

SUCCESS IN NUMBERS

BY

JON-DAVID

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*Success in Numbers* was Originally written as a spec screenplay for TV & Film producer director, Bill O'Shaughnessey. Bill asked Jon-David to write a character driven script with only a few Chicago locations to keep production costs down as this was going to be Bill's first self-produced small budget film. As pre-production began to pick up speed, Bill became ill due to complications of AIDS. It was a shock to Jon-David and Bill's close friends when bill died December 9, 1996.

This play was originally produced and directed by Jon-David in the fall of 1999 at the Flat Iron Arts Building in the Wing & Groove Theater. The production was dedicated to Bill O'Shaughnessey and was sold out for it's six week run.

If any theater company would like to perform or produce *Success in Numbers*, please contact Jon-David through [MafiaHairdresser.com](http://MafiaHairdresser.com).





Place: Action mostly takes place in Cammi's loft/photography studio, with sofa at Stage center. There is Stage left: Rich's antique store. Stage right: Jessy's bathroom/restaurant and 1st bar date w/Jessy. Down Stage center is used for bar scene/ disco. 4 chairs upstage left to use for taxi et-all. 4 stools.

"Success in love should always be cautioned with, 'be careful of what you wish for'. And a precursor to any successful love is - the numbers. The number of men, liars, women, partners, husbands, deadbeats, lovers, ex's and girlfriends that we go through teach us what we don't want in love and pushes us to what is better - next time. The maturity level we have in love is in direct proportion to the number of candles on our birthday cake. The more phone numbers on match-books, the more numbers of people we have to choose from. Success is always in the numbers. But, when it comes to love, what is Success?"

Jon-David

## SUCCESS IN NUMBERS

### ACT 1

***CAMMI and JESSY enter to Stage Center.  
Camera, two boxes, props, umbrella/flash.  
Lights on Stage Center.***

***Loft:***

CAMMI. You're a twenty four year old prude, that's what you are.

JESSY. Someone's got to be the prude.

CAMMI. pllllllt! ....come on. Tell me. *I know* what the bars are like. Tell me about your date.

JESSY. If you know about bars, then you know it wasn't really a date. We just met at bar and had a drink at another bar the next night.

CAMMI. [fold arms]

***Lights out.  
JESSY moves to sit stage right with DATE IN BAR who brings two beers.  
Box for table, two stools.  
Lights on stage right: bar-type music.  
Gay Bar:***

JESSY. ...it's a great business, really. You get your creative side, you know, you get to be creative, and yet the product we put out has to sell something...

(DATE IN BAR) D-I-B. Hi, how's it going..[to offstage]

JESSY. ...We're basically working with the vision, or product of whatever company so it's pretty hands on with the people we are dealing with... yeah...

D-I-B. Um-hmm.

[Enters KYLE]

JESSY. But Cammi's great. We're more than just business associates, we're friends. She's like my sister, ha, my really, really pushy older sister... ha, ha....

D-I-B. Spandex again?

KYLE. Show off your investments. Look at that Mastodon over there. Are you going' ta be at practice Sunday?

DIB . Got a date. A previous appointment...

KYLE. Hear about Jeff and Dan? Broke up. And guess who broke up with who?! Jeff broke up with Dan! How come the troll's always dump the cute guys? And how do the troglodytes get the cute ones in the first place?

D-I-B. So, Dan is single....

KYLE. Viper. I can tell you're heartbroken. Give Dan, at least, another week to get over it, then you can have him, I'm sure.

D-I-B. This is Kyle, he's on my Volley Ball team.

JESSY. Hi.

KYLE. Hi. How fish.

JESSY. Jessy.

KYLE. Well, I gotta go. Nice meeting you. {begins exit]

JESSY. See ya.

KYLE. (Doubt it.) [exits]

D-I-B. Want another drink?

JESSY. No thanks. I work early tomorrow.

D-I-B. I gotta go pretty soon... Gotta give my liver a rest. I was pretty drunk last night. Sorry, if I was rude or anything.

JESSY. You weren't rude, then. You asked me out for tonight, didn't you?

**Lights out.**

***Date In Bar removes beers then pulls out table cloth and two wine glasses and sets box- then exits with beers.***

***JESSY moves back to Stage Center with CAMMI.***

**Lights on Stage Center.**

***Loft:***

CAMMI. Did you sleep with him?

JESSY. You're projecting again.

CAMMI. Ya know, *you've* got to get on with your life. I've been thinking about this lately. I'll do your tarot cards.

JESSY. MMmm..

CAMMI. Listen. You're young, you can fall in love again. And you're a *guy*. You need sex.

I know you must be getting it somewhere.

JESSY. How was your date?

CAMMI. Fine. Okay.

JESSY. And...

CAMMI. He was a script doctor, or something, from Hollywood. Typical guy-California, dude.

**Lights Out.**

***CAMMI goes to stage right with DUDE-DATE.***

***WAITER-IN-RESTAURANT (W-I-R) in place.***

**Lights on Stage Right.**

***Restaurant:***

(DUDE-DATE) D-D. It's just that every shit-head with a computer is a writer, ya know. That's why what I write has to mean something to me. To the audience; has to mean

something. People don't care just for special effects and shit like that. Not impressed! Shit no. The audience is more sophisticated these days.

(WAITER-IN-RESTAURANT) W-I-R: [Approaches but aborts interruption.]

D-D. All they want is... You know what they want?! They want the heart, the sole of the... They want snappy... you know, *heart* in a script. They want a good story! A shit eating meaty story!

CAMMI. I think you've used shit as a verb, a noun, an adjective and a proper pronoun. {signals W-I-R}

D-D. I know...

CAMMI. So, what's your next project?

D-D. Well, the flamingo thing took a lot out of me, as you could imagine. [flags off W-I-R]

W-I-R. [aborts interruption.]

D-D. Editing in lips on flamingos is pretty tough. And then the FX guys couldn't decide on what kind of lips and...

You know, the lips would usually be under here. But we can't just film a flamingo from down here, so we put the lips on the side, like this...they talked like this, see?

And try to get quality actors to be flamingo voices was..., well, a strain, to say the least. You really have to get the right personality for the right flamingo, or it just fucking flops, as you can imagine. Sally Field will only do cats anymore. She won't do birds and she was the one who I wrote the lead for! 'I can't lend *my* voice to birds.' *Bitch*. Give Gidget a couple of Oscars and *suddenly* flamingos are beneath her!

I got my hands on a tasty next project. A musical. It's got audience appeal and a hell of a lot of heart. I'm adapting Forever Plaid for the screen. You heard of it?

CAMMI. I just love that. [signals W-I-R] I took my grandparents to see it.

D-D. See. *Audience appeal*. I just want depth, you know?

W-I-R. Can I get you anything else?

CAMMI. Thank you. Check, maybe.

D-D. So, do you think you'll get to LA soon?

CAMMI. Soon? No.

**W-I-R. Exits.**

D-D. I have a great Botswanian place we could go.

CAMMI. Cool. So, do you want to go to my place for a drink?

D-D. Sure. That would be great. We're really connecting tonight. Aren't we.

CAMMI. Yeah...

*[to offstage]Check Please.*

**Lights Out.**

***Dude-Date takes off table cloth and drinks and stools then exits.***

***CAMMI goes back to Stage Center with JESSY.***

**Light On Stage Center.**

***Loft:***

JESSY. So you slept with him.

CAMMI. I needed some kind of reward for enduring dinner. Great bod.

JESSY. How come you go out with guys like that?

CAMMI. I like being single. It's my nature. I'm married to the business now, anyway.

JESSY. We're doing fine, now. And we're pretty much on schedule. I was thinking. If we hired an assistant, we could probably take on a few more projects. You could use one area to shoot and I could do a job, like, over there in *that* corner.

CAMMI. You know, you really should start seriously looking for a boyfriend, again. You're not getting any younger.

JESSY. At least I'm not fighting my years.

CAMMI. Hmmm? I'm hungry. Wanna get dinner?

JESSY. K... We can finish this tomorrow. And don't forget we're going to that antique store in the morning.

CAMMI. Let's go in the afternoon. I'm going out with the girls tonight to see a band. Wanna come?

JESSY. Nope... goin' out with the guys.

CAMMI. Shopping for boyfriends?

JESSY. No.

**Light Out.**  
**Jessy exits.**

***CAMMI goes to get SNAKE to bring to Stage Center--enters through doorway.***

**Lights on Stage Center.**

**Loft:**

CAMMI. [looks around like it was a new place - looks different tonight]

SNAKE. Wow! Faugh..., I mean, *Fudge!*

Wow! Fudge! Wow! This is a real artist loft. Look at all the room! My band could really jam here!

CAMMI. There's a band that plays downstairs and that's about all I can stand most of the time.

SNAKE. Cammi, I could be inspired to write some fuah-fauh-fricking-good lyrics in a space like this.

CAMMI. Oh? What would you write, Snake?

SNAKE. I don't know. Something Republican.

CAMMI. My loft reminds you of Republican, Snake? I'm not a Republican Snake!

SNAKE. Got something to drink?

CAMMI. Would you like some tea, Snake? Coffee, Snake?

SNAKE. I was thinkin' of somethin' more - stimulin'...

CAMMI. Me too, like a stomach pump. What was it that me and my girlfriends were drinking at the club?

SNAKE. Our band's special - Vaginal Secretions. [Snake sits down on the sofa.]

CAMMI. How could I forget? I guess my stomach doesn't have as liberal a mind as it used to be. Snake, I think I'm going to be sick.

SNAKE. Come sit down. I'll try and make you feel better.

[Cammi sits down and Snake begins to rub her neck as she is faced away from him.]

CAMMI. [moans in gratitude.]

**Lights remain on Stage Center.**

***JESSY enters Stage Right and places a bathroom faucet on the box.***

**Lights on Stage Right.**  
**Jessy's Bathroom:**

JESSY. [to mirror.] I am worth loving and a beautiful manifestation of human resplendence.

I am open to receive all the goodness and symmetry that another human being brings to my life as I am also open to giving to him.

I have that special glow that attracts and mesmerizes men of commitment and quality at bars - and dimly lit cruising establishments.

[Jessy begins to leave and comes back.]

And if I can't get a husband, dear God, maybe just a little safe cheap sex.

**Lights out Stage right.**

Jessy exits.

CAMMI and SNAKE.

Loft:

SNAKE. [gets braver]

CAMMI. [gives warning moan or/and slap]

SNAKE. Relax... Cammi, I know what will make you feel better.

CAMMI. At your age I thought I knew what would make me feel better too. You'll grow up to find out that it's only temporary.

**Lights out Stage Center.**

**Lights on Disco Ball Down Stage Center.**

**JESSY and MAN-IN-BAR steps to Down Stage Center.**

**Disco music plays and the disco ball begins to turn .**

**Another Gay Bar:**

JESSY. [inebriated] But how come you never called? You said you would call. I remember. You said you wanted to see me again. After your business trip. Two weeks you were supposed to be gone. Two weeks! I remember. You would have been back on a Thursday. I waited Thursday, then Friday, then Saturday then Sunday - and now here you are! And I must say, you have aged!

Did you think I was some kind of bimbo-boy? I'm not a bimboy!

Was it because I didn't put out?

Because sometimes I'm pretty sure that's why guys don't call me back. But that's the new frontier you see. Waiting for the right person to have sex. See? No ring on the finger, no sex! That's the way it should be.

[M-I-B escapes and exits.]

Okay. Sorry. I'll go home with you now. (I just had to get that off my chest.)

**Disco ball lights off.**

***Man-In-Bar exit. Jessy back to Stage Right--(bathroom).  
CAMMI and SNAKE  
Light on Stage Center.  
Loft:***

SNAKE. Chill, baby. I'm just trying to share a nice time with you. [sings:] Do, do, do, do, ya feel the bloooooood in your member, baaaaaby? Da, da, da, da ya wanna share our blood in September, baaaby? Remember my member! Remember Together. Dismember your member!

CAMMI. Ew! [Cammi pulls away.] What does that mean?

SNAKE. It's Darwinism... It's cool, really. It's about losing the tails of evolution to a man-woman love! It's beautiful, really. Intellectual, like you.

CAMMI. I'm not intellectual and I'm not a Republican Snake. [stands.] Oh, Snake... I'm sorry. I have really got to cut this evening in the 'member', now. I feel sick. I feel really old. And my astrologer said that Mercury is in retrograde. I make stupid decisions in retrograde.

SNAKE. Oh.

CAMMI. So...

SNAKE. Are you sure? I'm pretty worked up. After playing two sets... You know how all that creative energy makes you feel.

CAMMI. I know how I feel if I drink a gallon of Vaginal Secretions after blowing out my ear-drums dancing by your band's big woofers and tweeters. I get sick, which is what I'm going to do.

