



A PEACEFUL PLACE

by temi rose 1987

Time: 1986

Place: NYC and environs

Characters:

| | |
|-------|-----------------------------|
| May | Talkative, friendly (18-21) |
| Alice | Serious, kind (18-22) |

May and Alice look very much alike. They often dress alike. Their differences are internal, attitudinal, and are manifested externally in their choice of jewelry and hairstyles. The colors they wear are similar.

Set: The set is essentially bare with areas set apart by the use of platforms. The central area is not raised. One or two set pieces will indicate place but the women will always be the most colorful and interesting presences onstage.

Lighting and Sound: The moods and changes of scene are primarily known by the audience through the use of the lights and sounds.

Style: The style is a minimal, symbolic set as for dance or performance art. The performing style is natural/realistic.

Scene One – *the audition*

May, waiting to audition, is pacing and thinking about her ex-beau.

MAY

Dear Arthur, You are a selfish prick... Dear Artie baby, Stephanie is a pig, dump her and come back to me. No, don't come back to me, you hairball, you walking, talking son of a scumbag. I like that, "Walking, talking," that's good. Dear Man-who-I-thought-I-loved, until Marie told me that Stephanie told her, you made it with her dog on Halloween. There are words for you but I don't know them. Dear Arthur, all your fancy words about love and peace and the dawning of the new age, any day now... (*sings*) "any day now, I shall be released." Dear Arthur, you are full of shit –

ALICE

Hey, May! Whatcha doin'?

MAY

Auditioning.

ALICE

Me too.

MAY

Which show are you trying out for?

ALICE

Men or Pause.

may

"A play in two acts." Yeah, me too.

They look at each other. They are so much alike that it is too threatening to think about. After checking each other out, they dismiss the issue and move on.

MAY

Yeah. So what's happening at the restaurant? How's it going?

ALICE

Not so good.

MAY

What's the problem?

What isn't?
ALICE

You lose a check?
MAY

Yes.
ALICE

Your boss come on to you?
MAY

Of course.
ALICE

What else?
MAY

They fired Charlie.
ALICE

MAY
I used to like waitressing. But then it seemed like I was doing something dirty. The way they treated me, the customers, like I was expected to wipe their asses for God's sake. And the managers are weird too, you know, coked up all the time, and counting every dime: weird. And no respect. Nobody respects the woman who wipes their ass, right?

*A voice from offstage calls, "Maybelle Leigh!"
May, hesitates.*

That's you.
ALICE

Oh. That's me.
MAY

Good luck.
ALICE

Thanks.
MAY

May exits bravely to audition. Alice speaks to herself as May did in the opening.

ALICE

Oh, God. What if she gets the part? She always gets these kinds of parts: The Angry Ingenue. I'm angry. Not too angry. They don't want you to be too angry because then they say, "Oh, she's temperamental," and they tell everyone you're a tramp. That's what they did to Eileen. She refused to take off her shirt and she let them know how she felt about it too: exploited. She was the youngest female in the show and the only one they asked to take anything off. She knew she was risking her reputation by refusing but the only lie she could think of telling them was that she had scars all over her body from the boiling water her drunken mother had poured on her when she was an infant. So she told them the truth. They couldn't fire her, even though they wanted to, because it hadn't been in the script in the first place so she wasn't in violation of her contract. But they made her life hell. Then they spread the word around that she was irrational. Not Eileen. Eileen may be a lot of things but she's not irrational. Not at all. It didn't seem to matter to anyone that we all knew that the director was a lech. But of course that had nothing to do with it. Just don't be too angry, that's all. A little angry is good; it's working class. But not feminist. There's a fine line. I'm more feminist. But I can act. I could act a little working class anger. "Stella!" Sure I could. I think I can. I think I can. I think therefore I am. I know I can. Of course I can. Think a little angry.

MAY

Hey, Alice, whatcha doin'?

ALICE

Hi, May, did you get it? I mean, how did it go?

