

BREACH

**a play by
Tom Baum**

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Characters (in order of appearance)

JILL (JARDINE), 30s, a psychotherapist

**JUSTIN (PECK), 20s-30s, Jill's client, African-American, a
website designer**

**NICK (WELLSTONE), 30s-40s, former patient of Adam Ferris,
Jill's client, a lawyer**

**MARIANNE (CAPUTO), 30s-40s, former patient of Adam Ferris,
Jill's client, a hospital receptionist**

ADAM (FERRIS), 50s, a psychiatrist

**DANETTA (BEALS), 40s, African-American, a homicide
detective**

**ROMY (SINCLAIR), late 20s, former patient of Adam Ferris,
Jill's client, a department store salesperson**

(Lights up on the therapy office of JILL JARDINE—formerly the office of ADAM FERRIS. The office contains, at a minimum, a desk with at least one drawer, a land line/answering machine, a desktop computer, a desk chair, two other chairs, a coffee table between the chairs, a Kleenex box on the coffee table, an analytic couch, and two doors, one to an unseen corridor, one to an unseen waiting room.)

JILL is talking on her land line. She has a trace of a Southern accent.)

JILL: *(into phone)* Hi, Ms. Caputo, this is Jill Jardine. Calling to follow up on an email I sent you...*(checks her screen)*...Wednesday, last week. I was asked by Dr. Ferris to contact his patients in the event of his death. So this is to let you know, if you're interested in continuing treatment, I was trained by Dr. Ferris and I'm at your disposal. Or if you just need help with a referral. Either way, please feel free to contact me.

(Blackout. Lights up on JILL.)

JILL: —Sorry, I can't give out information about the circumstances of his death....Or the investigation... No, I have a Masters in Social Work and a PhD in Clinical Psychology and I trained with him for two years...Well, I thought an afternoon call would be appropriate....To see if you're interested in continuing your treatment...Excuse me?

(JILL hangs up.)

JILL: Well fuck you too.

(Blackout. Lights up on JUSTIN PECK, an African-American in his 20s, sitting opposite JILL.)

JUSTIN: —I had this dream last night. I'm still in college. I haven't been to class in years, nobody's caught me, nobody's called me on it. It's always a different school, different campus, but the same problem, who do I have to...to get out of this college?

JILL: Who do you have to fuck.

JUSTIN: Right. Sorry.

JILL: Any thoughts about that?

JUSTIN: If you were a man, I would have said “fuck” in the first place.

JILL: Why didn’t you?

JUSTIN: Yeah, I know, it’s really lame. Chelsea curses more than I do. So OK, in this dream, I have to get to the registrar’s office, see what courses I still have to take...and I have to wait in this long line to talk to anybody...and the walls were pink, with this Spanish moss hanging from the ceiling...

JILL: Right, so who do you have to fuck?

JUSTIN: I guess the pink walls are the vagina, and the Spanish moss the pubic hair?

JILL: Who’s making demands on you?

JUSTIN: I like your new office, by the way. The old one was so small, I always felt claustrophobic.

JILL: Is your girlfriend making demands?

JUSTIN: Chelsea’s not my girlfriend. I mean I can’t call her that.

JILL: You just have sex.

JUSTIN: Mostly, yeah. Doesn’t it kinda freak you out? That a murder was committed here? This is that very office, right?

JILL: It happened here, yes.

JUSTIN: How come you inherited it?

JILL: How often does Chelsea ask for sex?

JUSTIN: Whenever she’s in the mood. OK, so when I get to the front of the line there’s like reams of paper to look through, see what courses I still have to take, and it’s all written in a code I can’t understand...

JILL: That would be your mom.

JUSTIN: That's amazing. I was picturing Momma before.

JILL: I know you were. Didn't you tell me you never knew what she really thought of you, because no matter what you did, she said, "Good job"?

JUSTIN: Yeah, no, how did you know that? I never told you that. What's the matter? What's happening?

(JILL has risen in her chair. Now there's a knock on the waiting room door.)

JILL: Excuse me.

(JILL goes to the door, opens it.)

JILL: *(to unseen person)* Have a seat, I'll be with you in two shakes. Plenty of magazines there, some of them might even be current.

(JILL closes the door, resumes her seat.)

JUSTIN: New client? Sorry, I shouldn't ask.

JILL: No worries, you're entitled.

JUSTIN: Yeah, there I go again. More Catholic than the Pope.

JILL: Good, you caught yourself. But you know what, Mr. Peck, we have to stop for now. Next week OK?

JUSTIN: My mom's staying with me all next week. I don't know if I can deal with Momma and therapy too.

JILL: So two weeks?

JUSTIN: Yeah, two weeks. After Momma I'll have a lot more dreams to tell you.

(JUSTIN *exits by the door to the corridor*. JILL *exits by the waiting room door*. *The land line rings and the answering machine comes on.*)

NICK WELLSTONE: (*on machine*) Yeah, hi doc, this is Nick Wellstone. Got your message, and sure, I wouldn't mind starting up again, with somebody new. Bummer about Ferris. Hope they nail whoever killed him. But yeah, we'll check each other out, see whether we have a future together...

(JILL *has re-entered, with MARIANNE CAPUTO, a woman in her 40s.*)

NICK: (*on machine*) ...Here are my avails: I can do Tuesday mornings before 11, Friday afternoons after 2. Let me know what works for you. Ciao.

(JILL *silences the machine.*)

JILL: Please have a seat, Ms. Caputo.

(MARIANNE *remains standing.*)

MARIANNE: What did he do, leave you his office in his will?

JILL: I was planning to move to this building. (*gestures toward chair*) Please.

(MARIANNE *slowly seats herself.*)

MARIANNE: When I saw it was the same address, I freaked.

JILL: Well, thank you for coming in.

MARIANNE: Seriously, why are you here? The murder office? Wow.

JILL: If it makes you uncomfortable—

MARIANNE: I can't do phone or Skype. Doesn't work for me.

JILL: Then let's talk about what brought you to Dr. Ferris.

MARIANNE: I really don't want to think about him.

JILL: What kind of thoughts are you having?

MARIANNE: You know...replaying that day.

JILL: When you say replaying—

MARIANNE: Yeah, well, I was here. In the building. I had a session that morning.

JILL: Were you his first patient of the day?

MARIANNE: What? No. I showed up after it happened. Are you gonna insist I talk about this?

JILL: Yes, and then we can move on.

MARIANNE: The door was locked when I got here.

JILL: He usually didn't lock it.

MARIANNE: I know. Freaked me out. Adam never missed a session. I went back downstairs and on my way out the guy at the desk says he was taken away in a body bag. I went numb. I thought probably a heart attack.

JILL: Why would you think a heart attack?

MARIANNE: I mean he seemed so stressed. The last few times I saw him. He didn't seem that way to you? You were in training with him, weren't you, didn't you say that on the phone? You must know all the details. Like if somebody was threatening to kill him?

JILL: I know there was police tape outside. In the hall.

MARIANNE: Was there?

JILL: Had to be. If the body was removed. You must have seen it.

MARIANNE: I don't know what I saw. The whole thing was so traumatic. When I couldn't get in the door I was like, is he sending me a message? Is he telling me we're done? I know that sounds crazy, but that actually crossed my mind.

JILL: Did you ever discuss termination?

MARIANNE: No. A couple of times. He seemed to be leading up to it. Like he wanted to see me on some other basis.

JILL: Why would you think that?

MARIANNE: I know he and his wife fought a lot. I know they fought a lot.

JILL: How do you know that?

MARIANNE: I used to see them all the time. I was in Guido's Restaurant one night when he came in. He kinda smiled at me, and she started yelling at him.

JILL: When else did you see him fighting with his wife?

MARIANNE: In the St. Catherine's cafeteria. I work on the information desk.

JILL: And when did you get that hospital job?

MARIANNE: I don't remember an exact date. Why are you asking me these questions?

JILL: Was it after you began treatment?

(Pause.)

MARIANNE: OK, I have to ask: How much is this costing me? I mean you're just a beginner, right? I don't know if it'll do me any good, having to come here. Where he died. Do I even want therapy? Maybe his death is a sign: I can finally stop therapy. I swear to God, if Adam hadn't been killed, I don't know what would have happened between us.

(Blackout. Lights up on JILL, lying on the couch. ADAM FERRIS, a man in his 50s, is seated behind her. It's several months ago.)

ADAM: You're unusually quiet today. Anything I should hear about?

JILL: OK. This has been brewing for a while. I can't do this anymore.

