

THE HILL
(a drama in two acts.)

by

John Shea

CHARACTERS

PETER McKENZIE- late-thirties.

HELEN McKENZIE- Peter's wife. Also late-thirties.

BRIAN McKENZIE- their son. Nineteen.

LINDA McKENZIE- Their daughter. Seventeen.

JERRY- late-thirties.

GUSSIE- JERRY'S wife, late-thirties.

BUSTER- late forties.

RITA - BUSTER's wife, late-forties.

GUY- early-forties.

CHICKY- GUY's wife, early-forties.

KID- young teen.

Early September, 1975, Bunker Hill, Boston.

PROLOGUE

(Light comes up on RITA, suspended above the stage washing a second story window. She has her back to the audience as she washes, the top sash pulled down over her lap, her legs on the inside. In her right hand, a wet cloth to wash, in her left, a dry cloth. RITA washes silently, as light rises slowly on stage, to the strains of Captain and Tenille's, "Love Will Keep Us Together." BUSTER enters the bar, and takes his place behind it. CHICKY enters and sits on her stoop, she is doing a crossword puzzle. HELEN enters her kitchen, sits at the table and begins writing a shopping list. JERRY and GUY enter the bar together, BUSTER gives them a beer. GUSSIE enters and sits on her stoop, she is shuffling cards, looking over CHICKY'S shoulder, helping her with the puzzle, as they glance up at RITA, shaking their heads and smirking. LINDA enters the kitchen, she and HELEN smile at each other. LINDA gets an apple and eats. PETER enters the bar, BUSTER gives him a beer. BRIAN enters the bar. There is a casual air as the song continues playing. One by one everyone exits, as the song ends, leaving the stage empty. Lights go down. In the darkness, images are projected onto the back wall of the stage, images of busing protests, prayer marches, politicians giving speeches, scenes of Boston in turmoil, 1975. As the projections continue, and the scenes of violence escalate; a black man beaten, a police car overturned, there is a loud explosion and blinding flash, the sound of breaking glass, as the projected images disappear. The red glow of a fire lights the stage, as BRIAN runs on. He stops and yells into the night, like Paul Revere warning the Colonists of the arrival of the British soldiers.)

BRIAN

The niggers are comin'.

The niggers are comin'.

(BRIAN laughs, running off as stage goes black.)

