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## Twilight Bowl

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# Twilight Bowl

By

REBECCA GILMAN

**Dramatic Publishing Company**

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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“*Twilight Bowl* was produced in a developmental production in Goodman Theatre’s 2017 New Stages Festival and received its world premiere at Goodman Theatre, Chicago, Ill., on Feb. 8, 2019, Robert Falls, Artistic Director; Roche Schulfer, Executive Director.”

Also, all producers of the play must include the following acknowledgment on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play:

“*Twilight Bowl* was commissioned by the Big Ten Theatre Consortium as part of an initiative to support new plays by women with major roles for female actors.”

*Twilight Bowl* was premiered by the Goodman Theatre, Chicago, in February 2019.

CAST:

Clarice ..... Hayley Burgess  
Jaycee ..... Heather Chrisler  
Maddy ..... Angela Morris  
Sam ..... Becca Savoy  
Brielle..... Mary Taylor  
Sharlene..... Anne E. Thompson

PRODUCTION:

Director ..... Erica Weiss  
Assistant Director..... Rebecca Willingham  
Set Design ..... Regina Garcia  
Costume Design ..... Izumi Inaba  
Lighting Design ..... Cat Wilson  
Original Music and Sound Design..... Victoria Deiorio  
Dialect Coach..... Eva Breneman  
Violence and Intimacy Choreographer ..... Rachel Flesher  
Dramaturg ..... Neena Arndt  
Production Stage Manager ..... Kelly Montgomery

# Twilight Bowl

## CHARACTERS

*(Ages when we first meet them.)*

Sam: 18.

Jaycee: 22, Sam's cousin.

Clarice: 22.

Sharlene: 19.

Brielle: 21.

Maddy: 19.

PLACE: Reynolds, Wisconsin.

TIME: Two years ago and up to the present.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

When a / appears in a line, it denotes an overlap. The beginning of the next character's line should begin at the /.

“Jaycee” is pronounced like “Stacey.”

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# Twilight Bowl

## Scene 1

AT RISE: *The bar at Twilight Bowl, a bowling alley in Reynolds, Wisc. A Sunday night in early August.*

*There's a long bar with vinyl bar stools. Bowling trophies and memorabilia line the shelves. A low-end flat-screen TV is mounted in one corner.*

*In addition to the front door, there is a door that leads through the locker room to the bowling alley and a door to a back alley.*

*There are a few small tables scattered about.*

*Everything is well-worn, but it's a clean, well-run establishment.*

*SAM, JAYCEE, CLARICE and SHARLENE are gathered around a table. SAM and CLARICE wear blue polo shirts with the Twilight Bowl logo on them.*

*They share a pitcher of beer, which is almost empty. JAYCEE and CLARICE have had more than their share. SAM is acting more drunk than she is. SHARLENE is completely sober.*

*There are two gift bags on the table. They have all eaten a piece of a brightly decorated cake. The remainder of the cake is on the table. There is a lot of cake left, like they were expecting twenty people rather than four. The cake has no candles.*

CLARICE. What kind of game is this?

SHARLENE. It's not a game. It's just something we do in our family before you open presents.

JAYCEE. I have a better idea, which is—we skip it.



*(JAYCEE reaches for a gift bag.)*

SHARLENE. But this is supposed to be part of the gift.

*(SHARLENE moves the gift bag out of JAYCEE's reach.)*

SAM. But a non-material thing.

SHARLENE *(nods)*. Like more personal than just “I bought you something.”

CLARICE. What’s wrong with buying somebody something?

SHARLENE. Buying somebody something is nice, and this is one more nice thing. Is all.

CLARICE. So the story is supposed to be nice?

SHARLENE. The story is just whatever you want to say about the person.

But I think, because it is a gift, it should be nice.

*(Beat.)*

JAYCEE. Come on. You can think of one nice thing to say about me.

CLARICE. But I don’t ever think about you that way.

JAYCEE. Thanks.

CLARICE. Hey—I don’t think about anybody that way.

*(Thinks.)* Something nice ...

SHARLENE. I can start ...

CLARICE. Can it be funny instead?

SHARLENE. It’s whatever you want to say—

CLARICE. OK. So, we were fifteen, and me and Jaycee and Sierra Loeffleholz and Emily James had a case of beer and a bottle of Jäger, and Emily drove us out to the end of Sawmill Road. And we’re sitting there and this one has to

pee— (*Jerks a thumb toward JAYCEE.*) So she gets out and goes in the bushes and pops a squat. Now if it was me, I would air dry. But Miss Priss here has to wipe, so she grabs a handful of leaves—

SAM. I think I know this story—

CLARICE. And doesn't look, just wipes. And guess what?

CLARICE, JAYCEE & SAM. It was poison ivy.

SHARLENE. Why didn't you look first?

JAYCEE. I was drunk.            CLARICE. We were wasted.

CLARICE. So I'm like, "Dude, I think you just wiped your cootch with poison ivy." And she's like, "No way I did that." And then Sierra gets out and stares at it and goes, "Leaves of three, leave it be." And we all start dying.

SHARLENE. So what happened?

JAYCEE. I got poison ivy all over my cootch.

SHARLENE. Did it itch?

JAYCEE. Like a mofo. So I put Vaseline on it because we didn't have any calamine lotion. And then my ... what do you call it? Your labia?

SAM. Yes.

JAYCEE. Swole up so bad I couldn't wear pants. So for like a week I walked around in this old skirt, terrified somebody was going to ask me why I was wearing a skirt on a weekday.

SHARLENE. Why didn't you go to the doctor?

JAYCEE. How was I gonna explain poison ivy on my pussy to my mom?

But then, like a week into it, I was sitting on the couch watching TV, and I was scratching down there, and my mom comes in and sees me and yells, "Go to your room if you're gonna masturbate!"

CLARICE. You never told me that.

JAYCEE. 'Cause I didn't know how to masturbate before that.  
That's how I learned.

CLARICE. No way.

JAYCEE. Yeah! I was like, "Oh, that's how you do it." So I started poking around down there—

SHARLENE. Does somebody else want to go?

CLARICE. You never masturbated before that?

JAYCEE. I was fifteen. I don't know. When did you start?

CLARICE. Shit. I was at that from like, twelve.

SAM. Seriously?

CLARICE. I'd sit in the bathtub and let the water drain until it hit me in just the right place. Then I'd put the stopper back in and go at it.

SAM (*to JAYCEE*). What were you watching?

JAYCEE. When?

SAM. When your mom walked in? Did she think you were fingering yourself over *Full House*?

CLARICE. No—no—it was *SpongeBob*. "Oh *SpongeBob*. Oh put it in me—"

SAM. "Eat me, *SpongeBob*—"

SHARLENE. Guys? This isn't—

CLARICE. Do sponges even have dicks?

SHARLENE. Can we remember why we're here?

JAYCEE. Please.

SHARLENE. Sam, do you have a story about Jaycee?

SAM. I was just telling a story about Jaycee getting eaten out by *SpongeBob*—

SHARLENE. No, a real story that's not gross and inappropriate?

CLARICE. Man, we're gonna be here all night.

SAM. I can do it. Let me think.

*(JAYCEE pours herself more beer.)*

SAM *(cont'd)*. OK! So one time Jaycee and me were out at our grandma's farm in Grafton, and it was really boring because there was never anything to do at her house—

JAYCEE. There was nothing for *you* to do because she always spoiled the shit out of you. When I was there by myself she worked me like a fucking field hand—

SAM. She gave me chores, too.

JAYCEE. Like what? Shelling peas or something? She had me out in the field with a hoe. Digging up mullein. She hated me.

SAM. She didn't hate you.

JAYCEE. She hated Mom, so she hated me.

SAM. She just—her resting face was kind of bitchy.

JAYCEE. Hey! This is Grandma you're talking about!

SAM. You started it—

JAYCEE. I'm yanking your chain, dumbass. Tell your stupid story.

SAM. OK. Anyway. It was really boring, but her basement had flooded. So we decided to go down there and play in the water—

CLARICE. Gross.

SAM. It wasn't sewage, it was ground water—

CLARICE. It's gross because it's dumb.

SHARLENE. How old were you?

SAM. I was like—nine? So Jaycee was twelve.

SHARLENE. It's so nice you had each other when you were kids. My cousins live in Arizona.

CLARICE. That's not true. Everybody on your road is your cousin.

SHARLENE. But I have three that live in Arizona, and I never get to see them. Libby and Dale and Elijah.

