

there's that crack across the ceiling
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DRAFT 1
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Characters:

Man/John
Woman/Rebecca
Billy
Father Martin
Barbara
Kathy
Other Man

Time:

Now, but mostly Then.

Place:

A bedroom unfamiliar.
Perhaps a hotel a motel or one of their very own.
There may be a deer head mounted.
Or a fur rug.

Notes:

There is never quiet.
Language between characters can vibrate on.
The Man and Woman always take precedence.

Billy does not have to be a dog or a human, but he can be.

Once a character enters the room, they may never leave.

"I am accustoming myself to the idea of regarding every sexual act as a process involving four persons. We shall have a lot to discuss about that."

– Freud

A bedroom. A man and woman. They're gentle at first, but then not so much so. Their arms travel. Their lips too. It lasts quite awhile.

MAN:

I thought of you often.

WOMAN:

Like what?

MAN:

Hm?

WOMAN:

I mean - I said -

MAN:

Skin's like glass.

WOMAN:

Skin's like -

MAN:

Mm.

WOMAN:

Yes. Mm.

MAN:

What I had pictured.

WOMAN:

What did you say?

MAN:

I said -

WOMAN:

Couldn't hear - your tongue -

MAN:

Oh. Yes. I -

WOMAN:

No. Like it. Really. I mean.

MAN:

Really?

WOMAN:

Really do.

MAN:

Me too.

WOMAN:
Can I -

MAN:
Course.

WOMAN:
Well, yes. But was going to ask if -

MAN:
Anything you like.

WOMAN:
Take my shoes off.

MAN:
Me?

WOMAN:
If you - well, I meant I - but yes.

The Man takes her shoes off slow.

WOMAN:
What did you think of me often?
Oh.
What?

MAN:
They use a machine to remove
the skin.
Oh. What?

MAN:
The hide. They use a machine. Called a fleshing machine. Then salted. Salt brine. Stops it from decomposing. They put it on a shelf, I believe a shelf or compartment of course. Store it away for awhile. When they take it out to be processed. Soak it. In water. Remove the dirt. Oh, am I hurting you?

WOMAN:
No, no. Listening.

MAN:
They use chemicals. Calcium oxide. Lime bath. So it all softens. After it bathes, soaks. Full of moisture. It swells. Thickens. Really thickens. Then it can be spliced. Spliced into two layers. But, first you have to soak it, process it all.

WOMAN:
Fuck me.

The Man crawls on top of her quick.

MAN:
Wait. My shoes.

He gets off takes them off. She matches.

WOMAN:
What did you think of me often?

MAN:
What?

WOMAN:
Nevermind.

MAN:
I had thought about this -

WOMAN:
The prospect?

MAN:
Yes. The prospect.

She gets down before him.

WOMAN:
And before, when we were distant -

MAN:
We were distant.

WOMAN:
Why was that?

MAN:
I'm not sure.

*She unzips his pants.
A dog starts barking.*

MAN:
What is that?

A dog enters.

WOMAN:
Billy!

She goes to him.

MAN:
Billy?

WOMAN:
My childhood dog, Billy. He died when I was twelve. My father backed over him in the driveway.

MAN:
My he looks good then.

WOMAN:
It was an accident. My father loved Billy most of all.

The Man pets Billy too.

WOMAN:

My father loved Billy most of all. And Billy loved peanut butter. And sometimes my father would put peanut butter on his hands and have Billy lick it off. Sometimes my father didn't wear a belt. Sometimes his pants fell. And peanut butter stains. And peanut butter's sticky. But Billy didn't mind, and Billy didn't bite.

The Man stops petting Billy.

WOMAN:

When Billy died, my father didn't know what to do. I only ate the kind with the blue top. And that's all he bought from then on. The blue top.

Do you think we should feed Billy? He must be hungry.

MAN:

I'm not sure - I'm not sure I have any - check. I'll check.

WOMAN:

Later. Check later.

She lets down her hair.

MAN:

He's on the bed.

WOMAN:

Don't mind Billy. He doesn't bite.

*She kisses the Man hard.
A priest enters through the window.*

MAN:

Father Martin?

