

# PAST CURFEW

by  
Arthur M. Jolly

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**Dedicated to**

**Danielle Ozymandias**

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**Stephanie Riggs**

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**Lisa Soland & the All Original Playwrights Workshop**

**Past Curfew**

*premiered at the Pacific Resident Theatre*

*April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010*

*SARAH – Dalia Vosylius  
KIRSTIE – Marley McClean  
MICHAEL – Michael Hanson*

*Directed by  
Danielle Ozymandias*

*Produced by  
Robin Becker  
Nicole Blaise*

*Stage Manager  
Bruce Sahud*

**PAST CURFEW**  
**Cast of Characters**

**SARAH** - 34, mother to Kirstie. Over many years of life's abuses, Sarah has evolved a defense mechanism of striking first - and striking viciously.

**KIRSTIE** - A seventeen year old girl, bright but troubled. An air of "damaged goods" - like a porcelain doll with a hairline crack.

**MICHAEL** - A seventeen year old boy, intelligent, funny but awkward. He is suffering from the agonizing pangs of puppy love - the strongest love there is, because it has yet to be diluted by experience.

**The Setting**

Sarah's trailer home in Klamath Falls, Oregon At rear, a flimsy door to the unseen outdoors. Left, an efficiency "kitchenette", separated by a half wall from the living room. An exit S.R. leads to the unseen bedrooms. The place is cluttered and run down.

And

A scenic overlook.

**ACT I**

Scene 1 - Sarah's Trailer Home - Late at night.

Scene 2 - Sarah's Trailer Home - That morning.

Scene 3 – Scenic Overlook - Earlier that evening.

Scene 4 - Sarah's Trailer Home - Late at night.

**ACT II**

Scene 1 - Sarah's Trailer home - Late at night.

Time: The Present.



ACT I

*Sarah's trailer home, after midnight on a stifling summer night. Moonlight filters through the window, not quite illuminating SARAH - seated at the kitchen table with a half finished glass of Jack Daniels in front of her. It's not her first, either. The front door opens, and KIRSTIE sneaks in, as quietly as she can.*

**SARAH.** Welcome home.

**KIRSTIE.** Shit!

**SARAH.** Yup.

**KIRSTIE.** You scared me.

**SARAH.** You are in shit. (*KIRSTIE turns on the light*)

**KIRSTIE.** You're still up. (*SARAH gives her a wan smile*) Mom...

**SARAH.** I think my watch must be broken.

**KIRSTIE.** Mom, it's not my fault –

**SARAH.** It's past midnight, that's what my watch says. And yet your curfew is ten.

**KIRSTIE.** I know when my –

**SARAH.** Care to explain?

**KIRSTIE.** I had to –

**SARAH.** Oh, shut up.

**KIRSTIE.** I had to walk back from...

**SARAH.** From where?

**KIRSTIE.** You were sitting in the dark. Just sitting there, waiting for me.

**SARAH.** I can sit in the dark if I want.

**KIRSTIE.** Like a spider.

**SARAH.** Like a concerned mother.

**KIRSTIE.** What's that like?

**SARAH.** I wouldn't know. So where were you? Where did you walk all the way back from?

**KIRSTIE.** Nowhere.

**SARAH.** Well, I'd hate to think of you walking all the way back from nowhere. I know it wasn't from Lucy's house... Care to tell me where you and Michael Trent go? (*KIRSTIE does not answer*) His mother called me: 'Michael's not back from his date with Kirstie yet. Are they at your house?' Do you have any idea what that looked like? How I felt? Who is this Michael boy?

**KIRSTIE.** He's just this guy from school.

**SARAH.** I knew it. I goddamn... I knew it when I saw your sheets.

**KIRSTIE.** What'd you mean?

**SARAH.** I did the laundry this morning. Your room's a sty.

**KIRSTIE.** My room is my room.

**SARAH.** Your clothes are all over the floor.

**KIRSTIE.** So don't go in there.

**SARAH.** I figured I'd do the sheets. I knew I couldn't tell the clean clothes from the dirty ones.

**KIRSTIE.** I don't need you to do my laundry.

**SARAH.** There were no sheets. I pulled back the comforter - and no sheets.

**KIRSTIE.** I don't -

**SARAH.** And when I walk over to the laundry room, they're already in the machine. I know you didn't get quarters out of my purse, so you spent your own. When was the last time you did any laundry, Kirstie? When was the last time you washed your own sheets? ... Never, that's when. That's when I knew. Watching your sheets going round and round... I wanted to chase the bus down. I wanted to march into your classroom and drag you out by your ears.