ACT ONE

	<p><i>(Light comes up on bar. JERRY sits at the bar, talking to GUY and BUSTER the bartender. PETER sits by himself at the far end. It is early on a Friday night, the end of the work week. JERRY and GUY are dressed in overalls. Near them on separate barstools are their hard hats, tool belts. There is an air of ease, jocularly, though the tone is gruff, somewhat harsh.)</i></p> <p>JERRY Fuckin' judge should be strung up by his balls, doin' this to us.</p> <p>GUY See what they did on the hill last night?</p> <p>JERRY What, the car? Can</p>		
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	<p>JERRY (<i>cont.</i>) you blame them?</p> <p>BUSTER Nice way to start he weekend, bring the cops up here.</p> <p>JERRY Like a warnin' shot, tellin' the niggers we don't want them.</p> <p>BUSTER Can't change the law, Jerry.</p> <p>JERRY When did you become a lawyer?</p> <p>BUSTER All I know is, it's gonna happen and there's nothin' we can do about it.</p> <p>JERRY All I know is, I'm not sendin' my kids to school Monday.</p> <p>GUY Me neither. Probly get shot in the halls.</p> <p>BUSTER That's fine for Monday, hell, maybe even a week...</p> <p>JERRY Senior year. What the hell are they supposed to</p>		
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	<p>JERRY (<i>cont.</i>) remember from this?</p> <p>GUY Imagine that prom?</p> <p>JERRY No way I'm lettin' my Vicky be part of that.</p> <p>BUSTER What are you gonna do, keep them out the whole year?</p> <p>JERRY No, of course not, but maybe if we keep them out long enough, they'll see we mean business, send everyone back to the schools they belong in.</p> <p>BUSTER Accordin' to the courts, they belong where ever the city wants to put them.</p> <p>JERRY What the fuck, Buster?</p> <p>BUSTER What?</p> <p>JERRY What are you, on their side?</p>		
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	<p>BUSTER No, I'm just sayin', there's not a lot we can do. Just let what's gonna happen, happen.</p> <p>JERRY What the fuck are you talkin' about, let it happen? What, because your kids don't go there no more, it doesn't matter about the rest of us?</p> <p>BUSTER That's not what I'm sayin'.</p> <p>JERRY Then what are you sayin'?</p> <p>BUSTER I'm just sayin' that if we wait and see, and stop fightin' it so hard, maybe things won't be as bad as we think they're gonna be.</p> <p>JERRY Not gonna be that bad?</p> <p><i>(BRIAN enters. He looks at PETER, laughs. PETER stands as if ready to defend himself. BRIAN simply and continues to where</i></p>		
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	<p><i>the men are seated.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN What's goin' on?</p> <p>JERRY Buster here says we should stop fightin' and just let the niggers in.</p> <p>BRIAN What are you, fuckin' crazy? If even one gets in, this neighborhood is done.</p> <p>GUY Place would fall apart.</p> <p>JERRY Next thing you know, there'd be drugs in the park, whores on the corner.</p> <p>GUY Wouldn't be safe to walk the goddamned streets.</p> <p>BUSTER Like it's so safe now?</p> <p>BRIAN</p> <p><i>(becoming indignant.)</i></p> <p>If you feel that way, Buster, why don't you just move over</p>		
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	<p>BRIAN (<i>cont.</i>) the other side of the hill with them.</p> <p>BUSTER That's not what I mean, and you know it.</p> <p>GUY Come on, everyone, huh?</p> <p>BRIAN Better be careful, talkin' like that...</p> <p>JERRY Hey, hey, hey, Brian...</p> <p><i>(JERRY whispers in BRIAN'S ear, as BUSTER gets everyone another beer.)</i></p> <p>GUY What the fuck are <i>we</i> fightin' for? What we gotta do, is concentrate on what we're gonna do next.</p> <p>BRIAN I know what I'm gonna do.</p> <p>JERRY This is our neighborhood and we're gonna keep it the way it's always been.</p> <p><i>(there is a pause.</i></p>		
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	<p><i>JERRY continues, quietly, as he empties his pint.)</i></p> <p>No matter how many cars have to be blown up.</p> <p><i>(light fades on bar.)</i></p>	<p><i>(Light rises on the nearly identical front steps of very similar, less than modest homes. A landscape of short stairways, narrow stoops, and aluminum, screen doors. GUSSIE is on her front steps, holding court as it were for RITA and CHICKY who stand a step or two below her. These women range from mid-thirties through late-forties, though their distinctive style and manner never vary. A floral housecoat, kerchief, comfortable, flat shoes and lack of make-up, combined with an abrupt and direct manner, make them appear to be made from the same mould. The ladies are laughing, enjoying the break from cooking and housework. The early evening sun</i></p>	
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		<p><i>casts a soft, orange glow.)</i></p> <p>CHICKY Everyday it's the same damned thing, Ma do this, Ma do that, wash my shirt, sew a button. Like they're still friggin' babies.</p> <p>RITA Feels like it's never gonna end.</p> <p>GUSSIE Look who's talkin', yours have all moved out.</p> <p>CHICKY When mine leave...</p> <p>GUSSIE <i>If</i> they leave.</p> <p>CHICKY You won't catch me hangin' around here.</p> <p>RITA Where you gonna go?</p> <p>CHICKY Somewhere I can breathe.</p> <p>GUSSIE Speakin' of movin', I talked to Marilyn today.</p>	
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		<p>CHICKY How's she doin'?</p> <p>GUSSIE To hear her tell it, she's doin' great.</p> <p>RITA She like it over there?</p> <p>GUSSIE What's to like? I mean, she <i>says</i> she likes it, but mark my words, she'd come back here in a second, if she had the chance, 'specially after what happened to her Timmy.</p> <p>CHICKY Why, what happened?</p> <p>GUSSIE Got arrested.</p> <p>RITA For what now?</p> <p>GUSSIE Robbin' a canteen truck.</p> <p>CHICKY What the hell did he do that for?</p> <p>GUSSIE Why else?</p> <p>RITA I'm glad mine never</p>	
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		<p>RITA (<i>cont.</i>) got into the drugs.</p> <p>GUSSIE It's all drugs over there. And she had the nerve to tell me it was a mistake, that it wasn't her Timmy...</p> <p>CHICKY She always acted like her kids were saints.</p> <p>GUSSIE What else could she say? With his record he'll probly go away again.</p> <p>RITA Maybe it wasn't him.</p> <p>GUSSIE Oh Rita, please, they picked him up holdin' the cash box, plus, he had 12 Baby Ruths and 36 packs of Planter's stuffed in his shorts...</p> <p><i>(GUSSIE and CHICKY laugh, GUSSIE continues.)</i></p> <p>Throwin' his life away for forty-six dollars.</p> <p>RITA What are you gonna</p>	
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		<p>RITA (<i>cont.</i>) do?</p> <p>CHICKY What can you do?</p> <p><i>(HELEN enters, carrying a bag of groceries. GUSSIE, puffing up her chest like a bird preparing for battle, speaks to her.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE So hot today Helen. I don't know how do you do it.</p> <p>HELEN Had to get a few things for supper, nothin' in the house.</p> <p>RITA I haven't even started dinner yet.</p> <p>GUSSIE Why bother? Nobody's ever home to eat, and when they are, they complain.</p> <p>HELEN Can't win for losin'. Still, I better get started. Somebody will be hungry.</p> <p>RITA Come join us later, Helen.</p>	
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		<p>HELEN Maybe. We'll see.</p> <p><i>(the ladies watch as HELEN enters one of the doors, as light rises on the McKenzie kitchen. As the scene progresses, HELEN is putting away groceries, straightening the kitchen, preparing dinner.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE She looks rough.</p> <p>RITA What with Peter out of work, can't be easy.</p> <p>CHICKY If Peter doesn't get a job soon, they'll end up with Marilyn and Jimbo in the projects.</p> <p>RITA Can you imagine?</p> <p>GUSSIE Whole town will be like the projects when the blacks get here.</p> <p>RITA They might get into the schools but they'll never get into the neighborhood.</p>	
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		<p>CHICKY Still, Helen better be careful, might end up livin' over the other side of the hill with <i>them</i>.</p> <p>RITA What's she supposed to do, there are no jobs.</p> <p>GUSSIE All I can say is I'm glad <i>Jerry</i> didn't take that job with the refinery.</p> <p><i>(LINDA enters, walking by the group.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE How's the baby Linda</p> <p>LINDA She's fine.</p> <p>CHICKY Who's watchin' her?</p> <p>LINDA I got a sitter.</p> <p>GUSSIE Wish I was able to afford a sitter.</p> <p>LINDA Guess some of us are lucky.</p> <p>RITA Haven't seen Norm</p>	
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		<p>RITA (<i>cont.</i>) around lately.</p> <p>LINDA He's workin'.</p> <p>RITA Lucky him.</p> <p>CHICKY Maybe you two can get married now.</p> <p>LINDA I have no intention of marryin' anyone.</p> <p>GUSSIE You have to think about that baby.</p> <p>LINDA Were you married when you gave birth?</p> <p>GUSSIE Of course I was.</p> <p>LINDA Where's your husband?</p> <p>GUSSIE Workin'.</p> <p>LINDA Funny work, I just saw him up the bar.</p> <p>GUSSIE <i>(coming down a step.)</i> You little bitch.</p>	
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		<p>CHICKY Be careful there Missy, I could say a few things about your father.</p> <p><i>(LINDA gives them the finger and continues on her way. She exits. CHICKY continues.)</i></p> <p>Slut.</p> <p>GUSSIE Takes after her mother.</p> <p>CHICKY How Helen ever got someone like Peter away from Debbie Curley, I'll never know.</p> <p>RITA Oh, he was handsome then, wasn't he?</p> <p>GUSSIE What I wouldn't have done for just one night in the back seat with him.</p> <p>CHICKY And while we were all fightin' over him, Helen walked</p>	<p><i>(light comes up on LINDA, nervously smoking a cigarette, eyeing the kitchen from far down.)</i></p>
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	<p><i>(Light rises on bar. PETER calls BUSTER over.)</i></p> <p>PETER Hey Buster, any chance?</p> <p>BUSTER Sorry Peter, tab's too high.</p> <p>PETER Thanks anyway.</p>	<p>CHICKY <i>(cont.)</i> right in and took him.</p> <p>GUSSIE She always thought she was better than us.</p> <p>CHICKY Raisin' those kids to think so too. If my daughter ever acted like that...</p> <p>RITA Poor Peter.</p> <p>GUSSIE Only one way a woman like that gets a man like Peter.</p> <p>CHICKY She never knew how to make him happy.</p> <p>GUSSIE If I was her, I'd</p>	
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	<p><i>(BUSTER walks back over to JERRY and GUY.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER Fucker got laid off.</p> <p>JERRY From the A&P?</p> <p>GUY He just got that job.</p> <p>BUSTER Happenin' everywhere. Last one hired.</p>	<p>GUSSIE <i>(cont.)</i> certainly know how to make him happy.</p> <p>RITA Gonna have to go to confession thinkin' like that.</p> <p>CHICKY All you have to do is look at him to know how miserable he is.</p> <p>GUSSIE Helen ruined him.</p> <p>CHICKY Everyone knows she trapped him.</p> <p>RITA At least he did the right thing and married her.</p>	
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	<p>JERRY Soon as they hire them, they're lettin' them go.</p> <p>GUY Jesus, poor bastard has no fuckin' luck.</p> <p><i>(light fades on bar.)</i></p>	<p>CHICKY Helen wasn't gonna have it any other way.</p> <p>GUSSIE And that Linda...</p> <p>CHICKY Thinks she's so smart.</p> <p>GUSSIE You mark my words, she'll be havin' another baby soon enough.</p>	<p><i>(LINDA puts out her cigarette, and enters the kitchen.)</i></p> <p>HELEN Where's Maura?</p> <p>LINDA Dotty's watchin' her.</p> <p>HELEN I don't know if I like her over there so much, Linda.</p>
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		<p>RITA Gonna have to learn the hard way.</p> <p>GUSSIE She better marry Norm quick, before she ends up on welfare.</p> <p><i>(light fades on stoops.)</i></p>	<p>LINDA Ma, please. Dotty's a good friend, she helps me out.</p> <p>HELEN I saw Mary-Ellen McPeherson at the grocery store, said to say, "Hi."</p> <p><i>(HELEN continues preparing dinner as she speaks.)</i></p> <p>She's workin' over there now, cashier.</p> <p><i>(LINDA stands, not wanting to listen to a litany about the virtues of Mary- Ellen, but can find no ready escape.)</i></p> <p>LINDA Can you iron a blouse for me?</p> <p>HELEN I always liked Mary- Ellen, how come you never see her</p>
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			<p>HELEN (<i>cont.</i>) anymore?</p> <p>LINDA I don't know, just busy.</p> <p>HELEN You two used to be so close.</p> <p>LINDA We were kids, Ma.</p> <p>HELEN Now you just hang around with that Dotty.</p> <p>LINDA What's the matter with Dotty?</p> <p>HELEN Nothin', I like Dotty, but maybe you could call Mary- Ellen once in a while, go out some night...</p> <p>LINDA Ma please, don't start that again.</p> <p>HELEN I'm just sayin' ...</p> <p><i>(BRIAN comes bounding into the kitchen. He is nineteen and tall, gangly. His limbs seem to be everywhere as he looks through the</i></p>
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		<p><i>cabinets, slamming doors.)</i></p> <p>HELEN Where have you been all day?</p> <p>BRIAN I'm starvin'.</p> <p>HELEN You better stay off the hill.</p> <p>BRIAN I can handle what's gonna happen.</p> <p>HELEN Nothin's gonna happen, if you don't make it happen.</p> <p>BRIAN Fuckin' niggers.</p> <p>HELEN Like a war zone out there. Be careful you don't get arrested.</p> <p>BRIAN I'm not gonna get arrested, 'cause I'm not gonna get caught. Supper ready?</p> <p>HELEN Soon. Where the hell is your father?</p> <p>BRIAN One guess.</p>
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		<p><i>(BRIAN stands over HELEN, looking over her shoulder.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN What're you makin'?</p> <p>HELEN Friday night, what do you think?</p> <p>LINDA Ma, now my clothes are gonna stink. I'm goin' out tonight.</p> <p>HELEN Where you goin'? You should be stayin' home with that baby, not runnin' around all over town.</p> <p>LINDA I'm gonna be eighteen soon.</p> <p>HELEN So what, that means you have no responsibility?</p> <p>LINDA No, it means I make my own decisions.</p> <p>HELEN And look where your decisions got you so far.</p> <p>LINDA What do you have that's so great?</p>
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			<p>BRIAN Don't talk to her like that.</p> <p>LINDA What the fuck do you care?</p> <p>HELEN You know, Linda, I don't like this mouth on you lately. I hope you don't talk like that in front of Maura.</p> <p>LINDA I don't. Besides, she's just a baby.</p> <p>BRIAN You should hear her in the streets, talks like a fuckin' sailor.</p> <p>LINDA Shut up Brian.</p> <p>HELEN I didn't bring you up like this. I don't know where you kids get it.</p> <p>LINDA Don't be startin' on me...</p> <p><i>(PETER enters. Everyone falls silent, looking down, trying to appear busy. PETER speaks, though not drunk, per se, his speech is</i></p>
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			<p><i>slow, heavy.)</i></p> <p>PETER What?</p> <p>HELEN What?</p> <p>PETER Everyone stopped talkin'. What did I do now?</p> <p>HELEN Where have you been?</p> <p>PETER Out.</p> <p>HELEN Out? You better get used to stayin' home. I gotta go down welfare Monday, apply for food stamps.</p> <p>PETER What do you mean? I told you I don't want to apply for nothin'. We don't need it.</p> <p>HELEN We do need it.</p> <p>PETER We don't. The refinery's supposed to re-open...</p> <p>HELEN They've been sayin' that for a year now.</p>
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			<p>PETER We just have to cut back.</p> <p>HELEN I can't cut back anymore than I already have. There's nothin' left. Lucky it's still summer, I don't know what we're gonna do this winter, oil keeps goin' up and up.</p> <p>PETER I'm sorry, okay, I can't do anything about that.</p> <p>HELEN I have to take what we can get.</p> <p><i>(PETER advances on HELEN, who doesn't look at him. He grabs her by the arm, turning her to face him.)</i></p> <p>PETER I'm not a beggar.</p> <p>BRIAN Leave her alone.</p> <p>PETER You shut your mouth.</p> <p>BRIAN Make me.</p>