ADAM: Are you breaking up with me?

JILL: Excuse me?

ADAM: Do you think our work is finished?

JILL: How can it be finished? I'm still in training. I meant I can't lie here anymore.

ADAM: When have you been lying to me?

JILL: Please, no jokes. I can't be on the couch anymore.

(JILL falls silent.)

ADAM: Lying down helps people regress. Be less resistant.

JILL: I don't need any training in passivity.

ADAM: Who said anything about passivity?

JILL: And I'm not planning to do any couch work.

ADAM: Then why do you need my permission?

JILL: Yeah, no, I don't.

(JILL gets up, takes the chair.)

JILL: Whoa. Feels weird.

(Pause.)

ADAM: Just tell your thoughts.

(Pause.)

JILL: OK. You remember that day, I think it was the week after I started treatment? We arrived in the parking lot at the same time? I took the elevator and you took the stairs, and I saw you go up the stairs two at a time?

ADAM: I don't remember doing that, but OK.

JILL: Well, you did.

ADAM: I'll take your word for it.

JILL: I thought, I can't be in therapy with somebody who goes up the stairs two at a time.

ADAM: And you waited all these months to tell me that.

JILL: Those first weeks were so...intimidating. If I said anything remotely humorous, you never laughed.

ADAM: Maybe I was laughing on the inside. Why would you need a chuckle from me?

JILL: It's a human response.

ADAM: But your first impression of me was that I was all too human. Dashing up the stairs like that...as if I couldn't wait to see you...that must have alarmed you. As for passivity...isn't it you who made the first move?

JILL: Whoa.

ADAM: I'm just repeating what you told me about your dating history.

JILL: Are you saying I put a move on you?

ADAM: No, of course not.

JILL: You said “made the first move.”

ADAM: I said “makes.”

JILL: I heard a “d.”

ADAM: I think you misheard.

JILL: “D,” “S,” they’re totally different sounds.

ADAM: Are you passive with your clients? Not from what you’ve told me.

JILL: Yeah, I am. I let them walk all over me. Justin...the kid whose roommate uses him for sex? He brings me a dream every session and dumps them all in my lap. Ignores all my comments. It’s exhausting.

ADAM: A kick in the ass is worth a hundred interpretations.

JILL: It’s stressing me out. Picturing what he’s telling me. I’m like an empathy machine. I practically know what he’s going to say before he says it.

ADAM: Try dialing that back.

JILL: I’ve tried. I can’t. Everything they tell me, it stays in my head. I’m a week behind on my sleep. I toss and turn, I replay all the sessions, and when I finally do fall asleep it’s one dream after another. I wake up and I’ve lost three pounds. It’s like I’ve invented a new diet. You wouldn’t consider writing me a refill for Ativan? Now that we’re face to face.

ADAM: Who’s your primary guy?

JILL: I’m between G.P.s Why, is there a problem?

ADAM: I think you know.

JILL: I’m asking you to feed me. The way my mom didn’t.

ADAM: Makes sense to me.

JILL: So fine, that's my ulterior motive, I'm aware of that. Don't tell me you never prescribe.

ADAM: I prescribe all the time. I've got one girl on antipsychotics and another on Klonopin. The one on Klonopin, I'm about to ease her out the door. Or ask the court for a restraining order.

JILL: Whoa, what's that about?

ADAM: It's ridiculous. I can't go anywhere without seeing this woman in my rear-view mirror. Restaurants, the zoo...she took a job at St. Catherine's just so she could be closer to me. It got to be more than I can handle. Or Gloria could handle.

JILL: You talked about her with your wife?

ADAM: What choice did I have? We couldn't have Date Night without running into Marianne Caputo. Of course Gloria accused me of leading her on.

JILL: What do you tell Gloria about me?

ADAM: As little as possible. She was sick of what she called my "harem."

JILL: You fought about that?

ADAM: Not anymore.

JILL: Things are better now?

ADAM: They will be.

JILL: You're seeing a couples therapist?

ADAM: You mean a divorce counselor? We've already got one.

JILL: Eesh. Adam. I had no idea.

ADAM: You know, you should really think about having an office here in Couch Canyon.

JILL: As if I could afford it. Adam, I'm so sorry.

(ADAM starts writing a prescription.)

ADAM: There's a terrific gym across the street. Not that you need to shape up.

JILL: Wow. Confessions and compliments.

ADAM: What's the matter, am I shocking you?

JILL: Yeah, a little bit.

ADAM: Well, I think you'll enjoy sitting up. I know I will. (*hands her the prescription*) Here. Oxazepam, ten milligrams, as needed. Works better for insomnia than Ativan. (*lightly*) And easy does it on the empathy, OK? You don't want to drive yourself crazy.

(*Blackout. Lights up on NICK WELLSTONE, a man in his 30s or 40s, sitting opposite JILL.*)

NICK: —Three things you need to know about me. One, I'm slammed all the time, with this election coming up, that's why I was so late today. So there's bound to be a certain amount of rescheduling. Two, you'll never have to tell me anything twice. Three, don't be put off by my Type A demeanor, I'm really a softy at heart. Do I have your attention? Saw you glaze over for a second. OK, so now I need to know something about you. I want assurances you're not a gossip.

JILL: That goes without saying.

NICK: I needed to hear you say it. Always had my doubts about Ferris. I know his marriage sucked. I was here the day the process server knocked on that very door. You two must have been close? Of course you were, you took over his office. Kinda wish you hadn't. Sucks we have to do this in Couch Canyon. Always made me nervous.

JILL: Why?

NICK: People see me coming out, they could jump to conclusions.

JILL: You don't want people to know you're in therapy?

NICK: Why, you have a problem with that?

JILL: Mind telling me why?

NICK: The name Eagleton mean anything to you? No? McGovern's running mate in '72? Spent time in a loony bin, they made him withdraw from the ticket.

JILL: You're running for office?

NICK: City Council. I'm in a dead heat, can't afford any distractions. OK, so let's see, where did I leave off with the good doctor? We were getting to the bottom of my "sex addiction." Not my term. One man's addiction is another man's success. Of course, Imelda didn't see it that way—did Ferris tell you about Imelda?

JILL: Dr. Ferris didn't tell me any personal details.

NICK: Good. Just checking. No, Imelda thought because the sex was perfect we were perfectly matched. Bzzt! Wrong! Bethany, my campaign coordinator, she's another story. Better than true love, it's true sex. I'm in charge, then she's in charge, we're dancing, it's awesome. And all with the blessing of Dr. Vicarious. What a nutcase that guy was.

(A knock on the door—it opens partway.)

JILL: Um, just a second please.

(The door closes again. JILL checks her watch.)

JILL: Listen, I'm sorry to interrupt, our very first session, but I've really got to deal with something.

NICK: That's true about Ferris. He dug hearing about my affairs.

JILL: I'll want to hear more about that.

NICK: Yeah, we can dish him together, poor guy. What do you figure it was, some ignorant junkie came looking for painkillers, and lost it when Ferris wouldn't come across? Or maybe his wife did him in?

JILL: I don't know any more than you do. Do you mind waiting outside? This shouldn't take more than five minutes.

NICK: Yeah, OK, but just this once. Listen, I'm really glad the cosmos brought us together. And don't worry, I'll pay Ferris's rate, even if he did have fancier degrees than you. I know we're gonna do great work together. See you in five.

(NICK exits by the door to the corridor. After a moment, JILL goes to the waiting room door.)

JILL: Detective Beals? Please come in.

(DANETTA BEALS, an African-American woman in her 40s, enters.)

DANETTA: Sorry to disrupt. The clock runs me, not the other way around.

JILL: No worries, please have a seat.

DANETTA: I noticed your door was unlocked. Was that true of Dr. Ferris?

JILL: In my experience.

DANETTA: So that morning, it was probably unlocked. Did he have hours that day?

JILL: He had hours every morning, except Sunday.

DANETTA: See, we checked his computer, we've got a list of his patients, but not when he scheduled them. How often did you see Dr. Ferris as a patient?

JILL: Twice weekly. He supervised some of my cases.

DANETTA: Did he ever share anything of interest?

JILL: In what sense?

DANEETA: About his patients.

JILL: I'm not prepared to say.

DANETTA: If I took a look at your emails, would I see their names?

JILL: If you so much as tried, I'd go to court to stop you.

DANETTA: Same applies to your voice mail?

JILL: Same applies. We're not being much help to each other, are we?

DANETTA: No, you're not. And you're getting in your own way here, I hope you understand.

JILL: No, I don't understand.