MAY

I don't know. I think I did ok. But I don't know. I didn't do very well. I wasn't sure what he wanted. Sometimes they get so intellectual it's hard to find the real woman behind the foster grants.

ALICE

What did he ask you to do?

MAY

Aargh. He wanted me to get on my hands and knees, pretend I was looking for a contact lens. You know, and then I was supposed to do the personal stuff in the script; but it was personal, you know, about her past and everything. It's right before they get it together and when I read it I thought it'd be a moonlit night or something and kinda deep when she finally lets down her defenses and tells him about herself. But he wanted me to play it light, throw it away and be on the floor, looking for this lens. I don't know. I think he's gay. My butt was sticking up in the air like a baboon and my script kept getting caught on things cause I had to drag it around to try and read it but I kept getting messed up on my lines. And I was trying to remember what Bill said last night in class. Remember? About intentionality and everything, but it

was hard. I don't know. I think I fucked it up. You know who would be good at this? Eileen. She'd know what to do.

ALICE

I got a postcard from her.

MAY

Yeah? From Florida, right? How's she doing?

ALICE

She says she likes it.

MAY

I bet the men are slick.

ALICE

Greased.

MAY

What's she doing?

ALICE

Hello Dolly. You wanna go for coffee?

MAY

Aren't you going to try out?

A voice calls from offstage: "Alice Faber!"

ALICE (*LEAVING*)

Nah, it's been a bad day already.

MAY

I didn't make you nervous, did I?

May grabs Alice by the arm and pushes her towards the audition platform. May's voice gradually fades as she speaks and gradually exits.

MAY

I'm sorry. You gotta try. Maybe it won't be weird for you. Go on, Alice, you can do it. It'll be fine. I just had a weird time, you'll be fine. Fine.

Alice, alone, faces into the audience, a script in hand.

ALICE

Yes?... Hello... On the floor? ... Like this?... *(she gets down on her hands and knees)*
Un-hunh... Look for his lens... Is it my lens? ... Yeah, I know. But why wouldn't he
look for his own lens? .. Well, you said he was standing and I'm down here on my
knees, so naturally I thought .. Oh, yeah, symbolism. But why would you want to
symbolize.... Un-hunh... No, I'm sorry, just that she seemed, when I read it I mean,
I thought she was trying to get him to really know her before she'd sleep with him.
And she's been so strong and now it's as if she's back to a subservient position...
(she stands) Well, yes, sir, I guess we do have divergent value systems... Ok, well,
it's nice to see you again too... bye.

Scene Two – *coffee shop negotiations*

Lights to black. Then they come up again on Alice and May drinking coffee and sharing a piece of chocolate cake in a coffee shop.

MAY

Oh, well, yeah, Arthur was a prick. What can I tell you? (*beat*) He's seen every film Stallone ever made.

ALICE

Oh, my God.

MAY

Hey, it wasn't that bad. Look: He fucked like a dream. Ok? Alice! Stop making faces at me. He's Italian. (*stage whisper*) HOT. I never came like that before. Without having to do anything. Nothing...No, I'm not kidding. The guy's a genius. Like, all I had to do was fucking lie there, not move at all, nothing, and Arthur, he could find my orgasm and pull it out of me til I was screaming. With his penis. He could do that. Amazing. I always had to work for mine. You know: flex and push and work up a good sweat and I can come. I'm not frigid or anything, but this is different, he spoiled me. Do you think maybe there's other Italians who can do that trick? It could be a technique. Then he could do it for anyone. He said I was special but he lied about a lot of things. On the other hand, a person with a talent like that has an obligation to society to spread it around. You know what I mean?

ALICE

Not really.

MAY

Is Charlie any good?

ALICE

May!

MAY

I heard black men are really good. And how'd he get fired anyway? What's he going to do now?

ALICE

May.