*(Beat.)*

SAM. So the basement was flooded, so we went down there and started splashing around in the water, and then—Grandma had this old floor lamp, but it was just the base and it didn't have a light bulb in it. And for some reason we were like, "What if you plugged it in and turned it on and put your finger in the socket while you were standing in water?"

CLARICE. You seriously wondered that?

SAM. We knew we'd get electrocuted, but we were like—you know—what would it look like?

JAYCEE. I have no memory of this.

SAM. It was your idea.

JAYCEE. Did you do it?

SAM. You did it!

JAYCEE. No I didn't.

SAM. You totally did. You put your finger in the socket and turned the lamp on and it exploded.

JAYCEE. No way!

SAM. It knocked you across the room. You blacked out.

JAYCEE. I completely don't remember this.

CLARICE. Gee, I wonder why.

SAM. It blew a fuse? And Grandma came to the top of the stairs and she was screaming, "What are you girls doing down there?!" And I thought you were dead and I started freaking out and then you opened your eyes and yelled, "Swimming!"

JAYCEE. Ha! That sounds like me.

SHARLENE. Why would you do that? That's so dangerous.

CLARICE. It's like homemade electroshock therapy. They do it on *Orange Is the New Black*. These two chicks stick a nail in a light socket and zap their brains to feel better. That's how depressed they are.

*(Small beat.)*

JAYCEE. Well I was twelve. So.

CLARICE. So you were killing brain cells, even then.

*(They regard one another.)*

JAYCEE. Hey. Wait staff. How 'bout another pitcher?

CLARICE *(indicates SAM)*. She works here too.

SAM. But I can't serve.

CLARICE. Can you pay? At least?

*(Beat. SAM gets her wallet.)*

JAYCEE. I'll pay for it.

SAM. No—

SHARLENE. We're taking you out, Jaycee! Gorsh.

*(CLARICE goes behind the bar and refills the pitcher.)*

CLARICE *(as she goes)*. Yeah, Jaycee. *Gorsh*.

SHARLENE *(sort of enjoying the attention)*. Don't make fun. I can't help how I talk.

CLARICE. You can say "gosh" if you want to.

SHARLENE. I try, but it comes out "gorsh."

SAM. There's no "r." Just take the "r" out.

SHARLENE (*tries*). Gorsh.

SAM. Gosh.

SHARLENE. Gorsh.

CLARICE. Or just say “God” like a normal person. It’s not 1952.

SHARLENE. I can’t.

CLARICE. You won’t get struck by lightning. Just say it. “God.”

SHARLENE. No.

CLARICE. God.

SHARLENE. No.

CLARICE. God!

SHARLENE. No!

CLARICE. I can’t believe you’re saying “no” to God.

SHARLENE. I’m not and you know it.

You’re not funny.

JAYCEE. She’s boring.

CLARICE. What?

JAYCEE. I am not going to miss any of this shit. Between the two of you.

I want to open my presents now.

*(SHARLENE moves the gift bag further out of reach.)*

SHARLENE. But I haven’t told my story yet.

JAYCEE. Like I need to hear another story where I act like a complete moron.

CLARICE. What other kind is there?

SHARLENE. This is why I wanted to do this, so I could tell this one story about you. Please.

*(JAYCEE sighs.)*

JAYCEE. Fine. Do it.

*(CLARICE returns with the beer. During this, she pours beer for everybody but SHARLENE.)*

SHARLENE. OK. What I always remember about Jaycee is the time she helped me win the Easter egg hunt.

This was when we still went to Adams Lutheran, and they used to hide the eggs in that graveyard behind the church? And after service we went out to hunt for eggs. And all the older kids and Jaycee were running around and they were finding eggs so fast. Like they knew where to look or something—

JAYCEE. We did.

SHARLENE. What?

JAYCEE. Mrs. Hayden and all those old ladies would hide the eggs during the service. So we would sit in the back pew and watch them out the window. So it was basically just who could get to the eggs fastest 'cause we already knew where they were.

SHARLENE. Oh.

JAYCEE. Oh.

*(SHARLENE considers.)*

SHARLENE. But that doesn't change the story. Which is I only had three eggs, but you had a ton. You could've won—

JAYCEE. Brian Halverson was going to win.

SHARLENE *(wants to make her point)*. But I couldn't find any eggs. And it seemed like everybody else could—

JAYCEE. Because everybody else was cheating.

SHARLENE. But I didn't know that, and I was getting really upset, and I was trying not to cry. And Jaycee noticed. Nobody else noticed, but Jaycee noticed, and she came



over and she said, “Do you want my eggs, Sharlene? You can have them.” And she gave them to me.

*(To JAYCEE.)* You put them in my basket one by one. And I just stood there. I couldn’t believe it. You were so nice.

And then it was time to count everybody’s eggs and I won. By one egg. And the prize was this little wind-up rabbit—

*(To JAYCEE.)* And I tried to give it to you, but you told me to keep it. And I still have it. And every time I look at it, I remember how you were so generous and nice and how you helped me win.

JAYCEE. And I remember how I only needed three eggs to beat Brian Halverson. So I gave you my eggs so you could beat him by one egg, and you did and he totally freaked.

CLARICE. And how, exactly, did he freak?

JAYCEE. He threw all his eggs on the ground, and he smashed them with his foot and his mom dragged him off and wailed on him—like beat the crap out of him in the parking lot. It was awesome— *(She and CLARICE start to laugh.)* I fucking hated that kid.

CLARICE. I saw him the other day.

JAYCEE. No way. Where?

CLARICE. At the Cenex in Dodgeville. He’s working for Bethke. Digging wells.

JAYCEE. Is he still a douchebag?

CLARICE. He was decent enough.

He’s married now. He’s got two kids.

SAM. Why do you hate Brian Halverson?

JAYCEE. No reason.

CLARICE. You have to tell her.

JAYCEE. No I don’t.

CLARICE. You brought it up, dude. You gotta tell.

*(Small beat.)*

JAYCEE. He was my sixth-grade boyfriend. And in sixth grade, I had, like, one pair of pants, practically, and I outgrew them, but nobody bought me any new ones. So everyday I'd come to school and somebody'd go, "Where's the flood, Jaycee?" And one day he was standing there too and he said, "Look. There's my *ex*-girlfriend. Floodpants." That's how he dumped me.

CLARICE. She vowed revenge.

JAYCEE *(to SHARLENE)*. And thanks to you, I beat him at the Easter egg hunt and made him cry like a little girl. Bam. And now for my presents—

*(SHARLENE moves the bag even further out of reach.)*

SHARLENE. I thought you gave me the eggs because you wanted me to win.

JAYCEE. I just wanted to crush Brian Halverson.

SAM. She let you keep the rabbit.

JAYCEE. Maybe I didn't want the rabbit.

SAM. Who wouldn't want a wind-up rabbit?

*(SHARLENE bows her head for a moment, then looks up.)*

SHARLENE. I think you were being nice but you can't admit it, and the point of my story is that—you have to remember you are the sum of all your parts. You're not a single action. You're all your actions combined. That's the point of my story, and that's why I wanted to tell the stories. So later on, you can look back and think of yourself at other times in your life and remember that you've been a different person and you will be again.

*(JAYCEE doesn't answer. Beat. Then JAYCEE grabs the bag.)*

JAYCEE. I want some real presents. *(She pulls a large, brightly colored dildo from the bag.)* Who the fuck got me this?

CLARICE. I did. Asshole.

JAYCEE. Well what the fuck am I supposed to do with it?

CLARICE. Do I really have to tell you? *(No answer.)* Remember? How you got poison ivy? And you were scratching away down there? Well this will help with that—

JAYCEE. No. Literally. What am I supposed to do with it? I can't take / this with me.

SAM. She can't take that with her.

CLARICE. You have to sneak it in. Otherwise you'll have to make your own.

JAYCEE. Why would I have to make my own?

CLARICE. Because you'll get desperate.

JAYCEE. I'm not going to get that desperate. Trust me.

SHARLENE. What is that?

CLARICE. Oh my god. Did you seriously just ask that?!

SAM. It's a dildo.

SHARLENE. Oh! *(She takes it from JAYCEE.)* I never saw one this color before.

*(This is a surprising sentence coming from SHARLENE.)*

CLARICE. What color dildos have you seen, pray tell?

SHARLENE. I've never seen any. In person. I've only ever seen one in a catalog and it was more ... flesh colored. I didn't know they came in colors.

*(This is also a very surprising bit of info.)*

SAM. I'm sorry. I have to ask. What sort of catalogs do you get at your house?