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			<p>PETER Don't fuckin' start with me, Brian.</p> <p>BRIAN What are you gonna do about it?</p> <p><i>(BRIAN and PETER start moving slowly towards each other. LINDA jumps up.)</i></p> <p>LINDA Stop it. Stop it. I hate this, I'm sick of it.</p> <p>HELEN Stop it, both of you.</p> <p>PETER <i>(to BRIAN.)</i> Why don't you do somethin' to help out around here...</p> <p>BRIAN Always startin' on her, like it's her fault.</p> <p>PETER Shut up Brian.</p> <p>BRIAN Always blamin' everyone else...</p> <p>HELEN That's enough, Brian. Your father's tryin'...</p>
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			<p>BRIAN Bullshit. He sits up The Last Call all day, waitin' for someone to buy him a drink, like a fuckin' loser. I'm embarrassed every time I go in there.</p> <p>PETER <i>(his anger growing.)</i> You got a lot of fuckin' mouth.</p> <p>BRIAN Why don't you be a man and do somethin' so she wouldn't have to go down welfare?</p> <p><i>(PETER rushes BRIAN, pushing him against a wall. LINDA screams, HELEN runs to them, pulling at PETER'S arm, to keep him from punching BRIAN.)</i></p> <p>PETER You son of a bitch...</p> <p>HELEN Peter, stop it...you'll hurt him...</p> <p>PETER Think it's fuckin' easy...</p>
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			<p>BRIAN Go ahead, big fuckin' man...</p> <p>HELEN Peter, please...</p> <p><i>(PETER pushes with his other arm, sending HELEN crashing into the table. Sudden silence as everyone realizes what has happened. PETER lets BRIAN go. BRIAN straightens his shoulders, standing tall. LINDA is mumbling, "I hate it here, I fucking hate it here...")</i></p> <p>PETER Helen, I'm sorry. I didn't...I just...</p> <p><i>(PETER crosses to HELEN, who is now seated at the table, visibly shaken.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN That's all your good for, you drunk.</p> <p><i>(BRIAN leaves angrily, knocking a chair over as he goes. LINDA turns to HELEN.)</i></p> <p>LINDA And you wonder</p>
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			<p>LINDA (<i>cont.</i>) why I leave Maura at Dotty's all the time.</p> <p>PETER Helen...</p> <p>LINDA You think I want her brought up with this?</p> <p><i>(LINDA exits. PETER tries to comfort HELEN. She pushes him away.)</i></p> <p>PETER Helen, please...</p> <p>HELEN <i>(exiting.)</i></p> <p>Shh, shh, shh...</p> <p><i>(PETER looks at her. He wants to go after her, but knows there is nothing left to say. PETER rights the chair again and begins to exit. He stops, turns to one of the cabinets and takes a tea cup from the shelf. He pulls out some bills, puts some cash in his pocket and returns the remainder to the teacup. He exits as light slowly fades on kitchen.)</i></p>
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		<p><i>(Light comes up on stoops. It is Saturday afternoon. Bright sunshine causes shadows to fall across the stage. GUSSIE and CHICKY are on GUSSIE'S stoop, CHICKY a step or two below GUSSIE. They are chatting quietly, laughing derisively, having a good time. RITA'S screen door opens, RITA steps out onto her stoop. She smiles at them and begins sweeping her stairs, the street in front of her house. GUSSIE and CHICKY watch silently exchanging amused, but exasperated glances. RITA, realizing she is being scrutinized, turns to them.)</i></p> <p>RITA House doesn't clean itself, that's what Buster says.</p> <p>CHICKY That's what they all say.</p> <p>GUSSIE This way, they always know where we are, like</p>	
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		<p>GUSSIE (<i>cont.</i>) housework will keep us out of trouble.</p> <p>RITA Have to keep up our end, can't have a messy house.</p> <p>GUSSIE Of course not, but they don't work on Saturday, why should we?</p> <p>RITA To keep the peace.</p> <p>GUSSIE If anything happened to Jerry, I'd never get married again.</p> <p>CHICKY Me neither.</p> <p>RITA What about your kids?</p> <p>CHICKY What about them?</p> <p>RITA If you weren't married, you wouldn't have them.</p> <p>CHICKY Jesus, Rita, open your eyes.</p> <p>GUSSIE Certainly don't need</p>	
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		<p>GUSSIE (<i>cont.</i>) a husband to have a baby.</p> <p>CHICKY You forget, she wasn't pregnant when she got married.</p> <p>GUSSIE Then why did she?</p> <p>RITA Think about it, what would we do without our husbands?</p> <p><i>(GUSSIE and CHICKY look at each other, laughing in disbelief.)</i></p> <p>CHICKY I know what I'd do.</p> <p>GUSSIE Me too and he'd be a hell of a lot younger than Jerry.</p> <p>RITA Gussie.</p> <p>CHICKY Oh come on, Rita. You never think what it would be like with someone other than Buster?</p> <p>RITA Never. He's my husband.</p>	
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	<p><i>(Light comes up on bar, sunshine filters in through the open door and stale cigarette smoke that never seems to dissipate.)</i></p> <p>JERRY When even the President can't keep his job you know things are bad.</p> <p>GUY At least he got to resign before they kicked his ass out on the street.</p> <p>JERRY God knows we don't get that luxury.</p>	<p>CHICKY Yeah, well I have one of those too, and I think about it all the time.</p> <p>GUSSIE Speakin' of husbands, were the hell are they?</p> <p>RITA They'll be home soon enough.</p> <p>CHICKY Every Saturday, they're out, spendin' money, not a care in the world.</p>	
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	<p>GUY Nobody's safe anymore.</p> <p>JERRY We're safe.</p> <p>JERRY Meat packer's union will protect us.</p> <p>GUY Only one safe around here is Buster.</p> <p>GUY And he doesn't have a union.</p>	<p>GUSSIE And they wonder why we can't make ends meet.</p> <p>RITA At least we're not on welfare.</p> <p>CHICKY Or in the projects.</p> <p>GUSSIE Now they're talkin' of closin' the meat packers.</p> <p>RITA Gets harder everyday.</p> <p>CHICKY Look who's talkin'. Queen of Sheba over there.</p>	
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	<p>BUSTER No matter how hard things get...</p> <p>BUSTER You jerks always find money for beer.</p> <p>JERRY I'll drink to that.</p> <p>BUSTER If there's one thing I learned in this world...</p> <p>BUSTER ...it's you gotta take care of yourself.</p> <p>GUY Long as we keep payin' our tabs.</p>	<p>RITA We have bills too.</p> <p>GUSSIE As long as Buster has that bar...</p> <p>CHICKY You're all set.</p> <p>GUSSIE On our money.</p> <p>RITA Buster earns every penny of that money.</p> <p>CHICKY Like candy from a baby.</p>	
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	<p style="text-align: center;">BUSTER</p> <p><i>(shuffling through a box of slips he keeps under the bar, BUSTER finds their respective tabs and ceremoniously hands them over.)</i></p> <p>Speaking of tabs...</p> <p><i>(BUSTER produces a small box from under the bar. He sifts through some papers and slaps one on the bar in front of JERRY.)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">JERRY</p> <p>Jesus, this month certainly flew by.</p> <p><i>(JERRY pulls out his wallet as light fades on bar.)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">GUSSIE</p> <p>More like mud in the eye.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RITA</p> <p>It's their world.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GUSSIE</p> <p>We just live in it.</p> <p><i>(light fades on stoops.)</i></p>	<p><i>(Light comes up on kitchen. HELEN is sitting at the table, just sitting. The sun</i></p>
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		<p><i>is setting, and the kitchen is dark. LINDA enters, and turns on the overhead light.)</i></p> <p>LINDA I'm goin' out.</p> <p>HELEN Where?</p> <p>LINDA I don't know. Saturday night, just out.</p> <p><i>(LINDA turns to exit.)</i></p> <p>HELEN Linda.</p> <p><i>(LINDA stops.)</i></p> <p>HELEN What's goin' on?</p> <p>LINDA Nothin'.</p> <p>HELEN Somethin's wrong and I want to know what it is.</p> <p>LINDA Nothin', everything's fine.</p> <p>HELEN Is Norm okay...is he treatin' you right, Maura?</p>
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			<p>LINDA He's fine. He's not hittin' me or nothin'.</p> <p>HELEN Then what is it? You never come home, you walk around like you're mad at everyone all the time. Never talk to me anymore.</p> <p><i>(they remain looking at each other silently. LINDA speaks first.)</i></p> <p>LINDA I'm pregnant.</p> <p>HELEN Again?</p> <p>LINDA Don't look so overjoyed.</p> <p>HELEN Just a bit of a shock.</p> <p>LINDA Things happen.</p> <p>HELEN Have you told Norm yet?</p> <p>LINDA He wants me to get rid of it.</p> <p>HELEN An abortion?</p>
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			<p>LINDA Do you know another way?</p> <p>HELEN How far along are you?</p> <p>LINDA What?</p> <p>HELEN Have you decided what you're gonna do yet?</p> <p>LINDA I'm gonna keep it.</p> <p>HELEN What about school?</p> <p>LINDA I'm not goin' back.</p> <p>HELEN You could if you didn't have another baby.</p> <p>LINDA Go to school with the blacks, get raped in the halls. How would that make you feel, pushin' a little black baby down the street, having to proudly tell everyone it's your grandchild?</p> <p>HELEN You stop that filth. I'm serious.</p>
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			<p>LINDA So am I. I'm not goin' back.</p> <p>HELEN You have no idea how hard things can get.</p> <p>LINDA I'll manage.</p> <p>HELEN Yeah, livin' on welfare. Nice life.</p> <p>LINDA Like mother like daughter.</p> <p>HELEN I just want more for you.</p> <p>LINDA What? Graduation, maybe college?</p> <p>HELEN Maybe. But you have to make a choice.</p> <p>LINDA You want me to get rid of it, don't you?</p> <p>HELEN I want you to think about what you're doin', what you're really doin'.</p> <p>LINDA I don't believe this. I am not havin' an</p>
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		<p><i>(Light comes up on stoops. There is a sense of peace, a moment of quiet and relaxation, as the orange sky slowly fades to deep purple as the sun sets.)</i></p>	<p>LINDA <i>(cont.)</i> abortion. It's a sin.</p> <p>HELEN Livin' like this is a sin.</p> <p>LINDA Then maybe you should have had the abortion.</p> <p>HELEN Maybe I should have.</p> <p>LINDA You always said God made us pay for our sins. What are you payin' for?</p> <p><i>(HELEN slaps LINDA, hard. LINDA doesn't flinch.)</i></p> <p>LINDA I won't be home tonight. I'll stay at Dotty's.</p> <p><i>(LINDA exits, as light fades on kitchen.)</i></p>
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	<p><i>(Light comes up on the bar.)</i></p> <p>JERRY They're gonna take to the streets after Mass.</p> <p>GUY No way they're gonna stop a bunch of housewives.</p> <p>JERRY Prayin' on a Sunday.</p> <p>GUY If the police do try somethin', they'd be disgraced.</p>	<p>GUSSIE March is on for tomorrow, on the hill.</p> <p>CHICKY Let the police try and stop us.</p> <p>.</p> <p>RITA Buster doesn't want me to go. Said nothin' good can come of it.</p> <p>GUSSIE Do you do everything Buster tells you to?</p> <p>RITA Makes things easier that way.</p>	
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	<p>GUY No they wouldn't. We're just people they look down on.</p> <p>JERRY I don't see the judge or the mayor openin' their kids' schools.</p> <p>GUY Like that would Ever happen.</p> <p>BUSTER You gotta look at it from their perspective...</p> <p>JERRY Fuck their perspective.</p>	<p>GUSSIE We have to stick together in this.</p> <p>CHICKY All we're gonna do is pray.</p> <p>GUSSIE If God can't help us now...</p> <p>CHICKY I don't know what we'll do.</p> <p>RITA Buster says the best thing to do, is nothin'.</p>	
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	<p>GUY Nobody gave a rat's ass about our perspective.</p> <p>JERRY Makin' us out to be bigots.</p> <p>GUY Like we're the ones who started this.</p> <p>BUSTER What are they supposed to think?</p> <p>BUSTER I mean, blowin' up our own cars on the hill. That doesn't seem to make a lot of sense to me.</p>	<p>GUSSIE Let everyone keep blamin' us for makin' trouble?</p> <p>RITA Buster thinks maybe marchin' will make things worse.</p> <p>GUSSIE Things couldn't get worse.</p> <p>CHICKY Don't forget, we didn't start this.</p> <p><i>(light fades on stoops.)</i></p>	
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	<p>JERRY You know Buster, you been talkin' a lot of this shit for a while now. Startin' to wonder about you.</p> <p>BUSTER Just tellin' you what I think.</p> <p>JERRY Nobody fuckin' asked what you thought.</p> <p>BUSTER I have to sit here, night after night, listenin' to your bullshit...</p> <p>JERRY Listen to him. The guy's a fuckin' nigger lover. Soon he'll be stockin' up on Colt 45 and shit like that.</p> <p>GUY Come on, we're all friends here.</p> <p>BUSTER With friends like these...</p> <p>JERRY Let's face facts here. If the niggers do get in, it's gonna be bad for all of us, and there's still time to stop this.</p>		
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<p><i>(Light rises on street. The streetlamp shines. LINDA enters, passing under the streetlamp. BRIAN calls from offstage.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN Linda.</p> <p><i>(LINDA stops and turns. BRIAN comes running to her.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN Where you goin'?</p> <p>LINDA Dotty's. I had a big fight with Ma.</p> <p>BRIAN About what?</p> <p>LINDA Nothin', except that I'm pregnant again.</p> <p>BRIAN Does Norm know?</p> <p>LINDA Oh yeah, he knows.</p>	<p><i>(JERRY takes a drink from his glass. He looks at Buster.)</i></p> <p>As long as we all stick together.</p> <p><i>(light fades on bar.)</i></p>		
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<p>BRIAN You gonna get married?</p> <p>LINDA He wants me to have an abortion.</p> <p><i>(LINDA looks away, embarrassed. LINDA turns back to BRIAN, and continues.)</i></p> <p>He said he just started workin' and can't afford another kid.</p> <p>BRIAN So he's makin' you have an abortion?</p> <p>LINDA Nobody's makin' me do anything.</p> <p><i>(LINDA softens as she speaks.)</i></p> <p>He did offer to pay for it, though.</p> <p>BRIAN I guess that's somethin'.</p> <p><i>(BRIAN looks away, slightly embarrassed.)</i></p> <p>You're not gonna do it, are you?</p>			
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<p>LINDA Of course not, I'll just have to get a job.</p> <p>BRIAN Not for nothin' or anything Linda, but who's gonna hire you?</p> <p>LINDA I'll find somethin'.</p> <p>BRIAN How you gonna work after the baby's born.</p> <p>LINDA I don't know.</p> <p>BRIAN Be smart, just get married.</p> <p>LINDA Doesn't look like I have a choice.</p>		<p><i>(Light rises on stoops, the ladies sit under the glow of their overhead porch lights, as well stoop lights and the light shining from inside their homes, streaming through the aluminum doors.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE Someday it will be us callin' the shots.</p>	
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<p><i>(light fades on street.)</i></p>	<p><i>(Light rises on bar.)</i></p> <p>JERRY Nobody can ever say Jerry Flaherty doesn't take care of his family.</p> <p>JERRY No matter what happens, Gussie's stayin' home where she belongs.</p> <p>GUY Imagine havin' to work with a bunch of women?</p> <p>JERRY The only workin' woman is a whore.</p>	<p>CHICKY Might not be a choice, they could all be out of work Monday morning.</p> <p>GUSSIE If Jerry gets laid off, I am goin' to work. I don't care what he says.</p> <p>RITA Look at Marilyn and Jimbo.</p> <p>CHICKY Losin' the house like that.</p>	
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	<p>BUSTER I'm not startin'.</p> <p>BUSTER I'm just sayin' that You work with a black guy you like but everything else is nigger this and nigger that. What's the difference?</p> <p>JERRY He's not like the rest of them. He's like white.</p> <p>BUSTER What the hell does that even mean, like white?</p> <p>JERRY It means I know him. We worked together four years on third shift.</p> <p><i>(JERRY looks at BUSTER, daring BUSTER to question his loyalty.)</i></p> <p>I even met his wife once.</p> <p>GUY What was she like?</p>	<p>RITA Feels more like it's endin'.</p> <p><i>(light fades on stoops.)</i></p>	
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JERRY