WOMAN:

Is that a -

FATHER:

John, you were such a fine boy.

John helps him through the window.

FATHER:

Terribly smart, inquisitive. Always volunteering, always willing.

John zips up his pants.

FATHER:

Tell me, do you still sing Soprano?

JOHN:

Of course not.

FATHER:

Do you remember the words to Ave Maria?

WOMAN:

I think I know them.

JOHN:

No, no. Father, this isn't a good time.

FATHER:

Of course it isn't. It never was a good time.

The priest sits on the bed.

WOMAN:

I feel a bit uncomfortable fucking you while a priest is here.

JOHN:

I'm allergic to dogs.

WOMAN:

Should I -

JOHN:

No, no.

WOMAN:

Did I -

JOHN:

No.

WOMAN:

Sorry.

JOHN:

Not you.

WOMAN:

Then.

JOHN:

Don't want you to go.

WOMAN:

Won't.

JOHN:

Maybe in time -

WOMAN:

What?

JOHN:
They'll leave.

Father lays down. Puts his hands behind his head.

JOHN:
There's no place to.

WOMAN:
Here. Here.

*He puts his head on her chest.
The dog barks.*

FATHER:
I'd been talking to the other boys, John. Not just you.

WOMAN:
I'm a house of my own. Bricks laid. Foundations, yes? Sturdy. Right. Varicose veins. Ha. They're just electrical wiring. We'll always have light. Yes? A house of my own here. Moat. Stones.

A woman in a leopard mini-skirt and big hair enters.

WOMAN:
Oh no.

JOHN:
Who?

WOMAN:
Just -

BARBARA:
Rebecca!

REBECCA:
Barbara!

They kiss cheeks.

BARBARA:
It's been a long time.

REBECCA:
It's been too long.

JOHN:
And who is this?

REBECCA:
Oh this is -

BARBARA:

Handsome. Always had an eye, didn't you? Charmed, I'm Barbara.

She makes him kiss her hand.

REBECCA:

Barbara was my canasta partner. We switched fields soon after.

JOHN:

Fields?

BARBARA:

I was just thinking the other day, remember when we both went down to Louie's on the strip. Picked up those two guys, one called himself Calico Jack, had a Prince Albert, you remember?

REBECCA:

No, no. I don't think I do. I think that was just you.

BARBARA:

Oh no, remember he sat on your face and called you cupcake. I was getting reamed by the other guy - Stan, Sam - had a goatee. Anyway, I laughed the whole time at the pirate. Almost choked on my cigarette.

JOHN:

Calico Jack?

REBECCA:

It was a long time ago.

Barbara sprawls on the bed.

BARBARA:

400 thread count?

She accidentally kicks the priest with her heel.

BARBARA:

Ooo forgive me father.

REBECCA:

John?

FATHER:

John, why don't you have a seat here.

JOHN:

Headache.

BARBARA:

You know I always thought about joining the convent myself.

FATHER:

Convent.

REBECCA:

Me too.

BARBARA:

Ha! You're a funny father.

JOHN:

Don't think different.

FATHER:

John. Why don't we have a seat together.

REBECCA:

Promise.

*A knocking at the door.
Rebecca looks out.*

REBECCA:
I think your mother's outside.

John backs away from the window.

JOHN:
The last time I saw her she —

REBECCA:
I know.

JOHN:
Left the - and boiled over. Burns on my hands. Didn't heal for weeks.

REBECCA:
I don't know what to say. I want to undress.

JOHN:
Yes.

REBECCA:
I just —

JOHN:
I do too.

They start to undress.

REBECCA:
I love your hands.

JOHN:
Healed now.

REBECCA:
Put them.

JOHN:
Alright.

REBECCA:
I never played cards.

JOHN:
Alright.

REBECCA:
What did you think of me often?

JOHN:
I hear her outside.

REBECCA:

Look in. Look into —

*John backs away.
The door bursts open.
He bumps into a woman with a baby on her hip.*

WIFE:

Roast beef or pork loin?

JOHN:

Kathy, not now.

REBECCA:

She's beautiful.

Kathy hands him the baby.