SNAKE. [gets up to go to the door.] I really like you, Cammi. I think it's cool that you are your own person. A woman in business - an Enterpreneur - a self made lady in the big city. I mean, a real successful lady photographer - Wow!

CAMMI. [holds up a hand.] That's enough now, Snake...

SNAKE. Can I have just one kiss?

CAMMI. [submits a little.]

SNAKE. [gets amorous.]

CAMMI. [Cammi tries to push him away and ends up throwing up on his shoes] I told you...

SNAKE. Shit... Ugh, can I call you?

**Lights on Stage Right.**

**JESSY.**

***Jessy's Bathroom:***

JESSY. [to the mirror.] [throws up.]  
{Jessy removes faucet and moves up Stage Right.}

**Lights out.**

**TAXI CAB DRIVER, CAMMI and JESSY pull up chairs from Up Stage Right to  
Down Stage Right.**

**Taxi Cab driver puts box on it's side.**

**Lights On Stage Right.**

**Taxi:**

CAMMI. Take us to...

JESSY. Roscoe and Clark, please.

CAMMI. *Roscoe and Clark.* All I'm saying is that alcohol takes away your discretion, your defense mechanisms. Alcohol makes you stupid and you end up desiring Mr. Wrong.

JESSY. I know! I know! Stop rubbing it in. I'm sorry I even told you about it.

CAMMI. Jessy! I was talking about myself.

JESSY. You?

CAMMI. [nods.]

JESSY. You met a guy last night.

CAMMI. [nods.]

JESSY. So... Did you take him home?

CAMMI. Yes. But we didn't do anything.

JESSY. Oh. What did you do?

CAMMI. What does it matter, Jessy? I got drunk and it impaired my ability to make an objective assessment of this guy's eligibility - his possible future worth in my life.

JESSY. Since when did you start looking for a guy that had possible future worth?

CAMMI. I've just been thinking, that's all.

JESSY. What happened to you last night?

CAMMI. Nothing.

JESSY. This is totally-fricking not fair. I always tell you about my *legitimate* dates. Cammi...! You know, I wouldn't think less of you if you were a closet-slut and brought home male hookers *every* night. You make me feel like I'm ten years old.

CAMMI. You're the same age as Mark. That's why...

JESSY. I'm the same age as your brother if he had *lived*.

CAMMI. *Driver, you can take Lake Shore Drive. It's faster.*

JESSY. No, it's not.

CAMMI. Is so.

JESSY. Not.

CAMMI. I'm paying anyway.

JESSY. *Get off on Belmont then, please.*

CAMMI. Last night I went to a club with the girls and, like an idiot, I hung out with a young drummer that I was lusting after as if I were a teen-aged groupie. Yes, I got very drunk and then proceeded to throw up on his shoe after I got him back to my loft.

JESSY. Ewww.

CAMMI. Well, I haven't done *that* before but I've been pretty darn stupid where it concerns men. I'm sick of the whole darn thing.

JESSY. Are you actually thinking of settling on one guy?  
I guess you have sampled them *all* anyway. Who was left?

CAMMI. Men are--babies.

JESSY. They *are* *immature* if you get them right out of high school!

CAMMI. If they are closer to my age, they're too insecure. Then I try to help them or guide them...

JESSY. ...direct them, manipulate them, change them...

CAMMI. ...into what I know to be his potential.

JESSY. ...cajole them, emasculate them, navigate them...

CAMMI. I'd go for someone more mature. But, older men want to dominate or intimidate because you're independent. And if I ever pretend that I'm a demure and nice girl just so I won't offend a man's ego or emasculate him, I vow to up-chuck on every wing-tip, oxford, Nunn-Bush in Chicago until I expire of bulimia or dehydration!

JESSY. That's a little drastic, but now that you've admitted that you're overweight, I think I can help you.

CAMMI. I open up to you and--jokes! And you wonder why I treat you like the little shit you are.

JESSY. I'm sorry. Cammi, I'm sorry. I'm just not used to this, role reversal thing.

CAMMI. Forget it.

JESSY. No. Now, wait a minute. What would you say to me? First, you'd quiz me and do your psychology thing.

CAMMI. What?

JESSY. You know. You'd do your 'mirror-back' thing to Jessy so he could hear himself - your psychology thing.

CAMMI. I have a headache.

JESSY. You said that you're sick of the men you've been seeing. Right?

CAMMI. Head Ache.

JESSY. You're tired of going out with guys that you have to take care of.

CAMMI. [fidgets]

JESSY. And you wish there was a guy out there who was as successful as you were and was secure in himself.

CAMMI. Maybe he's not born yet.

JESSY. But he has to be your age or...older.

CAMMI. Still sexy! He's got to light my pilot light!

JESSY. So, what have we got? A mature, sexy man, over thirty...

CAMMI. Eight

JESSY. ...thirty eight who, maybe owns his own business, who is intelligent and very open minded and sexy - and single. You know, you'll have to raise your standards.

CAMMI. I have to admit, that is good advice. I think you're right.

JESSY. Wow. I'm pretty good at this.

CAMMI. I've been telling you this same thing all along.

JESSY. Works both ways. One more thing.

CAMMI. What?

JESSY. I have to add one more trait of my own to your dream man.

CAMMI. He has to be obnoxiously outrageously filthy rich?

JESSY. No. He has to be tall. You always pick guys who are shorter than you. Why is that?

CAMMI. It's a control thing, of course. Jesus. Maybe you're not so good at this after all.

JESSY. You're just embarrassed because I got you.

CAMMI. Hmm. A relationship. *RELATIONSHIP...*

JESSY. (RELATIONSHIP?!)

CAMMI. I've always put so much into my work.

JESSY. *We* have *both* been workaholics.

CAMMI. You--*you* are the one that needs to set your sights on getting back on the horse, or whatever. There must be someone you're interested in. At least a prototype.

JESSY. Older, stable, open-minded, intelligent, successful and sexy. He's totally different than the guy you would want.

CAMMI. Then why do we go out with guys who don't fit that description? -the prototype?  
So, it's a challenge then?

JESSY. I'm not betting or anything.

CAMMI. From now on, we will only go for the prototype. But let's not count on him being the working model just yet. I can only handle thinking about raising my standards. In practice, it might be a little more difficult.

JESSY. There's the Antique store. This is fine, sir. Right here, please. Thank you.

**Lights out.**

***Taxi Cab Driver uprights box then exits with chair.***

***RICH and WOMAN-IN-STORE enter Stage Left with props. W-I-S shops.***

***CAMMI and JESSY move chairs to Up Stage Right and then re-enter Stage left.***

**Lights on Stage left.**

***Antique Store:***

JESSY. I saw him first!

CAMMI. Don't be me! Besides, I think he's on my team.

Look at the way he likes the attention from that women. Although, he could be on commission.

JESSY. Commission? He must be the owner. He's dressed too nice to be an employee.

CAMMI. Mmmm. Italian shoes.

JESSY. Do they make you feel like barfing?

CAMMI. I'd never barf on those shoes. Besides, he's nothing like I've ever considered bringing home. He looks like he's got more class than me.

JESSY. He's probably the father of your last boyfriend.

JESSY. Shhh. He's coming over here. Act normal.

RICH. May I help you?

CAMMI. Death!

RICH. Excuse me?

CAMMI. Excuse you... yes!

We were looking for things that you would find in a morgue. Death paraphernalia... objects.

RICH. Are these objects for a ceremony of some kind or for a more - personal nature?

CAMMI. Ugh... Ugh...

JESSY. They're for a club called The Morgue. I'm a stylist and we need this stuff for props.  
To create an atmosphere of an old style morgue.

RICH. You're not morticians?

CAMMI. Ugh...

JESSY. She's a photographer.

RICH. You're styling dead people's hair.... She takes their picture?

JESSY. No! I'm a *photography* stylist and...  
...We're shooting ad stills for a night club that is *called* The Morgue.

RICH. Thank Goodness. I thought there were dead bodies involved.

CAMMI. They're cremated!...the, the, the, owner is using urns encased in glass in the walls- to decorate the club...that's if the city approved it... the cremated dead remains, as decor... It's in. It's cool....

JESSY. We need a pair of those long candelabra things that they have on either sides of a casket at wakes or put on a pulpit. We'll start with that and then we'll get to the list of other things that we need.

RICH. I think I have just the thing. [Rich walks away to behind screen.]

[CHRIS enters and helps W-IS]

JESSY. I've never seen you like this before.

CAMMI. I wasn't prepared! Fine. Okay. I'm fine now. I was just thrown off balance for a minute. It's his age - I only have lines for younger guys.

JESSY. Well, I have to admit, the lack of finesse that you have applied to picking him up seems to have worked. He likes you. I could coach you so you could go in for the kill. He already thinks you're into cadavers.

CAMMI. Hmmf.

JESSY. He has responded very well to the natural approach.

{Chris comes up behind Jessy and Cammi}

CAMMI. I have no experience in that technique! He's gay. He was too polite. He's too-- neat.

CHRIS. May I help you?

CAMMI and JESSY. Agghh!

JESSY. Oh my God, another one!

CHRIS. I'm sorry I startled you.

CAMMI. I think we're being helped. By that other man.

JESSY. ...your associate...

CHRIS. Yes. My associate. Well, if there is anything I can do to help either of you, let me know.

[Chris exits.]

CAMMI. Associate!

JESSY. Lover.

CAMMI. They're a couple!

JESSY. The older one is probably the sugar-daddy.

CAMMI. Let's go.

JESSY. Yeah. This place sucks.

[They start to leave as W-I-S exits.]

W-I-S. Oh. Excuse me.

CAMMI. Scuse me. [to Jessy] Wait a minute. What did we come in here for?

(W-I-S exits.)

JESSY. The parade of fashions?

*[RICH returns with candelabra.]*

RICH. Is this what you're looking for?

CAMMI. Yes! Big, thick, cylindrical sticks. Illuminates at the tip. A bonus!

JESSY. [to Cammi] *Remember: the Natural approach.*

CAMMI. Are you straight?

JESSY. [coughs.]

RICH. Excuse me?

CAMMI. Are you straight? Please don't take offense, we were just wondering.

RICH. Why?

JESSY. Don't look at me. I wasn't wondering *that* bad. And I don't have such fluctuations of *my* estrogen level.

RICH. I'm heterosexual. But lest I offend, I'm not going to adamantly impress anyone on any degree of my heterosexuality.

CAMMI. Oh. You're open-minded.

JESSY. Are you married?

CAMMI. Jessy! You're so forward!

JESSY. *Me?!*

RICH. No. I'm not married. I've never been and I have no children. These are my own teeth.

CAMMI. and JESSY. Nice.

**A phone rings.**

RICH. Excuse me, once more, uh...

CAMMI. Cammi. And this is Jessy.

RICH. Excuse me, Cammi and Jessy. My assistant seems to be busy in the back. I'll ask him to help me find a couple of things that you might be looking for. Death objects, maybe. But I'll be back shortly, so that we may put some other matters to rest... like if you are married, Cammi. [Rich walks away to phone, then exits with phone off hook.]

CAMMI. He's definitely not gay. He's my first one. The prototype. Goal Set. Visualize. Execution . Actualization. I'm winning the contest.

JESSY. That means the other guy is straight then too. I am having no fun here at all!

CAMMI. Jealous. He's straight, cute, witty, open minded and he obviously owns this business. He even knows I think he's speaking Italian on the phone.

JESSY. He's only a prototype, so far - not the working model - until tried out.

CAMMI. Watch me.

JESSY. What has gotten into you?

CAMMI. You told me to loosen up. You said that I should find a guy that was above my old standards. He's perfectly above every one of my standards, so far. I'm sure there's something wrong with him, but he's great, so far.

JESSY. You just met him - and we, just now, set out to finding a guy who fits the criteria. He is literally the first one we've run across!

CAMMI. It's just like, like the universe is talking to me. Last night was the last straw. I'm not messing around anymore. I wanted a real man in my life and as soon as I admitted that to myself, Pouf! There he is.

*[CHRIS enters with a few pieces from the back room.]*

CHRIS. Rich asked me to bring these out for you. Do you think they might be what you're looking for?

CAMMI. Perfect!

JESSY. It might be a case of too much of a good thing.

CHRIS. This is for a photo shoot. Right? Well, I know you probably don't want to buy these pieces outright, but for a small charge and deposit we can loan certain pieces out. I can even pick them up, if you are in the City.

CAMMI. Oh, that would be so great.

JESSY. Really nice.

CHRIS. I guess Rich will get all the information for me and we'll go from there. All right? Here, take my card.

CAMMI. Thank you.

JESSY. Thanks.

CHRIS. You're both welcome. [Goes to phone, talks, then hangs up and exits]

CAMMI. He's nice too.

JESSY. Now you're into three-ways?

CAMMI. I think he liked you.