MAY

No one can hear us. You can tell me. Is he doing something illegal? He could sell his body, I bet, he's so gorgeous... You're lucky, my Dad would beat the shit out of me if he caught me with a black man. But I made it once with a Chinese man. It was like sleeping with a silk ribbon. It was the most beautiful experience. But I couldn't do it again in case my Dad might find out. So? There you go, making faces again. Oh, I'm embarrassing you. You shy or something? You don't like to talk about sex? Gosh, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. Alice, speak to me.

ALICE (*laughing*)

May, it's ok. I just don't feel comfortable.

MAY

With me?

ALICE

In here.

MAY

Where do you want to go?

ALICE

You wanna go camping?

MAY

Around here? In the park? I don't know. My grandpa used to do it but I don't think it's safe anymore.

ALICE

No, not around here. I know a place, a campground.

MAY

How do you get there?

ALICE

A bus.

MAY

A bus goes to a campground?

ALICE

Kinda.

MAY

Kinda, Alice?

ALICE
Yeah?

MAY
You still seeing Charlie?

ALICE
Yeah, why?

MAY
You're not... you know?

ALICE
I'm not looking for pussy, May. Just some company. I want to get away from here for a little while. Think, talk.

MAY
You been to this place before?

ALICE
A coupla times. It's a peaceful place. We take a bus from Port Authority for two hours and it takes us onto higher ground: mountains, birds, flowers, things like that. Then we get out and hitch a coupla more miles and there's a campground by a lake.

MAY
A lake.

ALICE
I've got a tent. Do you have a sleeping bag?

MAY
Sure, I been outdoors.

ALICE
You wanta go?

MAY
How long will we be gone? They said they'd call me about the part, the day after tomorrow.

ALICE
Then let's go tomorrow afternoon and we can be back by noon the next day.

TOGETHER (*accidentally*)
They never call before noon.

They laugh.

ALICE

I don't have to work til Thursday.

MAY

You got a deal, Alice. You got a fuckin' deal. Let's blow this stinkin' hole. We'll search for peace of mind. (*sings*) "Nothin' ain't worth nothin', 'less it's free."

Blackout

Scene Three – *hitch-hiking*

The lights come up on Alice and May hitch-hiking and walking. Alice is carrying a back pack and is eating the last of an apple. It is late afternoon. Suddenly the sound of a car passing causes both women to put out their thumbs. May adds a huge pleasing smile. Alice's approach is more businesslike, then she goes back to eating the apple and throws away the core. May is carrying a dufflebag and a ghetto blaster. Alice is wearing a hat, bangle earrings and patched pants. May has a scarf around her head, bells around her ankles, a skirt over pants. They are colorful gypsies.

MAY

Three. I don't think anyone's ever going to pick us up. How far is it?

ALICE

Only a little ways more.

MAY

How many miles?

ALICE

Two.

MAY

Two.

ALICE

Someone'll pick us up.

MAY

How do you know?

ALICE

Law of averages.

MAY

Law of averages.

The sounds of a car are heard. They put out their thumbs. The car passes.

MAY

We're working with the law of averages, right?

ALICE

Right.

MAY

So, say one out of every twenty people, maybe one out of every twenty-five people, is radical enough to pick up a hitch-hiker....

ALICE

Two women.

MAY

Ok, add in perverts if you want to, and we're back to one out of twenty.

ALICE (*laughing*)

Ok.

MAY

We've been walking and walking and walking and walking, Alice, there have been four cars TOTAL on this road. This is what is known as a deserted road at dusk. Now: add it up, my friend, we'll get to the lake before twenty cars even pass us. We'll never get a ride.

May plunks herself down by the side of the road.

MAY

So, you wanta hear the new Madonna tape?

ALICE (*still laughing*)

Oh, God, May, don't: I have to piss.

MAY

Lucky thing we stopped. I see a great set of bushes over there. (Alice heads for the bushes) Don't worry, if I get a ride while you're gone, I'll be sure to steal all your stuff, especially the set of lacy underwear I saw you pack. And the cooking utensils, I have my eye on those aluminum treasures, Alice, you better not leave me alone with all this stuff. Alice, I'm warning you!