She was nice...for a black woman. But it doesn't mean I want her livin' next door to me.

(PETER enters.)

BUSTER

Hey Peter.

PETER

Hey Buster, Guy, Jerry.

(PETER sits at the bar and places a bill on the bar.

BUSTER gets him a beer.)

GUY

Where you been all night?

PETER

Nowhere, every time I go home, there's hell to pay.

JERRY

They're always in a mood over somethin'.

GUY

Nag us every Saturday.

JERRY

It's the only time we get to spend alone, and they gotta ruin it with their bitchin'.

	<p>PETER Never gonna change.</p> <p>GUY Nothin' ever does.</p> <p><i>(GUY finishes his beer and heads for the door.)</i></p> <p>JERRY Where you goin'?</p> <p>GUY I gotta get home, gettin' late.</p> <p>JERRY Keep us under their fuckin' thumb.</p> <p>PETER See you later Guy.</p> <p>GUY We married 'em.</p> <p>JERRY All for a piece of ass.</p> <p><i>(JERRY raises his glass, a toast.)</i></p> <p>And just look at their asses now. If I only knew then...</p> <p><i>(GUY is about to leave, BUSTER calls to him.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER Hey, if she kicks</p>		
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	<p>BUSTER <i>(cont.)</i> you out, you always have a place here.</p> <p>GUY No such fuckin' luck.</p> <p><i>(GUY stops, and crosses to the end of the bar and waves BUSTER over. GUY leans over the bar, speaking low.)</i></p> <p>Put whatever Peter has on my tab. Just don't let him know it's me.</p> <p><i>(GUY exits.)</i></p> <p>JERRY</p> <p><i>(finishing his beer in one gulp, he stands.)</i></p> <p>What the hell. Gotta face the music some time.</p> <p><i>(patting PETER on the shoulder.)</i></p> <p>See you later Peter.</p> <p>PETER All right, Jerry, I'll see you.</p> <p><i>(JERRY exits. BUSTER pours two shots, gives one to PETER, and holds the other up, a toast.</i></p>		
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	<p><i>PETER looks up, surprised.)</i></p> <p>PETER What's this?</p> <p>BUSTER Just don't be lettin' it get around, they'll all be askin'.</p> <p><i>(they clink glasses and down the shots, as light fades on bar.)</i></p>	<p><i>(Light comes up on stoops. RITA sits alone on her steps. HELEN comes out to sit on her steps, she has a cup of tea.)</i></p> <p>RITA Helen.</p> <p>HELEN Rita.</p> <p>RITA So hot in there, had to get out.</p> <p>HELEN Hot cuppa tea, cool me off.</p> <p>RITA So quiet lately. Since my Ricky moved out last year, I don't know what to do with myself.</p> <p>HELEN</p>	
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		<p>HELEN (<i>cont.</i>) Can only clean so much.</p> <p>RITA Buster's never home. So busy at the bar. He keeps talkin' about hirin' extra help.</p> <p>HELEN And when they are home, it's miserable.</p> <p>RITA Better than bein' alone all the time.</p> <p>HELEN Is it?</p> <p>RITA How's Peter, Helen?</p> <p>HELEN Worried. Might lose the house if things don't change.</p> <p>RITA What are you gonna do?</p> <p>HELEN I don't know. Guess I'll have to get a job.</p> <p>RITA If there are any.</p> <p>HELEN There's gotta be somethin'.</p>	
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		<p>RITA If you need help...</p> <p>HELEN No, really Rita, thank you...</p> <p>RITA Look, it could be any one of us, the way things are goin'.</p> <p>HELEN <i>(sincerely.)</i> Thank you, Rita. I don't know, might have to go down welfare.</p> <p>RITA What about Brian?</p> <p>HELEN He was scrubbin' trays at the White Rose, let him go after only two months.</p> <p>RITA And Linda, she can help.</p> <p>HELEN I think Linda will be "gettin' married," soon.</p> <p>RITA Probly best.</p> <p>HELEN Probly, especially since she's not goin'</p>	
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		<p>HELEN (<i>cont.</i>) back to school.</p> <p>(<i>silence. HELEN continues.</i>)</p> <p>I don't know, she doesn't seem to know what she wants.</p> <p>RITA Did any of us know what we wanted at her age?</p> <p>HELEN Didn't matter what we wanted. We just did what we were told.</p> <p>(<i>GUSSIE comes through her screen door, wiping her forehead with a dishtowel.</i>)</p> <p>GUSSIE Jesus, is it hot in there.</p> <p>HELEN (<i>with some reservation.</i>) Gussie.</p> <p>GUSSIE Helen.</p> <p>(<i>GUSSIE looks around.</i>) Where's Chicky?</p>	
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		<p><i>(RITA points at CHICKY'S door.)</i></p> <p>RITA Her Eddie and his girlfriend are in there.</p> <p>GUSSIE That Dotty? You gotta keep your eyes on that one. Mark my words, nothin' but trouble. I wouldn't let <i>my</i> daughter go around with her.</p> <p>RITA Guess Chicky wants to be sure they don't <i>do anything</i>.</p> <p>HELEN They're seventenn, not like you can stop it from happenin'.</p> <p>RITA I remember when I was seventeen.</p> <p>GUSSIE Me too. I spent seventeen in the back seat with Jerry.</p> <p>RITA Gussie.</p> <p>GUSSIE Oh Rita, please, act like you were a virgin when you got</p>	
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		<p>GUSSIE (<i>cont.</i>) married.</p> <p>RITA I was.</p> <p>(<i>GUSSIE and HELEN exchange surprised, mirthful glances, as GUSSIE sits on the stairs.</i>)</p> <p>GUSSIE They're organizin' a march tomorrow, Helen, the mothers, on the hill.</p> <p>HELEN I don't think so.</p> <p>GUSSIE We have to do somethin' to stop this. I can't even sleep thinkin' what it's gonna be like.</p> <p>RITA I'm glad my kids don't have to deal with this.</p> <p>GUSSIE Even if they did, you have boys, think what it's gonna be like for the girls bein' in there with them.</p> <p>(<i>CHICKY comes out and joins the ladies. GUSSIE looks over, nodding toward CHICKY'S door.</i>)</p>	
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		<p>GUSSIE They still in there?</p> <p>CHICKY They're supposed to be goin' out. I don't know what my Danny sees in her.</p> <p>GUSSIE Obvious to me what he sees in her.</p> <p>CHICKY Obvious to everyone.</p> <p>RITA What kind of mother would let her daughter dress like that?</p> <p>GUSSIE The kind of mother who sits at a bar every night.</p> <p>CHICKY She goes to Doyle's on the other side of the tracks, thinkin' nobody will know.</p> <p>RITA While her daughter runs around all over town, doin' God knows what .</p> <p>GUSSIE Wouldn't surprise me if she ends up quittin' school.</p>	
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		<p><i>(RITA and HELEN exchange quick glances.)</i></p> <p>RITA I think quittin' school is the <i>least</i> of her worries.</p> <p>CHICKY They might all end up quittin'. I'm not sendin' my kids.</p> <p>GUSSIE Nobody's gonna send their kids, nobody decent anyway. High school's bad enough, I'm just glad I don't have little ones anymore.</p> <p>CHICKY Imagine the kind of things they'll see bein' sent over there.</p> <p>GUSSIE And that's what you have to think about Helen, Linda and that baby. What's it gonna be like when Maura starts goin' to school?</p> <p>HELEN By that time, this might all be over.</p> <p>CHICKY The only way it will be over is if we stop</p>	
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	<p><i>(Light comes up on bar. PETER is talking to BUSTER. PETER is obviously under the influence, slightly slurring his words.)</i></p> <p>PETER Like a morgue in here.</p> <p>BUSTER With everything goin' on...</p> <p>BUSTER Everyone's a little cranky. Been a long summer.</p>	<p>CHICKY <i>(cont.)</i> it ourselves.</p> <p>GUSSIE Whether you like it or not, Helen, you are part of this neighborhood, and we have to do what we can, right Rita?</p> <p><i>(JERRY enters. GUSSIE stands.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE Where the hell have you been?</p> <p>JERRY I'm not in the mood, Gussie, okay.</p> <p>GUSSIE You're not in the mood?</p>	
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	<p>PETER Gonna be a long fuckin' night.</p> <p>BUSTER When second shift gets out, things will pick up.</p> <p>PETER I didn't hit her Buster.</p> <p>BUSTER I never hit her in my life.</p> <p>PETER I just pushed...</p>	<p>GUSSIE You left here at noon, it's almost eight o'clock.</p> <p>GUSSIE Drink the day away, while I'm stuck here?</p> <p>JERRY Who the hell do you think you are?</p> <p>GUSSIE Supper's on the stove. <i>(GUSSIE enters her house, slamming the screen door behind her.)</i></p> <p>JERRY What the fuck is her</p>	
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	<p>BUSTER Can't worry about that. Things change.</p> <p>PETER Helen's changed. Bitter, angry.</p> <p>BUSTER Hard not to be with everything goin' on.</p> <p>PETER I feel like I don't know what's what anymore.</p> <p>BUSTER Just gotta keep goin'.</p>		<p>HELEN <i>(sitting.)</i> What are you doin' tonight?</p> <p>BRIAN I don't know. Just goin' out.</p> <p>HELEN Anything happenin' with a job?</p> <p>BRIAN There's nothin'.</p> <p>HELEN Maybe you can go back and finish school.</p>
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	<p>PETER Keep goin'? How? Can't even fill the gas tank.</p> <p>BUSTER This can't last forever.</p> <p>PETER Explain that to the bank.</p> <p>PETER And to Helen.</p> <p>BUSTER She knows.</p>	<p>BRIAN I'm almost twenty years old, Ma, it's too late for me.</p> <p>HELEN Maybe get a G.E.D...</p> <p>HELEN They just opened that Community College.</p> <p>BRIAN And who's gonna pay for that? You?</p> <p>HELEN There are ways, I don't know...scholarships, loans</p> <p>BRIAN I don't know whether you noticed</p>
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	<p>PETER It's hard to look at her.</p> <p>PETER Like I can see it in her eyes, how she feels about me.</p> <p>BUSTER I don't think you have to worry about Helen.</p> <p>PETER Have to worry about everything these days.</p> <p>PETER I don't know what more I can do.</p>		<p>BRIAN (<i>cont.</i>) or not, Ma...</p> <p>BRIAN But I'm white.</p> <p>BRIAN I ain't gettin' nothin'.</p> <p>HELEN You gotta do somethin'.</p> <p>BRIAN Why? Nobody else around here works.</p> <p>HELEN You shouldn't be so hard on your father.</p>
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	<p>PETER Gonna lose the house.</p> <p><i>(BUSTER pours two more shots.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER Somethin' will turn up.</p> <p><i>(light fades on bar.)</i></p>		<p>HELEN This isn't easy for him. He's never been without a steady job this long before.</p> <p><i>(not wanting to hear his mother defend his father, BRIAN starts off.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN I gotta go, have to meet some people.</p> <p>HELEN Brian...</p> <p><i>(BRIAN turns to HELEN, she continues slowly, cautiously.)</i></p> <p>You're not doin' drugs, are you?</p> <p>BRIAN No, why?</p> <p>HELEN I know Timmy Kavanaugh and some of your other</p>
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			<p>HELEN (<i>cont.</i>) friends are.</p> <p>BRIAN I don't really see those guys anymore.</p> <p>HELEN Be careful out there.</p> <p><i>(they look at each other for a moment.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN Don't worry about me.</p> <p>HELEN It's not you I worry about.</p> <p>BRIAN I know how to take care of myself.</p> <p><i>(BRIAN exits as light fades.)</i></p>
		<p><i>(light comes up on the stoops, CHICKY and GUY are sitting on their steps, sitting close to each other, talking quietly.)</i></p> <p>GUY My brother offered to help us out, with a loan.</p> <p>CHICKY Can we really do this?</p>	

