waiting. Always waiting. Go on and try ... Because they're the ugliest bunch you've ever seen. And that's not being mean either. That's just fact ... Slapping and scraping and slapping every last thing onto their faces. But still. Still ... Ugly will always be ugly ... You should see them.

*(Beat. Jamie sits up on the bed.)*

JAMIE: Wouldn't that be something? ... If you saw them?

*(Jamie jumps out of the bed and walks to the door.)*

JAMIE: Sunday lunch. All of them around the table. Jabbering on about everything and saying nothing. Words without meaning. Makes me so angry. Makes me ... But you. On my arm. Or just you. The moment would need nothing else but ... That shocked, silent look on their faces. Because you would make them silent ... You would open the bathroom door. You ...

*(Jamie exits the bedroom.)*

JAMIE: *(offstage)* Hey? Would you do that? Would you come with me? ... We could hide it from your bloke if you want ...

*(Beat. Jamie re-enters the bedroom, jumping up and down to music only he can hear.)*

JAMIE: ... Boom boom shaka shaka boom. Boom boom shaka shak-

*(Beatrice storms in from the bathroom, shaking, furious, her eyes red from crying.)*

BEATRICE: Slut!

*(Jamie stops. Silence. Beatrice storms up to Jamie, right up in his face.)*

BEATRICE: Slut Slut Slut.

*(Jamie tries to get away from Beatrice and hits the wall.)*

JAMIE: What?

*(Beatrice gets up in Jamie's face.)*

BEATRICE: Slutslutslutslutslutsl-

JAMIE: *(in her face)* STOP!

*(Silence. Beatrice steps away from Jamie.)*

BEATRICE: Doesn't sound so good now, does it?

JAMIE: What?

*(Beatrice lunges at Jamie.)*

BEATRICE: Funny little boy. Funny funny little boy  
aren't we?

JAMIE: What? No. What?

*(Jamie ducks away from Beatrice. She follows him as he moves around the room, trying to get away from her.)*

BEATRICE: Big man with his big words. Because words are everything aren't they Jamie? Isn't that your thing? Words, words, it's all about the fucking words?

JAMIE: I don't understand.

BEATRICE: Slut.



*(Jamie lunges at Beatrice.)*

JAMIE: I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

*(Beat. Beatrice pulls away from Jamie and walks to one side of the bed. Jamie remains in the same position.)*

BEATRICE: I asked where the bathroom was.

JAMIE: ... Okay.

*(Beatrice calmly walks to the other end of the bed.)*

BEATRICE: And then you were talking about being disgusting.

JAMIE: My sisters. I don't know how to use a bathroom because I have too many sisters. Because I only get these tiny tiny seconds and I have to do it all. It's all just madness. Time stops or beats to a different clock and there's no seconds left to put the towel away or scrape the hair from the sink. The seconds come and go and you have to grab as many as you can before your mother shouts that the bus is coming.

*(Beat.)*

BEATRICE: And then I made you hard just by sticking my tongue in your mouth.

JAMIE: ... Yes.

BEATRICE: And then you said-

JAMIE: No.

*(Beatrice walks to the doorway, faces away from Jamie.)*

BEATRICE: Nice and low.

JAMIE: No.

*(Silence. Beatrice suddenly turns around and storms up to Jamie. Jamie starts dancing on the spot as Beatrice approaches.)*

JAMIE: No. No. No. No.

*(Beatrice stops before she reaches Jamie.)*

BEATRICE: What are you doing?

JAMIE: Boom boom shaka shaka boom-

BEATRICE: STOP!

*(Jamie stops. Silence.)*

BEATRICE: I should go.

*(Beat. Beatrice suddenly moves, jerking around the bedroom, picking up every piece of clothing off the floor, including her own, and tossing them away. Jamie watches her.)*

BEATRICE: Because I'm thirty-seven. Which isn't the problem. But thirty-seven and here? Oh yes, thirty-seven and here is ten problems. More, worse, and all

of them scream of a messiness that should have been scraped away sometime before the clock struck thirty-seven. So I should go, and be thirty-seven someplace else.

*(Beatrice stops.)*

BEATRICE: Say something.

*(Beat.)*

JAMIE: I wouldn't say that.

*(Beatrice continues moving around the room. Jamie watches her.)*

BEATRICE: No.

JAMIE: It's not one of my words.

BEATRICE: Because cruel. Cruel. And mean ... And dark. And murky.

*(Beatrice picks up her underwear and puts them on. Jamie starts dancing on the spot. Beat. Both of them stop and stare at each other. A long moment passes.)*

BEATRICE: What? ... WHAT?