JESSY. Yeah, right. He's gorgeous! Even if he was on my team, why would he be looking at me for? He could have anybody.

CAMMI. Hey. We said we were going to lift our standards.

JESSY. First, I'd have to lift some weights. Besides, he's straight.

CAMMI. I don't know...

JESSY. Straight guys don't like to hire gay guys unless they need a make-over and this Rich guy seems to me he's known how to dress himself for a long time.

CAMMI. And I think I'd like to be the one to undress him.....

**Lights Out.**

***Jessy exits.***

***WAITER-IN-RESTAURANT brings back tablecloth and wine glasses to stage right.***

***CAMMI and RICH enter Stage Right with two stools.***

***W-I-R "waits" at discretion.***

**Lights on Stage Right**

***Restaurant:***

CAMMI. ...No.

RICH. I mean are you always this *direct*.?

CAMMI. I'm a go-getter. Should I be more, demure? Maybe be coy-ish?

RICH. I'm not saying that you should be anything. I'm just curious how you are so direct. Such as your to asking men out to dine. I am not that way. It takes me a while to do, well, to do *anything*.

CAMMI. My assistant, Jessy, says I'm a bulldozer.

RICH. I can see why he says that.

What I mean is that, well [Cammi laughs, followed by Rich]  
I suppose my assistant would call me a *dozer*. ....because I like to sleep, see...

CAMMI. You are soo cute!

RICH. I'm afraid that you have me at a disadvantage, in a way.

CAMMI. Oh?

RICH. I don't have as many social skills as you possess and...

CAMMI. You knew which fork to pick up. You haven't slobbered or belched or talked with your mouth open. ...pretty good for any date of mine.

RICH. Now, that's just it. I'm not very good at dating and you seem to be very nice at it and, well, the truth be known, I've never been a dating man.

CAMMI. What? You answer personal ads? I know: On-line junkie. Right?

RICH. You have me. Now, if you could have just met me in cyberspace, I would have felt much more comfortable.

CAMMI. I could have told you I had big boobs...

RICH. ...I could have said I looked like a model from a Romance novel...

CAMMI. ...I'm home alone with a cucumber...

[both laugh]

No, seriously. Why aren't you a dating man?

RICH. Well, I sleep too much.  
I'm just not good at dating.

CAMMI. I've had a great time tonight! What was this? An un-date?

RICH. But I wasn't really expecting this to happen.

CAMMI. ....I see. Were you expecting *this?! [kisses him]*

RICH. Thank you.

CAMMI. Your welcome.  
So, if your not expecting it, it's okay then?

RICH. That was okay. You are a relationship kind of woman, aren't you?  
[Snaps his fingers when Cammi does not respond.]

CAMMI. My astrologer says that I have a Cancer Venus which is a direct polar opposite of my independent nature of my Sun sign.

RICH. Astrologer.

CAMMI. Serena, my astrologer, says that if you have a Cancer Venus you are compelled to find a guy and--settle down. Is there some kind of chemotherapy for my Cancer Venus, I asked her?

I don't know--if I'm a relationship woman. I just know that--I like you, now. So, maybe, if we forget about dating, and then, maybe, we might end up having another *un-date*, sometime, maybe...

But, let's not make any plans for that....

RICH. Fine...

CAMMI. Let's go for a walk after dinner. Okay? Spontaneously.

RICH. All right...

**Lights Out.**

***Cammi and Rich exit.***

**[Music: Here comes the sun" by Nina Simone. [over used but who cares?]]  
Montage slide/photos of CAMMI and RICH dating is flashed on back-drop.**

***RICH and CHRIS go to Stage Left.***

**Light On Stage Left.**

***Antique Store:***

CHRIS. So, you are going to be all right?

RICH. Sure. Don't worry.

CHRIS. No. I won't.

RICH. See you in about a week, then.

CHRIS. Next Thursday. I told you, I'll be back on Thursday. I wrote it all down in the desk.

RICH. Yes. I know.

CHRIS. You have all the numbers.

RICH. Like every other time you go, yes.

CHRIS. Okay.  
All right.  
Good bye. I love you.

RICH. I love you too.

CHRIS. Rich, is there something you're not telling me? You've been acting kind of strange the past few weeks. You're in one of your moods.

RICH. No. I'm fine. Really.

CHRIS. You sure? Because I can stay. I'm sure they can send pictures or faxes. I don't have to go.

RICH. And ruin a years' worth of trying to work with this wholesaler? No way.  
I'm *fine*. I'm not going to do anything stupid.  
I'm, actually, quite well.

CHRIS. You're not keeping anything from me?

RICH. Nothing that you won't pry into anyway... when you get back.  
I'm sorry, I said that.  
I am doing fine and there is nothing else to tell. [Chris lingers and then leaves.]

**Lights Out.**

***Rich and Chris exit.***

***JESSY and LET'S-DO-BRUNCH (with pen and paper) enters--each with phones to  
Down Center Stage.***

**Lights on Up Stage Center**

(LETS-DO-BRUNCH) L-D-B. Let's do brunch.

JESSY. Hi.

L-D-B. What can I do ya for?

JESSY. Well, I was thinking of--doing brunch.

L-D-B. We're not your typical Mother's day type brunch reservations, you know, we're a dating service.

JESSY. I know. Uh, how does this work?

L-D-B. We take your money and we fix you up with an eligible partner to have brunch with at one of our official lets do brunch sites. Brunch is the perfect occasion to meet Mr. or Ms. Right now. And you would be looking for a Mr. or...

JESSY. Mr. Right.

L-D-B. Mr. Right--now I need to know a few details about you. When was your last date?

JESSY. Oh. Well, a while.

L-D-B. (Looks--a five out of ten.)

JESSY. What?

L-D-B. What is your yearly income?

JESSY. It's not that I haven't had a date in a real long time--maybe a month.

L-D-B. (Possibly impotent.)

JESSY. I want to meet someone nice--above my past standards.

L-D-B. (Delusional.)

JESSY. My freind raised her standards and she's been with the same guy for like, a month now.

L-D-B. I have a Chicano cross dresser. You like Latinos? Oh, he smoke a smokes a pack a day. Do you smoke?

JESSY. I'm looking for someone my age, or older, I'm twenty four. Stable. Maybe owns his own business. Open minded. And sexy.

L-D-B. Oh, we have lots of those. And how will you be paying?

JESSY. Paying? Um, credit card I guess. Don't you want to know something more about me?

L-D-B. Yeah, your credit card number. Do you two step? I have a two stepper who wants brunch this weekend.

JESSY. This is your regular procedure?

L-D-B. Successfully finding Mr. Right may take many brunches. The more brunches, the closer to Mr. Right is to you.

JESSY. I don't know...

L-D-B. Would you like to purchase our buy four get one free, or our buy eight get two free brunchs? The package of ten comes with courtesy follow up flowers sent to all of your brunch dates so you don't look cheap.

JESSY. I think I'll take... [hangs up]...my chances.

**Lights Out.**  
***Jessy and Lets Do Brunch Exits.***  
***RICH and CAMMI go to couch Center Stage.***  
**Light On Center Stage.**  
***Loft:***

CAMMI. I feel...good!  
How do you feel?

RICH. I feel good too.

CAMMI. Me too. Good.

RICH. Good.

CAMMI. I can't believe how many men I had to go through to finally find you.

RICH. That sounds like you were trying on jeans.

CAMMI. Oh.  
Not *too many* jeans.

I mean, it takes a few fittings to know your size, and everything... And then you have to wear them a while to see how they stretch out--if they--before you take them back.

RICH. I understand...

CAMMI. I think my past dating experience was to show me what I *didn't* want in a man.

[RICH gets up and walks to the camera and, increasingly yet discreetly, wavers.]  
With the data that I have acquired from my, very moderate, dating past I know, without uncertainty, that I don't want a liar-man, a overly partying--man, a poor man, and testosteroneally driven man, a egocentric-man, a baby-man, a boy-man, a responsibility impaired man, or a man who lacks another passion in his life besides me. I can't tell you how many guys out there that have one job, and I'm not talking a *career*, who have nothing better to do than make their girlfriends the center or their universe. Some girls might like that kind of a relationship, but I don't. When a guy's like that, I always wonder what's wrong with me for hating someone who loves me so much.

You're not like that.

RICH. [Sits back down with Cammi] Thank you.

CAMMI. I mean, you like that I'm my own person and I like that you have your life too. Right?

RICH. Is there another way?

CAMMI. You're happy, right? Because I'm happy.  
It's okay that we don't see each other so much. Isn't it?

RICH. We've been together every other night for the past few weeks.

CAMMI. I know, but I'm very busy. I have *my career*. I just don't see why a woman has to let her career suffer because of a relationship. My astrologer says I try too hard to have everything.

RICH. I'm a little tired.

CAMMI. That shop of yours and all those picky clients and designers must keep you busy.

RICH. I couldn't do it without my assistant.

CAMMI. What would we do without them?

RICH. I wouldn't. That's what I would do.

CAMMI. Damn right.

You know what? No more "every other day" rule. From now on you can have me any time you want me.

RICH. You had an every other day rule?

CAMMI. Sequential Protocol. First you have the "go out with him only when he calls three days in advance" rule. Then you progress to the "make the next date before you end the last date" rule. After that you can move into the assumption stages.

RICH. The assumption stages? Like how you assumed that we were going to spend this Saturday evening together?

CAMMI. You did want to be with me this evening, didn't you?

RICH. I wouldn't want to disappoint *you*.

CAMMI. I don't think you could ever disappoint me.

RICH. That's an awful lot to live up to.

In fact, that makes me feel a little uncomfortable.

CAMMI. Oh.

I didn't mean anything. Sorry. I just meant that I'm so happy when I'm with you. I'm being pushy, huh? Oh, my gawd. I'm always thinking of my schedule and how I feel, and I never once thought that I might be dragging you away from things that *you* might need to do.

I'm an *over-nurtured* child - my parents thought everything my brother and I did was wonderful and so we think only of ourselves...

What? Are you laughing at me?

RICH. Only in the most complimentary sense. I'm laughing at your over-nurtured child.

CAMMI. I think we both have strong egos.

RICH. Maybe your strong ego was something you were born with...

CAMMI. No, I think it has to be taught.

Hello? What do you think? Aren't you going to take the opposite postulation so that we can view all the pros and cons and argue whether we think having overly nurturing parents breeds arrogant children?

RICH. Not tonight, my dear. It's getting late.

CAMMI. I hope one day Jessy can find someone as wonderful as I have.

RICH. Cammi. How is *our* relationship different from your past relationships?

CAMMI. You mean my *moderate* dating past?

RICH. I wouldn't be offended if it was an extensive past. I'm not like your egocentric-man, who needs to believe that I am the only one you have been with.

CAMMI. Thank God I found you!

RICH. What is it that you see in me that is so different from other men?

CAMMI. Well, we talk a lot. About different things. We have nice outing and talk about things. And I feel very intrigued by your past, because you guard it voraciously.

RICH. I do?

CAMMI. Yeah. We'll be talking about something that happened and then you're like, "and then *it* happened," and then you change the subject.

RICH. I do that?

CAMMI. Uh-huh.

RICH. Well. [Stands] Tonight is not the night I'm going to tell you about how "it happened." I'm very tired and I have to meet Chris early in the morning so that we may go over contents of a shipment coming in.

CAMMI. Awwww. Can't you call your mommy and ask if you can stay over?

RICH. Well... Only if you promise to let me go to sleep.

CAMMI. Promise.

RICH. You promised last time.

CAMMI. I feel like such a bad girl...

RICH. Sorry. I have to go home now.

CAMMI. Okay. Okay. I'll be good.

RICH. You'll set the alarm?

**Lights Out.**  
***Cammi and Rich Exit.***  
***CHRIS goes to Stage Left.***  
**Lights on Stage Left.**  
***JESSY enters.***

***Antique Store:***

CHRIS. Hi.

JESSY. Hi.

CHRIS. Come in, it's freezing out there!

JESSY. 'Tell me!

CHRIS. What are you doing out in the cold this early in the morning?

JESSY. I was on my way to the L and I saw that you were in here, so I just stopped to say hello.

CHRIS. Great. You want some coffee? I just made some. Starbucks beans. MMmm!

JESSY. No thanks. I don't drink coffee that much. But do you have something for a little hang over?

CHRIS. Orange juice? Aspirin?

JESSY. Just orange juice is okay. By the way, we should be done with those pieces finally today. They worked out great.

CHRIS. Oh, great. I'll pick them up. Maybe this afternoon or tomorrow.

JESSY. Cammi should just ask Rich to take 'em back for us.

CHRIS. Rich do a pick up? That'll be the day. I do that stuff. It's no problem.

JESSY. Is Rich here?

CHRIS. Oh. He's supposed to be here. Here, you go. He's only an hour late. He has another hour's grace period before I call an emergency number.