		<p>GUY Not without his help. No way we could afford it on our own.</p> <p><i>(from inside GUSSIE'S house, JERRY and his daughter, VICKY, can be hard arguing.)</i></p> <p>JERRY I don't give a good goddamned what you think...</p> <p>VICKY Dad...</p> <p>CHICKY He's startin' early.</p> <p>JERRY No daughter of mine is gonna be walkin' the streets like some tramp...</p> <p>VICKY But Dad...</p> <p>JERRY I don't care if it is summer.</p> <p>VICKY You're not listenin' to me...</p> <p><i>(there is the sound of a slap from inside JERRY'S house.)</i></p>	
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		<p>JERRY Now get upstairs and change that skirt.</p> <p>VICKY <i>(screaming.)</i> I hate you!</p> <p>GUY Sure you're not gonna miss it here? <i>(GUY indicates JERRY'S and GUSSIE'S door with a nod of his head.)</i></p> <p>CHICKY All I can think about is havin' a yard, a real back yard.</p> <p>GUY Just don't say anything to anyone until it's final.</p> <p>CHICKY I'm not sayin' a word, they'd just turn it into somethin' bad.</p> <p>GUY Babe and Denny are movin' out to Chicago.</p> <p>CHICKY Probly best, what with two sons in jail now.</p>	
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	<p><i>(BRIAN enters the bar. He sees PETER and laughs.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN Of course. She's gotta get food stamps, while you sit around drinkin'.</p>	<p>GUY His brother-in-law got him a job out there.</p> <p>CHICKY It's all changin' so fast. I mean, who ever thought we'd be leavin'.</p> <p>GUY Just have to make it through next year.</p> <p>CHICKY Right now the only thing I'm worried about is gettin' the kids through school.</p> <p>GUY Let's just hope the meat packer's doesn't close. Otherwise it would be impossible, even with my brother's help.</p> <p><i>(they sit silent, as light fades on stoops.)</i></p>	
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	<p>PETER Don't let me kill him, Buster.</p> <p>BUSTER Hey Brian, what's it gonna be?</p> <p>BRIAN Nothin'. Jerry been in?</p> <p>BUSTER Left here a while ago.</p> <p>BRIAN Got somethin' to show him, somethin' he's been waitin' to see.</p> <p>BUSTER What?</p> <p>BRIAN Fireworks that beat the Fourth of July.</p> <p>BUSTER Like the show two nights ago?</p> <p>BRIAN What, the car? That was nothin'. This will really show them who's boss.</p> <p>BUSTER Just a bunch of punks.</p> <p>BRIAN Tomorrow you won't be sayin' that.</p>		
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	<p>BUSTER Knock off the shit, stop makin' trouble for everyone.</p> <p>BRIAN Trouble for who? Them? What are you defendin' them?</p> <p>PETER Why don't you just grow up?</p> <p>BRIAN Like you? Look at you. You're a disgrace.</p> <p><i>(PETER stands, ready to attack BRIAN. BUSTER reaches over the bar, grabbing PETER by the shoulder, stopping him.)</i></p> <p>PETER And you're shapin' up to be a real success.</p> <p>BUSTER Maybe you better go Brian, bring whatever you have with you.</p> <p>BRIAN I'm not goin' anywhere, yet. I'm stayin' right here and there's nothin' you can do about it.</p>		
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	<p>BUSTER If you don't leave, I'm gonna have to throw you out.</p> <p>BRIAN I'm not afraid of you, any of you. Look what you did to this neighborhood, you let it go. Bunch of losers who can't even hold a job. But I'm gonna change that, take it back, make it what it was.</p> <p>BUSTER Get the fuck out of here, before I call the cops.</p> <p>BRIAN Be careful Buster, you could be next.</p> <p><i>(BRIAN exits.)</i></p> <p>PETER Think they know everything.</p> <p>BUSTER We were the same way when we were his age.</p> <p>PETER Maybe you're right, but we didn't act like that.</p>		
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	<p>BUSTER</p> <p><i>(laughing.)</i></p> <p>Didn't we?</p> <p><i>(PETER laughs as well.)</i></p> <p>PETER</p> <p>Well if we did, we did it with respect.</p> <p>BUSTER</p> <p>Someday they'll realize they need us.</p> <p>PETER</p> <p>Like a fuckin' hole in the head.</p> <p><i>(BUSTER glances up at the clock.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER</p> <p>Guess that's it, Peter. Gonna call it a night. Everyone's gone. Time to go home.</p> <p><i>(PETER stands, laughing. BUSTER crosses to him.)</i></p> <p>Give me a minute, I'll walk home with you.</p> <p><i>(light fades on bar.)</i></p>	<p><i>(Light rises on stoops. It is late, quiet. A light shines through GUSSIE'S aluminum door.</i></p>	
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<p><i>(Light comes up on the street. The streetlamp shines. BRIAN enters. He stops. He reaches into his pants and pulls out a gun. He pantomimes with the gun, pointing it, putting it back in his pants and drawing it quickly, like a cowboy in some old movie. BRIAN stops his pantomime and looks off. He crouches, moving slowly on his haunches, as he watches and listens.)</i></p>		<p><i>Somewhere, a baby cries, a car door slams, someone coughs.)</i></p>	<p><i>(Light rises on kitchen. A small light shines from the stove. There is the sound of a clatter, as PETER enters the aluminum door to his house, slamming it behind him. PETER stumbles through the gloom of the kitchen. He crosses to the refridgerator. He sits at the table, still in the gloom. Leaving the beer untouched, PETER puts his head down.)</i></p>
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		<p><i>(JERRY and GUSSIE can be heard offstage.)</i></p> <p>JERRY Don't fuckin' start with me, Gussie.</p> <p>GUSSIE Start with you? I should have finished with you long ago.</p> <p>JERRY Get over here, you bitch, don't you ever speak to me like that again.</p> <p><i>(there is the sound of a scuffle coming from the house as JERRY continues screaming and slapping GUSSIE. "Shut up, shut up..." he yells. GUSSIE'S cries can be heard.)</i></p> <p><i>(GUSSIE comes bounding through the front door of her house, down the steps, running off, out of sight.)</i></p>	<p><i>(HELEN enters the kitchen. She stands and watches PETER silently.)</i></p> <p><i>(HELEN reaches for the light switch, bathing the kitchen</i></p>
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		<p><i>(JERRY appears at the door.)</i></p> <p>JERRY You come back here and I'll fuckin' kill you.</p> <p><i>(JERRY disappears, back into the house, as light goes out in GUSSIE'S doorway.)</i></p>	<p><i>in a ghastly, fluorescent glow. PETER starts, lifting his head.)</i></p> <p>HELEN I'm tired of this.</p> <p><i>(PETER raises his head.)</i></p> <p>PETER How do you think I feel?</p> <p>HELEN I don't care how you feel. What about the rest of us?</p> <p>PETER Don't you think I worry about that every day?</p> <p>HELEN No, I don't. It doesn't seem to matter what we think, you go about your business like everything's okay.</p>
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		<p><i>(Light shines behind CHICKY'S door, as CHICKY appears behind the door, listening, nervous.)</i></p>	<p>PETER You think I think everything's okay?</p> <p>HELEN I don't give a damn what you think when you come home like this.</p> <p>PETER I'll tell you what I goddamned think. I think it's a lousy, fuckin' life.</p> <p>HELEN And drinkin's gonna help?</p> <p>PETER It's all I have to remind me I'm still alive.</p> <p>HELEN And what do I get to remind me? Huh, tell me, what do I get? A useless drunk...</p> <p><i>(HELEN turns to leave the kitchen. PETER is suddenly on his feet, his drunkenness replaced by rage. He is upon her,</i></p>
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		<p><i>pulling her back into the kitchen by her arm.)</i></p> <p>PETER Is that what you think of me, huh? I'll fuckin' show you useless.</p> <p><i>(HELEN pushes PETER, trying to exit the kitchen.)</i></p> <p>HELEN I'm goin' to bed.</p> <p><i>(PETER again grabs HELEN. She slaps him. He slaps her back.)</i></p> <p>HELEN Peter please.</p> <p>PETER What do you want from me?</p> <p>HELEN I don't want anything from you.</p> <p>PETER <i>(grabbing HELEN, pulling her close, as if he is going to kiss her, his hands on her back, her neck.)</i></p> <p>I'm your fuckin' husband and you're gonna start treatin' me like one.</p>
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<p><i>(BRIAN stands and shouts.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN Hey, Nigger!</p> <p><i>(BRIAN raises his arm. He holds the gun out in front of him, pointing it off stage. BRIAN fires the gun.)</i></p>		<p><i>(GUY appears behind CHICKY and holds her, comforting her.)</i></p>	<p>HELEN You call yourself a husband? Look at you, you're a mess.</p> <p><i>(PETER raises his fist, ready to punch HELEN. She stands, unafraid, defiant.)</i></p> <p>Go ahead. Prove what a good husband you really are.</p> <p><i>(PETER drops his fist and in his frustration, he pushes HELEN, hard, causing her to slam her face into the door.)</i></p> <p><i>(HELEN slowly turns to PETER, holding her bleeding nose.)</i></p>
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<p><i>(BRIAN runs off as sirens sound in the distance.)</i></p>		<p>GUY It's none of our business.</p> <p><i>(GUY leads CHICKY back inside. The siren continues to wail, as lights fade to black.)</i></p>	<p>HELEN I want you out of here.</p> <p><i>(PETER steps towards her. She screams, throwing her fist up.)</i></p> <p>HELEN Get out. Get out. Get out.</p> <p><i>(PETER runs past HELEN, as she crosses to kitchen table and sits, trembling. Light fades on kitchen.)</i></p>

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

			<p><i>(Light comes up on the kitchen. It is Sunday morning, quiet. Sunlight streams in, filling the kitchen with a white light. HELEN sits at the table. She has some slight bruising on her cheek, forearm, though nothing readily noticeable. She sits, a cup of tea by her side, untouched, an open newspaper. HELEN is lost in thought,, staring at nothing in particular. Slowly, she glances down at her arm, she notices the bruises, runs her fingers lightly over them. LINDA enters, slamming the door, shattering the silence, startling HELEN, who looks down as if reading the paper.)</i></p> <p>LINDA Where's Brian?</p>
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	<p><i>(Light comes up on bar. GUY is the only customer. BUSTER gets him a beer.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER It was Bill Daniels.</p> <p>GUY Jesus.</p> <p>GUY Why would someone want to shoot Bill?</p> <p>BUSTER Why do you think?</p> <p>GUY Well, yeah, he's</p>		<p>HELEN I don't know, why?</p> <p>LINDA You know that shootin' last night?</p> <p>HELEN Yeah, up on the hill?</p> <p>LINDA Somebody said they saw Brian...</p> <p>HELEN What do you mean, saw Brian?</p> <p>LINDA Runnin' away, just after the shootin'.</p>
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	<p>GUY (<i>cont.</i>) black, but we know him.</p> <p>BUSTER That means nothin' anymore.</p> <p>GUY Anyone hear if he's dead?</p>	<p>(<i>Light comes up on stoops. CHICKY and RITA are talking, they have given up their housecoats for simple, plain dresses. Perhaps a subtle floral print or ruffled collar, but nothing showy or too colorful.</i>)</p> <p>CHICKY Hear what they were sayin' after Mass?</p> <p>RITA I don't believe it. Won't.</p>	<p>HELEN That doesn't mean anything.</p> <p>LINDA Everyone's sayin' Brian was talkin' about doin' somethin' like this.</p> <p>HELEN Sayin' somethin' and doin' it are two</p>
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	<p>BUSTER I don't know, but it can't be good.</p> <p>GUY Heard he took a bullet right in the gut.</p> <p>BUSTER I hear Brian McKenzie might have been involved.</p>	<p>CHICKY What's this neighborhood comin' too?</p> <p>RITA It's all this trouble with the blacks.</p> <p>CHICKY Everything was fine before all this started up.</p>	<p>HELEN (<i>cont.</i>) different things.</p> <p>LINDA The cops are gonna be lookin' for him.</p> <p>HELEN Don't believe everything you hear.</p> <p>HELEN Why can't everyone just mind their own business.</p> <p>(<i>light fades on kitchen.</i>)</p>
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	<p>GUY He's been doin' nothin' but makin' trouble since this all started.</p> <p>BUSTER Jerry know?</p> <p>GUY I don't know, haven't seen him.</p> <p>BUSTER Me neither, hasn't come in yet today.</p> <p>GUY He usually comes in when everyone's at Mass.</p> <p>BUSTER Gussie must have</p>	<p>RITA What's gonna happen when school opens tomorrow?</p> <p>CHICKY I don't know.</p> <p>RITA We still marchin'?</p> <p>CHICKY Two o'clock. Hope Gussie makes it back.</p> <p>RITA Where was she, she didn't go to Mass.</p>	
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	<p>BUSTER <i>(cont.)</i> put her foot down.</p> <p>GUY Did you hear them last night?</p> <p>BUSTER I don't pay attention anymore. <i>(light fades on bar.)</i></p>	<p>CHICKY Probably her sister's...</p> <p>RITA Were they fightin' again?</p> <p>CHICKY Everybody was, Jerry and Gussie, Peter and Helen...</p> <p>RITA I didn't even hear it.</p> <p>CHICKY Typical Saturday night, nothin' new. <i>(light fades on stoops.)</i></p>	<p><i>(Light rises on kitchen, as it remains on stoops. PETER enters.)</i></p> <p>PETER Where's Brian?</p> <p>LINDA I don't know, I've</p>
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	<p><i>(Light comes up on the bar as it remains on the kitchen. BRIAN enters.)</i></p>		<p>LINDA <i>(cont.)</i> been lookin' too.</p> <p>PETER Helen?</p> <p><i>(HELEN is doing what she can to avoid any direct contact with PETER.)</i></p> <p>HELEN I don't know, he didn't come home last night.</p> <p>PETER All I hear is he may have been involved in this shootin'.</p> <p>LINDA Is the guy dead?</p> <p>PETER No, but he's not in good shape. If Brian does come home, don't let him leave. I'll check the Last Call.</p> <p>HELEN How convenient.</p> <p>PETER This is not about you and me.</p>
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	<p>BUSTER Everyone's lookin' for you.</p> <p>BRIAN I'm right here.</p> <p>GUY Did you do it?</p> <p>BRIAN I don't know what you're talkin' about.</p> <p>BUSTER Someone said they saw you.</p> <p>BRIAN I don't know what they saw, 'cause I</p>		<p>HELEN What will happen if they catch him?</p> <p>PETER Well, it's not murder.</p> <p>HELEN Yet.</p> <p>PETER Has no record, probly wouldn't get much time.</p> <p>LINDA If he did it.</p> <p><i>(light fades on kitchen, as PETER and HELEN knowingly glance at each other.)</i></p>
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	<p>BRIAN (<i>cont.</i>) didn't do nothin'.</p> <p>BUSTER Another fuckin' mess.</p> <p>GUY I don't know if you did it or not.</p> <p>GUY And I'm not sayin' you did.</p> <p>GUY But you're gonna have to leave.</p> <p>GUY Stay with a friend,</p>	<p>(<i>light comes up on the stoops. CHICKY and RITA stand talking.</i>)</p> <p>RITA I don't understand what's goin' on with everyone.</p> <p>RITA Marilyn and her son.</p> <p>RITA Babe with her two in jail.</p> <p>RITA And now Helen.</p> <p>RITA I just never expected Brian McKenzie.</p>	
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	<p>GUY (<i>cont.</i>) relative somewhere. Otherwise, they're gonna pick you up.</p> <p>GUY Out of state would be best.</p> <p>GUY And you're gonna have to stay away.</p> <p>GUY Who knows, maybe you can come back.</p> <p>GUY Someday.</p> <p>GUY Just have to wait.</p>	<p>CHICKY It's not Helen. It's this place.</p> <p>CHICKY It's no good here.</p> <p>CHICKY I used to think that if we could get away, things might be different.</p> <p>CHICKY Maybe I'm just foolin' myself.</p> <p>CHICKY Maybe it's the same where ever you go.</p> <p>CHICKY Maybe I should just</p>	
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	<p>GUY See what happens with Bill.</p> <p><i>(men drink silently, trying to figure out what to do next.)</i></p> <p><i>(JERRY comes storming into the bar. He crosses To BRIAN and grabs him by the throat.)</i></p> <p>JERRY You son of a bitch.</p>	<p>stop waitin'.</p> <p>CHICKY Nothin's gonna change for us.</p> <p>RITA You okay, Chicky?</p> <p>CHICKY <i>(pulled from her reverie.)</i> Who am I kiddin'? You can never get away. Not really. <i>(RITA looks at her, and speaks softly.)</i></p> <p>RITA No, but it doesn't mean you have to stop hopin'. <i>(light fades on stoops.)</i></p>	
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	<p><i>(GUY tries to pull JERRY away, BUSTER jumps over the bar trying to pull BRIAN away. "Stop Jerry," "Let him go," "You're gonna kill him..." They manage to pull JERRY and BRIAN apart.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER What the fuck are you doin'?</p> <p>JERRY Son of a bitch killed Bill.</p> <p>BRIAN He was a nigger.</p> <p>JERRY He was a friend of mine.</p> <p>BRIAN You said get anyone of them who came to this side of the hill.</p> <p><i>(JERRY goes on the attack again, freeing himself from GUY'S grip. He lunges at BRIAN, who is caught off guard. JERRY screams.)</i></p> <p>You son of a bitch. I'll fuckin' kill you.</p> <p><i>(PETER enters the bar. He sees what</i></p>		
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	<p><i>is happening and rushes to help GUY pull JERRY off. Everyone stands breathless and speechless as BRIAN struggles to regain his breath.)</i></p> <p>PETER What the fuck are you doin'?</p> <p>JERRY He killed a friend of mine.</p> <p>PETER Look, we don't know anything...</p> <p>BRIAN I didn't kill anyone, you're full of shit.</p> <p>JERRY I just talked to his wife. He's dead.</p> <p>BUSTER Jesus, Jerry...</p> <p>PETER What makes you think he did it?</p>	<p><i>(Light comes up on stoops.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE Bill died.</p> <p>RITA When's it gonna end?</p>	
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		<p>GUSSIE It won't, until we stop it ourselves.</p> <p><i>(to RITA.)</i></p> <p>All of us.</p>	
	<p>JERRY Everybody knows.</p>		
	<p>BUSTER Someone said they saw him run off.</p>	<p>RITA What do you think will happen to Brian?</p>	
	<p>GUY Just after the shootin'.</p>	<p>GUSSIE Probly do time. If they catch him.</p>	
	<p>GUY It was him, Peter.</p>	<p>CHICKY They won't catch him.</p>	
	<p>JERRY <i>(to PETER.)</i> And I'm gonna</p>	<p>GUSSIE No matter what I think of Helen, she wouldn't let her son go to jail.</p>	

