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## Cast of Characters

RENEE, an anorexic high-school girl

PATTY, her best friend, a bulimic high-school girl

JEANINE, another anorexic high-school girl, recently sprung from a Body Image Clinic

THE BRADLEY, a high-school hunk; also plays:

PABLO, a Latino bag boy

MARCEL, a Barney's salesman

DENNIS, a high-school boy, McDonald's employee (o/s voice)

MONIQUE, the reigning anorexic, a dying high-school girl; also plays:

MILA, an African-American woman, works at David's Cookies

JANE, Monique's grieving mother

MRS. BLUE, a high-school drama teacher

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR, a hippy and hippie-ish middle-aged woman, she is given to wearing organic cotton and chunky Third World Jewelry. She is eager to prove that she knows your name and really *cares*.

TRIBUNAL, a chorus of dead Dianas

*Note: The roles can be cast separately when large casts are available.*

## **Locations**

hospital corridor, gift shop, room, waiting room

David's Cookies (awning)

Jeanine's bedroom (canopy bed)

funeral (open casket)

grocery store (shopping cart)

funeral reception (buffet table)

store (counter)

McDonald's drive-thru (Ronald face microphone)

car (two chairs/steering wheel)

Jeanine's house (two urns)

## **Dialogue Note**

When dialogue appears in brackets, feel free to update the cultural reference.

## **Production Notes**

The scenes with Pablo and the Guidance Counselor are optional.

## Acknowledgements

*Schoolgirl Figure* was first produced at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago in 2000, with the following cast and staff:

RENEE .....Schuyler Grant  
PATTY ..... Courtney Shaughnessy  
MONIQUE, MILA,  
    JANE, MRS. BLUE ..... Stephnie Weir  
THE BRADLEY, PABLO,  
    MARCEL, DENNIS..... Benjamin Sprunger  
JEANINE .....Megan Kellie

Director .....David Petrarca  
Set Design..... Todd Rosenthal  
Costume Design ..... Linda Roethke  
Lighting Design..... Robert Christen  
Sound Design.....Ray Nardelli  
Production Stage Manager.....Kimberly Osgood

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*Schoolgirl Figure* was first produced by  
The Goodman Theatre, Chicago on April 10, 2000  
Artistic Director Robert Falls,  
Executive Director Roche Schulfer

# SCHOOLGIRL FIGURE

by Wendy MacLeod

*(In the dark we hear a triad of teenage girls' voices chant:)*

**TRIBUNAL.**

If you defy The Teen Tribunal  
We assume a hefty numeral  
We send you to the land of jelly molds  
Of condiments and casseroles  
Where girls in acid-washed grow old  
In grown-out perms and women's sizes  
Where sagging breasts have no reprises  
Where sun-burnt skin age spots and falls  
You won't resemble us at all  
You won't see yourself in magazines  
You won't attract the he-teen dream  
Beyond an eight is beyond the pale  
Banish-ed banish-ed she who fails.

*(Lights up on school corridor. RENEE and PATTY stand in line outside the girls' bathroom door. There is the occasional flushing sound.)*

**RENEE.** What's the hold up? How long does it take these girls to spew?

**PATTY.** It's the after lunch rush hour.

**RENEE.** Why don't you just spew at the hospital? There won't be a line there.

**PATTY.** If I wait any longer, I'll digest.

**RENEE.** All this standing. I'm getting tired.

**PATTY.** You're tired because you don't eat enough.

**RENEE.** Don't eat enough?! I don't eat at all.

**PATTY.** What is your body supposed to live off of?

**RENEE.** I'm heavier than I look. If you saw me without my clothes...

**PATTY.** I see you without your clothes all the time. You weigh yourself naked four times a day.

**RENEE.** I'm trying to get an accurate reading.

**PATTY.** All I ever see is bones.

**RENEE.** You're sweet.

**PATTY.** It doesn't look good, Renee...

**RENEE.** And don't start on Marilyn Monroe again, whatever you do...

**PATTY.** She was a...

**PATTY / RENEE.** Size 12!

**RENEE.** I know. Marilyn Monroe was JELL-O on springs. It was a different, slothful time. This is the millennium. We can't be all post-war. Yo Princess Dianas! Finish and flush!