JESSY. He's always late?

CHRIS. Mmmmmm.

JESSY. Cammi's been late a few times the past week too.

CHRIS. I doubt for the same reasons.

JESSY. (Oh...?)

CHRIS. Are you on your way to work?

JESSY. Yeah. But maybe I'll hang around here for a few minutes. At least till the coast is clear. [Winks]

CHRIS. Okay...

JESSY. So, how long have you known Rich?

CHRIS. Pretty much all my life. He's my...

JESSY. I'm not being too nosy, am I?

CHRIS. No.

JESSY. It's just that I'm a little curious, you know... Because, well....

CHRIS. These are a few items we get for our clients. I just got back from Italy. Our more *eccentric* clients.

JESSY. Cool. I feel kind of strange about this... I've never done this before.

CHRIS. Done what?

JESSY. You know, fished for information before...

CHRIS. Ask me anything you want. I didn't know what half this stuff was before I got into the business either.

JESSY. No. I'm talking about a person...

CHRIS. You want to know about Rich? What has he done? Has he hurt himself? Is he okay?

JESSY. Yes. He's fine, I guess.

Yeah. Relax. I come in peace.

CHRIS. Then what?

JESSY. I just want to know a few things out about him, that's all. For my own information. To put my mind at ease.

CHRIS. Wait a minute. You want to ask him out?!

JESSY. No.

CHRIS. What?!

...you don't want to ask him out?

JESSY. What kind of a guy do you think I am?

CHRIS. I don't know. I'm not sure...

JESSY. ...I'm asking because of my friend, Cammi!

CHRIS. Cammi wants to go out with Rich?

JESSY. *Hello! They've been together for the past month!*

CHRIS. Together?

JESSY. Yeah. Like, *biblically*, too.

CHRIS. I didn't know it was possible...

JESSY. You didn't know that?

That's kinda why I stopped here. To see if Rich had left Cammi's already. Usually I would go over to the loft whenever I wanted, but lately, I feel like I have to wait and see if Rich has left yet. I just feel like I'm intruding all the time.

CHRIS. Rich and Cammi are having an affair?

JESSY. I think it's a little more than *affair*. It's, it's, it's a, it's a *thing*.

I can't believe you didn't know. I thought you guys worked so close to each other and Rich only talks about you, so I thought you were his best friend.

CHRIS. I'm a little more than his best friend, I can tell you that, but Rich can keep *things* under wraps when he wants to.

JESSY. Oh. Cammi and I are so all over each others' business that I just assumed that you guys were, like, the same.

CHRIS. I've been out of town a lot. Rich hasn't wanted me to know about them, I guess...

Your *friend*, Cammi? How is she?

JESSY. Friend. Cammi. Fine...

CHRIS. I mean, you say that they've been having this *thing* for three or four weeks now? Has she said anything? Have you noticed anything different about them together?

JESSY. Yeah. She's nuts! She won't stop talking about him and that's making me nuts! We had this challenge thing and she was just like, so intent on winning and everything---I mean she was like this heat seeking missile at Rich--nuclear warhead woman...

CHRIS. Okay... Are the things she says about him *good* things?

JESSY. Well, yeah. I sound jealous, don't I?

CHRIS. So, they seem happy together?

JESSY. I guess so. It's just that it's happening so fast. I just think we need to move a little slower, that's all.

CHRIS. If I know Rich, it won't move *too* fast. But if Cammi seems happy, things must be going all right.

I have noticed that Rich has been doing pretty good lately. I just couldn't put my finger on why. Maybe this is just what he needs.

JESSY. You know, if he has a tardy problem, with Cammi it's just going to get worse.

CHRIS. You might be a little jealous, but I think you're being protective. Am I right?

JESSY. See, she *talks* about him all the time but she doesn't *talk that* much about him. You know, about the detail stuff. I guess I never saw the spark. You know?

CHRIS. Rich probably doesn't tell anyone much about himself. After all, I'm the closest person to Rich, next to Cammi, obviously, and I didn't even know they were having a thing, or dating, or whatever!

JESSY. Isn't that strange?

CHRIS. But she seems happy to you?

JESSY. Yeah. But this dating one guy thing is different behavior for her. She used to date a lot of guys, you know? And now, just one. It's like she's come up from the depths of depravity so suddenly, I'm afraid she'll get the bends.

CHRIS. Well, I wouldn't worry about Cammi in that way.

JESSY. Are you saying that I don't have anything to worry about because Rich is good for her?

CHRIS. I don't know what I should say....

But Rich is unusual... I only met Cammi once, and I can tell that she could be A-number one in my book if she can make him happy. She's very pretty.

I'm just saying that maybe you could have your friend be a little cautious with my boss. Because, he's a different man than you think he is. He's very special and if someone didn't know that...

JESSY. Cammi wouldn't hurt a flea.

CHRIS. I wouldn't doubt that. It's just that Rich is pretty high maintenance in a lot of ways...

JESSY. So's *Cammi*...!

CHRIS. Look, Rich and I do have a very different kind of *connection* than most people...

JESSY. ...*a connection*...

CHRIS. ...and I tend to protect him, probably like you do for your friend. But Rich needs a certain kind of attention and, *care*--might be the right word.

JESSY. You're wacked, dude! If you're saying what I think you're saying...  
Oh, My Gawd! Cammi has no idea!

CHRIS. Uh,....  
Oh. No.  
You think that Rich and I are...? Together?  
No! Ew! Incest! Yuck. Ew. Spttt!

JESSY. So you're not?

CHRIS. No! Of all the sick things! Sick! Sick! Sick!

JESSY. Hey!  
Okay... You know, *okay!* This was a bad idea, obviously. I'm talking to the wrong guy.

CHRIS. No. Jessy. Listen. *Sick! Ugh.* Sorry.

JESSY. I don't have to be insulted here, you know. I can go to work for that.

CHRIS. You said you wanted information. Right? Okay, now listen, all right?

JESSY. Okay. Fine. Are you okay?

CHRIS. Textbook.

JESSY. Okay.

CHRIS. Now, if you just let me try and finish what I'm trying to say.  
I'm trying to tell you, to tell Cammi, that she should be... How can I put this...

JESSY. Just say it.

CHRIS. I'm just afraid that someone like Cammi, who is maybe used to a more *outgoing* man, might be a little fast for a guy like Rich. Not fast, as in *fast*, just, you know... used to normal guys...

JESSY. Cammi is the sweetest, most coolest girl in the whole world.

CHRIS. I don't mean...

JESSY. ...and if you think for one millisecond that she's not good enough for your boss, then you can stick that thingy over there up you're ass! And....

**[Enters Rich]**

RICH. Good morning.

JESSY AND CHRIS. Good morning!

RICH. Hello, Jessy. What are you doing here?

JESSY. Ummm. Picking up some more things for that photo shoot that we did, we're *doing....* still doing.

**[Chris gets the “thingy” that was referred to previously and thrusts it at Jessy. Jessy takes it.]**

CHRIS. There you go.

JESSY. Thank you.

CHRIS. Thank *you*.

JESSY. Well, gotta go.

RICH. All right. I'll see you later.

JESSY. All right by me. Bye.  
[Jessy exits.]

[Chris and Rich exchange looks.]

**Lights out Stage left.**  
**Chris and Rich exit.**

**JESSY and CAMMI enter to Stage Center.**  
**Light on Stage Center.**

***Loft:***

[Jessy and Cammi are setting up shots. Both can use placement of props and flash as antagonism and power...]

JESSY. Are both of his parents married? *No.*

CAMMI. What? *No.*

JESSY. Because, I don't have to tell you the statistics of a man who has parents that

are divorced and remarried several times. Those guys can't commit.

CAMMI. He can commit.

JESSY. Oh.

CAMMI. We haven't talked about it though. *No.*

JESSY. Talked about what? *Yes.*

CAMMI. Marriage. It's too soon. *No. A little over.*

JESSY. It's been over a month. In my book that's long enough to call him an ex when you break up.

CAMMI. We're not breaking up.

JESSY. Course not. So, does he show any signs of being a high maintenance guy?

CAMMI. *Every* guy is high maintenance.  
Let's talk about you. *No.*

JESSY. What about me? *I think so.*

CAMMI. The mission. The challenge. *I think so.* Who have you asked out? Who have you met?

JESSY. No one, really. I've been as busy as you have. *Fine.*

CAMMI. No one? We both agreed that we were going find a guy--you know, the prototype.

JESSY. Yeah, but you cheated. You found Mr. Right--right away. I did meet someone. But I haven't asked him out yet. We're kind of in the getting to know each other stage.

CAMMI. What does he do?

JESSY. That's the thing, see. He's a waiter. I've been out almost every night to the bar where he works and I talk to him when I order drinks from him.

CAMMI. Haven't you asked him out? *What are you doing over there?*

JESSY. I always get too drunk before I do. I mean, what other premise would I have to meet him? He probably thinks I have a real problem. Last night, I finally got some nerve to finally just ask him out.

CAMMI. So...

JESSY. Just as I was about to go up to him, he began talking to a friend of a friend of mine.

CAMMI. So...

JESSY. So, this friend, who was obviously a friend of his, knows a guy that I went on a date with.

CAMMI. I've lost you, honey.

JESSY. Well, the guy I went on a date with I met on one of those *Internet chat rooms* on my friend's computer.

CAMMI. [laughs] How *Scandalous!*

JESSY. Hey! I don't want the guy to think I'm some kind of, of, E-mail scum.

CAMMI. He already thinks you're an alcoholic. It's not like you met a guy at an adult book store.

JESSY. I'm not afraid for anyone to know that I can read.

CAMMI. I'm sure your waiter already senses that you want to ask him out the way you've been stalking him, so you might as well just walk up to him and ask him.

JESSY. He's not *my waiter* and probably never will be. Drop it. I'll find someone to ask out. Someone like your antique store owner.

CAMMI. Rich is a genuine renaissance man and pursued his true love - Antiques. Isn't that cool? He's such an intellectual too. He's so stimulating to be around.

JESSY. (I'm stimulated just hearing about him.) So, how come no one has snatched him up until now?  
Are all his parts working?

CAMMI. ...well, yes.

JESSY and CAMMI. [in unison:] Slut!

CAMMI. I got him the first night! He's kind of a loner, but an interesting loner. I only know a little bit about the assistant.

JESSY. That guy seems like an ass but Rich seems pretty mellow whenever I've see

him.

CAMMI. Yeah, right.. He *is* pretty mellow most of the time. He has a balancing effect on me and I feel that I'm here on this earth to loosen him up. Make him have some fun in his life. He's so serious sometimes.

JESSY. I like him, I really do.

CAMMI. Hey. Why don't you and I take him out tonight. You know, show him fun like he's never seen before.

JESSY. Me? With you two guys? I've scrapped the bottom of the barrel before but I can't...

CAMMI. No, really. Let's take him to show tunes night. It'll be fun.

JESSY. Straight night at the gay bar. He better not embarrass me and ask the bartender to turn to game on.

CAMMI. You are so heterophobic sometimes.

JESSY. I get nervous around straight people. It was guys like Rich and his assistant Chris that used to beat me up in high school.

CAMMI. That was just kids. I think you sometimes perpetuate your own segregation because you don't hang around straight people enough.

[A Buzzer Rings and Cammi goes to answer it.]

CAMMI. Photography Studio. Who is it?

CHRIS. [Off-stage.]Hi. It's Chris, Rich's assistant. I came to pick up those pieces.

JESSY. Shit.

CAMMI. Oh. Sure. Come on up. Third Floor. [Walks back to camera.] Rich must have told him that we were going to be done with them today.

JESSY. And, what's this Chris guy's story?

CAMMI. I really don't know that much about him, other than Rich relies on him at work. Rich and I talk about so many other things.

JESSY. They're partners?

CAMMI. I think that Chris just works for Rich and does most of the traveling for the

business. He goes to Italy and picks up things.

JESSY. Someone's got to run the business. Rich has been spending all of his time with you.

[knock at the door. Jessy answers.]

JESSY. Hi.

CHRIS. Hi.

JESSY. The stuff is over there but we're still using it.

CAMMI. Hello, Chris. We're done, let me snap the rest of this roll and then they're yours. Thanks for coming by, it saves us a lot of time. Jessy, get something for Chris to drink.

CHRIS. I can come back later.

CAMMI. Sit down. Just two minutes.

CHRIS. Great studio. Photography and graphics are pretty interesting to me. Design was my major till I dropped out.

JESSY. All we have was mineral water. You look like a coffee drinker. A *Starbucks* coffee drinker. I could go through the trouble of going downstairs and getting you some. They're on every corner, you know.

CHRIS. Mineral water is fine.

[Jessy goes and gets a water. shouts from where he goes to.]

JESSY. *[offstage]Unless you want a beer.*

CHRIS. No, I like water.