May puts in the tape and another car passes. This time the headlights are visible as they streak by. May jumps up and poses, thumb out, with a big smile until the car passes her.

MAY

Damn it. Well, I don't think much of you either. I bet you beat your children and cheat on your taxes. Creep. Five.

ALICE (*returning*)

Let's go, it's getting dark.

MAY

No way, no ma'am. I'm not moving. I hate walking. I especially hate walking when I'm carrying bulky bags. I'll just stay here, camp on the side of the road like a you-know-what.

ALICE (*attempting to assert the moral imperative*)

May.

MAY

Alice.

ALICE

If we put out the effort, then it will return to us.

MAY

Yes, I heard about that. But what exactly does it mean?

ALICE

It means what goes around, come around... what you give, you get.

MAY

Where do you get this stuff?

ALICE

Are you religious, May?

MAY

I'm Catholic.

ALICE

Do you believe in God?

MAY

I guess so. But every time I call, I get a busy signal. And what, pray tell, does God have to do with hitch-hiking?

ALICE

I believe in the power of the spirit world to guide us, and I don't think it's a he-god or a she-god, I think it's like the water surrounding the fish in the ocean, keeping them afloat. The spirit world keeps us suspended.

May pretends to be in suspended animation.

ALICE

I'm not explaining it right.

MAY

Oh, I'm just giving you a hard time. I know what you mean. I have those feelings too... like there's someone who reaches out and puts her arms around me. She's invisible but I can feel her. I know she's there. When things get really bad and I'm really scared, I can feel her arms reach out and hold me. You think she'll carry my dufflebag for me?

ALICE

No. But if we keep walking, she might bring you a Cadillac.

MAY (*getting her gear together*)

I hope you know what you're doing.

ALICE

Are you hungry? I'll carry the blaster if you want to eat an apple.

MAY

No, thanks. I'll suffer.

They walk. Another car passes, they put out their thumbs, the car keeps going.

ALICE

Cars are armored tanks.

MAY

Yeah, crank up the music and pretend you're invincible... it's fun when you're the one inside.

ALICE

But when I'm walking, I have my power. My legs stride, stretch and pull these long muscles in my thighs. I make a breeze with my motion. The air washes my face with its freedom. I can breathe it in and it washes my heart. The air touches lots of ways, May. Did you know that? Now, we're getting near the lake so the air is wet and filled with dew and it's cool air too, from the moon. Can you feel it?

MAY

I think so. Alice? There's a car coming. Alice, this is it. Come on, Alice, smile. Here it comes. PRAY!!!

The lights go blindingly bright on Alice and May with their thumbs out, smiling. Then Blackout.

Scene Four – *tent confessions*

Lights come up with the sound of a car door closing and an engine revving. May enters, calling back to the person in the car. Alice has begun to set up the tent.

MAY

Thanks. Thanks, a lot... Yeah, you too. Sure, see you around. Bye. Thanks again. Wow. We made it, Alice. A Camaro is a lot nicer than a Cadillac.. Oooo, he was cute. Too young for me, though. But cute. I love this. This is beautiful. What a nice lake and so close to the city. I can't believe it. It's so quiet here.

May throws her dufflebag on the ground, searches and finds an apple in Alice's pack and proceeds to eat it.

MAY

Let me know if you need any help, ok? Oh, Alice, this is beautiful.

They are both silent and the birds and crickets can be heard. The sun setting casts an orange light over everything.

MAY

Oh, check out the sky.

Alice stops working and silently appreciates the sky. Then, as the light fades, she goes to her pack and takes out a power flash light and puts it in May's hands, shining it on the tent. Then she goes back to work.