KATHY:

Been driving on 95, traffic jammed up the center. Bumper to bumper. First thought was to leave the door open and walk out far as I could. Decided to come to you. Ask what you want for dinner.

Rebecca lights a cigarette.

JOHN:

I'm sorry.

KATHY:

Your mother called left your clothes in a heap at our door. I left them there. Beef or pork?

REBECCA:

Don't be sorry. It's your —

JOHN:

Was.

REBECCA:

I get it.

JOHN:

She comes up often.

KATHY:

Baby lost her first tooth.

REBECCA:

Still love.

JOHN:

Yes. No.

REBECCA:

Right.

JOHN:
When she was born I —

KATHY:
You were at work —

JOHN:
I don't remember when she was born.

KATHY:
You missed it.

REBECCA:
Should I?

JOHN:
No, no. She'll go. I know she'll go.

Kathy takes the baby. It cries. She changes its diaper.

KATHY:
Traffic from a car crash. Tiny bike. Stupid thing. Could have killed. Could have.

JOHN:
Come.

Rebecca goes to him.

JOHN:
Don't think different.

REBECCA:
Were you at work?

FATHER:
John, it's important to always look upwards.

JOHN:
I was. I was at work.

REBECCA:
Please let me.

JOHN:
I will. I will.

REBECCA:
I thought of you often.

JOHN:
Yeah?

REBECCA:
Thought of eyes across room.

JOHN:

Know the eyes.

REBECCA:

Stopped blinking. Frozen.

JOHN:

I remember. Wore black.

REBECCA:

Mourning something.

JOHN:

Not us.

REBECCA:

No, no.

JOHN:

Beautiful or -

REBECCA:

What?

JOHN:

Nothing.

REBECCA:

Can't remember what I was mourning.

JOHN:

Did you know then?

REBECCA:

What did you think of me —

JOHN:

I'll show you.

*He kisses her neck.
A man in a motorcycle jacket enters.*

REBECCA:

Get the fuck out of here.

OTHER MAN:

We drove to the beach last night.

REBECCA:

I mean it, I -

OTHER MAN:

You left your earrings I got you.

*He hands her them.
She throws them to the side.
The baby cries loud.
Barbara goes scavenging for them.*

JOHN:
He got you?

REBECCA:
Stole.

FATHER:
Remember, I told you that, that day in fact. To always look upwards.

OTHER MAN:
I brought back to you -

REBECCA:
Said no. Said don't want. Don't.

*The Other Man tries to hold her.
John stands.*

KATHY:
Look at Daddy stand so tall. For once. For once.

REBECCA:
Fine. Really. Fine.

JOHN:
Cause I'll -

FATHER:
Now, John. That's not what I taught you. That's not what we discussed.

REBECCA:
Don't. Just don't. Just. He'll leave. He always leaves.

JOHN:
Used to work with him.

REBECCA:
Used to.

OTHER MAN:
I'm not going this time. I'll wait. I'll always wait.

JOHN:
Why not him?

REBECCA:
What?

KATHY:

Are you even listening to me?

REBECCA:

I can't do this while your wife's here.

JOHN:

I left her. I left her a long time ago.

REBECCA:

Doesn't matter I can't —

JOHN:

She still won't leave.

REBECCA:

What did you mean before?

OTHER MAN:

I'm not leaving.

REBECCA:

I told you, I told you in letters, voicemails, direct deposits. I traced down your PO Box and left sets of keys. Just —

JOHN:

Seems to care.

REBECCA:

What does that?

JOHN:

Nothing.

REBECCA:

No, what do you. What did you think of —

OTHER MAN:

I found you in a pile in the bathroom. The floor started to come up from the water. It's going to cost my month's rent to fix.

JOHN:

What -

REBECCA:

It's nothing.

JOHN:

What's he?

REBECCA:

He's gone. He's gone and I gave you the money —

OTHER MAN:

Not about the —

JOHN:

What did you do?

REBECCA:

I didn't I -

JOHN:

Never told me.

REBECCA:

Never got to that point.

JOHN:

Please come.

REBECCA:

Loud.