JESSY. *[offstage]Tea?*

CAMMI. Sit right here on the couch, Chris. Make yourself at home.

JESSY. *[offstage]Orange juice? Oh, I drank that...*

CHRIS. You live here too?

CAMMI. Yeah. I'm always here.

[Jessy returns with water and gives to Chris and returns to camera work.]

JESSY. And I'm usually in Aruba.

CAMMI. Jessy and I are stuck with each other. He's always here too.

JESSY. When the coast is clear, lately.

CHRIS. How long you guys worked together?

JESSY. We've been stuck together ever since my lover died.

CAMMI. So, Chris. How long have you worked for Rich?

JESSY. *Try one shot.*

CHRIS. About as long as he's owned the antique salon.

CAMMI. *Now back.*

JESSY. *Fine.*

CAMMI. Rich is kind of shy, isn't he?

CHRIS. You mean secretive.

CAMMI. Well...

CHRIS. He doesn't get out much. Until he met you, that is. He seems very happy since he's been dating you.

CAMMI. I hope you think I'm good for him then.

{Cammi still shoots as Jessy moves a prop to the couch area.}

CHRIS. I happen to think you are wonderful for Rich.

CAMMI AND JESSY. *Really....*

CAMMI. Now we're done and Chris can have his props back and we can take a break.

JESSY. What? [gasps/ clutches his chest and teeters]

CHRIS. [alarmed: begins to assist Jessy.]

JESSY. [Takes notice of Chris' compassion.] I'm sorry. I've just never heard her say

that I could take a break before.

CHRIS. [whispers to Jessy]--I came to apologize--about when we talked.

CAMMI. So, I was thinking that Rich needed some real shaking up. Some real fun. We've been on nice dates, dinner, walks, movies and things, but I want him to experience something different. Do you think Rich would like that?

CHRIS. Your a missionary.

CAMMI. He's so conservative I thought I'd take him to a gay bar.

JESSY. Chris, don't you think that Rich would be a little too *sensitive* for a bar *like that*?

CHRIS. I don' think so, Jessy. Just don't take him to a leather bar.

CAMMI. [laughs.] No. Just a regular show-tunes-video bar. Where everyone's singing the words to Xanadu and Oklahoma. I bet you he'd freak out at how fun it is!

CHRIS. Well, I don't think he'd be freaked out going to a gay bar.

CAMMI. So, Jessy, you and me, and Rich tonight. Okay?

JESSY. Cammi, you're nuts. Rich and Chris aren't going to want to hang out in a gay bar with you and me.

CHRIS. It sounds great, really, but I'm already meeting friends out tonight but...

JESSY. And why would you want to go to a gay bar anyway? What have you got in common with of us fags? You probably don't know the words to Xanadu and you haven't picked up your leather from the dry cleaners.

CAMMI. Jessy!

JESSY. This is what I was talking about. All straight people think gay bars are different from their bars, with guys swinging from the ceilings in leather harnesses.

CHRIS. I really would like to go with you guys. And Rich would probably, well, think it was interesting. I'm just meeting an old girlfriend from college whose in town with her...

JESSY. Yeah. Yeah. Yea. You would never be seen with all of us Oklahoma-singing, swizzle-stick-sipping- queens, hairdressers, actors and flight attendants when you could be watching dumb old sports and banging your college girlfriend on the pull out sofa in front of the TV!

CAMMI. Shut up! What's with you?!

JESSY. And why would I want to be in the middle of a date with *you and Mr. Intellectual Renaissance Guy*?

**Lights out.**

**Chris exits.**

***JESSY and CAMMI and RICH, (bringing another stool) go to Stage Right .***

**Lights On Stage Right. Bar music.**

***Yet Another Gay Bar:***

CAMMI. We choose our own deaths. I really think so.

JESSY. You mean, that if I die by a bus mowing me down, that I chose that bus instead of a Volkswagen?

RICH. Or if I got caught in the blades of a tractor cropper and got mutilated...

JESSY. ...like in tiny little pieces...

RICH. Yes. Slowly, inch by inch, blade by blade...versus a swift death...

JESSY. ...by say a comet landing on your head...

RICH. ...rendering your body unrecognizable...

JESSY. ...how about...

CAMMI. How about farting in a space suit and asphyxiating in your own noxious and lethal repulsive fumes and then throwing up and choking on your own bile and vomit?

JESSY. Can you pass me some more pate', Rich?

RICH. Certainly. It is tasty, isn't it?

CAMMI. Haw-haw. You guys are very funny. You started it anyway. I'm so glad you all came.

JESSY. Me too. I'm so embarrassed about today, though. Chris probably thinks I'm a complete idiot.

CAMMI. It was like you had it out for the poor man! He's probably a Leo. Is Chris a Leo, Rich?

RICH. Yes. I believe he is.

CAMMI. You two would be like oil and water.

[WAITER-IN-BAR (W-I-R) enters with a drink tray.]

W-I-R. Can I get you another round? [flirting.]

JESSY. Sure. I'll buy this round though, Rich. After all, this is my domain, really! You, being in a gay bar for the first time - as a straight man - who is on a date with my friend, who's a woman.

[WIR leaves to get drinks.]

Oh, my gawd! Have I ever been stupider!?

CAMMI. Hmmmm. I might only have to use my short-term memory for *that* one.

JESSY. That's the waiter I was telling you about. I just made a total fool out of myself!

RICH. That young man is not one of my favorite people.

CAMMI. You know that waiter?

JESSY. He'll never go out with me now.

CAMMI. Calm down. He'll come back. Then you'll have another chance. [to Rich] I'll ask you how you knew the waiter, later.

JESSY. All right, all right. We need to lighten this up, here. What were we talking about?

CAMMI. Death.

RICH. And my dear, I never knew you had such a graphic imagination.

CAMMI. You didn't? [kiss]

JESSY. Gross. Not in front of the child!

CAMMI. You know? We are having a good time, aren't we?

RICH. I suppose we are. But, back to your original premise. If we are truly beings that choose our paths in life, in this life, although I do not concede that there is anything before or after this lifetime that we own, we might therefore choose our death as well. But there is no proof.

CAMMI. Oy. That Taurus judgment. You're a pragmatic. There's past life regression.

Dejavu. The fact that we are all so different- directly from birth... Everyone prays when they are in trouble and every civilization recognizes some kind of higher power. Who needs more proof? I mean that would make everyone insane or something.

JESSY. Tell him about the channeler.

RICH. What is a 'channeler'.

JESSY. A disembodied spirit that speaks through a living person's body who acts as a host. Seance stuff. Ohhhhh!

CAMMI. I don't care if you believe that or not. It was the wisdom I got from the channeler that was important.

RICH. Who was the spirit?

CAMMI. My brother.

JESSY. That's how Cammi and I met. I used to go with Mark.

RICH. You've talked about him. He was a hairdresser?

JESSY. Hair-Burner!

CAMMI. He was a great hair burner. The best. I'm fifteen years older than Mark. Did I mention I was raised Catholic?

JESSY. It wouldn't be obvious.

CAMMI. Before he died, I used to be such a stick in the mud. Really. No fun at all. Never went out. Dated one guy, *forever*. And when Mark passed on, I just about wanted to kill myself--so, I just went to this Channeler.

I can't remember exactly how he said it, but the basic ramifications was that I had to learn from his passing. I had to learn how to live again. In a *different way*.

JESSY. And she has been living up to his slutty reputation ever since... Before you, of course. She's practically a virgin again.

CAMMI. I've had a...

CAMMI and RICH.[in unison]...moderate...

CAMMI. ...yes, *moderate*, dating history. We're supposed to experience life, enjoy, have fun. And all you have to do is believe that you can have it and it's yours. That's the way Mark *lived!*

JESSY. Mark used to *live* too much. He *lived* himself to an early grave, avoiding any problems that he didn't want to deal with.

CAMMI. He would just wish for something and *bang!*; he had it. That's what he taught me. Jessy doesn't believe me anyway. But I don't care. I know it was Mark.  
He made me promise to look out after Jessy.

JESSY. He did? He never would have come into the body of the woman you described. She was wearing feather jewelry and polyester.

RICH. So, if you *believe* it, then it will happen?

CAMMI. Kind of. I decided when and what kind of man I wanted in my life and *pouf!* There *you* were...

JESSY. I saw you first.

RICH. And, so, if you believe that you have that kind of will and power, you believe that you have some kind of control of when and how you are going to die?

JESSY. I'll probably die of a heart attack. That's going to hurt. Maybe I could drown.

CAMMI. I want to drown. It's a scary thought, but only in thought. They say that drowning is the most pleasant of the ways to die. It would be my second choice, of course, only to dying in my sleep.

RICH. If I had to die of something natural it would be some kind of Cancer. You get prescribed a plethora of drugs when you're diagnosed with Cancer. If it were unnatural, it would be a drug induced toxic sleep.

JESSY. That's cool. Painless.

[CHRIS enters.]

CHRIS. Hello.

JESSY. Shit!

CAMMI. Chris. What a pleasant surprise.

CHRIS. I thought you'd be at the video bar across the street.

CAMMI. It was oldies night. Jessy and I are more of the show tunes types. So we decided to come here to dance to seventies disco. Would you like a drink?

[W-I-R enters with more drinks.]

W-I-R. Hi. How ya doin', Chris? [Sizes up Jessy and Chris.] Can I get you your regular?

CHRIS. Sure.

[Jessy starts to pay for drinks served--stands and fishes in pockets.]

W-I-R. It's on me. [W-I-R exits.]

JESSY. 'You know him?

CHRIS. I used to live with him. Why? Do you like him? Let me save you some grief now and tell you that you are too good for him and to forget him. He lies. He has no ambition. And he wouldn't recognize the word, commitment, if you tattooed to his forehead.

JESSY. Oh, my god! I thought--you were...

CHRIS. Only when I'm banging my girlfriends on the fold-out bed.

JESSY. Since we don't have any drugs to kill myself with, right now, I'm going to drown in my drink. {Downs his drink.}

CHRIS. You are a very funny man. And you also jump to a lot of conclusions.

JESSY. Why didn't you stop me from making of a fool of myself today?

CHRIS. You seemed so intent on making a point. So far, I have yet to understand where you are going with any of your points...

CAMMI. What's your sign?

CHRIS. Uh.

RICH. Leo.

CHRIS. Yeah--Uh, Leo.

CAMMI. [to Jessy:] See. I knew it. [To Chris:] We were talking about how we would like to die before you got here, Chris. That's what Jessy's babbling about now.

CHRIS. I see. And who picked this topic?

CAMMI. Yeah! [Looks at Rich.] Who picked this topic? And, please! Drugs are so dramatic. I'd rather drown with Jessy. Drugs are so... spineless.

RICH. They can help a person live a lot longer than he normally would without them and keep pain away at the same time.

CAMMI. Well in that context...

RICH. Exactly. Excuse me. I'm going to find the restroom.

CAMMI. We've taken this conversation down the toilet and I have taken it to a depressing low, so let's say we move on and party! Drugs. I'm so sure!

CHRIS. Richard is always pretty serious.

JESSY. You never know exactly when you'll die, anyway.

CHRIS. Sometimes my Uncle thinks he knows...

CAMMI and JESSY. [look of disbelief]

CHRIS. Oh. I see...

**Lights Out.**  
**Actors Exit.**

***INTERMISSION***

***ACT 2***

***CAMMI, JESSY, CHRIS, RICH and M-I-DS [Men-In-Disco] enter to Up Stage Center and dance.***

***Light on Up Stage Center --music and disco ball.***  
***Still at: Yet Another Gay Bar***

[Chris is paying attention to Jessy, who likes the attention. A M-I-D is eyeing Jessy too.]

CHRIS. Rich really seems to be having a good time.

JESSY. When Cammi takes on a project, it always ends up successful.

CHRIS. I'm glad I stopped by.

JESSY. Me too.

CAMMI. Why didn't you tell me that Chris was your nephew? I would have paid more attention to him.

RICH. The latest generation of my family doesn't like to emphasize the blood bonds or nepotism.

CAMMI. What do you emphasize?

[Rich takes Cammi's hand and leads her off the dance floor un-noticed to Exit.]

JESSY. Those guys are looking at you.

CHRIS. I think they're looking at you.  
I want you to come home with me. Do you have to work tomorrow?

[Jessy exits.]

**Lights out.**  
***D-I-B-S and Chris Exit.***  
***RICH and CAMMI go to couch at Stage Center.***

**Lights On Stage Center.**  
***Loft:***

{Cammi is playing with Tarot cards.}

RICH. Physical loving is nature's trick to ensnare us to re-populate.

CAMMI. Wasn't tonight a Hoot? They're probably still dancing. Ah. The moon card in on your place of family and friends.

RICH. Cammi...