**KIRSTIE.** Nothing happened tonight.

**SARAH.** Don't lie to me.

**KIRSTIE.** I'm not -

**SARAH.** Shut up! What are you thinking? D'you want to end up like me? You want to get knocked up at seventeen and have your whole life turn to shit?

**KIRSTIE.** I can't talk to you when you're like this.

**SARAH.** Get out. Go to bed, just - go on. (*KIRSTIE heads for the door*) They'll call you a slut. (*KIRSTIE freezes*) That'll be your nickname. Sar - Kirstie the slut.

Kirstie the slut. They'll write your name on the walls. Is that what you want? (*Pause*) I don't want that boy in this house again.

**KIRSTIE.** He's never been in this house. I would never invite him here.

**SARAH.** Get out. Go to bed. You're...

**KIRSTIE.** I'm what. Grounded?

**SARAH.** Damn right you're grounded.

**KIRSTIE.** No.

**SARAH.** What?

**KIRSTIE.** No. I'm not.

**SARAH.** Yes. You are.

**KIRSTIE.** What are you gonna do? Lock me in my room? That's illegal. False imprisonment.

**SARAH.** But... No, you're grounded.

**KIRSTIE.** How? How are you gonna stop me walking out the door? You gonna hit me?

**SARAH.** I've never hit you.

**KIRSTIE.** What's stopping you? Hit me. Go on. It doesn't make any difference.

**SARAH.** You'd like that, wouldn't you? Poor little abused Kirstie, such a martyr to her monstrous, uncaring mother.

**KIRSTIE.** You don't care about me.

**SARAH.** Oh get off your drama horse, no-one's watching.

**KIRSTIE.** You never cared.

**SARAH.** Twitter, twitter, twitter goes the little bird. Mommy doesn't care. Where'd you get those jeans? They magically appear in your closet? Have you ever gone hungry? You think it's been easy –

**KIRSTIE.** That's not the same!

**SARAH.** What, I didn't hug you enough? Go on, let me have it.

**KIRSTIE.** You couldn't handle it.

**SARAH.** Well, you're too big to be grounded, Miss Turned Seventeen, all grown up. You're out... fucking your boyfriend, so why don't you just sit down and make a good long list of why I'm such a terrible mother. Go on, sit. (*KIRSTIE doesn't move*)

No? I was looking forward to it. I just love being told I'm no good. I get it at work, I got it from your father... you should've heard my dad when he found out. I'd revel in hearing my own daughter turn on me. That would just complete the goddamn set, that would.

**KIRSTIE.** You never wanted me! (*Beat*)

**SARAH.** What, you just figured that out? What the hell did you think, I made a career choice at seventeen to throw my life away on you? You're damn straight, you weren't wanted - you were the worst fucking thing in my life. But sometimes, you don't get the choices you want. You make do with what life gives you - and I've been a damn good mother. I lost everything, and I came back - clawed my way back. Everything you've had I got for you. I did that. And what do you do? You piss it all away on some guy. You have no idea.

**KIRSTIE.** You think you know everything.

**SARAH.** I know you.

**KIRSTIE.** You don't know shit.

**SARAH.** Watch your –

**KIRSTIE.** You don't know fucking bullshit! I have never *fucked* Michael - I've never *fucked* anyone. You wanna know why I'm late?

**SARAH.** Spare me the details.

**KIRSTIE.** You wanna know? I had to walk home because Michael ditched me when I wouldn't put out. 'Put out or get out', heard that one? You'd never know because you never had to walk back miles in the fucking dark, because you did put out, but I'm not a whore like you.

**SARAH.** You shut up right–

**KIRSTIE.** You wanted it, mom. I told you, you couldn't handle it. D'you think people in this town don't know? I've heard it my whole life, I knew what you were before I knew what it was. Whore.