MAY

Alice, I want to share something, something personal, something about me. Hey, I didn't know if I should tell you before but I want to tell you now because it's important to be honest with people, especially when you first get to know them. If you start off lying, there's no telling how bad it can get. I mean, when I think of the lies Arthur told me, I could puke. I mean, you brought me all the way out to this beautiful place so that we could talk, it's a cosmic happening, to come here, to this peaceful place. It's important to try and reach deeper and relate more, on a grander scale than we can trapped in concrete slabs. You brought me here to experience this freedom and I want to live up to the trust and faith you've shown me by bringing me to your special place. My name really isn't Maybelle Leigh, it's Angela Allentano

and I never went out with any guys who weren't Italian and Catholic because my father is a good man and he scares the shit out of me. And the reason I picked a Southern name was that, more than anything, all my life, I've wanted to be a lady and I wanted to be a star and Southern women are always ladies, and there's lots of stars named Leigh... so... and there's one more thing and I hope it doesn't ruin everything for you because I don't know how you feel about things like this but I wanted to be able to appreciate the cosmicness of this and so I dropped acid when we got off the bus. You don't hate me do you?

Blackout

Scene Five – *campfire memories*

Alice and May are sitting by a fire in the midst of conversation.

ALICE

"Mother, I can't be who you think I am, I can't even be who I think I am. You have no idea how scary this is."

MAY

Was it really scary?

ALICE

Yeah.

MAY

What was the most scary part?

ALICE

Um, I think the idea that he'd be there a lot of times when I might not want him to be there.

MAY

I never lived with a man.

ALICE

This is my first time.

MAY

Really? Well, Charlie is a pretty cool guy. You two don't seem to have much in common, though. I always thought of him as into clothes and dancing and making it big.

ALICE

We're a lot alike though.

MAY

How?

ALICE

We're scared. *(pause)* He's a dancer who acts and I'm an actress who dances.

MAY

He loves to talk about sex.

ALICE

And I'm a prude.

MAY

No. I didn't mean that.

ALICE

But I am.

MAY

Why?

ALICE

Because the butler finger fucked me when I was six and he terrified me into not telling and I never told, even after he was fired for stealing silver spoons, I never told. And I still don't tell, I try but it's hard, difficult, things get stuck in my throat.

MAY

Gee, Alice, you're full of surprises. What did your parents do when you moved in with Charlie?

ALICE

They disowned me.

MAY

Shit. I'd have to kill my little brother or something to get disowned. My sister had a baby out of wedlock and they didn't disown her. But, I don't know, I never tried dating a Jew. That might put my father over the edge.

ALICE

You know what Eileen told me once? She said you might be rich in energy or thoughts, abundant in caring or beauty but rich people aren't rich in money, they have way more bullshit than money, so their abundance is in bullshit.

MAY

I'd like to be rich. What would you do if you had a million dollars?

ALICE

I have a million dollars.

MAY

You do? Holy fuck. You have a million dollars. What are you sitting here with me for?

ALICE

I like you.

MAY

You really have that much money?

ALICE

I guess so.

MAY

But you're not sure? Are you sure you're not a virgin?

ALICE

Gee, May, I don't know. When he stuck his finger in my ear, did that count?

MAY

If I had it, I'd know I had it. Lord, Mary, Jesus, Alice, no one knows this. Does Charlie know this? (*Alice nods*) And he didn't tell me, the weasel.

ALICE

I swore him to secrecy.

MAY

That never stopped him before.

ALICE

Has he told you things about me?

MAY

No, before you. I know a lot of stuff about Charlie, we were in Terry's class two years ago, that teacher was mad, we went every week and got slobbered after she'd ripped us apart in class. The woman has no mercy. I always wondered what Charlie'd be like to go out with, but we were too good friends. Besides, he's black and my family would shit, you know... Alice, you don't act rich.

ALICE

Thanks. What about Sheila? Did he tell you about Sheila?

MAY

She was a jerk. He just liked her because she was so easy.

ALICE

Sheila was easy?

MAY

I know, she doesn't act it, does she? But she is. Frank told me that about her too. I don't like her.