CAMMI. The moon card in reverse means, um Peace after a difficult time. With family, I guess. I had fun. Did you have fun? I knew you'd have fun.

RICH. It was a very nice evening.

CAMMI. A few surprises... You, know you've got to go see Serena.

RICH. The astrologer.

CAMMI. She really is amazing. I mean, she can really straighten you out. Astrology can really be affirming.

RICH. We were talking about the preoccupation that human beings have for mating.

CAMMI. Oh, yeah. *Four of swords*. That's not good. Not bad but...

RICH. I can understand women, who must find a man to father children, but I don't understand two of the same sex .

CAMMI. What? Why did you say that? Do you think that I'm trying to snare you? Hey, mister, I'm the original fraidy-cat when it comes to natures trap. Marry! Hah!

RICH. Do you want to marry me?

CAMMI. I don't know. Maybe marry isn't the noun-verb that I would have used but... the essence of the word is what I feel drawn...to do, would like to see...happen, I guess...in the future. I mean, if I still am attracted to you... physically - by nature.

RICH. I'm flattered.

CAMMI. Well, good. But I was hoping that you would feel kind of the same.

RICH. The same?

CAMMI. Yes. The same. You know what I'm saying, don't you? What I said?

RICH. That you want to marry me.

CAMMI. Well, the essence of that.

RICH. Yes. The essence of that.

CAMMI. Are you freaking out? Rich, if you're nervous, so am I. We don't even have to talk about this, but you brought it up. We've only been seeing each other for a while. We don't have to rush into this conversation. So put away your male jitters of commitment, because I'm not asking for one.

RICH. Jitters... But thoughts come up, with all of the doubts that would occur, to someone like me, and they are all for your benefit. To protect you. If I had jitters, they would be for you. Not myself.

CAMMI. What the Sam-hell are you talking about? You're not interested in me anymore?

RICH. I am interested...

CAMMI. Then shut up and well talk about this shit when the time comes. It's too soon. I haven't even hit my past maximum dating record yet. That will be .... Thursday. We can talk then.

RICH. We should talk soon. I really think, for your own good, that we should discuss my situation.

CAMMI. Is your secret wife in an asylum and you can't divorce her?

RICH. I'm not married.

CAMMI. Then you're breaking up with me?

RICH. I don't think that I am. I'm trying to explain something to you, in my own awkward way and I'm just not sure what I intend the outcome to be. In regards and contrast to your prior admonition, I don't have any future visions for our relationship.

Please, Cammi. Sit down. Hear me out.

CAMMI. You're saying that we don't have a future together? Do I want to know why? I don't think so. Not yet anyway. First I have to work into a fit of rage /hate and humiliating self-doubt. That what I'm supposed to do, right? See--I never got this far. Taurus'--you always have to make things so hard. This was such a good thing, I thought. Even your cards say so.

RICH. You are a successful woman. And yet you look for tools in your life to help you stay one step ahead of it. You invest and you expect to reap a return. But there are things we cannot control.

CAMMI. Shit. Dump me. I've got so much work to do anyway...

RICH. I'm not dumping you. I know that I need you, but... it is hard, but not because I'm a Taurus, or any religion or philosophy. Maybe it's a birthright.

CAMMI. Then, what the Sam-Hell?

RICH. I have problems.

CAMMI. So do I. I have 'once-a-month problems'. I have 'overly motherly tendency' problems. I have business related overly-extended problems. I even have tax problems. What kind of problems do you have?

RICH. Health problems.

CAMMI. Wh-what kind health problems? Like chronic callus's or migraines? Health problems...

RICH. More like mental health problems.

CAMMI. [laughs.] I'm sorry. I don't know what to say. I don't know...

RICH. I love it when you laugh. You like to laugh. And when you do, you laugh for both of us.

CAMMI. Sorry. I don't know what's come over me. You see, I basically told you that I'm thinking of possibly spending the rest of my life with you and now you're saying that I might not know the person I said it to. You don't have multiple personalities, do you? Because that throws me, you know?

RICH. A joke. That's good. Thank you.

CAMMI. Is this going to be a little bomb-shell like Chris being your nephew?

RICH. No.

CAMMI. Then why haven't you told me this before, *whatever* you're going to tell me? Why do you hold things in?

RICH. I didn't think we would get this far. I missed something--that I think should have happened along the way.  
I didn't know you could like me so much.

CAMMI. I think I love you.

RICH. I'm not like other men.

CAMMI. What do you mean, Rich. What do you mean when you say you're not like other men?

RICH. Sex.

CAMMI. Pardon?

RICH. Level with me. Sex for you isn't that good when you're with me.

CAMMI. No. It's great!

RICH. Cammi...

CAMMI. Well I was always used to younger boys. Of course they have more stamina and they are a little more firm... I mean, I didn't mean...

RICH. It's from drugs, Cammi. The drugs I take, they take away desire.

CAMMI. Oh. I was beginning to think you weren't attracted to me.  
Drugs. That would explain it then.... Drugs...

**Lights Out.**  
**SERENA and RICH walk to Stage Right.**  
**Serena's Office:**

RICH. What makes you become an astologer?

SERENA. Your moon is in Aquarius--very sensitive. This is a very sweet moon, but very sensitive.

RICH. Is there some kind of degree that you...

SERENA. You have an aspect in your chart that is very... self destructive, my friend. Lets start there.

RICH. You've been telling me all about me. Please continue.

SERENA. Hmm. Yes. Now. You said you take a pills. What kind of pills?

RICH. One to wake up in the morning. One to make it through the day. And one to go to sleep.

SERENA. Oy. You're probably saving a lot of money on Coffee and Vodka. Do you do anything for meditation... anything like that? What's with the pills?

RICH. The daytime pills are the most important. Without them I think I would walk into my dressing closet and tuck into a fetal position and pray to a god, that I don't believe in, to de-create me; make me disappear.

SERENA. Don't be such an umblick. Tell your brain to shut up! Taurus, Aquarian moon... That's what makes you take those pills in the first place.

RICH. I see why Cammi likes you.

SERENA. Save your sanity and drive everyone else nuts. Now, talk... Not the brain though...

RICH. I don't know what you can do for me, really. I've been to many pchychiatirists. Cammi sent me...

SERENA. Talk. From here.

RICH. Cammi says... No. Ugh. I have nightmares. My family, you see...

SERENA. Abuse.

RICH. That's in my chart?

SERENA. Psychology minor. You're a textbook.

RICH. I have nightmares.

SERENA. Father? Mother? Your Father hurt you?

RICH. Forgive and forget. Move on... Acquiring wisdom and relinquishing blame to one's parents does not magically materialize a toolbox of faith and ...self love that one uses to survive in this world.

SERENA. How many shrinks have you been talking to? There's nothing nice about some things that happen to people. Sometimes they keep drawers and drawers filled with bad memories and schmutz but some still try to fill those little vacant nooks with a few laughs. Can you do that?

RICH. (Why am I here?)

SERENA. You're here because your pushy girlfriend wants you to loosen up.

RICH. Let me say this in my own way. I look at a homeless woman. Her life is paltry and dark. No home, family.. yet she may exhibit joy in her face. I see such people. I ask myself, what was she given in her life that sustains her will to live?

SERENA. A sense of humor. You have people who love you. A home. A girlfriend and even your own business. Maybe if you stopped taking those pills you'd be able to appreciate these things?

RICH. I should stop taking the pills.

**Lights Out.**  
***RICH goes to Stage Left.***  
**Light On Stage Left.**

***Antique Store:***

[Rich talks a few pills.]

[JESSY enters.]

JESSY. Hi.

RICH. Jessy. Did I leave the door unlocked?

JESSY. I saw the light on. Didn't know you'd be here.

RICH. I'm usually not. In fact, I'm leaving.

JESSY. Oh. Well I guess I'll be goin' too. I thought you'd be at the studio.

RICH. Not tonight.

JESSY. Okay. See ya later. Did you have fun the other night?

RICH. Yes.[Rich shakes his pills and puts them on the counter.]

JESSY. Chris did too, didn't he?

RICH. I believe he did, yes. We hadn't talked, as of yet. He's made a quick trip to Europe. He'll be back late tonight.

JESSY. Um. Yeah. Goodnight.

RICH. Jessy?

JESSY. Yeah?

RICH. I suppose you have a date tonight?

JESSY. A date?

RICH. Cammi told me about your little contest.

JESSY. Contest. After I complete the world peace thing--I have a quite a *few* dates lined up.

RICH. You're handsome and a good man. You'll find someone special.

JESSY. Thanks. [starts to walk again.]

RICH. Chris doesn't have that many dates either.

JESSY. He doesn't?

RICH. No. I know he's a little bit old fashioned. We talk a little bit. He gets a little nervous when he likes someone.

JESSY. Yeah?

RICH. You want some orange juice? I have some things to do, but they can wait.

[Rich takes out his pills and puts them in his pocket.]

**Lights out.**  
***Rich exits.***

***CAMMI and JESSY enters Stage Center.  
Lights on Stage Center.***

***Loft:***

[Cammi uses flash as antagonism.]

CAMMI. You just have to give a guy a chance. Jessy, have you ever thought that maybe you haven't fully given someone a chance?

JESSY. I just have my standards. Aren't you supposed to build a foundation before you--you know?

CAMMI. Maybe you're too picky.

[Jessy ignores Cammi and then they both adjust the props--haggle--and then laugh at themselves.]

JESSY. I thought about asking Chris out--like on a date. But I think I blew it. I freaked out.

CAMMI. Leo.

JESSY. And then there's the fact that he's always traveling and never home. But he is a lot like Rich...

CAMMI. Maybe we're taking this whole challenge too seriously. Let's just drop it.

JESSY. But look what it got you! You've got a great guy. I really like Rich. I feel like I can talk to him.

CAMMI. Yeah, but does he talk back?

JESSY. Sure.

CAMMI. What? When did you talk to Rich?

JESSY. Tonight. I stopped by his shop. We talked about guy stuff.

CAMMI. Guy stuff...

JESSY. Hey... This may sound dumb. Did you notice that Chris has the same last name as Rich? Why would Chris's mom have the same name as Rich, if she was married to another guy?

CAMMI. Maybe she wasn't married. She had a lot of problems, I know that. She died a while back.

JESSY. That would explain why they're so close...  
He's really cute. Don't you think?

CAMMI. Rich?

JESSY. No. Chris.

CAMMI. Uh, yes. **[flash]**

JESSY. What's with you?

CAMMI. Nothing! I'm just thinking that you sure have gotten past your heterophobia. It seems like you and Rich really have hit it off.

JESSY. Yeah. He's just like you said. He's smart. A cool guy. I can really talk to him. Did you guys get into a fight?

CAMMI. A fight. I don't get in fights.

JESSY. Oh. From what Rich said, I thought you were.

CAMMI. And what did Rich say to you?

JESSY. Nothing. Really. He only tells me little things probably.

CAMMI. About us? What little things has he told you?

JESSY. Well. When we were talking about me, and relationships, right? And he said that relationships are for like, really busy people who usually are leaders. People who are leaders don't have time for social groups or social packs. That's why they need a one on one connection, just so they can satisfy their human desires of sexual and mortal needs. [smiles.]

CAMMI. Yes. Yes. I think I remember him saying something like that too.

JESSY. There's something wrong. Isn't there?

CAMMI. No. I've got a stomach ache. That's all.

JESSY. Have you missed your period?

CAMMI. Oh. A pregnant joke! I am *very* careful about that. I'm always careful about that.

JESSY. At least you'd know who the father was now a days.  
Cam...

CAMMI. What?

JESSY. Why, before Rich, did you go with so many guys?

CAMMI. You *mean*, why did I *sleep* with so many guys.

I don't know.

I guess I just went crazy after Mark died. I was living life to the fullest, I thought. And then I met Rich.

I wanted what Mark and you had. You know?

JESSY. We had problems, like anyone else.

You and Rich have got something very special though. I can tell.

CAMMI. *Jessy*, you're not sleeping with your dates too soon are you? I mean, the longer you wait, the better chance you have for a long term situation. It's a statistic.

JESSY. I always sample the 'candy' before I buy. How else will I know if it tastes good - or if it snores!

CAMMI. Ah-ha! You are getting it somewhere! Just be careful. You can't be too careful.

JESSY. Where did this crap come from? Hello. This is Jessy. You see me 12 hours a day. And I can't get a date to save my life, let alone jeopardize it.

CAMMI. Sorry, I don't know wha... I don't know. Stomach ache... thing.

JESSY. I haven't had sex with *anybody* since Mark.

CAMMI. But... You're a guy!

JESSY. What the heck does *that* mean?

I'm just waiting for the right guy.

CAMMI. Wow.

Well, that's admirable, then. Wow.

JESSY. Yeah, well there isn't any merit badge for it, let me tell you.

CAMMI. Jessy...