SHARLENE. I saw one in the Evening Rose catalog. (*They stare at her.*) That the Evening Rose lady brings around.

CLARICE. You're saying these words like we know what they mean.

SHARLENE. The Evening Rose lady comes to people's houses and you have a party—like a Tupperware party—and she sells things. (*They wait.*) She sells marital aids for the Christian lifestyle. We had an Evening Rose party at our house last month, and we had so much fun. You guys should come next time. Everybody laughed so hard.

SAM. But—like what sort of things?

SHARLENE. Like lotions and oils. And real pretty lingerie.

SAM. Like—nightgowns or—?

SHARLENE. Like teddies.

CLARICE. I thought you guys just wore a big sack with a hole in it. (*She draws a hole over her crotch.*)

SHARLENE. No! We like to look nice. Gorsh.

SAM. I thought Christians only had sex for the purpose of procreation.

SHARLENE. We have sex for fun, too!

Or I don't, yet. But I will once I'm married. Because a healthy sex life is part of a healthy marriage. It's what God wants. It keeps you safe from temptation. (*She puts down the dildo.*) But masturbation is all about temptation. It's wrong. You shouldn't do it.

CLARICE. Then what do you use the dildos for?

SHARLENE. I don't really know. It was just in the catalog. She didn't have one at the party so nobody asked.

JAYCEE. It's for the kinky Christians.

SHARLENE. No ...

JAYCEE. It's for the closeted homo Christian who shoves a dildo up his ass while he fucks / his wife up hers—

*(SHARLENE puts her hands over her ears.)*

SHARLENE. Shut up shut up shut up! It is not!

*(CLARICE picks up the dildo and offers it to JAYCEE.)*

CLARICE. But seriously, you have to take this with you or you're gonna end up using a screwdriver.

JAYCEE. How do you come up with this shit?

CLARICE. How do you come up with your shit?

*(No answer.)*

CLARICE *(cont'd)*. It was on *Orange Is the New Black*. This dyke gets a screwdriver and you think she's gonna kill somebody with it, but she makes a dildo out of it instead—

JAYCEE *(sharp)*. Would you stop talking about that stupid show?

SAM *(overlaps)*. I hate that show.

CLARICE. Have you even seen it?

SAM *(nods)*. It felt fake to me. Like prison was funny?

SHARLENE. When does it come on?

SAM. It's on Netflix.

SHARLENE. We don't have cable—

CLARICE. It's not cable. It's Netflix. And it's not fake, it's based on a true story. *(To JAYCEE.)* I just think you should watch it so you'll know what it's like.

JAYCEE. I already know what it's like. I've already been to see my dad in prison. I know what it's like and she's right—it's not funny. *(Grabs the second bag.)* Give me another present that's not stupid.

SAM. That's from Mom and me.

*(It's filled with makeup and toiletries. JAYCEE pulls out a small bottle of lotion.)*

SAM *(cont'd)*. It's basics. Makeup and shampoo ...

CLARICE. She can't take that in, either.

SAM. Aunt Natalie said she could. *(To JAYCEE.)* My mom called her, and she said you could take in stuff as long as it was in the small bottles.

JAYCEE. Yeah. She's wrong.

SAM. But Mom called her and she said.

JAYCEE. What time did she call her?

SAM. Whenever she got home from work.

JAYCEE. Because Mom's usually wasted by six. So if it was after six, she didn't know what she was talking about and she probably doesn't even remember the conversation.

SAM. I'm sorry. I wanted to get you something nice.

JAYCEE. It's real nice. It's tons nicer than the stuff I buy.

SAM. I'll get you something else.

SHARLENE. You didn't know.

CLARICE. You would have if you watched *Orange Is the New Black*.

JAYCEE *(to SHARLENE)*. So what useless thing did you get me?

*(SHARLENE hands her a card.)*

SHARLENE. The present's inside.

*(JAYCEE opens it and looks at the card.)*

SHARLENE *(cont'd)*. You can read the card later if you want.

CLARICE. You wrote a lot.

SHARLENE. You can read it after you get home if you want.  
It's only for you.

CLARICE. Is it about how nice she was at that Easter egg hunt?

SHARLENE (*ignores her and takes a plastic card from the envelope*). Here's the present. It's a calling card.

(*JAYCEE stares at it.*)

SHARLENE (*cont'd*). It's going to be long distance for you to call home. You either have to call people collect or use a calling card. In case there's somebody you want to call who can't accept the charges.

CLARICE. Like me.

(*SAM gives her a look.*)

CLARICE (*cont'd*). What? I'm broke.

SAM. You could accept the charges.

JAYCEE. Don't worry 'cause I'm not calling her anyway.

CLARICE. Good. Because I can't accept the charges.

SHARLENE. That's why I got you the card. So you can call whoever you want.

SAM. How do you know that? About the phones?

SHARLENE. My church does outreach to these ladies in prison, and they all said that's what they wished somebody had gotten them. When they went.

JAYCEE. They do outreach at Ridgeway?

SHARLENE. Greenfield. But we might start at Ridgeway, too.

(*SAM looks at her gift bag.*)

SAM. Can I send you this stuff after you get there?

SHARLENE. You can only send things from approved vendors.

CLARICE. You have to go on the prison website and see who the approved vendors are. But their stuff is mad expensive.

JAYCEE. Nobody has to send me anything.

SHARLENE. You can send money to her commissary account, and she can buy things at the commissary.

SAM. Then I'll do that.

JAYCEE. I don't want money from you.

SAM. I want to get you a present.

JAYCEE. I don't want any fucking presents. OK? (*Looks at the cake.*) Is nobody else coming? Tonight? Like who all did you invite anyway?

CLARICE. Everybody.

JAYCEE. Who?

CLARICE (*shrugs*). I posted it on Facebook.

JAYCEE. Lucas and those guys aren't on Facebook.

CLARICE. I texted them. (*Beat.*) What do you expect? People are mad at you.

JAYCEE. Why?

CLARICE (*seriously?*). It's one thing to just be using. It's a whole other thing to sell stuff to kids.

JAYCEE. You use—

CLARICE. Not that shit.

JAYCEE. And I didn't sell anything to anybody.

CLARICE. But your dad did.

JAYCEE. I had no idea he was doing that.

CLARICE. People don't believe you.

JAYCEE. Why not?

CLARICE. 'Cause you got a shit ton of drugs.



JAYCEE. For my dad. I was just trying to help my dad.

*(Nobody says anything.)*

JAYCEE *(cont'd)*. What? *(Turns to SAM.)* What?!

SAM. It's just that it sounds bad. I mean, helping your dad is like ... handing him a wrench while he's fixing the sink ...

CLARICE. Making a sandwich for his lunch ...

JAYCEE. He couldn't get any more pain meds, so I got a prescription. He was in pain.

SAM. But you didn't just get one prescription.

CLARICE. You got like a hundred. You drove all over the state.

*(JAYCEE doesn't answer.)*

SAM. It just seems like you would have known—

JAYCEE. What the fuck do you know?

I did not know he was selling to kids. I just thought he was selling shit to his stupid buddies.

He had no income, OK? All he had was this shitty disability that didn't even pay his rent, so I was trying to look out for him. I was trying to help my dad. I didn't know he was hanging out at the fucking high school.

CLARICE. Selling fentanyl patches to ninth graders.

JAYCEE. That's exactly what I did not know.

SAM. You could have asked us.

JAYCEE. What? You knew?

SAM. If all it was was money, you could have asked my parents for help.

JAYCEE. Your mom thinks my mom is utter trash—

SAM. They're sisters! She does not—

JAYCEE. Our whole side of the family is like—we're the total embarrassment / side of the family—

SAM. That is so not true—

JAYCEE. So I'm not asking your mom for money. Or Aunt Vanessa or Aunt Brenda, because I don't want a lecture about how I need to get my mom in rehab and how I should just stay the fuck away from my dad. (*Looks at SAM.*) Everybody compares me to you.

SAM. No they don't.

JAYCEE. "Why can't you be like Sam and go to college? You were like twins when you were little and now look at you—high all the time and you can't hold down a job. What's your problem? You got a diploma. You got decent friends. I mean look at Sharlene— (*At SHARLENE.*) Sharlene's already got promoted, or look at Clarice— (*At CLARICE.*) Clarice, even, is doing better than you. You keep going like you're going and you're gonna end up just like your mom. Or your dad. Or in jail—"

CLARICE. Which you are, and that's why everybody's pissed at you because everybody's been trying to tell you for two solid years that you're gonna get your ass handed to you and look!