**SARAH.** Shut up!

**KIRSTIE.** Whore! Slut whore! (*SARAH raises her hand - but hesitates*) Do it. Hit me. I dare you.

**SARAH.** I will not stand in my own house and have my own daughter talk to me like that.

**KIRSTIE.** You want me to call you a whore outside?

**SARAH.** You think you're –

**KIRSTIE.** I know. I grew up hearing about you. You know what it's like to have some guy grab at you on the street? "Like mother, like daughter, right Donny?" I didn't even know what the hell he was talking about. I was twelve. I thought he wanted to eat me up - like a troll or something.

**SARAH.** Don did that?

**KIRSTIE.** One of his buddies - they hang out in front of that bar on seventh. Just pawing at me as I passed by. Because I'm your daughter. Because of you.

**SARAH.** What the hell were you doing walking down there?

**KIRSTIE.** That's so typical. Some creep grabs your daughter - and you blame her. I was twelve!

**SARAH.** Twelve is old enough to know better! What d'you think, you can just walk down any street, and you'll be safe? You got to be careful, Kirstie. There are guys out there who'll do worse than grab your tit.

**KIRSTIE.** You would know, you've fucked most of them. (*SARAH slaps her. A Moment*) My point. Fifteen love. (*They stand there. Lights out*)

Scene 2

*It is that morning. Kirstie enters through the front door, carrying a box of laundry detergent. She hurries to the kitchen, and puts it away under the sink. Sarah enters, carrying a lit candle.*

**SARAH.** *(Singing)* Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you...

**KIRSTIE.** Hey.

**SARAH.** I didn't know if you wanted a cake.

**KIRSTIE.** Not for breakfast.

**SARAH.** After school?

**KIRSTIE.** You're working.

**SARAH.** After that. Wanna go out to Dell's? My treat?

**KIRSTIE.** I don't think so.

**SARAH.** Hot fudge sauce... it's calling you. Hot fuuudge.

**KIRSTIE.** I'm going out tonight.

**SARAH.** Hot fuu-uuudge. Hot fudge!

**KIRSTIE.** Going to Lucy's.

**SARAH.** Well, of course if you'd rather hang out with a skeleton with limp hair –

**KIRSTIE.** Mom!

**SARAH.** I'm serious, that kid kinda freaks me out.

**KIRSTIE.** Lucy's really nice –

**SARAH.** I'm sure she is, but someone needs to tell her when your knees are fatter than your legs, you can have a goddamn Twinkie.

**KIRSTIE.** She's got some issues.

**SARAH.** Reader's Digest has some issues - that kid's a mess.

**KIRSTIE.** I like her.

**SARAH.** What there is of her.

**KIRSTIE.** Just leave her alone!

**SARAH.** Jeez, chill, kiddo. She can't hear me.

**KIRSTIE.** You just can't let it go.

**SARAH.** I can let it go.

**KIRSTIE.** Mom...

**SARAH.** Okay - I'm sorry. I will never say anything bad about any of your friends ever again, ever. You gonna blow out this candle, or am I gonna just stand here like a shrine to Mary?

**KIRSTIE.** Why did you...?

**SARAH.** What the hell. You only turn seventeen once.

**KIRSTIE.** I'm not blowing out a candle.

**SARAH.** Okay. I can wait. *(A pause)*

**KIRSTIE.** Are you starting –

**SARAH.** Please - too early even for me. Not starting anything. *(Silent banter between them as SARAH proffers the candle, to be rejected by KIRSTIE.)* Tell you what, you blow out the candle, and you can bring Lucy to Dell's with us. Hot fudge sundaes all round. *(SHE nudges the candle towards KIRSTIE again)* She'll only eat the cherry anyway, we can split the rest of hers.