*(Jamie drops to the floor and dives under the bed.)*

BEATRICE: Because I was just trying to have some fun Jamie. Because there hasn't been a lot of fun lately to

be found and why shouldn't I? At least close to it. You don't know. You will probably never know, because this is fast looking like it's about to come to a swift and slightly painful ending. And I know how painful the end is. But fun is exactly what the doctor ordered. Because nothing has happened. All of the effort you can possibly imagine, and not one thing has happened ... Perhaps I wanted too much. Too many things. Because I wanted to be everything. Absolutely everything. And you can't have that. And it's heartbreaking ... But none of that matters. Except I deserve, I really deserve, a little bit of fun. Just for one night. That doesn't make me a ... That doesn't make me anything but normal. Just normal. Because everyone wants everything. And everyone is lucky to end up with something ... But you know that ... Don't you? ... Because please. Please tell me you haven't been screwed up this young. Please tell me you are sweet and innocent and still slightly scared of women. Please say you haven't spent your teenage years wide-eyed and muscle sore thanks to free porn on the internet. Please tell me you're not moments away from slapping me on the arse and calling me worse than ...

*(Jamie crawls out from under the bed, dragging a cardboard box. He shoves the box into Beatrice's arms.)*

JAMIE: There. All of them are there ... See for yourself. See it.

*(Beatrice holds the box but doesn't open them.)*

JAMIE: Go on.

*(Jamie rips the box open and pulls out fistfuls of notebooks. He holds them up to Beatrice's face. Beat. Jamie throws the notebooks across the room. He pulls out another fistful of notebooks and holds them up to Beatrice's face. Jamie is about to throw them again-)*

BEATRICE: I should go.

*(Jamie drops all of the notebooks back into the box except one. He flicks through it, showing Beatrice the tight scrawl covering every inch of paper.)*

JAMIE: Look. Look at them ... Go on ...

BEATRICE: Stop.

JAMIE: All of the words. Every last one of them. Go on. I don't care.

BEATRICE: Stop now.

*(Beat. Jamie pushes Beatrice around the room, picking up the notebooks, shoving them into Beatrice's face, and then throwing them on the ground.)*

JAMIE: Look. Read. Go on. Every last one of them. Because I don't care. Why would I care what you think? Who are you Beatrice? Who are you to be here in my place, my little little place, and tell me words that are not mine? Who are you?

*(Jamie pushes Beatrice too hard. She trips and falls on the floor.)*

JAMIE: Read them. Go on.

*(Beatrice breathes hard, struggling for air.)*

JAMIE: I dare you.

*(Blackout.)*

## SCENE FIVE

*(The Nightclub. The neon light bounces around with less intensity. Slow movements, as if the light is about to burn out. It stops on Jamie. He has lost his jacket and his t-shirt. He continues to jump with the thumping music. The music starts to slow. Jamie starts to slow with it. It continues until the music is a series of long, mechanical beeps.)*

## SCENE SIX

*(The Hospital. Night. Beatrice lies unconscious in the hospital bed. The long, mechanical beeps continue rhythmically from unseen machines. Jamie sits on a plastic chair, his coat unbuttoned, his head between his legs, throwing up into a stainless steel bedpan. He finishes and slowly raises his head. He stares straight ahead, not once looking in Beatrice's direction.)*

JAMIE: Then he asked me what happened. After he looked me up and down, taking his time about it, making me feel hot and stupid. After he asked me if I was your son and what our last name was ... After I didn't say anything because ...

*(Jamie leans over, almost throws up, stops. Beat.)*

JAMIE: Because what is happening? I don't understand what the fuck is happening.

*(Jamie throws up again.)*

JAMIE: Fuck ... That's not one of my words. No, that was never one of my words. Because my sisters used to say it all the time. Fuck him. And fuck her. And fuck everyone ... Not Bridget, but the rest ... I really want to call Bridget, but I can't call Bridget and say I don't understand what the fuck is happening. But I can't call Bridget. Because that is ... crazy ... He came in close, too close, a hand gripping my shoulder,



pressing down on the flesh and the little bit of muscle. Gripping it all the way to the bone. Could feel the gun wedged hard against his hip as he said ... 'Son'.

*(Jamie takes deep breaths.)*

JAMIE: 'Son, you need to tell me what happened' ... Little bit of cock in his voice. Only a little bit, and you could only hear it if you were listening for it. But it was absolutely there.

*(Jamie leans forward. His body convulses, wanting to throw up again. Nothing comes out. He sits up.)*

JAMIE: Why aren't you wearing a hat? Policemen have hats. You've got the gun and the badge and the little bit of cock in your voice, so where is your hat? Show me your fucking hat ... I'm liking that word more and more Beatrice ... Fucking Beatrice.

*(Jamie lunges forward and coughs up some bile.)*

JAMIE: This is not real. This is not happening. This can't be real. This can't be happening. This, this, this.

*(Jamie lunges forward and tries to throw up. Painful. Violent. Nothing comes out.)*

JAMIE: Because he doesn't have a hat. And policemen should have hats.

*(Jamie puts the bedpan on the floor.)*

JAMIE: With his hand still on my shoulder and his fingers. Those fingers. Full of muscles. Fingers stronger than fingers should be. Everything is all wrong with him, starting with the hat that is not there and ending with his big fingers bruising my bones ... 'Son? ... Son!'