I'm jealous of her. ALICE

Why? MAY

Because she's fearless. ALICE

But she's not. MAY

How do you know? ALICE

She wants to get married. MAY

So? Doesn't everyone? ALICE

Yeah, but she's a lot older than you are. She doesn't look it, but she's thirty. MAY

You're kidding? ALICE

Un-unh. And I think, personally, that she'd do ok if she didn't lie about it. The guys like her and they'd forgive her for being easy but they don't forgive her for lying and they have a point. That's the hardest thing for me about Arthur, he lied so much. MAY

I used to lie a lot. ALICE

Why? MAY

Protection. To get out of tight spots, to make an impression. ALICE

You could do that without lying. MAY

Do you feel ugly sometimes? ALICE

MAY

Sometimes? All the time. I “compensate” – I try to distract people from my imperfections.

ALICE

Yeah, that’s kinda how I lied.

MAY

Are you saying my looks are a lie?

ALICE

Don’t get pissed but, yeah, I do. I think we all lie because it’s too threatening to tell the truth, to be who we really are.

MAY

Are you giving it away?

ALICE

What?

MAY

The money. Are you giving it away?

ALICE

I don’t think so.

MAY

What are you going to do with it?

ALICE

I don’t know. Nothing.

MAY

Nothing? Are you going to keep waitressing?

ALICE

Yeah, what else can I do?

MAY

What else can she do? What else can you do? What can you do with a million dollars? You could go around the world.

ALICE

And leave Charlie? We just got our apartment.

MAY

Take him with you.

ALICE

And how would he feel? Being carted around?

MAY

Shitty.

ALICE

See?

MAY

You could cart me around the world, and I wouldn't feel shitty at all.

ALICE

Hey, I don't want to be rude or anything, but I would rather stay in my small apartment and my shitty job and live with Charlie than go around the world with you.

MAY

No problem. You could invest it and make more money.

ALICE

I don't need any more. I don't even know what to do with this much.

MAY

What did they mean when they disowned you? You can't have any more?

ALICE

I guess. But that's not the part that bothers me.

MAY

What part bothers you?

ALICE

That I never had a home and now I don't even have the pretence of a home. Charlie says that we can start our own home and I want to feel like I belong somewhere but I don't know how to do that.

MAY

You *are* depressed. I grew up like a piece of shit. We never had enough money for decent shampoo. We used Prell. Remember Prell? Now they advertise that stuff on cable: "Green Slime Shampoo." You can order it special. It's a joke. Now. I didn't think it was funny then. Not by a long shot, more like a cheap shot. I was ashamed. We were good people and we went to church and we prayed and all that stuff but we

never, never had enough to go around and I hated it, I really did. That pearl floated down to the bottom of the bottle as slow as it took to rinse that shit out of my hair. The first thing I did when I got my first job was buy three bottles of great beautiful shampoo with fancy names and special ingredients. I know what I'd do with a million dollars. I'd buy myself a trip to one of those spas where they pat you all over every day, both sides. Then, when I got home, I'd give my cousins the money for a piano so Danny could get great. If he doesn't get a piano soon, he'll end up playing pool. The guy's a genius with his hands, an artist. Then I'd get my Mom a new pair of reading glasses. And I'd get my Dad a dog and I'd take a contract out on Arthur's life, that's a joke, you're supposed to laugh. And then, I'd move to Hollywood and hire a publicity agent and become a star. But you'd rather keep on working for that creep at the restaurant, go to acting class with me and Charlie and watch us struggle.

ALICE

I'm struggling.

MAY

For what?

ALICE

You mean you think money is the only thing that people struggle for?

MAY

All the people I know.

ALICE

Not me. I struggle to live without fear.

MAY

But how can you be scared when you have so much money?

ALICE

Originally, people believed that they would work hard and one day their children would be able to stop struggling for material things and be able to concentrate on the struggles towards spiritual enlightenment.

MAY

What does that mean?

ALICE

It means... that I have enough material wealth to realize that fear comes from something more ephemeral than the lack of some *thing*. Fear is a disease and I have it and I think I'd do just about anything to learn to live without it.