**KIRSTIE.** Mom –

**SARAH.** Lighten up.

**KIRSTIE.** I'm not going to Dell's. Lucy's got a new video game, and we're gonna go play it in her basement.

**SARAH.** Ooh, Lucy's den of iniquity - the basement. Nice if you've got one. ... Not inviting any boys over?

**KIRSTIE.** Mom –

**SARAH.** I'm just asking.

**KIRSTIE.** No. No boys.

**SARAH.** Good.

**KIRSTIE.** Couple strippers, maybe.

**SARAH.** Well, it's a birthday. ... You know they're all gay, right?

**KIRSTIE.** Who?

**SARAH.** Male strippers. Fruity as cake. Queer as a Cardinal.

**KIRSTIE.** Didn't know, but thanks for the info.

**SARAH.** Well, that's what Moms are for. So make a wish already.

**KIRSTIE.** There's nothing I want.

**SARAH.** Then I'll make a wish for you.

**KIRSTIE.** Wait – *(SARAH blows out the candle)*

**SARAH.** Too late.

**KIRSTIE.** What did you wish for?

**SARAH.** If I tell you that, it won't come true.

**KIRSTIE.** Fine.

**SARAH.** But you're curious.

**KIRSTIE.** I gotta get to school.

**SARAH.** *(sing-song)* You want to know what I wished for.

**KIRSTIE.** Not interested.

**SARAH.** A pony?

**KIRSTIE.** Right.

**SARAH.** Ten years in a convent.

**KIRSTIE.** That's what you actually want for me.

**SARAH.** That's why I wished for it, kiddo. ...Okay, what?

**KIRSTIE.** What what?

**SARAH.** What should I have wished for?

**KIRSTIE.** This is stupid.

**SARAH.** You never know. Sometimes things happen.

**KIRSTIE.** I probably would've wished for my overbearing mother to drop dead and leave me alone.

**SARAH.** Who's that, your dad's new girlfriend? Is she the overbearing type?

**KIRSTIE.** Quit, okay?

**SARAH.** Fine. Glad you didn't get your wish.

**KIRSTIE.** So what did you wish for?

**SARAH.** A daughter that appreciates me.

**KIRSTIE.** Don't hold your breath.

**SARAH.** For a winning streak to end.

**KIRSTIE.** Wow, mom... way too early. You just wasted a candle. See ya.

*(KIRSTIE grabs a school bag and heads out the door)*

**SARAH.** Did you take lunch?

**KIRSTIE.** Got it.

**SARAH.** Give some to Lucy. Unless you think she'll just - *(SARAH mimes sticking a finger down her throat)* - you know - *gaaagh.*

**KIRSTIE.** God, Mom! *(KIRSTIE leaves)*

**SARAH.** Happy... *(SHE puts the candle down. SHE seems at a Loss. Lights out.)*

Scene 3

*A car parked at a scenic overlook – the local lover’s lane. It is that evening.  
MICHAEL and KIRSTIE sit on the hood.*

**MICHAEL.** It’s a nice view from up here. You can see the whole town.

**KIRSTIE.** Yeah. Great town.

**MICHAEL.** I don’t... I mean, it’s... yeah.

**KIRSTIE.** Yeah.

**MICHAEL.** Is it okay if I kiss you?

**KIRSTIE.** I don’t know.

**MICHAEL.** You don’t know?

**KIRSTIE.** I don’t think so.

**MICHAEL.** So why did you go out with me?

**KIRSTIE.** What?

**MICHAEL.** I don’t... I’m just asking.

**KIRSTIE.** You asked.

**MICHAEL.** So what if I just asked you to kiss me?

**KIRSTIE.** Let’s just talk for a while.

**MICHAEL.** Okay. *(THEY sit in silence for a long moment)* Nice view.

**KIRSTIE.** I hate it. I’m getting out of here.

**MICHAEL.** Where are you gonna go?

**KIRSTIE.** I haven’t figured that part out yet.

**MICHAEL.** Portland?

**KIRSTIE.** Maybe. Or L.A.

**MICHAEL.** Los Angeles.

**KIRSTIE.** Yeah.

**MICHAEL.** You can’t call it L.A., You have to say Los Angeles.

**KIRSTIE.** Says who?

**MICHAEL.** It’s like a rule. You can only call it L.A. if you live there, or you’re on TV.

**KIRSTIE.** Okay, Los Angeles.

**MICHAEL.** What would you do there?

**KIRSTIE.** Be a hooker, like *Pretty Woman*.

**MICHAEL.** Interesting.

**KIRSTIE.** You always hear people go there to be stars, and they end up as hookers. I figure, I'll set out to be a hooker, and I'll end up on TV.