	<p>JERRY (<i>cont.</i>) make sure he pays for what he did.</p> <p>BRIAN</p> <p>(<i>to JERRY.</i>)</p> <p>Fuck you, Jerry, okay. You're the one who told my where to get the gun.</p> <p>(<i>light fades on bar, but remains on other scenes.</i>)</p>	<p>RITA</p> <p>What could she do?</p> <p>GUSSIE</p> <p>What any mother would do.</p> <p>CHICKY</p> <p>And many have had to.</p>	<p>(<i>Light rises on the kitchen, LINDA and HELEN are seated at the table.</i>)</p> <p>LINDA</p> <p>What will happen if they catch him?</p> <p>HELEN</p> <p>I guess he'd have to go to prison.</p> <p>LINDA</p> <p>There are lawyers.</p>
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	<p><i>(Light rises on bar. BUSTER, GUY and</i></p>	<p>CHICKY Hide him.</p> <p>CHICKY Lie for him.</p> <p>CHICKY Send him off somewhere.</p> <p>CHICKY Like I did for my Jimmy that time.</p> <p>CHICKY No mother, no decent mother is gonna let her son go to prison.</p> <p><i>(light fades on stoops.)</i></p>	<p>HELEN We can't afford a good one.</p> <p>LINDA Maybe we could borrow the money.</p> <p>HELEN He's a man now.</p> <p>LINDA He's your son.</p> <p>HELEN And I have to do what's right.</p> <p><i>(light fades on kitchen.)</i></p>
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	<p><i>JERRY are there. The bar is filled with silent tension as they try to avoid each other in the confined space. GUY looks up and speaks.)</i></p> <p>GUY Jesus, Jerry.</p> <p>JERRY What?</p> <p>GUY Givin' a kid like that a gun.</p> <p>JERRY I didn't <i>give</i> it to him, besides, you of all people have no right talkin about, "a kid like that."</p> <p>GUY You should have known somethin' like this would happen.</p> <p>JERRY What are you, blamin' me? This isn't my fault.</p> <p>GUY What were you thinkin'?</p> <p>JERRY You don't know what the fuck you're talkin' about, so just shut up.</p>		
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	<p>BUSTER Reporters are gonna have a field day with this, like there wasn't enough already.</p> <p><i>(GUY and JERRY look at him as the bar falls silent again. GUY speaks.)</i></p> <p>GUY What's gonna happen to him now?</p> <p>JERRY Who?</p> <p>GUY Brian.</p> <p>JERRY What the fuck do I care about him for? I just lost a good friend of mine, so leave me the fuck alone.</p> <p>BUSTER Maybe we should send flowers, somethin', I don't know.</p> <p><i>(after another strained moment, GUY speaks. Though his words are directed at JERRY, GUY doesn't actually face him, keeps</i></p>		
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	<p><i>himself distanced, his eyes down.)</i></p> <p>GUY Do you ever take responsibility for anything?</p> <p>JERRY</p> <p><i>(slowly looking up at GUY, who averts his gaze. JERRY speaks quietly, but menacingly.)</i></p> <p>You forget, Guy... my kids never shot anybody.</p> <p><i>(the bar falls into an uncomfortable silence, as light fades.)</i></p>	<p><i>(Light comes up on stoops. GUSSIE, CHICKY, RITA and LINDA are readying for the march. GUSSIE too is now dressed in her Sunday clothes. They carry bibles, rosary beads and purses.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE Now we'll show those bastards.</p> <p>RITA</p> <p><i>(quietly, but obviously vexed.)</i></p>	
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		<p>Gussie.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GUSSIE</p> <p><i>(turning on RITA, snapping.)</i></p> <p>What?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RITA</p> <p><i>(backing off, not wanting a confrontation.)</i></p> <p>Nothin'.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CHICKY</p> <p>You okay, Rita?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RITA</p> <p>Just nervous.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GUSSIE</p> <p>About what? We're doin' the right thing.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RITA</p> <p>I know we are. That's not what has me worried.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CHICKY</p> <p>Buster?</p> <p><i>(RITA nods her head.)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">GUSSIE</p> <p>You can't live your life worryin' about whether they'll be mad or not...</p> <p><i>(GUSSIE takes a compact out of her</i></p>	
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		<p><i>purse, and applies make-up to her black eye and bruised lip.)</i></p> <p>CHICKY They're always gonna be mad over somethin' anyway. Bills.</p> <p>GUSSIE The kids.</p> <p>CHICKY The house.</p> <p>GUSSIE Us.</p> <p>CHICKY If they only knew how lucky they were to have us.</p> <p>RITA <i>(relaxing, laughing.)</i></p> <p>I think they think we're the lucky ones, havin' them.</p> <p>GUSSIE Why wouldn't they think that, The way we treat them. We do everything for them, and what do we get? You call that lucky?</p> <p>CHICKY If it wasn't for bad luck...</p>	
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<p><i>(GUSSIE, CHICKY, RITA, and LINDA enter, their voices raised, as they kneel across downstage. They are loudly reciting "The Lord's Prayer.")</i></p>	<p><i>(Light rises on bar. JERRY, GUY and BUSTER are as before. In the distance .voices can be heard reciting, "The Lord's Prayer." The men start as the voices get closer, rising in intensity. JERRY and GUY exit the bar to watch, looking out over the hill, as the praying becomes closer, louder.)</i></p> <p>JERRY Here they come, let that fuckin' judge and the mayor ignore this.</p>	<p>GUSSIE</p> <p><i>(to RITA, pointedly.)</i></p> <p>This is somehthin' we can do to that's ours, and nobody can take it away from us. They don't own us.</p> <p><i>(light fades on stoops as they exit.)</i></p>	
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<p>WOMEN Our Father Who art in Heaven Hallowed be thy name Thy kingdom come Thy will be done On earth As it is in heaven Give us this day Our daily bread</p> <p><i>(RITA glances over at BUSTER but does not move. The WOMEN continue praying, uninterrupted, getting louder and more insistent as they continue.)</i></p> <p>WOMEN And forgive us our trespasses As we forgive those</p>	<p><i>(BUSTER joins them as the watch.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER It's over Jerry, you gotta let it end.</p> <p>JERRY We'll see tomorrow if it's over, when those empty school buses come ridin' over the hill...</p> <p><i>(BUSTER sees Rita and backs up a step, trying to decide what to do, as the praying continues. After a moment, he steps forward and speaks to RITA in a low, but commanding voice.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER Rita, what the hell do you think you're doin'?</p> <p>BUSTER Get over here... <i>(harshly.)</i></p>		
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<p>WOMEN (<i>cont.</i>) Who trespass against us</p> <p>(<i>RITA slightly shakes her head, “No.”</i>)</p> <p>(<i>RITA remains where she is, though obviously frightened.</i>)</p> <p>WOMEN And lead us no Into temptation But deliver us from evil</p> <p>(<i>GUSSIE stands and speaks, as other WOMEN stop praying.</i>)</p> <p>GUSSIE Deliver us Lord, From every evil, And grant us peace in our day.</p> <p>(<i>GUSSIE rejoins the kneeling WOMEN as they begin “The ‘Hail Mary.’ ”</i>)</p>	<p>BUSTER (<i>cont.</i>) Get the fuck off that street.</p> <p>(<i>BUSTER walks toward the WOMEN, JERRY holds him back.</i>)</p> <p>JERRY Leave her alone.</p> <p>BUSTER No wife of mine...</p> <p>GUY Jesus, Buster, she’s not doin’ nothin’.</p> <p>(<i>BUSTER brushes past JERRY and GUY.</i>)</p>		
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<p>WOMEN Hail Mary Full of Grace The Lord is with Thee Blessed art Thou Amongst women And blessed is the fruit Of Thy womb, Jesus Holy Mary Mother of God Pray for us sinners Now, and at the hour of our death Amen</p> <p><i>(WOMEN take up "The Lord's Prayer," again.)</i></p> <p>WOMEN Our Father Who art in heaven Hallowed be thy name Thy kingdom come</p>	<p>BUSTER Rita, I'm warnin' you.</p> <p>JERRY Let them do what they gotta do.</p> <p>BUSTER Rita, get over here and stop makin' a fool of yourself.</p> <p>GUY Come on Buster, it's not illegal, they have the right...</p> <p>BUSTER Embarrassin' me.</p> <p>JERRY They're tryin' to help...</p> <p><i>(BUSTER takes a step toward the WOMEN, who continue praying. RITA, now scared, stands and steps back from the group, as GUSSIE and CHCIKY stand in front of her, all the while continuing to pray. JERRY grabs BUSTER by the arm.)</i></p>		
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<p>WOMEN Thy will be done</p> <p>WOMEN On earth as it is in heaven Give us this day Our daily bread As we forgive those Who trespass against us. And lead us not Into temptation But deliver us from evil</p> <p><i>(GUSSIE speaks, as other WOMEN stop praying.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE Deliver us Lord, From every evil, And grant us peace in our day.</p> <p><i>(GUSSIE again begins the, "Hail Mary," and the WOMEN join in. The praying continues as the scene progresses, alternating between "The Lord's Prayer," and "The Hail Mary.")</i></p>	<p>JERRY Don't.</p> <p><i>(BUSTER pulls free from JERRY'S grip.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER It's none of your business.</p> <p>JERRY Leave them alone...</p> <p>BUSTER You can't stop this from comin' Jerry...</p> <p>JERRY And you can't stop this...</p> <p><i>(BUSTER again</i></p>		
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	<p><i>attempts to make his way to where the WOMEN are kneeling. JERRY grabs him. BUSTER turns, punching JERRY in the face. JERRY pushes BUSTER to the ground. JERRY starts toward him again, GUY blocks his way. JERRY points, yelling at BUSTER.)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">JERRY You mother-fucker...</p> <p><i>(BUSTER crosses to RITA, pushing GUSSIE and CHICKY to the side. BUSTER pulls RITA by the arm, CHICKY reaches out for RITA'S free hand and holds it tightly. As BUSTER tugs at RITA, she lets CHICKY'S hand go. The praying continues, as BUSTER pulls RITA towards the bar, past JERRY and GUY.)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">BUSTER Actin' like this...all these people watchin...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">JERRY Traitor...</p>		
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	<p><i>(BUSTER turns to GUY and JERRY, he speaks as he enters the bar with RITA.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER Bunch of stupid, fuckin' drunks.</p> <p>JERRY Traitor.</p> <p><i>(JERRY stands in the entrance of the bar and yells, pointing directly at BUSTER.)</i></p> <p>JERRY Just wait, you'll get yours, nigger lover.</p> <p><i>(GUY manages to push JERRY offstage. BUSTER turns to RITA.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER <i>(yelling over the loud, incessant praying.)</i> What the hell do you think you're doin'?</p> <p>RITA Prayin'.</p> <p>BUSTER Makin' a fool of me like that, and yourself...</p>		
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<p><i>(Sirens can be heard as blue lights flash. The Women continue their vigil, praying loudly, until sudden silence as the stage goes black.)</i></p>	<p>RITA It makes me feel useful.</p> <p>BUSTER You'll do what I tell you.</p> <p>RITA Like I'm somebody.</p> <p>BUSTER We're not one of them.</p> <p><i>(BUSTER slaps RITA. She drops her purse and sends her rosary beads scattering across the floor. Sudden silence as stage goes black.)</i></p>		<p><i>(Light comes up on kitchen. PETER and HELEN, sit, silently. After a few moments, PETER speaks.)</i></p> <p>PETER It's murder, Helen, plain and simple.</p> <p>HELEN Plain and simple? How can you sit there, so calm, as if he did nothin' more than skip school?</p> <p>PETER It's the way it is. There's nothin' we can do, we just have</p>