JESSY. Now, I'm upset. I wasn't going to get upset today and you made me upset.

CAMMI. I'm sorry.

JESSY. Now you are going to have to buy me something very expensive.

CAMMI. It's the thought that counts.

JESSY. It's the resale value.

CAMMI. Let's just forget this silly old contest anyway.

JESSY. Contest now, is it? First it was a challenge, a personal challenge, now it's a contest?

CAMMI. That's what I meant. Challenge.

JESSY. No you didn't. You meant contest and you think you've won now that you have Rich, don't you? You're doing it right, so you must be the expert over me.

CAMMI. You've been jealous of Rich and me for a long time now. Let me tell you, you have nothing to be jealous about.

JESSY. I'm not going to validate that.

CAMMI. You don't understand, Jessy. Rich has problems...

JESSY. You know, I have been able to tolerate the big sister thing up to now because I thought that I was taking the place of Mark in your life and I felt closer to him when I was with you. But if you think that I'm going to stay here to be humiliated because you've gone feeble-minded with love, you're crazy!

And if I listened to you about how to run my love life, by your standards, I won't have a have a boyfriend for another 12 years! You're the one who's fallen in love for your first time, at 39!

CAMMI. 38 and one-half! At least I don't fall in love with waiters whom I've never spoken to before--or even been to bed with.

JESSY. You know, maybe if *you* got a 'little', lately, you wouldn't have to focus on my love life!

CAMMI. What! What the hell has Rich told you?!

JESSY. Not much. There's not much to tell. He told me he can't have sex that much, that's all.

CAMMI. Agh! He didn't!

JESSY. I told you, we talked guy talk.

CAMMI. You..! I can't believe you would pry into my private life like that.

JESSY. It's better than trying to run your private life like you do to me.

CAMMI. ' do not!

JESSY. ' do so. Every day, since Mark died, my personal life has been your mission. I come to work and it's 'raise your self esteem, Jessy', 'grow up Jessy--do the shot this way, Jessy.'

CAMMI. I've taken you under my wing and tried to teach you everything I could, like I tried to do for Mark. I've taught you all about the business...

JESSY. With strings.

CAMMI. If you have something to say, Jessy, go ahead and say it, please. I wouldn't want you to strain yourself by holding back or anything.

JESSY. I helped build this business too, ya know.

CAMMI. This has always been my business, and that is why your title has always been 'assistant'. I'm the boss. You're the assistant. Is it the pay? Do you think I owe you a raise?

JESSY. No.

CAMMI. Have I demanded too many hours of your 'personal' time?

JESSY. No.

CAMMI. Well, what is it?

JESSY. I just want you to start treating me more like... more like Rich.

CAMMI. Rich? I already do! I don't have sex with you either!

JESSY. You've known him a fraction of the time you've known me and you discuss things with him. You ask him his opinion. You give him the benefit of the doubt when he's late. Me, you order around, like you're the only one who knows how to do the shot right - always your way. And if I'm late, you always assume that I've been partying all night.

Ever since you and Rich have met, you've been extra condescending to me!

CAMMI. Are you sure your just not a little jealous Jessy? Jessy, it's natural to be a little jealous. We used to spend so much more time together...

JESSY. Why would I be jealous?! You just happened to fall into a relationship - on a dare - on my coaching!

CAMMI. Ah-Ha! You are jealous! You probably could have even dated Chris, if you weren't so ppltt with him.

JESSY. You know? I'm totally seeing you in a different light! You're pushin' 40. You're eggs are drying up - and you've fallen for a guy who can't put out. That's why you have to boss me around. It's just like Rich said. You're a controller, so you need only a one on one relationship. Any more than that and you get bossy!

CAMMI. You're just jealous cuz you can't legally get married!

JESSY. What?! [Cammi is as surprised as Jessy that she said that.] I was married. So what it wasn't legal! I loved Mark so much and maybe I'll never get over him - but you're a bitch!

'know what else?! That precious little brother of yours was a slut! I loved him and he cheated on me till the day he died! And you *idolized* him! You *became* him! And he was a selfish asshole that didn't appreciate me either. He was lucky! And then he died...

CAMMI. You're mad? You've been angry with him for dying?

JESSY. Aren't you?

CAMMI. I... I don't know...

JESSY. I feel bad.

I don't want to feel bad.

Goodbye.

You were lucky to have me too!

CAMMI. Where are you going?! Come back here!

Jessy! I'm sorry! I didn't mean it! I have to tell you something!... about Rich and me....!

[Jessy exits.]

**Lights out.**

***Cammi exits.***

***Character Actor and Nurse Lionel set up boxes to make bed and lay sheet, and set up IV at Down Stage Center. Character Actor exits.***

***RICH enter lays on bed with sheet over him.***

***CHRIS enters Center Stage and stands outside hospital bed area.***

***LIONEL is fiddling with charts, IV and Rich silently.***

**Lights on Stage Center.**

**Cammi enters.**

**Hospital Outer Room:**

CAMMI. Hi. Thanks for calling me.

CHRIS. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry...  
I thought you should know and...  
I'm sorry...

CAMMI. I'm okay...  
I'm okay. All right? All right?  
Chris, are you okay?

CHRIS. Yes. I'm the one who's gone through this all before.

CAMMI. I suppose that doesn't make it any easier.

CHRIS. I feel bad for you being in the middle of everything... I wish I could have told you, or talked to you about things.

CAMMI. You mean *warned* me.

CHRIS. I never really got a chance to talk to you. I feel somewhat responsible that you may be hurt.

CAMMI. Oh.

I went into this with my eyes wide open, you know. I had just set a goal and he was it. And if you told me that he was a human time bomb, I would have told you to get lost and started diffusing him myself.  
I feel like I should know you...

CHRIS. Rich's fault.

CAMMI. No, it was...

RICH. Rich is afraid of me.

CAMMI. Rich isn't afraid of you! He loves you.

CHRIS. It's hard for him to be around me, and yet, he loves me and needs me. I know that. But he sees my mother every time he looks into my eyes and that hurts him.

CAMMI. I don't think...

CHRIS. ...yeah... Rich and my mom had each other when they were growing up.

Comrades in arms. Together they survived that awful man...

CAMMI. Your grandfather?...

CHRIS. My grandfather, my father... Sick.... horrible man.

CAMMI. Did you know him?

CHRIS. I have memories of him. But he died when I was four. Mom took her own life on his birthday when I was nineteen. The only reason she hung out as long as she did was for me.

CAMMI. I know Rich loved her very much.

CHRIS. Yeah. She was great. I don't even fault her for leaving me.

CAMMI. And what about your Brother?

CHRIS. I understand why Rich wants to die but my heart wishes that he would stay. For me. But you can't stay for any reason but your own. That makes sense to me, I guess..

CAMMI. Come here. [hugs]

No matter what happens, I need you. I know you don't understand why, right now, but I need you. Friends?

CHRIS. Sure.

CAMMI. Another thing--about Jessy...

CHRIS. He doesn't like me very much.

CAMMI. Sure he does--he's just a little, um, sexually challenged. He just got scared when you invited him home.

CHRIS. Did he think...?

CAMMI. He said....

CHRIS. Yeah, but not for...

CAMMI. Then...

CHRIS. No.

CAMMI. No? You are such a Leo.

CHRIS. I'm not a Leo.

CAMMI. You're not? But Rich said you...

CHRIS. He was jokeing and I just went along. I'm a Sagitarian.

CAMMI. Oh. Okay. Okay.

So Rich has a little funny bone after all.

Right now I've got to talk to the joker in there that ate too many pills for lunch.

Okay?

CHRIS. [nods]

CHRIS and CAMMI enter RICH's room. Lionel exits.

***Hospital Room.***

RICH. [to Chris:] You're fired!

CHRIS. I've heard that one before.

RICH. I thought you were going to get me some brie, not call everyone in Chicago.

CAMMI. [To Chris] Could you call Jessy for me? Let him know where I am?

RICH. No!

CAMMI. Do you have his home number?

RICH. No!

CHRIS. No.

CAMMI. All right. Yes... here. [Cammi fumbles to pull out a card and scribbles Jessy's number.] And when you talk to him... Tell him...

CHRIS. Yes?

CAMMI. Just tell him that I need to see him as soon as possible. Say that I *need* him very much. I'll be at the loft, later.

CHRIS. Cheers. [Chris exists.]

RICH. I told him not to call you.

CAMMI. He's your family and he loves you. That's what family's who love each other are supposed to do, you know. Do what's best for you, even if it's against your wishes.

RICH. He's fired, of course.

CAMMI. I don't think that you would fire your own brother. Or your nephew?  
You don't seem to make anything stick, do you? Not even a suicide.

RICH. I think you should leave, Cammi. Really, I do.

CAMMI. I don't want to.

RICH. There is nothing to say. You can't help me - change me or make me see the error of the ways that I choose to exist in an inconsequential existence.

CAMMI. You're *still* on that one? Inconsequential. That's pretty rough. I think you just don't know how to be happy. I can make you happy, if you let me. No. I can *help* you to be happy.

RICH. Happy. I am constantly analyzing, constantly in conflict, continually turning over the problems and issues that I deal with every minute of every day.

[LIONEL enters]

CAMMI. Do you know that you are totally ruining my wedding plans?

LIONEL. Did I hear someone say wedding plans? Where's the service going to be held? Forrest Lawn? Sorry for butting in. But if you two really do get married, I'll give you my lover's card. Tobias Sneed, wedding coordinator extroidinaire.

RICH. This is my nurse. Lionel. He's rude.

LIONEL. You come in here full of pills the second time in as many years, let me change your shit-pans and piss-pans and throw up on me and you have the nerve to call *me* rude?

Nice to meet you. You must be Cammi. The therapist is gonna love to meet you.

CAMMI. Nice to meet you too. Uh, thank you for keeping Rich alive, I guess.

LIONEL. I should thank *you*. Rich and I go way back. When he checks in he gets his stomach pumped and I get philosophy lectures. Always philosophy!

Now, don't mind me. I'm just going to do my checks. 'Scuse me.

CAMMI. Oops. Sorry.

LIONEL. No problem. I'm not here...quiet as a mouse. Go on with your bad selves.

CAMMI. Remember how you talked metaphorically about seeing a lady who seemed happy, even though she was homeless, and *female*? Well, even if you believe that bullshit about her life being meaningless, at least the woman is having a few smiles in her lifetime. That makes it worthwhile. Life, without meaning, I mean. A few laughs is a privilege. Some people have none.

LIONEL. [to himself]She's good!

RICH. You've taken me closer to an understanding of what you say, more than I've ever been able to grasp before.

CAMMI. So, maybe I can help you push the pain away then. I'm the funniest, happiest person I know! It rubs off, you see. You said you needed me.

RICH. You don't need to be with a man who doesn't laugh.

CAMMI. What about those drugs you take to make you happy. Don't they make you laugh at all?

LIONEL. If you knew how much 3rd generation Prozac cost, *you* wouldn't be laughin' either.

CAMMI. I don't want to give up.

RICH. This is not your decision.

CAMMI. Think of someone other than yourself... your pain... Your sister ran from her life--I think even my brother did too. They left us to deal--it's selfish.

RICH. I want you to leave for your own welfare. That is not selfish. I'm not good for you or your needs. I'm not someone whom *anyone* can count on and you need someone to count on. Please don't see anymore in me than there is.

CAMMI. You want me to leave. You want me to just walk out of this room and forget about you. Well I'm not going to do that. That would be too easy for you, buster. I know your game now, you see. It would be so easy for you to know that I'm out there in the world getting over you and then you wouldn't feel accountable anymore. You'd like that, wouldn't you? Taurus.

RICH. Gemini.

LIONEL. Capricorn.  
[pause]

CAMMI. Why didn't you tell me Chris was your nephew or your brother?

RICH. I didn't think it was significant.

CAMMI. It's very significant. He's family. That's all we have in life, you know, *family*.  
What is significant to you? Your precious antiques?

RICH. They validate my theories. Consider my many religious artifacts. Mankind takes precious Earthly materials to create elaborate symbols for and of his faith. They worship the material itself and even their own handiwork at creating it. And then, they feel a sense of accomplishment and purpose in the creation. But it is his worship of the objects that he has created that validates his existence. Man, the creator, is like the great creator, they reason.

But in reality, in the end, all of us wont last much longer than another--only the things that we have made with our hands.

CAMMI. Bullshit!

You are shutting yourself off. So you don't feel. I know this one. I know this one...

I've been doing it too. Only I didn't have antiques, I had lovers, and men and wild nights and they were no where close to who I really am than your antique bullshit. It's a way of deafening the screams of pain in your head and the horror of what comes to you in life...

We are very much alike, Rich.