**MICHAEL.** Are you -

**KIRSTIE.** I'm joking.

**MICHAEL.** I know. I was going to say, you don't have to leave for that. You could be a hooker in Portland, too.

**KIRSTIE.** You can be one right here?

**MICHAEL.** I didn't mean - I wasn't talking about your...

**KIRSTIE.** What?

**MICHAEL.** Nothing.

**KIRSTIE.** What?

**MICHAEL.** Nothing *(Pause)*

**KIRSTIE.** My mother's not -

**MICHAEL.** *(simultaneously)* I wasn't talking about your mom. I would never say that.

**KIRSTIE.** I know what they call her. She's not.

**MICHAEL.** My dad... *(beat)* Everyone's parents embarrass them.

**KIRSTIE.** Yeah, right.

**MICHAEL.** My dad hums.

**KIRSTIE.** What?

**MICHAEL.** He hums. Really loudly, when he's in his den. He doesn't know he's doing it.

**KIRSTIE.** What does he hum?

**MICHAEL.** Hymns, mostly. Just hums - he's completely oblivious. I bet he does it at the practice, too. All those people sitting in the waiting room with their toothaches and orthodontic adjustments, listening to "Here I Am, Lord" at full volume droning from the other room.

**KIRSTIE.** That's what embarrasses you?

**MICHAEL.** It's weird... What?

**KIRSTIE.** You're lucky.

**MICHAEL.** I know. But whatever, everyone's parents are awful.

**KIRSTIE.** You ever see them having sex?

**MICHAEL.** What?

**KIRSTIE.** Have you ever walked in on them doing it?

**MICHAEL.** That's weird. I don't... I don't think they do that anymore.

**KIRSTIE.** Yeah they do.

**MICHAEL.** Not my parents.

**KIRSTIE.** I bet your mom goes down on him.

**MICHAEL.** Quit it!

**KIRSTIE.** While he hums “Here I Am, Lord.” (*They laugh.*)

**MICHAEL.** You’re freaky weird. But in a good way.

**KIRSTIE.** Yeah?

**MICHAEL.** I’m glad you said yes.

**KIRSTIE.** Do you want...

**MICHAEL.** What?

**KIRSTIE.** Have you ever been to Los Angeles?

**MICHAEL.** I’ve been to Portland. (*Beat*)

**KIRSTIE.** Did you go to the zoo there?

**MICHAEL.** What?

**KIRSTIE.** The zoo in Portland. Have you ever been there?

**MICHAEL.** Yeah. ... Weird again.

**KIRSTIE.** Do they have a tiger there, in a moat?

**MICHAEL.** I’m lost.

**KIRSTIE.** Like a wall, with a moat, and then a tiger. No glass.

**MICHAEL.** I think so. Yeah.

**KIRSTIE.** My mom went there.

**MICHAEL.** Your Mom went to the zoo? Was it in all the newspapers? Does the FBI know?

**KIRSTIE.** She went there as a kid, when Sheba was born. Tiger cub. It was like the first one born in a zoo or something. There was a fire. She’s told me about it like a hundred times.

**MICHAEL.** A fire in the zoo?

**KIRSTIE.** No – a – Okay, she’s there, with her parents, and there’s this guy standing next to them, watching the tigers. And the tigers aren’t moving. They’re like a rug. So this guy takes his cigarette, and he flicks it at them. Lit cigarette, bounces off the Momma tiger - and she like shrugs, gets up and walks away. The cigarette lands in this - like a clump of dried grass, which catches fire. There’s a little fire, burning inside the tiger pit. And the baby tiger comes over. Never seen fire before. Completely fascinated. He pats at it, and swipes at it. Like a cat playing. Mom says their paws must be real thick, because Sheba keeps batting, and playing with this burning grass. And her Mom runs off to find a zookeeper and get the cigarette guy in trouble or whatever, and my Mom just watches Sheba trying to claw the burning grass. And finally Sheba pounces, and tries to bite the flames. And that’s when he gets burned. He leaps straight up in the air, yowling and screaming...

and goes running off to his mother. My mom loves that story, because he goes running back to his Momma. That's like her go-to "I told you so" story.