Here's your ass. So.

Happy going-to-prison party. Or whatever the fuck this is.

(*Pause.*)

JAYCEE. So this is the party?

CLARICE. It's better than nothing.

SHARLENE. I love you, Jaycee.

JAYCEE. Oh God.

SHARLENE. I don't love your sins, but I love you.

SAM. I'm only going to college because I got a scholarship. The difference in our families is only—

JAYCEE. Don't say "luck" 'cause it's way more than luck.

SAM. It is luck. I don't think I'm better than you.

JAYCEE. Good. 'Cause you're not.

SAM. I don't even know if I want to go.

CLARICE. Don't be an idiot. They're paying you to go.

SAM. But there's tons of pressure.

SHARLENE. You're going to learn so much. It's going to be so great.

CLARICE. And everybody thinks you hung the moon. When they put your senior picture in the paper—underneath it said, "Attending Ohio State University in the fall." When I graduated? Under mine? I got, "Going to join the workforce."

SAM. That's what I mean by pressure. What if I fuck up?

JAYCEE. You don't get to be the fuckup. I'm the fuckup. So shut up and stop being an asshole.

*(Small beat.)*

SAM. You know? We have to go. Set two alarms because we're picking you up at five.

JAYCEE. In the morning?

SAM. You have to be there at eight.

JAYCEE. Fuck.

SHARLENE. I wish I could come with you. I would except I don't get any more days off until September.

CLARICE. You didn't want me to come, did you?

JAYCEE. No.

CLARICE. Good. 'Cause I can't. *(She starts picking up the glasses, etc.)* What do you want to do with this cake?

SHARLENE. If nobody else wants it, I'll take it to work tomorrow.

CLARICE. Go for it.

*(SHARLENE puts the cake in its box. SAM and CLARICE carry things to the bar. JAYCEE finishes whatever beer is left in her glass.)*

JAYCEE. So what else do they do on that stupid TV show?  
Besides make dildos?

CLARICE. They make toilet hooch. They fuck in the showers.

JAYCEE. Great.

CLARICE. I only thought you should watch it so you'd know what to expect.

SHARLENE. But it might scare her.

CLARICE. To make her feel better. Because it's not as bad as you think.

JAYCEE. 'Cause it's a TV show.

CLARICE. But it's based on a true story. *(To SAM.)* Trash or lanes?

SAM. I don't care.

CLARICE. Do the lanes then.

*(SAM exits into the bowling alley proper. CLARICE gets the trash and exits out the back door with it. JAYCEE looks at the cake.)*

JAYCEE. Those people at the old folks' home are gonna know they're getting used cake.

SHARLENE. They won't know.

JAYCEE. It says, "We'll Miss You, Jaycee" on it. Or ...  
*(Looks at it.)* "You, Jaycee."

SHARLENE. They'll just be happy to have cake. It's one of the blessings of dementia.

JAYCEE. Jesus. Shoot me now.

SHARLENE. I love all those old people. And I think they love me. And as long as they can give and receive love ...

JAYCEE. What? They're "God's children"?

SHARLENE. Yes.

*(Small beat.)*

JAYCEE. You're wrong about that stupid show. It wouldn't scare me.

SHARLENE. Are you sure?

JAYCEE. Yeah, 'cause I'm already scared shitless.

*(She tries a laugh. SHARLENE regards her.)*

SHARLENE. I'm going to pray for you, Jaycee.

JAYCEE. Please don't.

SHARLENE. I'm still going to do it.

JAYCEE. But I don't want you to.

SHARLENE. OK.

But I still am.

## Scene 2

*(The Friday after Thanksgiving. Afternoon. MADDY is at the bar. Her coat hangs over the back of the bar stool, and it has some sort of patch on the shoulder that lets you know it's very expensive. MADDY is smoking pot with a weed pen, almost hungrily. The sounds of a bowling game in progress come from the bowling alley, but it is oddly dark in there.)*

*BRIELLE enters from the bowling alley, wearing a blue polo shirt with the Twilight Bowl logo on it. She is carrying*

*a tray with empty bottles on it. As soon as MADDY sees her, she puts the pipe in her purse and picks up her phone like she was looking at it.*

*BRIELLE knows exactly what was going on. She goes behind the bar. During this, BRIELLE rinses out the empties before putting them in the recycling bin.)*

BRIELLE. You can't smoke in here.

MADDY. I wasn't.

BRIELLE. Or vape.

MADDY. I wasn't. But OK. *(She looks at her phone.)* What carrier do you use around here?

BRIELLE. U.S. Cellular.

MADDY. No wonder. *(Holds up her iPhone.)* Data roaming.

BRIELLE. I can turn on the TV if you want.

MADDY. Oh, I still have a signal. I just have to pay for it.

BRIELLE. You can bowl if you want.

MADDY. I suck.

BRIELLE. How can you suck?

MADDY. I just do.

BRIELLE. Then—how did you get on the team?

MADDY. What team?

BRIELLE. I thought you were on the team with Sam—

MADDY. We're just friends.

BRIELLE. Oh.

MADDY. Could at least—like could I get a shot, at least?

BRIELLE. Aren't you underage?

MADDY. I have a fake ID.

BRIELLE. If the owners found out they'd fire me. It's a family business.

MADDY. What can I have then? If I can't have a shot.

BRIELLE. Soda? Water?

MADDY. Do you have anything to eat?

BRIELLE. Chips. Cheese and sausage plate. Pizza—

MADDY. Pizza please!

BRIELLE. They're frozen.

MADDY. I don't care.

BRIELLE (*points to two cardboard circles over the bar*).

It's five ninety-five for a ten inch or seven ninety-five for a twelve.

MADDY. Twelve please. You take plastic, right?

BRIELLE. Yeah. (*She opens a freezer under the bar*.) We have sausage, pepperoni, or cheese.

MADDY. Pepperoni please.

(*BRIELLE takes a pizza out from the freezer.*)

MADDY (*cont'd*). Will it take long?

BRIELLE. Fourteen minutes.

(*BRIELLE unwraps the pizza and puts it in the oven. As she does this, MADDY sneaks a hit on her weed pen. She's bad at sneaking.*)

BRIELLE (*cont'd*). Dude. You can not smoke that in here.

MADDY. It's an e-cigarette.

BRIELLE. No, it's not.

MADDY (*starts to put it away, stops*). Do you want some?

BRIELLE. No.

MADDY. Do you not smoke?

BRIELLE. Not at work. Where I can get fired.

MADDY. Well let me know if you change your mind, 'cause this shit is good.

BRIELLE. I don't care how good it is.

*(The sound of laughter from the bowling alley. MADDY stands up on the bar rail and looks through the window.)*

MADDY. What are they doing in there?

BRIELLE. Bowling.

MADDY. But it's all dark.

BRIELLE. It's black light bowling.

MADDY. Everybody's teeth are glowing. *(Corrects herself.)*

Is glowing. *(Corrects herself.)* Are glowing.

BRIELLE *(kinda had it)*. What time did those guys say they'd meet you here?

MADDY. Sam said she'd call when they were close.

BRIELLE. When did she call?

MADDY. She didn't. I just could not stand being in her house one more second. No offense.

BRIELLE. It's not my house.

MADDY. Her parents kept getting me snacks and asking if I was cold? Did I want a blanket? And telling me to watch whatever I wanted on Netflix. I was about to lose my mind.

BRIELLE. Sounds awful.

MADDY. They were scrutinizing me. I don't want to be scrutinized.

BRIELLE. Or maybe they're nice?

MADDY. But to what end?

BRIELLE. To the end of being nice?

MADDY. Who does that though?

BRIELLE. Why didn't you just spend Thanksgiving with your own family?



(No answer.)

BRIELLE (*cont'd*). I'm sorry. Do you not have a family?

MADDY. I have a family. In Winnetka.

BRIELLE. Where's that?

MADDY. Winnetka? It's on the north shore? Of Chicago?

BRIELLE. So, right outside of Chicago?

MADDY. On the north shore. (*BRIELLE makes a face like, "Huh."*) What?

BRIELLE. I thought—Sam said you lived too far away to go home for Thanksgiving. But if you live in Chicago—didn't you kind of drive right past your house to get here?

MADDY. That's what my parents said. They're so pissed at me right now. I told my mom Sam was going through a really hard time and she really wanted me to come home with her but she thinks I'm lying—that I don't want to see them—

BRIELLE. What's wrong with Sam?