DANETTA: Any of these patients show violent tendencies? Any anti-socials? Borderlines? Any psychotics?

JILL: I wouldn't be obliged to share that information. Unless they made specific threats.

DANETTA: I'm as aware of the Tarasoff Rule as you are. This was an extremely violent event. Somebody made Dr. Ferris suck on the barrel of a .38, and blew the back of his head off. I don't see a random junkie pulling a stunt like that.

JILL: You haven't found the gun?

DANETTE: I'm betting whoever killed him still has the gun. How many of his patients have signed on with you? I'm not asking for their names.

JILL: You'll get around to it.

DANETTA: OK, if that's the way you want to play it. End up like Dr. Ferris, don't say I didn't warn you. *(pause)* Sorry, am I being too blunt?

JILL: Why would a guilty patient agree to see me?

DANETTA: Find out what you know. Return to the scene of the crime. That's more than a myth, believe it or not. Call me when you have something to share.

(DANETTA hands her a business card and exits by the door to the corridor. JILL goes to the waiting room door, opens it.)

JILL: Mr. Wellstone?

(No reply. Nick's gone. Blackout. Lights up on ROMY, a woman in her late 20s, sitting opposite JILL.)

ROMY: Do you believe in ghosts?

JILL: Why, do you?

ROMY: Kind of. I mean yeah, for sure. *(pause)* It's so weird to be here.

JILL: You're not the first person to say that, Ms. Sinclair.

ROMY: Ohmigod, Adam never called me that. It's Romy. Do you believe we disappear when we die?

JILL: No.

ROMY: OK. That's a relief.

JILL: We live on in other people.

ROMY: I know we do, that's not what I mean.

JILL: What did you mean?

ROMY: Our energy. It stays around. Everything we do, everything we say, all the people we love, all the people we hurt—that energy stays in the living world and that's what we call ghosts and some people are more sensitive to this energy than others.

JILL: You, for example?

ROMY: And you too. I bet you have insomnia?

JILL: Most people have it now and then.

ROMY: I knew you did! Do you ever have prophetic dreams?

JILL: I haven't been keeping track.

ROMY: Did you ever dream of Adam? I did. All the time.

JILL: What did you dream about him?

ROMY: That something awful was going to happen. I can sort of remember the future.

JILL: Can you give me an example?

ROMY: OK. Like last week, I was running hot water in the sink? And I was thinking ohmigod it's so long since anything terrible has happened to my house, I'm sure the water heater's scheduled to explode. And two days later, boom, a pipe burst in the crawlspace under my kitchen. Cost me six hundred dollars.

JILL: You live in a house?

ROMY: Why, do I seem too young to live in a house? Bloomingdale's gives me huge bonuses every Christmas. I know as soon as women walk into my area which ones are going to buy perfume. So why did you flinch when I called him Adam? I bet you called him Adam and he called you Jill.

JILL: We were colleagues.

ROMY: He was grooming you to take his place.

JILL: How do you know that?

ROMY: I just knew. (*pause*) You don't remember me, do you?

JILL: No, remind me, from where?

ROMY: I had the hour before you on Mondays. I used to see you getting out of your Subaru. I was like, "Who's this Hooter's waitress with the lesbian car, and why is she in therapy?" Didn't you see the look on my face when you opened the door?

JILL: You looked pleased to see me.

ROMY: I was pleased. I am pleased. Except you look thinner than you used to. Have you lost weight? From not sleeping, probably. Never mind, you look fine, should we talk about your fee? Which you probably thought I couldn't afford it, since you thought I couldn't afford a house.

JILL: How much were you paying Dr. Ferris?

ROMY: It varied. Sometimes a hundred fifty....my co-pay was like 75...sometimes nothing.

JILL: When wouldn't he charge you?

ROMY: Like when I had to pay the plumber? For the new water heater? Or whenever I was broke.

JILL: I can't offer you the same deal.

ROMY: Hey, that was special treatment, ohmigod, you think I don't know that? Did he shower before your sessions? He used to before mine. His hair was always wet.

JILL: He belonged to the gym across the street.

ROMY: Yeah, he doesn't shower there anymore.

JILL: (*carefully*) No, he doesn't.

ROMY: That wasn't a joke. So this is what I really need to know... how much are you actually going to charge me?

JILL: What did you mean, that wasn't a joke?

ROMY: OK, it was. Seriously, how much? I can't wait to come back here again. You're totally on my wavelength. I knew it the minute I walked in.

(Blackout. Lights up on JILL and ADAM, sitting opposite each other. It's two months ago.)

ADAM: —The great advantage you have, you're one step ahead of the game. All that time you put in at that halfway house, you know the difference between misery and insanity. Too many shrinks never see any psychotics.

JILL: I'm not seeing any now.

ADAM: Well, brace yourself, because I'm about to bequeath you one.

JILL: Does he know?

ADAM: She. Girl in her 20s. The one on antipsychotics. You might be reminded of your mom from time to time.

JILL: Why, is this woman delusional?

ADAM: Floridly. Romy hallucinates at the drop of a hat. She's high-functioning, though, you'll be fascinated.

JILL: If she's so fascinating, why are you firing her?

ADAM: I'm not firing her. Just be careful though. There's something truly hypnotic about her. She's apt to turn you into a believer.

JILL: A believer in what?

ADAM: Her delusions. The way you picture that kid's dreams? The one who lives with a girl who's always hitting on him? That's your Achilles heel, this hyper-empathy of yours, so don't let Romy overwhelm you.

JILL: Adam...why are you asking me to take her on?

ADAM: Because I think you're ready. How's your social life these days? You seeing anybody?

JILL: Nobody special. Why?

ADAM: Male? Female?

JILL: I'd have told you, wouldn't I? Adam...forgive me...are you getting ready to throw me from the nest?

ADAM: No, I'm setting you up in style. While I go in a new direction.

JILL: Don't tell me you're retiring.

ADAM: What, and wait to die? This way to the cemetery? Hell no, I'll still be seeing patients.

JILL: At the hospital?

ADAM: No, I'm leaving St. Catherine's.

JILL: Then how?—

ADAM: I'm going on TV. You know that chef who fixes restaurants? Same format. I'll be visiting a bunch of clinics. See, you don't know this about me: back East I worked with a lot of chronic patients. I'd go into a teaching hospital, ask them to trot out their most intractable case, some hopeless catatonic who hadn't blinked for twenty-five years—whose eyeballs they had to irrigate so they wouldn't dry out—and within five minutes we'd be chatting away like old friends. This one silent old woman, I'll never forget, she used to line up all her vegetables on the plate so neatly she couldn't bring herself to eat them. So I sit down next to her, I reach over, and I mess up her nice row of peas. Right away she starts screaming. Lodges a complaint. Accuses me of sexual harassment. She was talking for the first time in years, but that irony was lost on the administration. Paranoids, too, I can usually make them come off it, the ones who think they're Jesus. "Gee, what a boring delusion. Can't you do better than that?" Or you play along with their fantasies, it creeps them out, they come off it. Romy's a prime example. But again, watch out. She's charming—her delusions are charming—but that can literally drive you crazy.

JILL: Adam, you can't be serious.

ADAM: Never more serious in my life. It's getting harder to make ends meet.

JILL: Come on. You live like a king.

ADAM: I'm abdicating. People come twice a month. The policies won't pay for anything more. They want instant results. They're like college students giving e-vals. Everything's user-friendly. It fucked up higher education and now it's fucking up psychotherapy. You could even piggyback onto my deal. They always need pretty women on TV. Not full time of course.

JILL: Adam...are you sure you want to do this?

ADAM: Absolutely. Once I decided on this new direction? And cut the cord with my wife? The weight of the world fell from my shoulders. For the first time in years I actually feel cheerful! And you know what they say—a completely cheerful man will live forever. So don't worry about me. Accept the challenges I'm giving you, stay calm, stay vigilant, and don't get lost in the labyrinth. You're so much better than you think you are.

(Blackout. Lights up on DANETTA and JILL, sitting opposite each other.)

DANETTA: You had something you wanted to share with me?

JILL: I should probably have mentioned it at our first meeting. It's about Dr. Ferris.

DANETTA: Go on. You're allowed to speak of the dead. No breach there.

JILL: He was going through a personal crisis.

DANETTA: You mean the peer review. He was in danger of losing his license.

JILL: Yes, that--plus his divorce.

DANETTA: We know all about the divorce. Mrs. Ferris was 3,000 miles away the day he was murdered. What else?

JILL: He was in a...a hypomanic state. He was making bizarre plans.