*(Beat. Jamie stands up, steps over the bedpan and walks to the end of the bed.)*

JAMIE: I'M NOT HER FUCKING SON. I DON'T KNOW WHO THE FUCK SHE IS. I DON'T FUCKING KNOW ANYTHING ... Said it like that too Beatrice. Said it loud and beautiful so it would look like I meant it.

*(Jamie sits back down, picks up the bedpan, puts it down again, sticks his head between his legs.)*

JAMIE: Slut. Just a dirty dumb ... Wouldn't let me go and I thought Why not? Why the fuck not? Fucking, fuck, fucking, fuck, fuck, fuck ...

*(Jamie stands up and buttons up his coat.)*

JAMIE: This is not happening. This is not real. The words don't matter because you don't have a hat on your head and she fell on the floor and didn't get up again.

*(Jamie strides over to Beatrice and stares at her lifeless body. After a moment, he tears off the blankets and grabs*

*Beatrice's wrist. The mechanical beeps become quicker, louder, more furious. Jamie ignores them as he removes a gold bracelet from Beatrice's wrist.)*

JAMIE: You know what I mean? Desperate. Just one of those with everything hanging out and slopping all over you. I should have walked away but I'm new around here and I'm taking it all. You know what I mean? Yeah. Yeah, you know what I mean. It was just there. Laid out over everything and giving it away for nothing. So I took it. I took it all. You know what I mean? Yeah ... Yeah.

*(Jamie covers Beatrice up again before calmly stepping over the bedpan and walking out the door. Beat. The room begins to fill with brilliant white light, coming from every direction and filling the space. Brighter, brighter until the bed and Beatrice are engulfed in it. The mechanical beeps become longer and longer until it is one continuous beep.)*

## SCENE SEVEN

*(The Nightclub. The long mechanical beeps continue. The neon light smashes around the space, only catching darkness.)*

## SCENE EIGHT

*(The Park Bench. Night.)*

BEATRICE: *(from the bushes)* ... Hello?

*(Beat. A rustling from a different part of the bushes.)*

BEATRICE: *(from the bushes)* Oh. You're still here.  
That's ... Yeah. That's really ...

*(The sound of Beatrice throwing up in the bushes.)*

BEATRICE: *(from the bushes)* Look ... Here's the thing ... Look ... Because you seem nice. I don't know for sure, because I'm drunk. And I've only seen you in the dark. But you seem to be one of the nice ones. Mainly because you're still here ... Are you still here? ... Hello? ...

*(Beat.)*

JAMIE: *(from a different part of the bushes)* Hello.

BEATRICE: *(from the bushes)* Oh. That is nice. That really is very, very nice. And nice is good. Nice should be enough. Jesus, most days I'd give my kingdom for some simple nice. You know what I mean? ... If you could promise me nothing but some simple nice then I would ... Could you do that? ... Do you think you could just be nice and nothing else? ... Like forever?

*(Silence.)*

BEATRICE: *(from the bushes)* Don't answer that. I don't want ... Look. I'm just going to go home. Because now crazy has come to the party and ...

*(Beatrice rustles in the bushes, coming closer and closer to the park bench.)*

BEATRICE: Look ... Look ... I'm just going to say some things and maybe you'll understand but maybe you won't, and I'm not quite sure it matters either way. And probably I should say nothing. Just go and you can just think I'm a bitch for a while and then not think about me at all.

*(Beatrice stops moving in the bushes. Beat.)*

BEATRICE: I'm thirty-seven years old. How did that happen? Because a moment ago, it was all endless. And now the doors are shutting. They are. I can hear the bang, bang, bang of the wood as the wind picks up and blows through. Thirty-seven, thirty-seven ... And nothing to call my own. I am thirty-seven years old and fucked too much and loved too little and time after time, failed to see that the difference is tinier than they should be ... Don't try and make sense of this. Don't you dare.

*(Beat.)*

BEATRICE: Are you making sense of this?

*(Beat.)*

BEATRICE: Are you still there?

*(Beatrice comes out of the bushes dragging her large handbag. Her hair is out and wild with leaves and twigs stuck through it. She stops at the park bench and looks around.)*

BEATRICE: Hello?

*(Beat. Beatrice sits down on the park bench.)*

## SCENE NINE

*(The Bedroom. Day. Jamie is tangled up in the sheets, crying and trying not to cry. The crying becomes fiercer, nudging at hysteria. Jamie lets out a long, piercing roar. The crying slowly starts to subside. Beat. Jamie disentangles himself from the sheets. He stands up, finds the 'Kill All Babies' t-shirt and puts it on. He lies back down in the bed and tries to sleep. Beat. He stands up, rips the shirt off and throws it on the floor. He picks up his coat and digs in the pocket. He pulls out the gold bracelet and puts it on his wrist. He gets back into bed, closes his eyes. Lights start to fade.)*

JAMIE: Boom boom shaka shaka boom ... Boom boom ... boom.