MADDY. Oh just—you know—she's upset. Because of her cousin. Being in prison.

BRIELLE. I didn't know it was that big a deal ...

MADDY. Because everybody's cousin is in prison around here?

BRIELLE. To her. Is all. (*Beat.*) Not everybody's cousin is in prison.

MADDY. I didn't say they were.

BRIELLE. Yes, you did.

MADDY. That's not me. That's a fact. We just studied it in my cultural anthropology class. The whole opioid/heroin epidemic? In rural America? The decline in life expectancy for rural white people?

Like that's the only group in this country that isn't living longer, and we all should be living longer because of medical

advancements and good nutrition, but white people between the ages of forty and sixty are dying tons sooner and it's all because of self-inflicted shit, like deaths from alcoholism and drug overdoses and suicide. These two doctors discovered this trend and they were like, "What?! What's happening?" It's all linked to limited economic opportunity and feelings of worthlessness. They call them deaths of despair. We just learned about it.

BRIELLE. What's this class?

MADDY. Cultural anthropology. It's the only elective I could take, and it's the only class I don't hate because every other class I'm taking is a "core requirement"? Like rhetoric and math, which—they should let me place out of that shit. I mean, I went to New Trier for fuck's sake.

BRIELLE. Is that like a ... school?

MADDY. New Trier? It's a high school.

BRIELLE. I never heard of it.

MADDY. It's kind of famous. It's considered one of the top tier schools in the country.

*(BRIELLE shakes her head—not ringing a bell.)*

MADDY *(cont'd)*. Well it is. So logically I should not even be at Ohio State. But—well, I got into Northwestern and while that would have been really comfortable because it's just like New Trier? I wasn't sure if I wanted to be comfortable in that way.

BRIELLE. A top-tier way?

MADDY. Exactly. It's hypercompetitive. Everything's functionalized. There's no learning for learning's sake. It's just, "Where-will-this-get-me?" cut-throat careerism. Which—I decided I'd had enough of that.

BRIELLE. Who hasn't?

MADDY. Exactly!

So I had to go somewhere, and I had applied to Ohio State as my safety school, and now I'm stuck there until I can figure out where to transfer to. Which means going through the whole application process again, which—well you know. It's a huge pain.

BRIELLE. Sounds ... yeah. Like a problem, I guess.

MADDY. Are you in school now ... ? Or going ... ?

BRIELLE. I was at UW Platteville.

MADDY. Where's that?

BRIELLE. Platteville.

MADDY. I know, but where's Platteville?

BRIELLE. West of here. East of the river?

*(MADDY has no idea.)*

BRIELLE *(cont'd)*. But I'm taking some time off.

MADDY. Did you not like it?

BRIELLE. I liked it fine, but I didn't know what I want to get my degree in, and I don't see the point in spending the money until I know ...

*(MADDY's phone dings, and she looks at it, not hearing this next sentence.)*

BRIELLE *(cont'd)*. It's really expensive.

*(MADDY is upset by a text message.)*

MADDY *(to her phone)*. I'm not answering you, fuckface. *(Puts down her phone. It rings.)* You better not—*(She sees who's calling.)* Oh. *(She answers.)* Where are you? ... I'm here already. I'm hanging ... I just thought I'd come early and hang. I don't know. *(To BRIELLE.)* What's your name?

BRIELLE. Who is that?

MADDY. Sam.

BRIELLE. It's Brielle.

MADDY (*on phone*). Briana.

BRIELLE. Brielle.

MADDY (*on phone*). She's totally cool except she won't serve me, and I wanted to get drunk tonight, so if we can go somewhere after and do that, I would appreciate that ... He just *texted* me, like five seconds ago ... Yeah. So no, obviously, I'm not answering a fucking *text* ... OK. Cool. Bye. (*She hangs up.*)

BRIELLE. Where are they?

MADDY. They're ... outside some town that I forgot the name of.

BRIELLE. For the record, I'm not not serving you because I'm "not cool." It's because I don't want to lose my job.

MADDY. I just very badly need to get drunk tonight. Did Sam tell you I just had an abortion?

BRIELLE. She did not.

MADDY. I did. I just had an abortion.

BRIELLE. Wow. I'm sorry.

MADDY. Don't be. It's not your fault.

But that's why I didn't go home for Thanksgiving. I could not face my mom. My mom is one of those people who—you know—one hair is out of place, and she thinks you're in crisis and she freaks out. She hates messiness.

Like I used to get super nervous? When I took tests in high school? Because I thought every test was going to determine the rest of my life? Because that's what they told you? And it got so bad that every time I had a test, I'd hyperventilate on the way to school.

And *my* hyperventilating upset my mom so much that *she* had to go on Xanax. And then she took me to a psychiatrist, and he put *me* on Xanax. But I still got nervous. Only I was scared to tell her I was nervous, so then I was nervous *and* scared so instead of hyperventilating on the way to school, I started vomiting.

So the psychiatrist said maybe hypnosis would help? Which—it turns out you can just Google a hypnotist.

BRIELLE. Who knew?

MADDY. Right? So we went and this lady would make me stare at this gyroscope thing until I was hypnotized. And then she'd tell me I was a superhero and I was invincible and I could never fail at anything. Especially not tests.

BRIELLE. You remember what she said?

MADDY. I was never hypnotized. I just closed my eyes and pretended I was. I'd be like— (*She closes her eyes and lets her mouth fall open.*) Then the hypnotist lady would pick up a magazine and read for the rest of the hour and totally ignore me.

I loved it. It was the best hour of the week.

(*Beat.*) She calls me five times a day.

BRIELLE. Why?

MADDY. Because she's so damn worried about me.

(*Small beat.*)

BRIELLE. The hypnotist?

MADDY. My mom!

She took it so personally when I said I wasn't coming home.

BRIELLE. At least she cares.

(*MADDY dies laughing.*)

MADDY. That's hilarious.

Seriously. Can't I have a shot of something? Like give me something nobody ever drinks so they won't notice. (*Looks behind the bar.*) Peach schnapps.

BRIELLE. A lot of people drink that. Actually.

I can't. I'm sorry.

MADDY. No. It's good. (*She looks at her phone.*) The guy who got me pregnant just texted me. "R u OK." The letter "r," the letter "u," "OK." No question mark. That's *four* keystrokes.

BRIELLE. Six with the spaces.

If you're really counting.

(*MADDY laughs.*)

MADDY. You're right. Six! (*Stops laughing.*) Like that's so much better than four.

BRIELLE (*looks toward the bowling alley*). Listen, once those guys leave—

It's slow so I'll prob'ly lock up anyway and then—if you're here with Sam and them—you can have whatever you want to drink.

MADDY. Whatever I want?

BRIELLE. You still have to pay—

MADDY. See? I knew you were cool!

BRIELLE. I'm not.

MADDY. You are. You're super cool Briana!

BRIELLE. Brielle.

(*MADDY looks at her phone again.*)

MADDY. I just seriously need to get shitfaced.

**Scene 3**

*(An hour later. The sounds of bowling from the bowling alley. SHARLENE, SAM and CLARICE enter in coats. They have on BIG coats. It is very cold outside.*

*During the following they take off coats, etc. CLARICE gets a pitcher of beer for herself and a soda for SHARLENE.*

*SAM pokes her head in the bowling alley.)*

SAM *(calls)*. Hey, Maddy! I'm back if you want to go someplace else!

MADDY *(off)*. Look! It's black light bowling!

SAM *(CALLS)*. I know!

MADDY *(off)*. Look at my teeth!

SAM *(to herself)*. OK. *(Calls.)* We're in here when you're done! OK? If you want to go!

MADDY *(off)*. It's OK! I'm drinking!

CLARICE. You want a glass? *(Slight hesitation from SAM.)*  
Come on. It's a holiday.

SAM. OK. *(To SHARLENE.)* Jaycee knew we were coming, right?

SHARLENE. I wrote her we were coming.

CLARICE. She didn't want to see us.

SAM. If she didn't want to see us, why did she put us on the list?

CLARICE. She chickened out. *(Pours beer into glasses.)*  
Whatever. Three hours in the car. I don't care.

*(The sound of MADDY's laughter from the bowling alley.)*

CLARICE *(cont'd)*. What's with your friend?

SAM. I don't know. What do you mean?

CLARICE. Does she always laugh like that?

SAM. I don't know. *(To SHARLENE.)* Is it always like that?  
That visiting room?

SHARLENE. Like what?

SAM. Loud and bright like that.

CLARICE. I thought it was freakishly quiet.