DANETTA: What kind of plans?

JILL: He talked about living forever.

DANETTA: That didn't work out, did it?

JILL: He was hoping to go on TV. His practice was dwindling. He was about to close it.

DANETTA: Or have it closed for him. The Psychiatric Association isn't sharing much either, but that's the impression I'm getting. How many of his patients knew he was quitting? Maybe one of them panicked. Threatened to kill him if he left them high and dry. Did he ever mention anything like that?

JILL: Detective Beals...

DANETTA: Danetta.

JILL: ...You know I can't answer these questions.

DANETTA: Why not? If a patient makes a credible threat, Tarasoff says you're obliged to notify.

JILL: Not if the target is already dead.

DANETTA: I think you're splitting hairs, but fine. Any particular loony come to mind? Never mind, I'll stop messing with you.

JILL: Sorry I can't be more help.

DANETTA: At least you're trying. And we've identified at least one suspect.

JILL: Is that right.

DANETTA: A certain car was seen leaving the premises.

JILL: Belonging to one of my clients?

DANETTA: We have our own rules of confidentiality. Maybe we can get a coffee and you'll worm it out of me?

JILL: I have a client coming in.

DANETTA: Or maybe dinner sometime. I know...I came on kinda harsh our first meeting. I'm trying to work on that. What do you say?

JILL: Wouldn't that violate procedure?

DANETTA: Cops are a little more flexible than shrinks.

JILL: Sorry, I can't.

DANETTA: Does that mean you don't want to?

JILL: You seem pretty sure I'm not in a relationship.

DANETTA: I'm pretty sure, yeah.

JILL: Why? Am I under surveillance?

DANETTA: Hey, we're all being watched these days. Some of us want to be on TV, like Dr. Ferris. Some of us would just as soon be invisible. Don't know about you, but that describes me to a T.

JILL: Could have fooled me.

DANETTA: I do fool people. You ask my co-workers, is Danetta Beals antisocial, I don't believe you'd get a yes from anybody. Because I know how to act...but it is an act. By the way, feel free to charge me for this hour.

JILL: If I were charging you, we couldn't have dinner.

DANETTA: Then how come Dr. Ferris dated his patients?

JILL: (*carefully*) I'm not aware that he did.

DANETTA: Suit yourself. Listen...if anything comes to light...along the lines we just discussed...my dinner offer still stands.

JILL: And you have my standing refusal.

DANETTA: I expected that. Always nice talking to you, Jill.

(DANETTA starts out, then stops at the door.)

DANETTA: Just out of curiosity...is it because you don't date black women?

JILL: You'd be the first.

DANETTA: Then we live in hope. Till next time.

(DANETTA exits. Blackout. Lights up on JUSTIN and JILL.)

JUSTIN: —So I'm having breakfast with my mom, the day before she's scheduled to leave, and Chelsea walks in.

JILL: You never told your mom about Chelsea.

JUSTIN: No. I mean...no.

JILL: Afraid she'd disapprove.

JUSTIN: Yeah, and she did. Big time.

JILL: Because she's jealous? Or because Chelsea's white?

JUSTIN: I don't know...both? *(then)* I never told you she was white.

JILL: Were you embarrassed to tell me?

JUSTIN: No, I'm not embarrassed, are you? Sorry. I shouldn't have said that. There I go again, apologizing for nothing. OK... maybe I didn't tell you because you sound like you might be from the South and I thought you might disapprove of black-white relationships. *(off JILL's silence)* Do you? Never mind. You don't have to answer that. Forget I said anything. I had a dream last night, can I tell you about it?

(Blackout. Lights up on MARIANNE, sitting opposite JILL.)

MARIANNE: ...You eat fresh fruit, you live longer. So I always put fresh fruit on my Cheerios. Or my All Bran. Or my cornflakes. I alternate. Cheerios, All Bran, cornflakes. Always with fruit...But the fruit goes moldy unless you sugar it, molds need water to grow, and sugar sucks the water out of things. Trouble is, if I eat too much sugar, I'm bummed by noon.

JILL: Yeah, and the price of strawberries is going up. Come on, Marianne, what's really bumming you?

MARIANNE: What do you mean, what's really bumming me? I thought shrinks were supposed to be interested in everything.

JILL: Right now I'm interested in your feelings about Dr. Ferris.

MARIANNE: What do you want to know? I'm still at the stage of denial.

JILL: What are you denying?

MARIANNE: I'm trying to pretend he didn't care for me.

JILL: When you say "care"—

MARIANNE: I don't mean just as a patient.

JILL: And how did he show this?

MARIANNE: I already told you.

JILL: Tell me again.

MARIANNE: By going to Guido's with his wife. He knew I went to that restaurant all the time. Men do that.

JILL: Do what?

MARIANNE: Show off their mistresses to their wives.

JILL: Were you his mistress?

MARIANNE: I'm making an analogy!

JILL: So he was stalking you.

MARIANNE: I swear to God, you're as bad as that detective.
(*pause*) I wasn't even in town the day Dr. Ferris was killed.

JILL: Where were you?

MARIANNE: What difference does that make?

JILL: It makes a big difference. You told me you were there that morning. You said the door was locked when you showed up for your session.

MARIANNE: I know what I said.

JILL: Then why did you just say you were out of town?

MARIANNE: Ohmigod. Do you actually think...wow. You realize how insulting that is? That you could even think that about me? Yes, he was stalking me. He was obsessed. Not the other way around. I was the one who was in danger. Me. Not Adam, OK? I was the one. Aren't you supposed to be on my side?

(*Blackout. Lights up on NICK, sitting across from JILL.*)

NICK:—After sex I get angry. I get impatient. My ape brain says I'm supposed to leave. But it's Bethany so I have to stick around.

JILL: Is that why you left our first session? After I asked you to wait five minutes?

NICK: I have a very crowded schedule. You took longer than five minutes.

JILL: Did you know I was talking to the police?

NICK: Of course I knew.

JILL: And how did you feel about that?

NICK: I didn't really give a shit. They're gonna try and weasel things out of you, but you know enough to fend them off, I'm sure. No, that didn't bother me. Busy man. Antsy by nature. On to the next. With Bethany I can't.

JILL: Wouldn't look right if you dumped her. In the middle of a campaign.

NICK: I love how you stick up for me. Not like Ferris. He was old school. Sink or swim.

JILL: You sound like you're nursing a grudge.

NICK: Because it's retarded.

JILL: Why is it retarded?

NICK: (*uneasily*) It just is. Fuck.

JILL: Who were you thinking of just then?

NICK: OK, I'll play. This retarded girl who used to walk my dog.

JILL: What about her?

NICK: Somehow she got it into her head I was Jewish. Instead of saying hello, every time she came to pick up Sammy, she'd say "Mazel tov." Which isn't even appropriate. Drove me crazy. Not because she was retarded. That's not what pisses me off. It's that they don't know they're retarded. People should know what they are. Do you know what you are?

JILL: I'm someone you're trying to provoke. What was retarded about Dr. Ferris?

NICK: He was always fucking up.

JILL: In what ways did he fuck up?

NICK: My diagnosis for one thing. That shit stays with you forever.

JILL: What diagnosis did he give you?

NICK: Come on, I'm sure he warned you. Not that he ever copped to it, not in my presence. But I knew from his questions what he was after. I know the Diagnostic Manual. I devoured it cover to cover. Let's get off this subject, do you mind very much? I'm glad he's dead, is that what you want to hear? So now you can drop a dime on me? I'd sue you from here to Tuesday.

JILL: Why Tuesday?

NICK: What do you mean, "why Tuesday"? It's an expression.

JILL: Six ways from Sunday, that expression I've heard.

NICK: Whoa. I don't think you're supposed to correct the patient. Particularly one with my diagnosis.

JILL: Dr. Ferris was killed on a Tuesday.

NICK: Yeah, and two plus two make eleven. Question for you: Were you fucking him?

JILL: OK, you see what's happening here?

NICK: Yeah, you're digging yourself a big hole.

JILL: First you idealize me, then you tear me down.

NICK: When did I idealize you?

JILL: You said the cosmos brought us together. You remember saying that?

NICK: Of course I remember. I'm "borderline" not senile.

JILL: Remind you of anything? This pattern?

NICK: What pattern?

JILL: Somebody you loved? And hated? Who loved you one day and hated you the next?

NICK: You're leading the witness, counselor.

JILL: Give it some thought. That's your homework. I know this is a high-stress time for you, heading into an election, but we don't want you losing your temper at any town hall meetings. You feel your anger bubbling up, take a breath, and when you get a chance write down the circumstances and what you did to keep yourself on track.