**MICHAEL.** Neat story.

**KIRSTIE.** (*a realization*) It's bullshit.

**MICHAEL.** You think she made it up?

**KIRSTIE.** He should've jumped in the moat. There was water right there. He ran the wrong way.

**MICHAEL.** She.

**KIRSTIE.** What?

**MICHAEL.** Sheba's a girl's name.

**KIRSTIE.** Whatever. My mom missed the whole point of the story. What's your mother gonna do if you're on fire? Get in the friggin' water.

**MICHAEL.** Huh. (*Beat*) My dad knows your mom.

**KIRSTIE.** What?

**MICHAEL.** He knows her. When I said I was going out with you, he asked if Sarah was your mom.

**KIRSTIE.** He's the dentist. He knows everyone.

**MICHAEL.** Maybe. Yeah. He said –

**KIRSTIE.** I'm not her.

**MICHAEL.** I know.

**KIRSTIE.** If you thought I was just going to come up here and you would get laid–

**MICHAEL.** I didn't. Honestly.

**KIRSTIE.** I'm a virgin.

**MICHAEL.** What? (*Beat*) I am... (*Beat*) That's okay.

**KIRSTIE.** Do you still –

**MICHAEL.** Yes.

**KIRSTIE.** I was gonna ask do you... d'you want to go to Los Angeles with me?

**MICHAEL.** When?

**KIRSTIE.** Dunno.

**MICHAEL.** I've got a plan.

**KIRSTIE.** Okay.

**MICHAEL.** We don't go back. We just drive, get on I-5, and head down. Sleep in the car outside of Redding, and in the morning, head on to Los Angeles. We could be there by tomorrow night.

**KIRSTIE.** Then what?

**MICHAEL.** I'll get a job at a place like my uncle's - I'm pretty good with tools, I can do oil changes and stuff - you be a hooker if you want, or work in a store selling stuff. We get an apartment, split the rent.

**KIRSTIE.** An apartment.

**MICHAEL.** Then you get on TV, and get a big mansion in Hollywood.

**KIRSTIE.** I don't think –

**MICHAEL.** I'll be devastated when you leave me, and I'll grow old and die in the same shitty apartment, telling strangers on the street I was with you when you were nobody, and now you're famous and don't talk to me, and no one will believe me because you'll be glamorous and famous and stuff.

**KIRSTIE.** That's your plan –

**MICHAEL.** I'm not done. You'll get famous -

**KIRSTIE.** Okay.

**MICHAEL.** And you'll do drugs and adopt Ethiopian babies, and then when you're sixty, you'll come back to me, because you realize that you never had true love.

**KIRSTIE.** Never?

**MICHAEL.** Never. Lots of empty-headed movie stars with egos and entourages, and boy toys half your age –

**KIRSTIE.** Lots?

**MICHAEL.** But never true love. And then, at the end, you'll break through my door, with your makeup running and your famous sunglasses at an angle and your red dress torn, and you'll find me on the carpet, dead of a broken heart and too much cheap vodka, and it will be a beautiful tragedy.

**KIRSTIE.** Do you have enough gas to get to L.A.?

**MICHAEL.** Los Angeles.

**KIRSTIE.** If you're dead of cheap vodka after sixty years there, I can call it L.A.

**MICHAEL.** No.

**KIRSTIE.** Any money?

**MICHAEL.** I spent it on the burgers.

**KIRSTIE.** You still want to kiss me?

**MICHAEL.** There are no words for what I want. *(They kiss - tentatively at first - but rising passion. MICHAEL starts fumbling with her shirt. KIRSTIE flinches in real pain.)*

**KIRSTIE.** No.

**MICHAEL.** Do we have to stop?

**KIRSTIE.** Leave my shirt on.

**MICHAEL.** No one can see us.

**KIRSTIE.** I know.

**MICHAEL.** Should I stop?

**KIRSTIE.** No... Do you have anything?

**MICHAEL.** Anything?

**KIRSTIE.** Like... protection.

**MICHAEL.** Yeah. *(HE takes a condom out of his pocket)* My dad gave it to me.

**KIRSTIE.** Your dad. After he... *(A moment)* I hate her. *(KIRSTIE runs off.)*

**MICHAEL.** Wait! Kirstie! Come back! *(Lights out)*

Scene 4

*Sarah and Kirstie are facing off, as at the end of Scene 1.*

**SARAH.** There are guys out there who'll do worse than just grab your tit!

**KIRSTIE.** You would know - you've fucked most of 'em. *(Sarah slaps her. A moment)* My point. ... Fifteen love. *(A long pause)*