SAM. With all those babies screaming?

CLARICE. But everybody talked so soft.

SHARLENE. You have to, if you want to have a private conversation.

SAM. And there was this weird smell that was really familiar. I keep thinking like a pudding. Or candy. Something pink, but that you eat.

CLARICE. Strawberry. And we didn't eat it. It was the same air freshener they put in the bathrooms at school.

SAM. Oh my god. Exactly. *(She smells her arm.)* I can still smell it.

CLARICE. There was another smell. Behind that.

*(They recall it. It was a bad smell. They drink.)*

CLARICE *(cont'd)*. Does she ever call you?

SAM. No.

CLARICE. Me neither. *(To SHARLENE.)* But she calls you all the time, right?

SHARLENE. She's only called me a few times. I think she mostly calls her mom.

SAM. She should not call her mom.

SHARLENE. She's in AA now.

SAM. Aunt Natalie?

SHARLENE. Yes.



SAM (*considers this*). Whatever. She's quit drinking before.

SHARLENE. She's been sober for six weeks.

SAM. Who told you that?

SHARLENE. I saw her at the Aldi. She said she's going to meetings. She said she never went to meetings before.

SAM. My mom's taken her like a thousand times.

SHARLENE. But she went on her own this time. She said seeing Jaycee and her ex-husband go to prison was a big wake-up call, and she had to admit she needed help from a higher power. It's a huge first step.

SAM. Well, all I know is last time we went over to her house she threw a jar of mayonnaise at my mom and told her to go fuck herself.

CLARICE (*has been stewing*). I shouldn't have even gone. You know? Jaycee's been pulling this crap for two years. Ever since graduation. She'd say she was going to meet me someplace, and then she wouldn't show. Or if she did show, like, I thought it would just be the two of us but she'd bring along all these randos.

Then—even if it was some little thing—if something good happened to me, it was like she didn't want to hear about it. Like when I got my apartment. I was kind of excited. I mean I know it's the size of a closet, but—I think it's pretty cute.

SHARLENE. It's super cute.

CLARICE. Everybody said I was stupid to paint in there? Since it was a rental? But it was totally worth it. It's like, exactly how I want it.

SHARLENE. I love your place.

CLARICE. Yeah. It's—it's what I wanted. But she didn't even want to come over. I had to beg her, practically. And then when she did come, it was like, she couldn't wait to go out.

SAM. That's when she moved in with her dad. Was right after graduation.

CLARICE. 'Cause her mom told her she had to start paying rent.

SAM. I never understood how she could live with her mom until I saw her dad's place.

*(Beat.)*

CLARICE. But she could have gotten her own place, too. If she got her shit together.

SAM *(to SHARLENE)*. How many times have you been to see her?

SHARLENE. Not that many.

SAM. But she'll see you? When you go.

CLARICE. It's because I was there.

*(SHARLENE sighs.)*

CLARICE *(cont'd)*. What? Did you just sigh?

SHARLENE. I just think—maybe you guys aren't seeing things from her perspective. Maybe it's not about you.

CLARICE. But we're the ones she wouldn't see.

SHARLENE. But it's the day after Thanksgiving. She knows we were all with our families yesterday and she wasn't. So when it came her turn to talk about what she did yesterday, what would she say?

CLARICE. I wasn't with anybody's family. I was at the hotel all day.

SAM. You had to work?

CLARICE. I volunteered. I got time and a half.

SHARLENE. But I do think it's harder to see somebody if you haven't seen them in a long time—

CLARICE. The only reason I haven't been to see her is I work weekends—

SAM. I haven't even been home—

SHARLENE. I know. *(To CLARICE.)* But there were at least two times you could have gone with me and you didn't. And if you can go more then it's not as hard on her because she doesn't have to put on a good face every time—

CLARICE. Are you reprimanding me?

*(SHARLENE doesn't answer.)*

CLARICE *(cont'd)*. Wait—are you *judging* me?

SHARLENE. No. I love you. I love all you guys, which is why I sit here with you while you drink and smoke. And I listen to you indulge in profanity and take the Lord's name in vain and I never say a word.

I never say a word. But every once in a while? I do think that maybe you could think of somebody else and imagine how somebody else feels for five seconds—

CLARICE. So you do judge.

SHARLENE *(sharp)*. Or maybe I'm being tested? I don't know what for? But maybe I am. I don't know. Whyever it is, it's my sin and I have to atone for it. OK?

*(CLARICE is a bit taken aback by this.)*

CLARICE. OK.

Gorsh.

*(BRIELLE and MADDY enter. They are both wearing bowling shoes. BRIELLE carries an empty pitcher and her glass, which she takes behind the bar. MADDY comes to the table with her own glass, which is almost empty.)*

MADDY. I got a hundred and thirty-six!

SAM. Seriously?

BRIELLE. We had the bumpers in.

MADDY. It doesn't matter. The ball wasn't going anywhere near the ditches. *(Sits.)* It's really not that hard. *(Picks up the pitcher.)* Can I have some of this?

CLARICE. Sure.

MADDY. Thank you. I'm Maddy.

SAM. Maddy, this is Clarice and Sharlene. Guys, this is Maddy.

SHARLENE. Hi.

*(MADDY pours herself some beer. She might spill some.)*

MADDY. How was your cousin?

SAM. We didn't get to see her.

MADDY. Why not?

SAM *(lies)*. Our name wasn't on the list.

MADDY. That sucks.

SAM. Yeah.

MADDY. It sucks your cousin has to be in prison. I'm sorry. About that. And about all the despair. *(Looks at her shoes.)* So I want to keep these shoes. If I stole them would anybody tell?

CLARICE. I'm the person somebody would tell, and you just told me. So yes.

MADDY. Is this your family's business?

CLARICE. No.

MADDY *(to SHARLENE)*. Is it yours?

CLARICE. It's the Brumlow's.

*(MADDY nods like she's listening.)*

CLARICE (*cont'd*). They're a brother and sister. They own the bowling alley and the movie theatre and the drive-in.

(*Beat. MADDY stares at her like she's a bug.*)

CLARICE (*cont'd*). Hey. You asked—

BRIELLE. She's totally not registering anything you're saying.

MADDY. I'm processing.

SAM. How stoned are you?

MADDY. Not stoned enough. But— (*Points at BRIELLE.*)  
Briana—

SAM & CLARICE. Brielle—

MADDY. Fuck. I had it but I autocorrected. Brielle says I can't smoke in here? (*She pulls out her weed pen hopefully.*)

CLARICE. She's right. You can't.

MADDY. It's weird that you guys like, follow the rules your bosses set.

SAM. We don't want to get fired.

CLARICE. You don't work here anymore.

SAM. I will this summer. I can't wait. I miss it so much.

BRIELLE. You *miss* the Twilight Bowl?

CLARICE. Because college is so hard?

MADDY. You have no idea how much pressure we're under.  
To perform.

SAM. I have four classes *and* practice *and* a work-study job.

MADDY. You have a job?

SAM. I work the bussing station at the dining hall. You've handed me your tray.

MADDY. I have?

SAM. It was ... before you knew me. (*She drinks.*) I hate it.  
It's not like here, where adult people just put their glasses

on a tray. It's all these stupid *boys* who play with their food. They never even think that a human being has to deal with it. It's so gross.

CLARICE. You want to see gross, you should clean motel rooms.

MADDY. Who does that?

CLARICE. I do. I work here / *and* the Days Inn.

SAM. She has two jobs.

CLARICE (*pointedly to SHARLENE*). That's why I never have a day off. So if I every once in a while have a day off? Maybe I don't feel like driving to a prison.

SHARLENE. I know. I'm sorry.

Parkside is hiring. If you want to come work with me. You'd only have to have one job then.

CLARICE. What positions?

SHARLENE. Kitchen staff.

CLARICE. Uck.

SHARLENE. But that's just where you start. I was only in the kitchen for six months before they promoted me to wait staff, and then I only did that for three before I got nurses' aid.

CLARICE. Do you have to touch people's poop?

SHARLENE (*laughs*). Not in the kitchen!

It pays eleven dollars an hour.

CLARICE. Seriously?

SHARLENE. I make fourteen now—plus simple IRA, health and dental allowance, and paid vacation after one year.

CLARICE. Huh.

SHARLENE. Come over on Monday if you want, and I'll introduce you to Mrs. Wolline.

BRIELLE. If you don't want it, I'll go.

CLARICE. I'll go. What time?

SHARLENE. Come by on your lunch break.

CLARICE. OK.