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			<p>PETER (<i>cont.</i>) to wait and see what happens.</p> <p>HELEN Is that you're solution to everything, to just "<i>wait and see?</i>"</p> <p>PETER This is not the time, Helen.</p> <p>HELEN When is the time? When we lose everything?</p> <p>PETER We can take care of this.</p> <p>HELEN How? We have no money, we can't get a lawyer...</p> <p>PETER We can send him away.</p> <p>HELEN What does that really get him? Spendin' his life lookin' over his shoulder, wonderin' when everything's gonna come crashin' down?</p> <p>PETER Better than spendin' his life in jail.</p>
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			<p>HELEN Is it?</p> <p>PETER We have to do what we can.</p> <p>HELEN Haven't we done enough?</p> <p>PETER What do you want me to do, Helen, I can't change the facts.</p> <p>HELEN What are the facts, Peter? That there's no money, that we're gonna lose the house...</p> <p>PETER We don't know that for sure, when the refinery re-opens...</p> <p>HELEN Wake up Peter.</p> <p><i>(PETER stands, stunned, as if he has been slapped. HELEN stands and continues, in a matter-of-fact way.)</i></p> <p>The refinery's not going to re-open. Things are not gonna get better.</p> <p><i>(HELEN continues slowly, calmly.)</i></p>
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	<p><i>(Light comes up on bar. BUSTER is behind the bar going over the day's receipts. BRIAN enters and without saying a word, crosses to the payphone on the wall. He drops a coin in and dials. BUSTER stands silently by, and overhears BRIAN'S conversation.)</i></p>		<p>HELEN <i>(cont.)</i> Livin' on welfare.</p> <p>PETER We're not goin' on welfare.</p> <p>HELEN It's not a choice I'd make either. But what else can we do?</p> <p>PETER Have everyone pointin' at me, sayin' I can't support my family...</p> <p>HELEN I don't care what everyone says, they're not payin' the bills.</p> <p>PETER Listen to us.</p>
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	<p>BRIAN Come on, Sully, I'm in a lot of trouble.</p> <p>BRIAN You owe me.</p> <p>BRIAN Just a few bucks then.</p> <p>BRIAN I can't wait til tomorrow.</p> <p><i>(BRIAN slams the receiver down.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN Fuck.</p>		<p>PETER Our son killed someone.</p> <p>PETER And we're arguin' about money.</p> <p>HELEN It's not just money Peter.</p> <p>HELEN It's everything.</p> <p>HELEN And I can't do it anymore.</p> <p><i>(PETER goes to HELEN and tries to put his arms around HELEN, who starts at his touch,</i></p>
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	<p><i>(Unsure what to do, BRIAN starts to exit. BUSTER stops him, grabbing him by the arm. BRIAN turns, ready for a fight. BUSTER hands BRIAN some cash. BRIAN takes the cash and stands looking at BUSTER for a moment. Neither speaks. BUSTER quietly says, "Go," and BRIAN exits, as light fades on bar.)</i></p>	<p><i>(Light comes up on the stoops. GUSSIE, CHICKY and LINDA sit on one of the stoops. They are defeated, resigned.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE At least nobody got arrested.</p> <p>CHICKY Police broke it up as soon as they got there.</p> <p>GUSSIE Can't win for losin'.</p> <p>CHICKY They don't care what we think, or</p>	<p><i>crossing the room and exiting as light slowly fades on PETER.)</i></p>
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	<p><i>(Light comes up on bar. BUSTER is alone, reading the</i></p>	<p>CHICKY <i>(cont.)</i> what we want...</p> <p>LINDA If we tried again, maybe tomorrow...</p> <p>GUSSIE It's never gonna change for us. This is it, all we'll ever have. And you have to hold onto it. No matter what. Keep this a decent place to raise your kids. Don't let <i>them</i> have it. You marry Norm, keep this neighborhood goin'. This is your home. And don't let anyone take it away from you. We may be white, but we still have our rights.</p> <p><i>(GUSSIE turns to CHICKY. She speaks.)</i></p> <p>Am I right, Chicky?</p> <p>CHICKY Right.</p> <p><i>(dejected, CHICKY turns her gaze away. turning her gaze away. LINDA exits as light fades on stoops.)</i></p>	
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	<p><i>newspaper. PETER enters and sits.)</i></p> <p>PETER Thought you hired Jacky Mahoney so you could take some time off.</p> <p>BUSTER Nah, that's what I told Rita so she'd stop naggin' me about comin' home. What the hell am I gonna do at home all day, listen to her?</p> <p>PETER Helen kicked me out.</p> <p><i>(getting two shot glasses, BUSTER fills them.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER She'll come around, they always do.</p> <p><i>(they drink the shots.)</i></p> <p>PETER What the hell did I do so wrong?</p> <p>BUSTER Just goin' through a bad time.</p> <p>PETER A bad time? Easy to say that.</p>		
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	<p>BUSTER Look around, everyone's got it tough.</p> <p>PETER <i>(unconvinced.)</i> Yeah, everyone.</p> <p>BUSTER Makes people desperate.</p> <p>BUSTER Do things they never would have imagined. <i>(BUSTER pours</i></p>	<p><i>(Light rises on stoops. It is early evening. The sun is moving west, creating patterns of shadow and light. GUSSIE and JERRY sit together on their stoop. CHICKY and GUY on theirs.)</i></p> <p>JERRY That fuckin' Buster. He'll find out what it's like to fuck with us. You'll see.</p> <p>GUY I don't think he meant it.</p> <p>JERRY You don't think he meant it?</p>	
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	<p><i>another shot as light fades on bar.)</i></p>	<p>JERRY I saw this comin' a long time ago. Thinks he's so much better than we are.</p> <p>GUSSIE Sendin' his kid off to college.</p> <p><i>(GUSSIE hold her hands up in a praying position and speaks with mock sanctimoniousness.)</i></p> <p><i>Holy Cross...</i></p> <p>JERRY They always acted like they were better than everyone else. I'll show him, "bunch of fuckin' drunks."</p> <p>GUSSIE Livin' like they're rich.</p> <p>JERRY Let's just hope somebody doesn't take a key to that new car of his.</p> <p>GUY Buster's okay...it's just...with everything goin' on...he didn't mean nothin'...</p>	
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		<p><i>(JERRY turns to GUY, giving him a warning glance.)</i></p> <p>JERRY You want to be next?</p> <p><i>(there is a brief, strained silence, as GUY unobtrusively takes CHICKY'S hand.)</i></p> <p>CHICKY Summer doesn't feel like it's ever gonna end.</p> <p>GUSSIE In February we'll be wantin' this heat.</p> <p><i>(RITA comes through her front door and sits on her stoop.)</i></p> <p>RITA No matter how hot it gets, we still have to make dinner.</p> <p><i>(silence from the other stoops. RITA continues.)</i></p> <p>Got chicken in the oven. Haven't even started the potatoes yet. Gotta put those on.</p> <p>GUSSIE Probly fried</p>	
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		<p>GUSSIE (<i>cont.</i>) chicken.</p> <p>(<i>GUSSIE and JERRY laugh, GUY and CHICKY remain silent, not looking at RITA, who continues.</i>)</p> <p>RITA Gettin' late, I wonder where Buster is. Supposed to have tonight off.</p> <p>JERRY Maybe he has a date.</p> <p>(<i>RITA senses the tension but pushes on.</i>)</p> <p>RITA Supposed to hire that Jacky Mahoney. Don't know how reliable he is. Goes around with that Kelly Donaghue.</p> <p>GUSSIE Better than goin' around with Aunt Jemimah.</p> <p>(<i>RITA smiles weakly.</i>)</p> <p>RITA Gettin' late, wonder where Buster is.</p> <p>JERRY Maybe he's down</p>	
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		<p>JERRY (<i>cont.</i>) washin' the school buses so his future customers will have a nice, comfortable ride tomorrow.</p> <p>RITA Any word yet, on Brian McKenzie?</p> <p>GUSSIE You haven't heard?</p> <p>RITA Heard what?</p> <p>GUSSIE Buster's got him tied up behind the bar.</p>	<p>(<i>Light comes up on LINDA and HELEN in the kitchen.</i>)</p> <p>LINDA You should have come with us.</p> <p>HELEN I have more important things on my mind right now.</p> <p>LINDA Gussie said we should have been allowed to march longer.</p> <p>HELEN Since when did you call her Gussie?</p>
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		<p>JERRY So he can turn Brian in.</p> <p>GUSSIE Maybe get a reward.</p> <p>JERRY And buy collard greens for all his friends on the other side of the hill.</p> <p>GUSSIE To celebrate.</p> <p><i>(RITA stands. She speaks quietly.)</i></p> <p>RITA I better go and finish dinner.</p>	<p>LINDA Said we have to fight, to keep what's ours.</p> <p>HELEN When did you two get so chummy?</p> <p>LINDA She cares about what's gonna happen to this neighborhood.</p> <p>HELEN All Gussie cares about is Gussie.</p> <p>LINDA You never gave her a chance.</p>
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		<p>RITA Buster should be home soon.</p> <p><i>(RITA turns and enters her house.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE Dinner. What, supper's not good enough for her?</p> <p>GUSSIE Gettin' too high and mighty for herself.</p> <p>GUSSIE Mark my words, she'll get hers.</p> <p><i>(light fades on stoops.)</i></p>	<p>HELEN I've known her since we were kids.</p> <p>HELEN She'd stab you in the back at the drop of a hat.</p> <p><i>(BRIAN enters the kitchen. Everyone looks at each other but nobody speaks.)</i></p> <p><i>(HELEN makes the first move. She crosses to Brian and stands, looking as if she wants to slap him.)</i></p> <p><i>(HELEN hugs BRIAN quickly and</i></p>
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			<p><i>lets him go. She speaks.)</i></p> <p>HELEN You can't stay here.</p> <p>BRIAN What do you mean, I can't stay here?</p> <p>HELEN Why did you do it?</p> <p>BRIAN I didn't do nothin'.</p> <p>HELEN I can't help you with this.</p> <p>BRIAN You're my mother.</p> <p>HELEN And that's why I have to do this.</p> <p>BRIAN Where am I supposed to go?</p> <p>HELEN You should have thought of that before you pulled that trigger.</p> <p>BRIAN Where's dad, he'll know what to do.</p> <p>HELEN I don't know where your father is.</p>
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			<p>BRIAN What time will he be back?</p> <p>HELEN He won't be comin' back.</p> <p>LINDA What?</p> <p>HELEN He won't be comin' home anymore.</p> <p>LINDA What do you mean he won't be comin' home anymore? What did you do?</p> <p>BRIAN So you're gonna kick me out too? You can't do this, I have no where to go, no money...</p> <p>LINDA Who do you think you are?</p> <p>HELEN Don't start with me, Linda.</p> <p>LINDA No wonder he left, you were never any kind of wife or mother.</p> <p>HELEN You think this is my fault?</p>
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			<p><i>(HELEN grabs LINDA by the arm, roughly, violently.)</i></p> <p>Look at this, look at this.</p> <p><i>(HELEN holds up her arm.)</i></p> <p>See this? Huh? See these bruises? Your father did that.</p> <p><i>(HELEN lets go of LINDA.)</i></p> <p>Is this what you want for yourself?</p> <p>LINDA Maybe you deserved it.</p> <p>HELEN Maybe I did, but that doesn't mean I have to live with it.</p> <p>BRIAN What happened to you?</p> <p>HELEN I made a decision. For the first time in my life, I made a decision.</p> <p><i>(silence. HELEN continues, turning to BRIAN.)</i></p> <p>You better not be here when the cops show up at that</p>