MAY

Ok, I get it, but what I want to know is, if you didn't have all that money, would you be trying to get it before you started thinking about all this ephemeral, is that how you say it, stuff?

ALICE

I don't know, I guess so.

MAY

This acid is incredibly speedy, I wish I had some pot so I could slow down. Aphemeral?

ALICE

Ephemeral.

MAY

Ephemeral means invisible, right?

ALICE

Right.

MAY

Arthur had good pot. But his other good qualities were ephemeral.

ALICE

I used to smoke pot. I quit because Charlie asked me to.

MAY

He told you about his brother, right?

ALICE

Yeah.

MAY

I never went out with a black man.

ALICE

You keep saying that.

MAY

Is it different?

ALICE

Is what different?

MAY

I don't know. Is anything different?

ALICE

Every guy is different, right?

MAY

Yeah, but you're being philosophical again and you do that when you when you don't want to say it straight out.

ALICE

You want to know if Charlie is good in bed?

MAY

Yes.

ALICE

Yes, he's gentle and he has really soft skin and he's funny and he makes me laugh...

MAY

While you're fucking?

ALICE

Sometimes. I like that. But after too. He's real. I can keep my eyes open the whole time and like it.

MAY

Alright, fuck, it's hard for you to say a simple thing, girl, you're great at the complicated stuff...

ALICE

Sometimes he reminds me of my dad.

MAY

What do you mean? He hits you?

ALICE

No, no, he's not violent, he's protective.

MAY

What's wrong with that?

ALICE

Nothing really but it can be patronizing and then I feel angry and trapped –

MAY

And scared?

ALICE

And scared. I need to make my own decisions or I get really freaked.

MAY

Me too. (pause) I saw Charlie hit his brother.

ALICE

You did?

MAY

Did you ever meet his brother?

ALICE

No. He was dead before I met Charlie. What'd he hit him for?

MAY

Trying to knock some sense into him. Trying to get him to quit lying, stealing and begging for money, for drugs. It was ugly. Dan came into the studio, made a big scene and wouldn't leave. Charlie got all mixed up. I heard him say, "I love you," right before he hit him.

ALICE

Then what happened?

MAY

Then Dan fell down and cried. He was dead pretty soon after that. Somebody must've lent him the money, cause he OD'd.

ALICE

Charlie said his father was tough, that Dan was the sensitive one and could never live up to his father's ideas of being a man. Dan never got the love he needed, just beatings. They all got beat but it hurt Dan the most. Did your father hit you?

MAY

Sure. Didn't your?

ALICE

No. He's a junkie.

MAY

What d'ya mean? He's a banker.

ALICE

Doctors do drugs.

MAY

But not bankers. He did smack?

ALICE

No. Pills. Sleeping pills, uppers, downers, prescription drugs. He has an “understanding” doctor, a doctor who “understands” all the pressures he’s under. The drugs change all the time, but he’s always on something.

MAY

Shit: the lifestyles of the rich and famous.

ALICE

For a long time, I considered becoming a heroin addict.

MAY

Yeah? Why?

ALICE

I thought it would make me famous.

MAY

A jones?

ALICE

Yeah, I thought, if I could get into a habit, I’d be wickedly famous. Everybody famous has wicked habits because it’s not natural to separate yourself out apart from other people, so, if you do it, you need a buffer. People are sensitive, too sensitive to do what they have to do, so they need to protect themselves, if they want to be out there. Drugs are the obvious choice and heroin is the most effective pain killer, or so I’ve heard.

MAY

So how come you didn’t do it?

ALICE

I’m more scared of needles than I am of being nobody, and more scared of dying than of being in pain.

MAY

The only habit I ever considered getting into was black and white. I just do drugs for fun.

Alice
Have you ever seen someone die?

MAY
Yeah, my grandmother, my mother's mother. I think she died of a broken heart.