MADDY. If you have two jobs then you probably have a permanent address, don't you?

CLARICE. I'm not                      SAM. She has an  
homeless—                      apartment—

MADDY. No! Like on applications and things. When they ask for your address and your *permanent* address, I have to put my parents' address. But you can put *your own address*. (To BRIELLE.) Do you want to bowl again?

BRIELLE. Not really. Sorry.

MADDY. It's good.

CLARICE. I'll bowl. If you want to bowl.

MADDY. Yeah?

CLARICE. But no bumpers.

MADDY. I don't need bumpers.

CLARICE. You want a bet?

SAM. Clarice.

MADDY. I'll bet you. How much?

CLARICE. Twenty bucks?

SAM. Clarice.

MADDY. OK, but I don't have any cash.

CLARICE. What sort of stash have you got?

MADDY. You mean ...

CLARICE. For your little "e-cigarette."

MADDY. Fine. I'll bet you that.

CLARICE. And I'll bet you twenty bucks.

MADDY. I paid a lot more than that. For that.

CLARICE. We don't have to bet.

SAM. She's really good, Maddy.

MADDY. So am I! I got the ball in every time. And I will totally take you on.

CLARICE *(to SAM)*. I'm assuming you're not into this.

SAM. You assume correctly.

*(CLARICE gets her bowling glove from behind the bar.)*

CLARICE. Sharlene, I know you don't indulge in gambling, but would you like to play?

SHARLENE. Really?

CLARICE. What size shoe do you wear?

SHARLENE. Nine.

CLARICE. Jesus. You're a horse.

*(CLARICE exits. SHARLENE and MADDY are following.)*

MADDY. Your name is Sharlene?

SHARLENE. Yeah.

MADDY. That's such a pretty name. It sounds like it's from another time or something.

SHARLENE. It was my grandmother's name.

MADDY. That's so sweet. That makes me want to cry.

*(They're gone.)*

BRIELLE. You can bowl if you want. You don't have to stick with me.

SAM. I don't have my ball. If I use a different ball I could fuck up my form.

*(BRIELLE laughs.)*



SAM (*cont'd*). I'm serious. I have to be. (*Puts the beer aside.*)

I shouldn't even be drinking this.

BRIELLE. Who's going to know?

SAM. They weigh you.

BRIELLE. They weigh you?

SAM. They measure your body mass index and everything.

It's like ... intense.

BRIELLE. It must be cool though. Too. I always wished I was on a team. Do you get a bowling shirt?

SAM. I'm not actually on the team. Yet.

BRIELLE. Why not?

SAM. They don't tell you all this when you get a scholarship, but they recruit more people than they can use. So they cut people. And if you get cut you lose your scholarship.

BRIELLE. Seriously?

SAM. Right now it's between me and this girl from Toledo for the last slot. And she's really good. She set three all-conference records.

BRIELLE. They can't cut you. You're the best bowler in the state.

SAM. But so is everybody else. Every girl on the team is like the *me* from their home town.

And this Toledo girl is a total suck-up. Coach is always telling her how good she looks and then she says, "But you have to tell me if there's any room for improvement." And he always says, "No. You're doing great."

BRIELLE. What does he say to you?

SAM. Nothing. Because apparently I suck.

BRIELLE. Nah. I don't know Toledo. But something tells me she sucks worse.

SAM. She doesn't suck. And also—

This is so embarrassing.

BRIELLE. What?

SAM. You have to have a minimum GPA to stay on the team.

And I've been getting C's. On everything. I've never made a C in my life. So I have to make A's, basically, for the rest of the semester or I can't play.

So I can't even practice as much as Toledo because I have to go to this tutoring center three times a week. And the stupid thing is, I'm working my ass off.

BRIELLE. College made me wonder if our high school was very good.

SAM. I started wondering, would I have even gotten in if they hadn't wanted me on the team. Like is this like some weird ... bowling affirmative action or something?

BRIELLE. Like you're filling some bowling quota?

SAM. Yeah, only—well I have a skill. I'm not just there because I'm a minority.

*(Small beat.)*

BRIELLE. Yeah. Neither are they? I don't think.

SAM. But they don't have to have as high a GPA or ACT scores as we do.

*(Small beat. BRIELLE steps up again.)*

BRIELLE. I don't think it's just based on scores. It's like, the whole student's a package and that's part of the package. I think.

*(Pause. SAM decides to drop it.)*

SAM. Whatever. I guess nobody's taking anybody's spot. I mean, there's sixty-thousand students.

(BRIELLE laughs.)

BRIELLE. For real, though, how many people go there?

SAM. Sixty thousand.

BRIELLE. You weren't kidding.

SAM. It's huge. How big was UW?

BRIELLE. UW *Platteville*. Seven thousand. And every one of them knew what they were doing there except me. I could not pick a major.

SAM. You didn't have any idea at all?

BRIELLE. There was an environmental and social justice program, but you could only minor in it.

SAM. What would you do with that?

BRIELLE (*shrugs*). Yeah, my advisor kept wanting me to be a business major so I could pay off my student loans. But I thought, "What if I just stopped taking out the loans instead?"

SAM. College graduates earn a lot more over their lifetimes.

BRIELLE. I took this intro to literature class I liked. We read *The Glass Menagerie*? It's a play?

SAM. Yeah?

BRIELLE. There's this girl in it who's got MS or something—she kind of limps? And she just sits at home and polishes these glass animals she collects. But they keep talking about how one time, she did go to business college to learn how to be a secretary. But when she got there, she was so shy that when she got asked to say something to the class she vomited everywhere. Like totally barfed in front of everybody.

SAM. Yeah?

BRIELLE. And it was supposed to be this indication of how she couldn't make it in the real world. She couldn't be a normal person.

But I thought—maybe it wasn't her problem. Maybe the real problem was business school.

I mean, if that's what you have to do to be “normal”—is like learn how to type and sit in a cubicle all day making Excel spreadsheets then maybe that *should* make you barf. Maybe the people who *aren't* barfing are the ones we need to worry about.

*(SAM drinks.)*

SAM. Do you mind being back home?

BRIELLE. It's OK. I mean, half my class never left, so ...

But I don't know. Sometimes I think I should get out. Experience the world and all that.

SAM. Where would you go?

BRIELLE. I wouldn't mind moving to Madison. Except the traffic is so bad—

SAM. I know!

BRIELLE. I'm actually scared to drive on the beltline.

SAM. Maddy learned how to drive in Chicago. And she was like, weaving in and out the whole way here?

I was kind of in awe of her.

*(Small beat.)*

BRIELLE. She told me why she came home with you.

SAM. Seriously?

BRIELLE. Yeah.

SAM. She told me I was the only person who knew. She swore me to secrecy.

BRIELLE. She's pretty wasted.

SAM. She swore me to secrecy.

I went with her.

BRIELLE. You did?

SAM. Somebody has to be there to drive you home. I don't know why she asked me. We're not that close—or we weren't before. But I was actually kind of honored.

I mean, it's a weird way to get to know somebody. To take them to get an abortion? But— *(Stops.)*

And then when she said she wanted to come home with me for Thanksgiving, I was like, "OK. We're friends. For real." You know? The whole way up here we were singing to all this crap on her phone.

But then—I told her we had an old house that we were remodeling? But I think she thought it was something different. Like a Victorian mansion or something. Because when she came in the house I could tell she was like— *(Makes a sour face.)*

And then—I don't know if I'm reading too much into this? But they told her she couldn't take a bath for the first ten days. Only we don't have a shower yet because my dad's been so busy he hasn't had a chance to do our bathroom. So she's having to kneel in the bathtub to get clean? I got her a plastic pitcher so she could pour water over her head but even that, she looked at it like it was old or something. Which it was because I had to take one my mom wouldn't miss.

BRIELLE. Isn't your dad a plumber?

SAM. But his business is doing so good now, since he went out on his own, he hasn't had time to work on our house.

BRIELLE. Then you explained, right? Why you don't have a shower.

SAM. But she hasn't really talked to me since we got here.  
She's just been smoking weed.

BRIELLE. She's dealing with a lot ...

*(Beat.)*

SAM. It's weird. I'm not really connecting with people?  
I thought I'd have friends on the team, but you can't be  
friends with people if they're trying to annihilate you.

And then—even Jaycee wouldn't come out to see me today  
so I'm like ... what am I? 'Cause I used to be, like, good at  
stuff and I thought people liked me.

BRIELLE. You still are. Don't freak.

SAM. I kind of wish I hadn't told Maddy that my cousin was  
in prison.