**PATTY.** You were a twelve before we came to this school...

**RENEE.** I was a large ten! I had glands.

**PATTY.** You didn't have glands, you were naturally a twelve.

**RENEE.** And what is so great about nature? Nature is a fiend. Ticks, tornados, and malaria are "natural." I mean, don't go all crunchy on me. I swear every day is Earth Day with you around.

**PATTY.** Just because I put my soda can in the recycling bin...

**RENEE.** It was *fanatical*. Come on, we've got to get to the hospital before Monique buys the farm.

**PATTY.** I can't miss sixth period, I have a Biology test.

**RENEE.** Would you stop? What a schoolgirl.

**PATTY.** Don't you think Monique dying is kind of sad?

**RENEE.** Why? Look at the Carpenter. She's famous.

**PATTY.** Yeah, but she was famous for doing something.

**RENEE.** Rainy Days and Mondays. Please.

**PATTY.** Monique's not gonna be famous. I mean she's the third one at this school alone.

**RENEE.** The first one was really sad. You remember Andrea's funeral? We all cried so much.

**PATTY.** (*Correcting the pronunciation.*) Andrea.

(*Toilet flush.*)

**RENEE.** We have to get to the hospital before Jeanine.

**PATTY.** I don't know why you think Monique is gonna leave you for The Bradley.

**RENEE.** It's in the by-laws. In case of a tie the reigning Carpenter can choose her successor.

**PATTY.** Jeanine is her best friend. What makes you think she won't choose her?

**RENEE.** Solidarity. Jeanine isn't a true Carpenter. She's an obsessive exerciser. She went crazy when she couldn't figure out how to exercise her head.

**PATTY.** Is that why she talks that way?

**RENEE.** Yeah. Too much group therapy.

**PATTY.** Can't we go to the hospital *after* school?

**RENEE.** I have to be there for Monique now. In her hour of need.

**PATTY.** As if.

**RENEE.** Don't be all... I can be nice.

**PATTY.** When?

**RENEE.** I also want to be there for The Bradley. What, he doesn't deserve comfort just cause he's gorgeous?

**PATTY.** He doesn't even know you.

**RENEE.** That can only help.

**PATTY.** The Bradley must be getting tired of his girlfriends croaking.

**RENEE.** It's every man's fantasy. Rotating women without ever having to break up. Dead girlfriends are the ultimate pick-up line. Who's going to say no to a guy with a dead girlfriend?

**PATTY.** Have you ever talked to him?

**RENEE.** Why?

**PATTY.** Is he smart?

**RENEE.** Smart?

**PATTY.** I mean, what's he like?

**RENEE.** (*Impatient:*) He's The Bradley.

**PATTY.** You know what Tricia said? She said maybe The Bradley isn't that great.

**RENEE.** Just because there's no chance in hell for that fat little hen... After the monthly weigh-in, Tricia's gone!

**PATTY.** They'll really send her away?

**RENEE.** Ten and over. Gone! They divvy up her clothes. Talk about a tent sale.

**PATTY.** Who made up the by-laws? Where did they come from?

**RENEE.** Who knows? My mother lived on Melba Toast. Her Nana bound her breasts. They've always been there. Like celery and Seconal. Speaking of by-laws, Patty, you're still looking a little double-digit and you know the rules. Beyond an eight is beyond the pale.

**PATTY.** All I've got to do is balance out my binges and purges.

**RENEE.** Well you're on probation. You've got a week to lose five pounds. Err on the side of purge.

*(RENEE shoves PATTY through the door for her turn and follows her in. Loud flush. PATTY emerges from the wings pushing RENEE in a wheelchair. They cross the stage talking.)*

**PATTY.** These wheelchairs are for the patients.

**RENEE.** Well they shouldn't leave them in the hallway then.

**PATTY.** Now don't say anything about her dying.

**RENEE.** Why not?

**PATTY.** It might upset her.

**RENEE.** A Carpenter aspires to death and decay. It's the ultimate weight loss plan. I wouldn't expect a Diana to understand. We're Sparta, you're Rome.