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		<p><i>(Light comes up on stoops. It is late, the street is empty. From an open window, a radio plays softly. GUSSIE enters. She stands, looking up and down the street,</i></p>	<p>HELEN <i>(cont.)</i> door. I won't lie for you.</p> <p>BRIAN You can't do this...</p> <p>HELEN You took someone's life, Brian.</p> <p>BRIAN And you're takin' mine.</p> <p><i>(BRIAN looks from LINDA to HELEN. Nobody moves. BRIAN shakes his head and exits. HELEN looks at LINDA, wanting to explain, but unsure how.)</i></p> <p>HELEN He took someone's life.</p> <p>LINDA Weren't you were the one tellin' me to have an abortion?</p> <p><i>(light fades on kitchen.)</i></p>
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	<p><i>(There is the sound of breaking glass.</i></p>	<p><i>craning her neck to see, to hear anything out of the ordinary. A car door slams, a girl's voice speaks, "Call me tomorrow." GUSSIE shakes her head disapprovingly. Another voice, a male, calls out, "I'm goin' out." GUSSIE glances at her watch, shakes her head and "tisks." After another moment of surveillance, satisfied that all is quiet on the home front, GUSSIE sits. She glances at RITA'S door, then CHICKY'S. Nothing. GUSSIE surveys her hands, noting a chipped fingernail, turning her hands over, dismayed at the rough, dry skin. She shrugs and settles in for a quiet moment of relaxation. When she is comfortable, a girl's voice, yells from offstage, loud, shrill, "Ma!" Exasperated, GUSSIE sighs, stands and enters her house.)</i></p>	
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	<p><i>Light rises on bar. BUSTER ducks behind the bar, a bottle falls from the shelf. PETER ducks his head, covering it with his arms. A voice from offstage can be heard yelling, "Nigger lover." When BUSTER stands, he holds up a large stone, as light fades on bar.)</i></p>	<p><i>(Light comes up on porches. KID enters. He is no more than fourteen. He kneels on RITA'S stoop. KID is spray-painting the word, "NIGGER," in black letters, across the bottom panel of her screen door. When he is finished, he stands and rings RITA'S doorbell. He runs off and stands, down. When RITA comes to her door, looking through the screen, KID yells, grabbing his crotch.)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">KID Right here, Bitch.</p> <p><i>(indignant, RITA steps out onto the porch as KID runs off, laughing. RITA</i></p>	
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		<p><i>calls after him.)</i></p> <p>RITA I know who you are...I'm callin' your mother.</p> <p><i>(RITA turns to go back inside and notices what has been done to her door. She looks around, scared, nervous and enters her house, quickly pulling the door shut behind her as light fades.)</i></p>	<p><i>(Low light comes up on the kitchen. LINDA enters. She stands in the doorway to make sure the kitchen is empty. When LINDA fully enters, she carries a packed duffel bag. She goes to the pantry and comes back with food; saltines, a piece of fruit, potato chips, a soda. She puts these in the duffel bag and begins to exit. She stops, nervously glancing around, and makes her way to the cabinet where the teacup with money is. She slowly takes the money and carefully, silently</i></p>
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<p><i>(Light comes up on street. BRIAN is standing, hiding in the shadows. He peers off, waiting impatiently. LINDA comes running on carrying the duffel bag. BRIAN starts toward her, but stops when he enters the bright light of the street lamp. He retreats back to the shadows. LINDA crosses to him. He takes the duffel bag.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN What took you so long?</p> <p>LINDA I didn't want Ma to see me.</p> <p>BRIAN Did you get everything?</p> <p>LINDA I think so.</p> <p>BRIAN Fuckin' Ma...</p> <p><i>(BRIAN takes the bag and starts off. LINDA stops him.)</i></p>			<p><i>puts the teacup back in the cabinet. She exits, as light fades on kitchen.)</i></p>
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<p>LINDA Brian...</p> <p><i>(BRIAN doesn't stop, LINDA calls louder.)</i></p> <p>Brian.</p> <p><i>(BRIAN stops and turns to her. Slowly he crosses and speaks softly.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN It's the only thing I can do.</p> <p>LINDA I know.</p> <p><i>(BRIAN and LINDA embrace, long, hard. They separate.)</i></p> <p>BRIAN I better go.</p> <p><i>(picking up the duffel bag, BRIAN points at LINDA, indicating her belly.)</i></p> <p>Be smart.</p> <p>LINDA I will.</p> <p><i>(they look at each other for a moment before BRIAN quickly exits, as light fades on street. The sound of</i></p>			
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<p><i>helicopters fills the air as rises again on street. It is Monday morning. Bright yellow sunshine fills the street. GUY comes running on. He is wearing his overalls and carries his hard hat in his hand. PETER follows closely behind. They stop when they see JERRY. GUY is frantic.)</i></p> <p>GUY It's closed. It's fuckin' closed.</p> <p>JERRY What are you talkin' about?</p> <p>PETER The plant, it's locked up tight...</p>		<p><i>(Light rises on stoops. Across the bottom half of RITA'S door is the word, "NIGGER," spray painted in black. CHICKY and GUSSIE come out of their doors, looking up at the sky.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE What the hell is goin' on?</p> <p>CHICKY It's like we're at</p>	
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<p>JERRY What do you mean?</p> <p>PETER Big sign on the gate.</p> <p>GUY There's no work.</p> <p>JERRY They can't do that...</p> <p>GUY Everyone's meetin' outside, tryin' to force their way in.</p>		<p>CHICKY <i>(cont.)</i> war.</p> <p><i>(RITA opens her door to see what is going on. GUSSIE and CHICKY look at her, daring her to join them. RITA looks at them and timidly steps back inside.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE What the hell country is this?</p> <p>CHICKY Like we're livin' in Russia.</p> <p><i>(GUSSIE and CHICKY turn toward the sound of JERRY and GUY as they approach the stairs.)</i></p>	
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		<p>JERRY They can't do this, we belong to the union...</p> <p>CHICKY Oh my God.</p> <p>GUSSIE What is it? What happened?</p> <p>JERRY Meat packer's is closed.</p> <p>PETER They're not lettin' anyone in.</p> <p>GUSSIE They can't do that. What are we supposed to do?</p> <p>JERRY How the hell do I know what we're supposed to do.</p> <p>CHICKY Guy...is it true?</p> <p>GUY There's no work...there's no fuckin' work.</p> <p>JERRY Un-fuckin'- believable.....kick us out, while the niggers just walk in and take it all.</p>	
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		<p>GUY It's the fuckin' politicians...</p> <p>JERRY Yeah, and we voted for those bastards.</p> <p>CHICKY What about the house? Guy? What about the house?</p> <p>JERRY We're all gonna lose out fuckin' houses.</p> <p>GUY <i>(to CHICKY..)</i> We're never gettin' out of here. <i>(HELEN enters, standing on her steps, looking up at the helicopters overhead.)</i></p> <p>HELEN Jesus. <i>(HELEN sees PETER. They stand looking at each other, PETER wanting to approach her, HELEN holding him off with a steely glare.)</i></p> <p>GUSSIE We're gonna end up in the projects.</p>	
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		<p>JERRY I'm not movin' to no fuckin' projects...we're gonna fight this.</p> <p>GUSSIE Looks like we lost.</p> <p>CHICKY Again.</p> <p><i>(CHICKY goes to follow GUY and JERRY off. She sees PETER, and glances at HELEN, before she exits. Defeated, PETER exits with them.)</i></p> <p>HELEN What happened?</p> <p>GUSSIE Meat packer's is closed.</p> <p>HELEN I'm so sorry, Gussie.</p> <p>GUSSIE Bastards...we're not givin' up that easy.</p> <p><i>(LINDA comes running on. She stops and slowly approaches HELEN.)</i></p> <p>LINDA He's on a bus. No thanks to you.</p>	
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		<p><i>(GUSSIE looks from LINDA to HELEN, understanding, giving HELEN a venomous glare. CHICKY comes running on.)</i></p> <p>CHICKY The mothers are gatherin' on the corner, they're gonna march on the school to block the buses.</p> <p>HELEN How much more do we have to fight?</p> <p>GUSSIE It's the only thing we can do.</p> <p><i>(turning to LINDA.)</i></p> <p>This is exactly what I was talkin' about...they want to take everything we got.</p> <p><i>(GUSSIE and CHICKY start down the street, they turn to HELEN.)</i></p> <p>CHICKY Come with us, Helen.</p> <p><i>(GUSSIE and CHICKY exit, HELEN calls after them.)</i></p>	
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		<p>HELEN For what? To stop poor people from goin' to poor schools?</p> <p>LINDA Don't you care about anything?</p> <p>HELEN It's over, Linda.</p> <p>LINDA We can still try.</p> <p>HELEN There's nothin' we can do.</p> <p>LINDA I hope I never give up on <i>my</i> kids.</p> <p><i>(LINDA exits. RITA comes out of her house when she is sure the coast is clear. RITA speaks quietly.)</i></p> <p>RITA She doesn't understand.</p> <p>HELEN Do any of us really understand?</p> <p>RITA Probly not.</p> <p>HELEN What makes everyone think</p>	
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		<p>HELEN (<i>cont.</i>) things are so much better on this side of the hill?</p> <p>RITA What's gonna happen, Helen?</p> <p>HELEN Let's just hope nobody else has to die.</p> <p>RITA I'm scared.</p> <p>HELEN We all are.</p> <p><i>(HELEN and RITA look up at the sky as helicopters pass overhead. BUSTER comes out the door. He glances down at the spray paint.)</i></p> <p>BUSTER Have you heard?</p> <p>HELEN Jerry and Guy just told us.</p> <p>BUSTER It's on the news. The workers are picketin' outside the gate.</p> <p><i>(BUSTER starts off.)</i></p> <p>RITA Where are you goin'?</p>	
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		<p>BUSTER To see what I can do.</p> <p><i>(BUSTER starts to exit.)</i></p> <p>RITA Buster...</p> <p><i>(BUSTER stops and turns to her. RITA's voice is soft, quietly pleading.)</i></p> <p>Don't leave me alone.</p> <p>BUSTER <i>(shaking his head as he exits.)</i></p> <p>Jesus, Rita.</p> <p>RITA <i>(turning to HELEN.)</i></p> <p>It's like the end of the world.</p> <p>HELEN No, it's not the end. We still have to get through tomorrow.</p> <p><i>(RITA looks at HELEN, helpless, hopeless. HELEN turns to enter her house. She speaks.)</i></p> <p>I better get dressed. Welfare opens at</p>	
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		<p>HELEN (<i>cont.</i>) nine.</p> <p><i>(HELEN enters her house, the screen door closes behind her. RITA stands, looking up as the sound of Helicopters and sirens fill the air. Unsure what to with herself, RITA looks down at the spray paint on the door. She slowly drops to her knees and begins to furiously rub the paint with the corner of her housecoat. She continues to rub, though her efforts are futile, as light very slowly fades.)</i></p>	

END OF PLAY