Except now, I want to, leave the screams in my head behind. I can't stop the pain, but I can stop covering it up. Loving you has made me soften the hurt, you know? I've lost my baby brother and I sill want to live! I am living, and I'm not going to punish myself anymore for wanting to!

I don't know what happened to you, Rich, but you have survived and your sister didn't. You're alive. Be mad, be hurt, be anything but live!

I love you. Please let me in...

Rich, do you know if you kill yourself your brother would be out of a job? Did you ever think of that? As an *employer*, you should really look at the wisdom of staying alive.

LIONEL. I love her! She's so sassy!

RICH. You don't have to bring up Christopher because he knows of my predisposition's, my problems. He will do well if anything ever happens to me. Although I am sure that he genuinely cares for me, your being here is evidence, I have told him time and time again that I may not be around very much in the future. He will get my business, of course.

CAMMI. That's fair. He forfeits having someone who loves him in his life but he gets to own his own business.

RICH. That business is everything that is good about me. My only mark on our planet. The business is the only thing I ever truly loved.

Oh dear.

CAMMI. Oh dear...

LIONEL. Oh dear.

RICH. I have only thought of myself of having a small void in the heart department, but I never considered that I might have been endowed with cruelty. I'm truly sorry. I really do...

CAMMI. What?! Love me?

RICH. That's not what I was going to say.

CAMMI. Lovely. I don't get it. I really don't Rich. You have everything. A business that you like, looks, money, and even family that looks after you. That is what everyone aspires to and you have it. Why can't you enjoy it? I would.

I wouldn't screw with it.

RICH. Well then stop screwing with it now.

CAMMI. I'm not screwing with it! You're the one whose wrecking your life.

RICH. I don't mean my life. I mean *your* life. You have all those things that you say that I am 'wrecking' in my life. [pause]

You have been the most precious gift that fate has cast in my path and I can only feel regret for not being able to cherish you as I know you should be cherished - loved.

CAMMI. I want someone else in my life, *besides* me. I want the husband. The lover. The love of my life. I want to share everything that I have. I want someone to be proud of me and someone I can be proud of.

[pause]

I know I have a lot to be thankful for. I appreciate what I've accomplished. I just fell in love with you, that's all. I *love* someone. Success story. I'm not a cold fish anymore. Do you know how many men I had to go through to thaw?

LIONEL. I bet I got *you* beat. I was the original Ice Princess before Tobias came into my life and melted my heart. Oh... and what a flame thrower!

CAMMI. You and I are going to be friends aren't we?

RICH. Ignore him. He's like a hornet. If you play with it, it stings.

CAMMI. Give *yourself* a chance. Give yourself and our relationship some kind of hope here. A maybe.

LIONEL. You, know. A man who collects things and wants to “leave his mark” doesn’t clinically believe that his life is totally unimportant. Maybe there’s hope for him yet. You might be good for a nut like him.

CAMMI. I just have a hope. I have some hope.

LIONEL. I do too.

RICH. You’re afraid of being alone. Why do you need someone else to validate yourself? It seems to me that you already have very good companionship. Someone more long lasting than a lover/husband.

CAMMI. Jessy?

LIONEL. Who’s Jessy. A dog?

CAMMI. My assistant.

RICH. Yes. I’m talking about Jessy.

CAMMI. I have some repair work with that relationship...

RICH. Cammi, darling. You possess all those things that you say that you want to acquire and yet you say that you want that mythical person called a husband. Come on. What are the odds? And what if he doesn't come along, at least for a very long time. Are you going to negate the things that you have and haven't done until you find him?

Right under your very nose you have a young man who looks up to you for guidance, and is proud of you and desires the same validation from you.

CAMMI. Well, you have Chris.

RICH. You both have taken on the responsibility of each other and need and love and trust more than I have seen two people, well, ever. ...more than I ever will. Jessy is your friend, your family, your son, and a wonderful companion.

LIONEL. He sounds like your dog.

CAMMI. I've been treating him like one too.

I understand what your saying...

LIONEL. It sounds like you’re one heck of a complete package with or without Mr. Philosophy.

RICH. I love Chris. And I hate him.  
When I see Chris, I see my past.

CAMMI. He knows this and it hurts him very much.

RICH. I have those screams that you speak about, Cammi. But they are louder and more painful than I can endure. So, we are not alike. I want you to know that. And I want you to know that Chris is a good boy and deserves all the happiness in the world as you do. It's possible for both of you. Not for me.

You will look out for him. I already know you will. That is the person you are, my dear. You take care of people. And you are good. But you cannot take care of a man who doesn't want your help, can you?

CAMMI. Rich. I have just one more reason for you to live....

LIONEL.[Lionel leans over to listen][Lionel screams in surprise!]

**Lights Out.**  
***Lionel and Rich exit.***  
***Cammi moves to Up Stage Center.***  
**Light go On Stage Center.**  
***Jessy enters.***  
***Loft:***

JESSY. What did you do to him?!

CAMMI. Nothing. He couldn't cope. He's not like us.

JESSY. Flat chested?

CAMMI. No. See, we *love* ourselves... and we live our lives... *We laugh.*

JESSY. What are you talking about? I came home today and got this mysterious message on my voice-mail from Chris to meet you here and that Rich is in the hospital. I call the hospital and some nurse, named Lionel, tells me Rich tried to kill himself with drugs and then invites me over for dinner with his lover and some blind date that he thinks would be perfect for me.

CAMMI. I guess I did tell him a little bit about you when I was at the hospital. I should have told him that I was fixing you up with someone myself.

JESSY. Did Rich try to do drugs because of that night at the bar?

CAMMI. Just listen. This is all floating in my head and...

**[THE BUZZER RINGS. Jessy answers]**

JESSY. Hello?!

CHRIS. **[speaker]** It's Chris.

**[Jessy buzzes him in.]**

JESSY. I don't understand what you're saying and why you're saying it. Is this an apology? I was asking you about Rich.

CAMMI. I'm telling you about Rich and I'm apologizing. I'm explaining something too.  
I am sorry for what I said. I am so sorry. I love you so much and I said those things because, well, because I was frustrated with Rich and I was trying to hang on to something. I guess I was taking it out on you. I mean - I fell in love! Can you believe that?

JESSY. So, what's wrong with Rich?!

**[Chris knocks at the door. Cammi answers.]**

CHRIS. Hi.

JESSY. Can I get you anything? I'll make some coffee. I know how to now.

CHRIS. Thank you.

CAMMI. I'll get it. I think I've got some Starbucks coffee that mysteriously appeared from somewhere.**[Exit Cammi.]**

JESSY. So, how are you doing?

CHRIS. Okay.

I've seen this before. He either makes it or he doesn't. I've just resigned myself to the possibility that he might succeed one day.

JESSY. What is going on?! Camm hasn't told me anything.

CHRIS. Oh.

Rich is sick. Very sick. He's also self destructive. I tried to explain to you once, but...

I didn't think that they would get this far...

JESSY. You mean Camm and Rich?

CHRIS. Rich just can't seem to hang on all the time...

JESSY. Wait a minute. Rich really tried to commit suicide?... And do I know why?...

CHRIS. My uncle, well, he's had a hard life. And he has bad memories... Well, he's not happy in his heart and he wants to die. As long as I've known him, I think he's always wanted to die.

JESSY. Oh...

How can *you* stay... how can you be around your *uncle* and, you know, watch this happen.?

CHRIS. Because I know how he feels. I *used* to know. My mother is his sister and, well, we had similar childhood's, my uncle and I. It's a battle inside your head to be happy after things happen to you.

JESSY. ....and you're happy?

CHRIS. Yes. I am happy.

I really tried to help him and then, you two walked into the shop. Things started to change in Rich. I saw life in his eyes that wanted to dance. Cammi was the best thing for him I've ever wished for. If there was anyone that could pull him into some kind of life-boat, it was her, I thought.

I, I feel a little responsible, in a way. I never wanted her to get hurt and I didn't know what to say.

JESSY. Oh, no. It's not your fault. She'll be okay. I'll take care of her.

But that's sweet of you to think like that.

[laughs] Funny. You know, how we are *their'* assistants. Get it?....

CHRIS. [laughs] Yeah...

JESSY. Chris, I know that this is a weird thing to ask... at this time...

CHRIS. Yes...

JESSY. But... Geez! This is probably the worst time...

CHRIS. No, go ahead...

**[Enters Cammi.]**

CAMMI. Here we are! Coffee with cream, sugar equal and chocolate!. [brings on fine china tray with everything]

JESSY. Wow. The classy service too.

CAMMI. Here you are. Here you are.

I'm not going to be drinking too much but it smells good with lots of chocolate!...

JESSY. Are you all right?

CAMMI. Never been better! Never been *worse*, but I've never been better.

CHRIS. My family curse seems to reach out and grab the nicest people.

CAMMI. Look. I fell in love with Rich. That's not such a horrible thing to have happen in the scheme of the world. I rolled the dice. The bad part is that Rich doesn't play the game. You don't play, you don't have a chance to win. He has to decide to live for himself, first. Like we all do.

And you know what? Up to this point in my life, the whole experience of looking for the right man to come may end up just that. Just looking and not finding.

JESSY. Don't say that.

CAMMI. No. No. It's all right. Maybe I made some choices in my life and they didn't exactly enhance the possibilities or chances of finding a husband. But hey! And besides, I have you, Jessy. You're my family! You really are. I'm so thankful for that. If Mr. Right shows up, hopefully out of that hospital bed, then I have an even bigger family.

A family is who you make it. Don't you think?

JESSY. I think you're losing it.

CAMMI. I'm getting it back, Jessy. My life. *My* life. And your life. Our life. I've been in this super hyper mourning for my little brother and it's affected me and you and .... I'm sorry, first of all. I've been hurting myself, and you...

I've just been crazy!

Crazy at work. Working too hard and playing too hard and never once stopping to feel how I feel, you know? I need to stop and decide how I feel, about things. About Marks death. I think I'm angry, you know? I think I'm damn angry!

I'm mad at him for leaving us, Jessy. I'm mad...

JESSY. I love you.

Yeah. I still loved him though.

CAMMI. Me too.

But the biggest decision I've made concerns the both of you and I really need your support...as my family...the *both* off you.

JESSY. What are you talking about?

CAMMI. Jessy, part of going on with *my* life means making you my full partner.

JESSY. No!

CAMMI. Yes!

JESSY. You're not thinking straight. You're not okay. Right?  
Really?

CAMMI. Yes, really! I mean, you're practically my partner now. You run this business just as good as I can, and with the exception of me having the better camera eye, we are completely equal. You see, I'm not a controller.

JESSY. I want it writing.

CAMMI. I'm going to need to take some time off sometime this next year and relax and enjoy some time... So, you can handle that, okay?

JESSY. Sure.

CAMMI. Maybe we'll get that assistant that you suggested.

And, in the meantime, before my 'vacation', maybe you can find time for yourself. Maybe you'll find the time and the 'offensive' to ask Chris out.

[Jessy, who is taking a sip of coffee, blows it out in surprise]

And Chris, I need your help by asking you to accept when Jessy asks you out. You may not know it yet, but you are part of my family and it would be nice to have you around a little bit more. We are going to have to get to know one another. And Jessy is a wonderful young... a wonderful man who would be a great asset to your already acquired happiness.

JESSY. This is embarrassing.

CHRIS. Is it as embarrassing as realizing that you thought I invited you over for coffee last night. And that's all?

JESSY. Coffee?

CHRIS. Coffee.

JESSY. I love coffee.

CAMMI. So, Chris, can you do this one little thing for me?

CHRIS. You *are* controlling.

CAMMI. Got a problem with that?

CHRIS. I like it!

CAMMI. One more thing. I really need two friends and I want both of you to fill the positions because I am scared. I'm more scared than I have been in my whole life.

CHRIS. The hospital will watch Rich 24 hours a day.

CAMMI. I know. I'll be there too. This has something to do with Rich, but in the past few weeks I've had to make a decision. I'm going to be thirty nine years old. I have come to the conclusion that my family is who I decide it is and I have my health and happiness to look out for. Especially now. You both are my family, right? This shouldn't have happened, but...

[Cammi reaches over to Jessy and takes his hand and put his hand on her stomach.]

[a look of realization comes over Jessy's face.]

CAMMI.[nods] I just don't want to be alone...

[Jessy reaches out to Chris and the three embrace]

JESSY. You're not alone.

A look of realization comes over Chris' face.

**Lights fade.**

**SLIDES of CAMMI, her BABY, JESSY, CHRIS,  
LIONEL and SERENA. Different combinations.**

**House Lights on.**

**?: Cammi has a baby in her arms and all three begin to pose for the camera on Stage center and the flash begins as the three adults pose with the baby. It is obvious that Chris and Jessy are an item.**

**[Add Nurse Lionel then other Part Actor and then Rich.**

**Music comes up, lights fade on and then off.]**

**House Lights On.**