**SARAH.** Why do you hate me?

**KIRSTIE.** Who else is there? ... Feel better?

**SARAH.** I bet you do. Vindication. You finally have an abusive mother. Just think, you can tell all your school friends about how I hit you.

**KIRSTIE.** I don't need to. I'll just hide my face, and tell everyone I ran into a door. The whole school will know.

**SARAH.** There's no mark.

**KIRSTIE.** Then I'll run into a door.

**SARAH.** Well be careful - doors aren't cheap.

**KIRSTIE.** They'll spit at you on the street.

**SARAH.** They'll laugh at you. Donny and his buddies? 'That's whatcha get fer bein' smart to yer Momma!' And they'll whistle and catcall - hoping to see you crack. And when you run off down the street crying, they'll be watching your ass the whole way.

**KIRSTIE.** My teachers will be so concerned. The nurse will purse her lips like she does when Lucy walks by.

**SARAH.** Sweetie - no one will give a shit. They'll give a head shake, and walk on.

**KIRSTIE.** Yeah, well it wasn't much of a slap. I didn't even feel it.

**SARAH.** I pulled it. I barely grazed you. *(She pats KIRSTIE'S cheek)*

**KIRSTIE.** You say that now.

**SARAH.** You were so desperate for it I thought - Hey, I'll throw the kid a bone. Little pat to make her feel like she matters. Like she can still get a rise out of her old Mom.

**KIRSTIE.** Yeah, right. *(SARAH turns and slams a glass tennis trophy off the kitchen counter - an open handed strike that sends it flying, shattering against the wall.)*

**SARAH.** If I'd actually hit you, I would've broken your goddamn jaw. But I didn't. Because... *(sacharine)* you're my daughter, Kirstie. *(Pause)* I win.

**KIRSTIE.** You always do.

**SARAH.** I've been playing longer. Fifteen all.

**KIRSTIE.** Had to break your trophy to do it, though. All state junior tennis champion. High point of your –

**SARAH.** Worth it.

**KIRSTIE.** You say that now.

**SARAH.** I'll say it tomorrow.

**KIRSTIE.** Yeah. For a point. I'm going to bed.

**SARAH.** So soon? We were just getting started.

**KIRSTIE.** That's what I'm afraid of.

**SARAH.** So you lost. Go get your momma a drink - my ice has melted.

**KIRSTIE.** I'm going to bed.

**SARAH.** You do that. Via the kitchen and the icebox.

**KIRSTIE.** You've had enough.

**SARAH.** You've had enough - I'm ready to go all night. *(Beat)* Get me a drink, or I'll tell you I love you. I'll wake you up in an hour or two, crooning, all sloppy and maudlin, tell you I love you really. You'd like that, right? Hearing Momma tell you she loves you? Isn't that what you want, deep inside?

**KIRSTIE.** Shaken or stirred?

**SARAH.** Just like a marriage -

**KIRSTIE.** On the rocks.

**SARAH.** *(simultaneously)* On the rocks. *(KIRSTIE heads towards the kitchen)* Careful of the glass. Don't cut yourself.

**KIRSTIE.** Yeah, that would be a tragedy. You broke your trophy.

**SARAH.** I'm aware.

**KIRSTIE.** That was like the one thing that –

**SARAH.** It's time was up.

**KIRSTIE.** Your hand's gonna hurt like a bitch in the morning.

**SARAH.** Careful - I think you just accidentally said something that was true. ... Put out or get out, Kirstie? No one says that. No guy has ever said that outside of an afterschool special.