NICK: You seem pretty sure I'm coming back. *(rises)* You really don't know what the fuck you're doing, do you?

JILL: Well there, you see? You're doing it again.

NICK: Keep this up, we'll both be sorry.

JILL: Why will I be sorry?

NICK: I think you know what I mean.

JILL: No, I want to hear more about that.

NICK: Goodbye, doc. *Sayonara.*

(NICK exits. Pause. JILL picks up her land line. Takes Danetta's card out of her desk drawer. Dials. She has second thoughts, starts to hang up—someone picks up.)

JILL: *(into phone)* Sorry, Danetta, I must have butt-dialed you....No, no problem...nothing to report. Take care.

(JILL hangs up. Sits a moment. Opens her desk drawer, takes out a vial of pills, gulps two pills dry. Then goes to the door, opens it.)

JILL: *(to offstage person)* Welcome.

(ROMY enters.)

ROMY: Who was that?

JILL: Who was what.

ROMY: Your last client. I met him coming down the hall. He goes, "Don't go in there. She'll suck the juice right out of your brain."

JILL: Those were his words?

ROMY: Yeah, how scary is that? Are you OK? You look kinda freaked. Sounds like he could use some ego drainage.

JILL: Please have a seat.

ROMY: Maybe you should tell the cops about that guy.

JILL: I was trained to handle problems.

ROMY: But they've been to see you, right? The police?

JILL: Just routine. They're making the rounds.

ROMY: You wouldn't tell them anything about me.

JILL: You know I wouldn't.

ROMY: Because I say a lot of things. People take me wrong sometimes.

JILL: You don't have to worry.

ROMY: Do you believe if you read about a disease you can catch it? I say that to people, they think I'm nuts.

JILL: Why, has that happened to you?

ROMY: Yeah, like if you tell me you have a headache, I immediately get one too.

JILL: That means you're an empathetic person.

ROMY: You know how that feels. You know what's going through my mind now?

JILL: You're thinking about Dr. Ferris.

ROMY: The police are all wrong about Adam.

JILL: In what way?

ROMY: Just things they don't know.

(Sound of a gunshot—distantly. JILL just perceptibly flinches.)

ROMY: Why are you flinching? You don't have to be jealous.

JILL: Jealous of what?

ROMY: Adam's really glad I'm seeing you. *(pause)* Never mind, I shouldn't have said that.

JILL: What exactly did you mean?

(No answer. ROMY is staring at the wall behind JILL, suddenly frightened.)

JILL: Romy?

ROMY: I don't think I can make you understand.

JILL: Try.

(ROMY turns away in the chair, shading her eyes against something.)

JILL: What is it? What are you seeing?

ROMY: It's OK. For a second I thought I saw...you know, the bloodstain.

JILL: When do you talk to Adam?

ROMY: Ohmigod, I'm sorry, am I freaking you out? Yeah, my throat is starting to close up too. Forget what I said. I was just messing with you. Can I please go now? I'll see you next time.

(ROMY heads out.)

JILL: Romy, I don't want you to leave.

ROMY: I know you don't. I have to. I'm too stressed right now and so are you.

(ROMY exits in a hurry. JILL sits rigidly, as though afraid to turn around. Finally she does, staring at the bare wall where Romy thought she saw blood. Turns away, fighting back a sense of horror. Blackout. Lights up on JILL, behind her desk, and DANETTA.)

DANETTA: Come on, that was bullshit about butt-dialing.

JILL: Nothing's going on. I had a moment of panic, I dialed you, I had second thoughts.

DANETTA: If you're gonna lie to me, hon, that's gonna get neither of us anywhere. Did he threaten you?

JILL: You're assuming it was a he.

DANETTA: Wasn't it?

JILL: The client didn't threaten.

DANETTA: Did he confess something?

JILL: The client ranted about Dr. Ferris. I overreacted.

DANETTA: Maybe you should fire him.

JILL: Why do you keep insisting this was a guy?

DANETTA: Because Nick Wellstone's the only man among your clients who were Ferris's patients.

JILL: Wow.

DANETTA: So can we please cut the crap?

JILL: I really am under surveillance, aren't I?

DANETTA: I know you don't want to implicate the dude, because it could undermine his political campaign. Do no harm, I get that. What was the substance of his rant?

JILL: I can't get into that.

DANETTA: Did he mention a weapon?

JILL: No.

DANETTA: I may have to assign an officer.

JILL: Danetta...I want to handle this myself. Until there's a clear-cut danger, and then I promise to contact you.

DANETTA: That's meaningless. That's your duty to warn. Are you upset that I'm concerned about you? Am I insulting your professional competence? You're obviously good at what you do.

JILL: Now how would you know that?

DANETTA: The way you got me to talk about myself.

JILL: Didn't take much encouragement, as I recall.

DANETTA: Got a minute? Mind if I sit down?

JILL: Sure, go ahead.

DANETTA: (*sits*) You do mind, I can tell. Is anything wrong? You look upset.

JILL: I'm upset you're assigning an officer. When I haven't broken any confidence.

DANETTA: You'll thank me later. Now what I didn't tell you about myself... I was raised in a town outside Salt Lake City. I was the only black girl at Emma Smith Academy—that's Joseph Smith's sister. Would you care to hear what happened to me there?

JILL: If you want to tell me.

DANETTA: OK. The way I saw it, I had two options open to me. Class clown or athlete. Don't know if you've noticed, but I'm not a particularly funny person. And for the first seven years of my life, I was no kind of jock. So one day...bear with me...I lost my rabbit's foot that my Aunt Cecelia bought me at the county fair. And I panicked in front of the entire class. Does all this sound trivial?

JILL: Not if it's important to you.

DANETTA: There's way more to the story. I'm late for an appointment, can we continue this at dinner?

JILL: You really don't give up, do you?

DANETTA: I'd even settle for therapy.

JILL: If I took you on as a client, we couldn't have dinner.

DANETTA: I'll have to think that one over.

JILL: And I don't date ex-clients either.

DANETTA: What about supervisors? Dr. Ferris, for example.

JILL: I think you'd better go.

DANETTA: *(rises)* Yeah. We're not supposed to date persons of interest either.

JILL: Is that what I am?

DANETTA: In every sense of the word. Bye, Jill.

(DANETTA exits. Blackout. Lights up on ADAM and JILL.)

ADAM: ...I couldn't believe how all the lawns were manicured. I'd never seen an edger in my life. In the East, the front lawns always spilled onto the sidewalk. To me that was symbolic of the East Coast's tolerance of disorder. But I found out I had that backwards. The minds out here, so much more disorderly. Case in point, this borderline you're about to inherit? If he doesn't get elected, he'll end up a serial killer. And of course there's Romy, but there we'll be teaming up.

JILL: What do you mean, teaming up?

ADAM: Don't look at me in that tone of voice. When you meet her you'll see why I'm doing this.

JILL: Adam, doing what?

ADAM: I can't keep treating her...and see her socially. That would be a breach.

JILL: Adam, stop. I don't want to hear anymore.

ADAM: Why?

JILL: Why? Because I might be obliged to report you.

ADAM: Jill, that's not like you, to be so priggish. Hey, when you first came to see me, you could hardly open your mouth, much less meet me on equal terms. By making you my confessor, I'm curing you of all doubts about your abilities.

JILL: You want to hear my version?

ADAM: Please.

JILL: You're making yourself dependent on me, just like my mom did.

ADAM: Exactly. Spot on. It's a "corrective emotional experience."

JILL: Just so you know...I'm feeling very close to the edge right now.

ADAM: Warned you about that, didn't I. You like osso buco? Ever been to Guido's? Great atmosphere. Great martinis.

JILL: Adam, what's the last time you slept?

ADAM: The truly cheerful man need never sleep.

JILL: Adam...I'm not going to a restaurant with you.

ADAM: Why, have you changed teams for good?

JILL: You could lose your license.

ADAM: Are you kidding? Do you know the statistics on therapist-patient marriages?

JILL: Oh, are you proposing marriage now?

ADAM: Still, there's no law against them, so long as the treatment's broken off.

JILL: Really? I thought you were in treatment with me now. Seriously, I have to go.

ADAM: No, where? The hour isn't up.

JILL: What hour. Whose hour.

ADAM: Please don't leave. I'll be good.

JILL: You realize...it's gonna take me a long time to process all this shit.

ADAM: Wow...that's the first time you've cursed in treatment.