BRIELLE. She won't tell anybody.

SAM. How do you know?

BRIELLE. I just ... I don't think ... she cares that much?

*(Pause.)*

SAM. Half my class never left either.

BRIELLE. That's always how it is.

SAM. But it's not like there's any shame in staying here.

BRIELLE. No.

SAM. Or in coming back, even. Right?

BRIELLE. Not if you're not ashamed of it.

*(Beat.)*

BRIELLE *(cont'd)*. But it's easier for me. Nobody ever  
thought I'd make it big—

SAM. That doesn't mean you won't.

BRIELLE. I'm not even saying that I want to I just— *(Sighs.)*

I'm talking about you, now. OK? At least finish your first semester. See if you make the team.

SAM. 'Cause everything will be better then?

BRIELLE. 'Cause people will treat you different. If you make it.

#### Scene 4

*(SHARLENE sits alone. She is on the phone with her mother, who is lecturing her about how her friends take advantage of her.)*

SHARLENE. I know.

...

Mom, I know—

...

Well, I promised to drive Clarice home for one thing.

...

Because it's freezing outside. And I don't want Clarice to have to walk back to her apartment in the dark all by herself. There could be somebody out there.

...

Well, I think I'm blessed to have them, too.

...

Mom—

Mom, it's not a contest. We're all blessed.

...

OK. I'll text you when I leave, but I'm going to drive slow because of the deer, so don't freak out if I'm not home in exactly thirty minutes.

...

OK. Love you, too.

*(She hangs up. She might stare at her phone for a second. But. Who else would she call?)*

*MADDY enters through the back door in her coat.)*

MADDY. That was my entire stash for the weekend, and they are smoking it all right now. Why didn't somebody tell me she's an expert bowler? Who bowls? Even. It's so weird that all you guys know how to *bowl*.

SHARLENE. I wish everybody would come inside.

MADDY. I know. It's fucking freezing outside. And the front door is locked. Who even is going to come in here?

SHARLENE. I wish you guys wouldn't do that stuff.

*(But MADDY's phone dings and she doesn't hear this. She pulls it from her pocket, looks at it and speaks to it.)*

MADDY. Can't you understand that I am not answering you? My ex-boyfriend. Or not. I don't know. Were we even dating? *(Yells at phone.)* He won't fucking leave me alone!

SHARLENE. Does he want to get back together?

MADDY. He wants to know if I'm OK.

SHARLENE. Why? What's wrong?

MADDY. It's— *(Sighs.)* His name is Ryan. And we met at this party at his residence hall. But he's not a freshman. He's an R.A. And I thought he was really cute and really funny. Like he should have busted up the party but he said he'd look the other way as long as nobody "put an eye out." Which—admittedly that would make him seem like kind of a huge dork? Except he said it with just enough irony that I thought it was hilarious so I laughed really hard and he kind of noticed and he kind of smiled. At me.

But nothing happened because I got completely wasted and



I hooked up with this other guy who—I don't even know. Like I woke up in his bed but I still had my underwear on so I don't know—

*(Stops.)*

SHARLENE. Did you drink so much you passed out?

*(MADDY nods.)*

MADDY. But even if he did do something ... what am I gonna do? Tell somebody?

*(She thinks what would happen if she did that. The whole process. The futility of it all.)*

They'd just say it was sloppy sex. And I still had my underwear on, so.

*(Recovers.)* Back to my point about Ryan.

We were playing Purdue on Saturday, so Friday night we were going around to all the frat houses, but it was pretty lame until we got to this one house and Ryan was there. And he just smiled this huge smile when I came in and he said, "I was hoping I'd run into you tonight." And I said, "Me too!" And we went out on the patio and talked for a really long time and they were passing around this Kool-Aid/Xanax punch that had more Xanax in it than I take in a year.

Which—as an aside—this girl on our hall had a Xanax withdrawal last week. It was so ugly. It made me completely rethink any ideas I ever had about going off it.

So I was totally shitfaced at this point, and I told Ryan I didn't want to wake up my roommate, so Ryan said I could come back to his room—which is what I was aiming for—and we got together that night. Then the next morning he said he had to meet up with some people he was going to the game with, but he would text me after the game and we

could go to some parties together and he did. He texted me right when he said he was going to. And that whole week I spent every night in his room.

And I'm a fool for love, right? And I thought, "Oh we're a couple." You know? Like I was even thinking I could bring over a toothbrush.

But then the next week I kept texting him and he wasn't texting me back. But I didn't freak, at first. At first I was trying to be all casual and just see what was up. But then finally I did lose it and I was like, "Did I do something wrong? Are you breaking up with me?" And he finally texted back and it said, "I didn't know we were dating."

Which—OK, so maybe we weren't dating or maybe I made too much of something, but this is how you tell me you don't want to spend time with me anymore? In a fucking text?! So I didn't answer. Because—I have some pride. And really, I never would have talked to him again except that month I didn't get my period. And the next month I didn't get my period and I was like, great.

SHARLENE. Are you pregnant?

MADDY. I *was* pregnant.

SHARLENE. You had a miscarriage?

MADDY. No.

SHARLENE. Oh.

MADDY. So I texted him when I found out and said you are definitely responsible for this because I haven't been with anybody else—

*(Stops again. Thinks again.)* Except for that one guy but nothing happened with him.

It had to have been Ryan because that first night we were so fucked up we didn't use a condom and he knew that. So I said, "You have to step up, asshole." And either to his credit

or to his shame, he didn't question it. Like either, he knew he was the father, or this happens to him *all the time*.

So I found out how much it cost and he came over with this envelope full of cash. But it wasn't even a new envelope. It was an old window envelope. He *re-used* an envelope from some bill he got. So when he asked me if I wanted him to come with me I said, "No, I have somebody." And that was that. He didn't insist. At all. So I was like—who do I get to go with me and Sam was out in the hall for some reason—

SHARLENE. Sam—?

MADDY. And I thought, "She doesn't know anybody I know."

So we went on Friday, and I didn't text him or anything after because why should I? And now he keeps texting me. "Are you OK?" But I haven't answered him because I know, all he wants to know is, "Did you do it?" "Is it taken care of?" "Do I have to worry that you're going to show up on my doorstep some day with a toddler and start garnishing my pay?"

So I'm not answering him. Because—basically?—I want him to suffer. I want him to suffer and suffer and suffer. Because there's plenty of suffering to go around in this world and I think he should get his fair share. Don't you?

SHARLENE. Your baby suffered.

MADDY. What?

SHARLENE. Your baby suffered when you killed her.

MADDY. Oh god. Are you one of those people?

SHARLENE. Why didn't you ask someone? Or find somebody to—

MADDY. I never would have talked to you if I had known—  
(*Gets bag, coat, etc.*)

SHARLENE. Your baby could have been loved by so many people. There are so many people out there who would have done anything to take care / of her—

MADDY. It's not a baby. It's a fetus.

SHARLENE. How old was she?

*(MADDY heads for back door but stops before she gets there. She doesn't want to deal with SAM and friends.)*

MADDY. Tell Sam I went home.

SHARLENE. A baby has a heartbeat at fourteen days—

MADDY. Yeah? I heard all this at the clinic? But they said six weeks—

SHARLENE. She had a heart and a brain—

MADDY. And a billboard on the way up here said nineteen days. So. You people need to get your facts straight.

SHARLENE. But she could feel pain when you killed / her—

MADDY. No. No “she.” It was was a collection of cells—half of which were some asshole's. OK? I know because I saw. Because they made me take an ultrasound. Because that's the fucking law in Ohio. So none of what you're saying to me right now is news— *(She is at the front door. It is locked.)* Fuck.

SHARLENE. You regret this.

MADDY. I regret telling you about it—

SHARLENE. God wanted you to tell me because he wanted me to help you find forgiveness—

MADDY *(looks around, trapped)*. Is there some other door where they can't see me / leave?

SHARLENE. You need to pray with me, Maddy. Ask God for forgiveness for what you've done— *(Goes to MADDY and tries to take her hand.)*

MADDY. Don't touch me!

*(SHARLENE tries to take her hand again.)*

MADDY (*cont'd*). Everybody keeps fucking touching me!  
Don't!

SHARLENE. I can help you!

MADDY. No you can't! You fucking—white trash—freak!

*(SHARLENE slaps MADDY, hard.*

*A moment of mutual shock.)*

SHARLENE. Oh God.

Oh God.

I'm sorry.

*(MADDY slaps SHARLENE, hard.)*

## Scene 5

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