**KIRSTIE.** Maybe he watches them. *(KIRSTIE hands the drink to her mother.)*

**SARAH.** What a cornball. I hope you laughed at him. I hope you laughed right in his face.

**KIRSTIE.** Is that what you would've done?

**SARAH.** If I had, you wouldn't be here, right? And then who would get me my drinks?

**KIRSTIE.** You could sip that, you know. You don't have to gulp it like a camel.

**SARAH.** Then I might taste it. This stuff tastes like crap.

**KIRSTIE.** So why drink it?

**SARAH.** It's poison. You gotta drink your poison, every fairy tale tells you that.

**KIRSTIE.** I thought that was a poisoned apple.

**SARAH.** Have I taught you nothing? How in the hell do you put ice in an apple?

*(KIRSTIE starts picking up pieces of the trophy)* Leave it.

**KIRSTIE.** You'll step on it.

**SARAH.** I'll do it tomorrow.

**KIRSTIE.** Sure you will.

**SARAH.** Then I'll leave it for you. Just go to bed.

**KIRSTIE.** Trying.

**SARAH.** Unless, you care to 'fess up why you ran home.

**KIRSTIE.** I told you.

**SARAH.** Oh yes - put out or get out. And yet, your sheets go round and round.

**KIRSTIE.** What sheets?

**SARAH.** Your sheets. In the washing machine. This morning.

**KIRSTIE.** I can wash my sheets.

**SARAH.** No, you can only try. I know that to get blood out of a sheet, you need to soak it in cold water first. You went straight to hot. Sets the stain - it'll never come out. Marked forever.

**KIRSTIE.** You saw the blood.

**SARAH.** Good God, you're stupid, Kirstie. Do you really think I know how to wash blood out of sheets? ... I could've told you to soak the damn things in gravy - you would've believed me. *(Beat)* My little girl - a virgin no more. Did he sneak over in the night, or was it a little afternoon delight before I came home? You can tell Momma, I won't use it against you.

**KIRSTIE.** Michael was never here.

**SARAH.** And you're as pure as an ugly altar boy.

**KIRSTIE.** Say whatever you want.

**SARAH.** Is that a challenge?

**KIRSTIE.** Mom - why do you care?

**SARAH.** I don't want you -

**KIRSTIE.** - to end up like you. Knocked up at seventeen. Kicked out by your own-

**SARAH.** It's hell.

**KIRSTIE.** I've gathered. I can't imagine anything worse than being you.

**SARAH.** Yeah. You're the opposite of me.

**KIRSTIE.** I'm not a slut.

**SARAH.** *(affecting a southern drawl from here on)*

“Why Kirstie, I had no idea an apple could fall so far from the tree - why, one might even call it a peach.”

**KIRSTIE.** Quit that. I hate when you do that voice.

**SARAH.** “Whatever do you mean? Mercy, I could swear I was told I could say just whatever I wanted not two minutes ago. It was almost a challenge.”

**KIRSTIE.** You’re such a bitch. That man – he ...

**SARAH.** “Are you referring to he who shall not be named? My gentleman caller? Was he southern? I disremember... wait. Why, I believe he was from Georgia.”

**KIRSTIE.** *(pleading)* No...

**SARAH.** “But, Mama, I just wanted to see it. I was curious, is all.’ And was he obliging? Why, one might think his interests were not solely confined to anatomical instruction.”

**KIRSTIE.** Why do you hate me?

**SARAH.** “Kirstie, have I for one solitary moment given you cause to believe I think ill of you and your precious, virginal peach?”

**KIRSTIE.** Please... please stop that voice... *(SARAH walks away - toys with her drink -stretches the moment...)*

**SARAH.** “I am that parched.” *(SHE downs the drink as KIRSTIE turns and runs from the room. Regular voice)* Thirty fifteen! I lead! *(SARAH returns to the kitchen, and picks up the bottle to refill her glass. She refers to the bottle.)* There are constants. There are things that can be relied on. You pay for liquor, and the bottle you get is not empty. That is a covenant. And a constant. To be there when called upon. *(SARAH pours another glass, then pauses - hearing something)* Well, don’t just stand there - either come in or fuck off. *(The front door opens. MICHAEL stands there)*

**MICHAEL.** I saw the light on. Is Kirstie here?

**SARAH.** Michael? Come on in. Make yourself at home. Have a drink. *(Blackout)*

## END OF ACT I

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