ALICE
I watched my brother die. You wanta take a walk?

MAY
Sure.

Blackout

NEW SCENE

Lights come up. Alice and May are walking in the moonlight looking at the stars.

MAY

Arthur hit me.

ALICE

Bad?

MAY

Bad. That's why I left him. He said I drove him crazy.

ALICE

What did you say?

MAY

I said, "Get out of my way, motherfucker. You expect me to sit and wait for you at home while you at home while you go out after every blonde bitch you can find?" I said, "Arthur, where do you get off making all the rules I gotta keep and you're out there breaking them yourself every day?" I said, "I hate you because I loved you."

ALICE

Did you really say all that to him?

MAY

Fuck, he beat me for going to the store for a pack of cigarettes while he was asleep because I didn't ask him first and he was screwing every... I felt like a fool.

ALICE

I never seem to have the guts to say all that to their faces. I think it and then, when they're standing there, I say these stupid polite or sweet things, it's disgusting. I held things in for so long, there was a couple of years where I didn't cry, not at all, no matter what happened, I couldn't cry and then I wrote a story for a class about this woman who couldn't cry and her eyes got so dry, she went blind, and that was me. That was the first time I realized that something was wrong with me. So I started changing my life. I had a fight with Charlie yesterday.

MAY

And so you split up here with me?

ALICE

I had to get away to think things out.

MAY

Did he yell? He's pretty quiet.

ALICE

He was too quiet. Eery. After he got fired, he got all weird and he wouldn't talk to me, and I felt like he hated me and I hated feeling like he hated me and I wanted him to open up and before I knew it, I was screaming and crying and he was sitting on the couch with his arms crossed across his chest, just putting up with me, and I thought, "I better get out of here before I ruin everything." So I did. And I went to the audition, and then you know what happened after that.

MAY

Was he home when you got home?

ALICE

Yeah.

MAY

What happened?

ALICE

Nothing.

MAY

Oooo, yuch. My Dad does that, refuses to speak, I hate that. I can't do that.

ALICE

Me either. I wish I could sometimes.

MAY

Me too. Do you think he feels weirds about your money?

ALICE

Yeah. I do.

MAY

Are you going to get married?

ALICE

I don't know. It would be a lot of pressure.

MAY

Yeah. How come the Partridge Family doesn't have these kind of problems?

ALICE

There's a shooting star.

MAY

That's good luck. There's Orion, the Hunter.

ALICE

Hey, how do you know all this stuff?

MAY

I told you: I been outdoors.

ALICE

I always wished on shooting stars when I was little.

MAY

I wished on the first star: "Star light, star bright, first star I see tonight, wish I may, wish I might, have the wish I wish tonight..." but I've seen a million stars tonight, there's a lot more out here than in the city. Are you going to make a wish?

ALICE

I don't know what to wish for.

MAY

You know you can be the biggest pain. Wish for something you want. And don't tell me there's nothing you want because I know you better than that. Wish.

Lights fade to black.

*In the dark, the embers of the fire the only light.
May and Alice are inside the tent, ready to go
to sleep.*

ALICE

What are you thinking about?

MAY

Sex.

ALICE

Me too.

MAY

What's your favorite position?

ALICE

(pause) I like to lie on my side and wrap my legs around his waist and he kisses my neck and lower down and we can hug and pull each other closer and closer...

MAY

Can you come that way?

ALICE

Yeah.

MAY

I wasn't really thinking sex.

ALICE

You weren't?

MAY

I wasn't thinking about Arthur, about whether he was in love with me or if it was all a lie. When I was little I used to wish for a lover, a man as good as my Dad but gentler, kind. And soft to touch. And he would know me the first time he ever saw me. He'd know: "She's the one for me."

ALICE

I used to wish for a peaceful place. A place where I could belong.

MAY

I like it here.

ALICE

I'm glad.

MAY

Buona notte, cara mia.

ALICE

May the angels dance on your pillow. Goodnight.

Blackout

The end