JILL: (*flares*) This isn't treatment, OK? You're not treating me, I'm not treating you. Are we clear on that? Adam...you need to go back into therapy, and it's not going to be with me.

ADAM: But you're the best.

JILL: I'm not even competent yet. Right now I feel like a fucking liability. What's more, I'm not taking on your Haldol girlfriend, this delusional psychotic, God no, are you kidding? How many other patients have you hit on?

ADAM: Oh, do you consider I've been hitting on you? You're not exactly blameless here, Jill. Takes two to tango.

JILL: Get some help. Please.

ADAM: The truth: Are you going to report me?

(JILL heads for the door.)

ADAM: Jill, come on, please don't go. I talked to my producer, he's definitely interested in bringing a woman onto the show. You have no idea how many doors will open, it's the 21st Century, Jill, conventional therapy is dead, most mental problems are self-correcting, and the ones that aren't self-correcting can't be corrected. I'm sick of being a sponge for toxic emotions!

JILL: You and me both.

(JILL exits into the corridor. ADAM calls to her from the doorway:)

ADAM: *(calls)* I want my time to be my own! And I want you with me! Jill! I need you!

(No reply. ADAM closes the door. Blackout. Lights up on JUSTIN and JILL. JILL is at the door to the waiting room, listening.)

JUSTIN: Hello? Are you even listening? What's the matter, what do you hear?

JILL: Nothing. You were saying.

(JILL backs away from the door, but doesn't sit.)

JUSTIN: I wish you would sit down.

(JILL sits—fretfully.)

JUSTIN: What was the last thing I said?

JILL: You were telling me a dream. You were in a panic, because you couldn't find your car. The more you looked for it, the stranger the landscape got.

(JILL has popped up again, in spite of herself.)

JUSTIN: What's going on here? I'm getting scared.

JILL: Don't be scared. What does the dream remind you of?

JUSTIN: I hate it when you say that! Why do I have to do all the work? Isn't this what I'm paying you for?

JILL: *(pacing)* You're paying for half the work. Here's my half, all right? You came in here, the first thing out of your mouth was, "I had a dream." You say that every session. You tell me a dream, and then you want me to tell you what it means. I tell you that's not how it works, and you get upset. Why? Because I don't think you're really interested in your dreams. When you say to me, "I had a dream," I think you're talking about something else entirely. You did have a dream. A recurrent dream. You had a dream that Chelsea was going to be your girlfriend, maybe even your wife, and what she turned out to be was an over-demanding fuck buddy.

JUSTIN: I didn't even get to fuck her that much.

JILL: Well there you go.

JUSTIN: After she met Momma she moved out.

JILL: You might be better off.

(JILL has gone to the door again.)

JUSTIN: What are you doing? Jesus, are you losing it?

JILL: *(calling out)* Hello?

(No answer. JILL opens the door, still listening.)

JILL: I think you'd better go.

JUSTIN: Why? What did I do?

JILL: You didn't do anything.

JUSTIN: You owe me five minutes.

JILL: I'll make a note.

JUSTIN: This is so weird. OK, I'm going. You were right about my dreams.

JILL: I know I was.

JUSTIN: And I'm gonna tell Momma to back the fuck off.

JILL: Sounds good. See you next time.

(JUSTIN exits in a nervous hurry. JILL stands listening to the silence. The land line rings. JILL's voice on the machine:)

JILL: *(voice over; on phone)* You've reached the office of Jill Jardine. Leave a message, and I'll return the call as soon as I can. If this is a psychiatric emergency, please call 911.

(NICK's voice, on the answering machine:)

NICK: *(on phone)* You fucking dyke bitch. I trusted you, you broke your legal obligation, and now you're going to pay. You're dead now. D,E,A,D. When you fucking least expect it.

(Message ends. Long pause. JILL takes out her smartphone, finds a number.)

JILL: Danetta? It's Jill. I just got a threatening message from Nick Wellstone...Me, he threatened me...I guess technically I'm warning myself, but I thought you should know....Right. I understand. Whatever you have to do.

(Pause. JILL opens her desk drawer, takes out the pill vial. Swallows two pills dry. Opens the door. MARIANNE enters, makes a beeline for the chair.)

MARIANNE: I almost didn't come today.

JILL: I know you didn't.

MARIANNE: What do you mean, you know?

JILL: The way we left it last time. You told me to go fuck myself.

MARIANNE: I never said that.

JILL: It's what you were thinking. When you left, you were never coming back.

MARIANNE: Yes, well, that's true. You accused me of something.

JILL: You contradicted yourself.

MARIANNE: I know what I said. Yes, I was here in town. I don't know why I said I wasn't. Somebody saw me leaving in my car. This detective, this woman, she looked up my license plate, she came to see me. I thought she was going to arrest me...for a thought crime.

JILL: You never believed Dr. Ferris had a heart attack.

MARIANNE: No...I thought...I thought somebody beat me to it.
(*pause*) I didn't mean that the way it sounded.

JILL: When people say "I didn't mean..."

MARIANNE: Yes yes, all right. But come on, why would I bother to expose him if I was going to kill him? Why go through legal channels?

JILL: What channels?

MARIANNE: You know...the Psychiatric Association.

JILL: Did Dr. Ferris know you were reporting him?

MARIANNE: Because of the stalking.

JILL: Marianne...are you sure he was stalking you?

MARIANNE: Yes! He was totally freaking out. Every session. Talking about himself. Bragging about himself. Anything that came into his mind. The TV show he was going to do. Like this orgy of oversharing. I was like, this guy's a menace. People should be warned.

JILL: Then why did you show up for your appointment?

MARIANNE: He called me. And sounded so weird on the phone. "We have to work through your trust issues." Trust issues! But OK, I thought maybe I owed him that much. All the way up in the elevator, I was like, "Marianne, don't do this, turn around, go home." And when I saw the police tape, I thought, ohmigod, what if they think I did it. I panicked. You think I was the only one? He was probably hitting on all his women patients. Did he? Did Adam hit on you? He did, didn't he? Does that mean you're a murderer?

(Blackout. In darkness, ADAM's voice:)

ADAM: *(over)* ...I owe you an apology....

(The lights have come up on JILL. She's listening on her smartphone.)

ADAM: ...I'm so ashamed of how I spoke to you last time. Not that I'm offering excuses, but when you add up the stress points, 100 for a divorce, 75 for switching jobs, plus some peer-review stuff you'll probably hear about sooner or later...hell, you didn't want me on TV anyhow, did you? And listen, I know I crossed a line. But if you're afraid to cross the line, you'll never be any damn good. And I know you have it in you to be good, if you can stop over-identifying with your patients. So I hope you'll take my advice about Couch Canyon, because the office is yours. OK. Signing off. What goes up must come down. I hope you know I love you.

(JILL tightens as she hears something.)

JILL: Hello?

(No answer. JILL goes to the door, opens it. NICK is standing there.)

NICK: Hello, doctor.

JILL: This isn't your hour, Mr. Wellstone.

NICK: I know it isn't my fucking hour. I'm not here for my hour.

(NICK backs JILL into the office, blocking the way to the door.)

NICK: Why did you sic the cops on my ass?

JILL: You left me a threatening message.

NICK: What message.

JILL: The one where you called me a dyke bitch. And spelled out the word "dead."

NICK: Yeah, I don't remember doing that.

JILL: You really don't remember?

NICK: Spelling out that word? No.

JILL: Well you did.

NICK: Makes us even.

JILL: How does that make us even?

NICK: You forgot something too.

JILL: What did I forget?

NICK: You didn't warn me you were calling the authorities. That's an ethical breach right there.

JILL: "When you fucking least expect it." You recall saying that?

NICK: I say a lot of things to a lot of people. I've got a lot on my mind lately.

JILL: Yeah, you're in a rage.

NICK: Do you blame me?

JILL: And I can help you get to the bottom of it.

NICK: Nice try, lady. I see you checking out the door. Sit down. It's over, bright eyes. I said sit down!

(JILL *sits*. NICK *paces*.)

NICK: Real estate might be your thing. You could specialize in trailer parks. Don't worry, I checked out your background. Did you know Ferris was trying to make TV deals? Did he ask you to be in the show? They oughta strip you naked at the next APA meeting. That would be an evening's entertainment.

JILL: OK. You've attacked us both, now let's talk about you.

NICK: What about me?

JILL: Were you physically abused, sexually abused, or both?

NICK: What kind of fucking question is that? You. You're the abuser. You and Ferris.

JILL: Who before us?

NICK: (*wincing*) I didn't come here for this.