JOHN:

Yes, but -

BARABARA:

I've been talking to this guy right -

REBECCA:

Were you thinking?

JOHN:

Frozen on separate sides of the same room. Was thinking.

REBECCA:

This.

KATHY:

They want an easy bake oven
For Christmas.

JOHN:

But better.

REBECCA:

Just alone and -

JOHN:

Yes and quiet -

BARBARA:

He's packing 10 inches.

REBECCA:

And your hands -

JOHN:

Your skin soft -

REBECCA:
Kiss palms and -

BARBARA:
All I do is scream.

JOHN:
Other palms.

REBECCA:
No. Yours.

JOHN:
Yes. What I meant was.

Father pets the dog.

FATHER:
Doesn't bite.

REBECCA:
Shhh.

JOHN:
I know I just.

FATHER:
Good dog.

REBECCA:
Just.

JOHN:
Look at me.

FATHER:
Learn a lesson or.

REBECCA:
Just look at me.

JOHN:
It's not real and yet —

REBECCA:
Real as ever.

JOHN:
Your father, I —

REBECCA:
Shh. Just.

JOHN:
Better if we.

REBECCA:
Tell me what you thought of me often.

JOHN:

Just want to hold you a bit.

REBECCA:

I feel as though.

JOHN:

Shh. No. No. Let's feel nothing.

*They hold each other.
It escalates as the chaos does.
Overlapping.*

KATHY:

The baby shit again / I'm sick of it. I'm sick of a lot of things.

FATHER:

Ave Maria, gratia plena / Maria, gratia plena.

BARBARA:

His cock is the size of my forearm / Like seriously. Can you even measure that?

FATHER:

Ave, Ave, Dominus / Dominus tecum.

OTHER MAN:

I held you once you were out of the tub. / Didn't find a towel or anything. Just skin.

BARBARA:

I mean like the size of my forearm / I'm telling you. He has nothing but time on his hands.

OTHER MAN:

And your skin was cold. / Your lips had no color. Laid a kiss.

KATHY:

Beef sets at 350. Pork sets at 400. / Tell me. Just pick one for god sake.

FATHER:

Benedicta tu in mulieribus / et benedictus.

OTHER MAN:

And I was scared.

BARBARA:

Really like him. Name's Doug / Think it might be forever we're going to Miami Beach.

OTHER MAN:

And I thought I killed a person without touch. / I was scared.

KATHY:

When they were born / they looked like you.

FATHER:

You sung so beautiful / couldn't believe it then.

BARBARA:

I'm worried I'll never be able to have children / or have children. Maybe I don't even.

KATHY:

They did look at you. Mean look like you / and now they're grown and still do.

MAN:

I'm still scared.

Rebecca and John intvined.

REBECCA:

I'm scared.

JOHN:

Was trying to avoid all this.

REBECCA:

I - well, I -

JOHN:

Was thinking -

REBECCA:

What?

JOHN:

Nevermind.

REBECCA:

Why don't you ever?

JOHN:

Stop.

REBECCA:

Just tell.

JOHN:

Don't want to.

REBECCA:

Why didn't we ever?

JOHN:

Because every time. They come.

REBECCA:

Different now. Let it be.

JOHN:

Better off when.

REBECCA:

I love you or or something.

JOHN:

Yeah.

REBECCA:

Can you?

JOHN:

No.

REBECCA:

Because of her.

JOHN:

No.

REBECCA:

Him?

JOHN:

No.

REBECCA:

Did you ever think? Well. I -

*John gets off of Rebecca.
Gets dressed.
It's finally quiet.*

JOHN:

What I thought of you often. I thought a woman kind. Whole. Saw me whole. Thought I could never imagine what it's like to not think of skin of separate skin of your skin on my skin and thought if I got together you know if I finally got it together and together and you and me and then apart and then I thought I could never think of spliced skin or layers or anything between the two. And you and I saw you and you saw me and I thought often. What I thought of you often. Now. I. I don't think at all.

REBECCA:

I think —

JOHN:

Say it.

REBECCA:

I think it's soaked. I think it cracked through.

*They're silent.
The room is not.
They hold hands.*