JILL: Yes you did. You've been thinking about him. Or her. It's a her, isn't it?

NICK: You're trying to talk me off the ledge. You're the one on the fucking ledge.

JILL: Who fucked you over? Say who it was, and I won't ask you any more questions.

NICK: This lady I used to cut her grass.

JILL: I'd like to hear about her.

NICK: No no. This is not the protocol you should be using. Who fucked you over, before Ferris? Your mom? What kind of trailer trash was she, a biker chick?

JILL: Just tell me about this lady. Mother? Grandmother?

NICK: Fuck difference does it make. Grandmother.

JILL: What did she do to you?

NICK: You said you wouldn't ask any questions.

JILL: I lied. What did she do to you?

NICK: She had a weed patch.

JILL: A weed patch. Where?

NICK: What do you mean, where? Between her legs.

JILL: OK—

NICK: In her backyard, where else?

JILL: What about it? What was there?

NICK: Crabgrass, dandelions, prickly lettuce, who cares?

JILL: She made you do what? Mow it?

NICK: Nah. With a weed whacker.

JILL: All right.

NICK: Totally useless. Used to watch me from this Adirondack chair. She was an ugly bitch, too, big old titties, skirt hiked above her knees, I could see the gray hairs curling out of her drawers. Getting off watching me sweat. I was like, "Why not dig up the patch and plant some fucking vegetables?" And she had these currant bushes behind her garage, real thorny motherfuckers, I picked those until my hands bled. And all the time she's watching me from that chair, legs all apart, fanning herself with a rolled-up newspaper, like if I didn't pick fast enough to please her she was gonna swat me with it.

JILL: How old were you? Ten? Eleven?

NICK: Eleven, yeah. Any older, I would have pushed her over in the chair and stomped on her ugly face. *(pause)* Whoa, you really pulled that out of me, didn't you.

JILL: Feel better?

NICK: Are you kidding? No. So what were your issues with your mom? Was she a juicehead? You probably had to prop her up, make dinner, put her to bed, was that the deal?

JILL: Pretty much, yeah.

NICK: See, that's where your strength comes from, having to take care of your mom. And your resentment. Of your patients. You resent the fuck out of me.

JILL: She raised you, didn't she, your grandmother.

NICK: Nah, I don't want to talk about her anymore. Let's talk about us. You ever have sex with a patient?

JILL: That's enough of that shit. Sit down.

NICK: Am I scaring you? Are you gonna call 911?

JILL: Not if you behave yourself. This is why you blow hot and cold, that sadistic bitch who raised you. You can't let yourself keep loving someone, because you know from experience they're gonna betray you, make you so angry you can't stand it, make you so angry you want to kill.

NICK: I think I'm falling in love with you.

JILL: OK. Every time you start switching, nasty to nice, back again, either way, make a note. Say to yourself, Nick, there you go again. Say it out loud.

NICK: And that's gonna cure me.

JILL: Just do it. Write it down. Keep a log.

NICK: You think I have time for this? Why am I even listening to you?

JILL: That's one.

NICK: Come on, that didn't count! I was fucking with you. Seriously, I think you're great.

JILL: That's two.

NICK: OK, OK, I get it. (*hears something*) Whoa, what the fuck was that?

JILL: What was what?

NICK: Come on, you heard it too. There's somebody here.

JILL: Yeah, sit tight.

(*JILL goes to the door.*)

JILL: (*to unseen person*) It's OK. I'm with someone. Seriously, don't come in—

(*DANETTA barges past JILL.*)

NICK: Who the fuck is this?

JILL: Danetta, we're having a session here.

NICK: You're not who was tailing me. Who are you?

DANETTA: I'm somebody you don't want to fuck with.

NICK: I don't appreciate the language. She told you to get out, why don't you listen.

JILL: Nick, it's all right, take it easy.

NICK: This time is paid-for. You're invading my space. Out you go.

(NICK grips DANETTA's elbow, starts steering her out.)

JILL: Nick, don't— DANETTA: Take your hand off me, please.

NICK: Why, are you jealous? You oughta see your face right now.

JILL: Guys, cut it out. Danetta, please go.

NICK: You heard her. Stupid dyke.

(DANETTA grabs NICK's arm, handcuffs him.)

DANETTA: That's it, you're coming with me.

NICK: Oh what, are you arresting me? She's the one who's in breach. Never mind. Fuck this. I take it back. (to JILL) You're not a genius, you're a fucking crackpot. Arrest her, why don't you.

(DANETTA hauls NICK out the door. Pause. Blackout. In darkness, ADAM'S voice:)

ADAM: (on voice mail) — And I know you have it in you to be good, if you can stop over-identifying with your patients. So I hope you'll take my advice about Couch Canyon, because the office is yours. OK. Signing off. What goes up must come down. I hope you know I love you.

(Knock on door. Lights up on JILL, alone in her office. The pill vial is open on her desk. She silences the voice mail.)

JILL: Who is it?

(No answer.)

JILL: Who's there?

(JILL rushes to lock the door. It opens before she gets there. ROMY enters, clutching a handbag close to her chest.)

ROMY: I really need to talk to you.

(JILL puts the cap back on the pill vial, puts the vial back in the desk drawer.)

ROMY: What are those?

JILL: Just something I take.

ROMY: For what?

JILL: Anxiety.

ROMY: Just anxiety? Nothing else?

JILL: Just tell me why you're here.

ROMY: Can I sit down?

(Pause.)

JILL: Romy? I'm waiting for you to tell me why you're here.

ROMY: You know why. Adam didn't mean to harass us. He feels terrible about that.

JILL: What's the last time you saw him?

ROMY: At my house. The one you think doesn't exist.

JILL: How long has he been there?

(No answer.)

JILL: In what way did Adam harass you?

ROMY: Because I wouldn't sleep with him.

JILL: Did he ask you to sleep with him?

ROMY: That's why he stopped my treatment.

JILL: So you two could be together.

ROMY: I didn't want that.

JILL: So what did you do?

(No answer.)

JILL: Romy, would you open your bag, please?

ROMY: Why?

JILL: Just show me what's in your bag.

(ROMY opens her bag, looks into it.)

ROMY: Ohmigod. Oh no.

JILL: What is it?

ROMY: My Haldols, I forgot to take them along.

(JILL tries to grab the bag from ROMY.)

ROMY: Whoa, what are you doing? Keep back. Is this what you were looking for?

(ROMY has taken a handgun out of her bag.)

JILL: Where did you get that gun?

ROMY: I've been meaning to put it back.

JILL: Put it back where?

ROMY: There. In the drawer.

JILL: Are you telling me that's Adam's gun?

ROMY: Yeah, don't you believe me?

JILL: How do you know he kept it in the drawer?

ROMY: 'Cause it was open. When I got here. I could see that in my mind's eye, that's why I ran all the way. I can see like ten minutes ahead. About sixty seconds from now they're gonna knock on that door, they've been following me everywhere...they're so clueless.

(JILL's cell rings.)

ROMY: See? There they are now.

(JILL answers the phone.)

JILL: *(into phone)* Hello?

ROMY: Put it on loud.

(JILL hesitates. ROMY is pointing the gun. JILL puts the phone on loud.)

DANETTA: *(on phone)*: Jill, are you OK?

(ROMY prompts JILL to say yes. Locks the door.)

JILL: *(phone)* Yes, I'm OK.

DANETTA: *(phone)* We've got a warrant to search Nick Wellstone's place.

JILL: *(phone)* Don't bother, the gun's here.

(ROMY grips the gun.)

ROMY: Hang up!

JILL: *(phone)* Danetta, I have to go now.

DANETTA: *(phone)* What do you mean, the gun's there?

ROMY: Tell her you're with a client.

JILL: *(phone)* I'm with a client.

(ROMY turns out the room light.)

ROMY: Say goodbye.

JILL: (*phone*) Danetta, I'm saying goodbye. We'll talk later.

(*JILL hangs up.*)

ROMY: Ten...nine...eight...seven...

(*A knock on the door. The doorknob rattles.*)

DANETTA: (*other side of door*) Jill?

ROMY: Tell her to go.

JILL: (*to ROMY*) She's not going to hurt you.

ROMY: Tell her.

JILL: (*calls*) Danetta, it's really better if you go. (*to ROMY*) Look, Adam's probably wondering where you are. You don't want to show up with his gun, do you?

ROMY: That's why he told me to put it back.

JILL: That's good thinking.

ROMY: He knows I'm here.

JILL: Are you sure?

ROMY: Oh totally. He knows I'm trying to help him. Ohmigod, when his colleagues threatened to take away his license? I was so upset when I heard that. I was like, is he gonna think I blew the whistle on him?

JILL: So why don't we give him a call? Just to let him know you're following his instructions.

ROMY: I don't think we have to do that.

JILL: You think he'd answer his cell?

ROMY: Yeah, I don't know.

JILL: Do you want to try him? Let's try him.

ROMY: Please don't.

JILL: For his sake, OK?

(JILL keys in a number on her phone. Shrill non-connection sound, and the recorded voice:)

VOICE ON PHONE: The number you have dialed is no longer in service. Please check the number and try again.

JILL: That's weird, isn't it. Maybe we should have a session, you me and him, the three of us. You wanta drive me over there?

ROMY: That's not gonna happen.

JILL: Maybe you don't really want to see him? That woman out there, Danetta, she can show you some pretty grisly pictures.

ROMY: Please stop talking about him.

JILL: Fair enough. Why don't we put the gun back where he wants it.

(JILL opens the desk drawer. ROMY hangs onto the gun. JILL makes a move toward her.)

JILL: Romy...

ROMY: That woman out there—

JILL: Let me worry about her. Tell me what you remember about that morning.

ROMY: It could have changed.

JILL: Not even God can change the past. See if this makes sense. You came here for your regular appointment—

(Knock on door.)

DANETTA: (*other side of door*) Jill?

JILL: Gimme a second, I'm working here! (*to ROMY*) You saw Adam slumped in his chair, all that blood on the wall....You took his gun out of his hand....and you closed the desk drawer. How am I doing so far?

ROMY: Yeah, he didn't want people to find it.

JILL: He didn't want people to think he killed himself. So you took the gun with you.

ROMY: He told me to. And close the drawer. And wash off the powder burns.

JILL: Why do you think he shot himself?

ROMY: Because I was too late.

JILL: Were you always on time?

ROMY: Except when I didn't come at all.

JILL: How many sessions had you canceled?

ROMY: I didn't cancel any. I just didn't come.

JILL: You were breaking up with him?

ROMY: Yeah, and then I woke up that morning and I knew what he was planning to do, and I rushed over, but I didn't get here in time.

JILL: OK. You come running in here, there's Adam. You close the drawer, you leave with the gun. When did you see Adam next?

ROMY: The foot of my bed.

JILL: You were sleeping?

ROMY: No, are you kidding? Totally awake. So I went to the bathroom and I took a Haldol and when I came back he was still there.

JILL: See, that's encouraging. Most people dream something like that, they can't keep it in their heads. That's a sign you're regaining control.

(JILL starts to move closer to ROMY.)

JILL: My mom, case in point, she couldn't manage it. And she was a pretty smart lady, when she wasn't trashed. We'd be sitting at breakfast, she'd see a tree growing out of the floor of our trailer. I'd ask what kind of tree it was, she couldn't say. Orange tree, apple tree, it kept changing on her.

ROMY: I never did acid, did you?

JILL: Not intentionally.

ROMY: What, who fed it to you? No...your mom?

JILL: While she was high.

ROMY: That's fucked up.

JILL: It's pretty fucked up, that's right.

ROMY: Even weed makes me nuts sometimes.

JILL: Probably good to stay away from it. Till we get full control of these thoughts.

ROMY: How will I know if I'm in control?

JILL: When Adam leaves your house.

ROMY: He's on his way back here now. Oh God. I don't want to see him.

JILL: Shh. It's OK. It's not your fault what happened. He did it to himself. He thought he could do no wrong, the world called his bluff, and he crashed. Happens to the best of us. And listen, I loved him too. I wish I could have brought him back to life—

ROMY: [stifled scream]

(JILL whirls, looking where ROMY's looking.)

ROMY: You're seeing that, right? Please tell me you're seeing that.

JILL: Yes. I'm seeing it.

ROMY: What? Tell me.

JILL: It's Adam. It's Adam's bloody head. Fuck!

(JILL grabs the gun out of ROMY's hand, as if to fire at the image. ROMY turns away. The instant she does, JILL relaxes a notch.)

ROMY: I'm sorry you had to see that. Is he gone?

JILL: Yes, he's gone. *(pause)* I think we can stop for today.

(JILL gathers herself, goes to the door, opens it, beckoning to the unseen DANETTA. DANETTA enters, sees the gun in JILL's hand. ROMY starts out past DANETTA.)

DANETTA: Whoa, where do you think you're going? What the hell is going on here?

JILL: It's OK, Danetta. Let her go.

DANETTA: What do you mean, it's OK? Where did that gun come from?

JILL: Dr. Ferris's drawer. It's his gun.

ROMY: I broke his heart.

JILL: Romy, his heart was already broken.

ROMY: I know, right?

JILL: We'll get into that next time.

ROMY: The regular time?

JILL: The regular time.

DANETTA: Whoa whoa, hold on. Nobody's leaving.

JILL: Danetta, it's not her gun.

DANETTA: Then what was she doing with it?

ROMY: I took it off him.

JILL: She took it off him. After he shot himself. So she could pretend he was still alive. Listen, she has to go home and take her meds, she forgot to put them in her bag. Adam's DNA's probably all over this gun, plus mine, plus Romy's, plus maybe the guy who sold him the gun. Seriously, what would you be charging her with? Evidence tampering? Fine, send her to County, she'll end up in what passes for a rubber room—at best. You'll be making my job a whole lot harder. And good luck ever seeing me again.

(Pause. DANETTA hesitates, takes several tissues from the Kleenex box on the coffee table, carefully wraps the gun, puts it in her purse, takes out her phone and texts. JILL opens the corridor door for ROMY.)

JILL: Detective Beals will be in touch. *(to DANETTA)* You're having her followed, am I right?

DANETTA: *(puts away her phone)* Until we confirm the registration.

JILL: *(to ROMY)* That's just a formality. Go on home now. Adam's not there, I promise. You'll be fine.

(ROMY backs out of the office. JILL closes the door, nervously eyeing the wall where Adam's image appeared.)

DANETTA: Did you know she was that far gone?

JILL: *(still staring at the wall)* I had inklings.

(JILL sits down suddenly, fighting off a dizzy spell.)

DANETTA: What's the matter?

JILL: Delayed reaction.

DANETTA: Jill, are you all right?

JILL: Just give me a minute. Sorry I panicked about Nick Wellstone.

DANETTA: (*numbly*) You sure it's safe for that girl to be walking around?

JILL: She's not a killer. She's a high-functioning schizophrenic. Lots of us around.

DANETTA: I hope you're kidding.

JILL: Why don't I fill you in over dinner?

DANETTA: You mean now?

JILL: I'm hungry, aren't you?

DANETTA: (*still dazed*) I could eat. (*pause*) Can I still talk about my issues?

JILL: If you pay for the meal. So...you were telling me how you became a jock?

DANETTA: Was I?

JILL: Your lucky rabbit's foot your Aunt Cecelia bought you. You thought you'd lost it. Were you panicked?

DANETTA: Totally panicked. I was looking all over for it.

JILL: The white kids were staring?

DANETTA: Yeah, and I saw my future, turds on my chair and all that nonsense, unless I acted fast.

(*JILL has swallowed two pills dry, offers the vial from the drawer to DANETTA.*)

JILL: Care for an Ativan?

DANETTA: Thanks, I had my Xanax this morning.

(*JILL stows the vial. She heads out with DANETTA.*)

JILL: So you had this epiphany, what did you do?

DANETTA: I sucked it up. I put in the time. Taught myself to hit a baseball...shoot a jump shot...head a soccer ball. And eventually that became my identity. Star black athlete in an all-white school.

JILL: So why did you become a cop?

DANETTA: Oh well. That's a whole 'nother story.

(JILL and DANETTA exit, closing the door after them. The phone rings. The machine answers:)

NICK: *(phone)* Pick up, bright eyes, I know you're there. Better lawyer up, you pussy-licker, 'cause I'm coming after you. You may think you're a genius shrink, maybe on good days you are, but you've got a shitload to learn about boundaries. Maybe a day in court will sober you up. Teach you to respect the rights, privileges, and future prospects of the people entrusted to your care. Oh and by the way, I can't make our Friday session. How's your Tuesday looking? I can do first thing in the morning or the late afternoon. Let me know. I'll look forward to it. You're the best. *(pause)* That's three. Can't wait to see you. Four. No-talent dyke. Five. I fucking love you. That's six. See you Tuesday.

(Blackout. END OF PLAY.)