(MONIQUE *lies on a hospital gurney. Solicitous*)

**PATTY.** Hi-i-i.

**RENEE.** Hi-i-i.

**PATTY.** Your room is really nice. It's so...clean.

**RENEE.** I love the rubber lining on the curtains!

**PATTY.** I love the bendy straws!

**RENEE.** I love the hyperalimentation tubes!

**PATTY.** Hyperalimentation? What's that?

**RENEE.** That's when they get all hyper about feeding you. She's being force fed. It's total fascism. I really ought to yank 'em out.

**PATTY.** Don't!

**RENEE.** Well, how would you like to be force fed?!

**PATTY.** I'd love it.

**RENEE.** They don't let even let you go to the bathroom by yourself here. They're afraid you're gonna spew.

**PATTY.** Wow.

**RENEE.** And they lock up all the drawers so you can't hide your dinner tray. Look. A dinner roll. Under her pillow. Honestly, Monique, it's the first place they'll look.

**PATTY.** We brought you magazines.

**RENEE.** Sassy, Seventeen, Self, Vogue, Elle, Glamour, Mirabella, Svelte, Slim, Thin, Reedy and Concave.

**PATTY.** You probably read them already.

**RENEE.** You probably did. How stupid are we?

**PATTY.** You probably have subscriptions.

**RENEE.** (*Sotto voce:*) Look at her. We're talking single issues. Off the news stand.

**PATTY.** Shh.

(MONIQUE *points to her eyes and shakes her head.*)

What? Why is she pointing to her eyes?

**RENEE.** No mascara?

**PATTY.** You look *fine*.

**RENEE.** A little cyanotic...

**PATTY.** A little cyanotic, but *fine*.

(MONIQUE *shakes her head. Points to her eyes*)

I get it! She wants Visine!

(MONIQUE *shakes her head. She closes her eyes and gropes like a blind person.*)

**RENEE.** No she doesn't, she lost a contact.

(MONIQUE *shakes her head no and gropes some more.*)

**PATTY.** Oh my God. She's blind.

**RENEE.** This is just like that play you were in, about the lesbians!

**PATTY.** The Miracle Worker?

**RENEE.** Why can't she talk? In the movies starving people talk. They discuss which one of them is going to be eaten.

**PATTY.** She probably has to conserve her energy.

**RENEE.** For what?

**PATTY.** Maybe she's sedated.

**RENEE.** Like the anorexics are gonna bust up the joint.

**PATTY.** Maybe she freaked out about the tube.

**RENEE.** I'd freak out about the tubes. It's like you're a Quaker and they're making you fly the Enola Gay.

**PATTY.** Renee?

**RENEE.** I know about Quakers!

**PATTY.** She's pointing to the magazine.

**RENEE.** Read to her Patty.

**PATTY.** (*Reading from magazine:*) When choosing a bathing suit, it's important to maximize your plusses while playing down your minuses. Thunder thighs? Don't despair! Look at a skirted bottom...

**MONIQUE.** I wish...

**PATTY.** What?

**MONIQUE.** I wish...

**RENEE.** *What?*

**MONIQUE.** I wish...

**RENEE.** Read that sentence again.

**PATTY.** When choosing a bathing suit...

(MONIQUE *makes a sharp noise.*)

It's the bathing suit. She wishes she could wear a bathing suit again!

(MONIQUE *yelps.*)

**RENEE.** You looked SO good in a bathing suit, didn't she Patty?

**PATTY.** SO good.

**RENEE.** Like the way your hip bones jutted out.

**PATTY.** She couldn't even lie on the concrete, remember that? She had to bring a chaise lounge.

**RENEE.** And those little sternum ripples and the COLLARBONES.

**PATTY.** Oh my God, you had the BEST collarbones.

**RENEE.** THE best collarbones. And every vertebra on your spine was so distinct.

**PATTY.** And you tanned so evenly.

**RENEE.** Monique, we don't want you to tire yourself out, or come any closer to expiration, but we were just wondering whether you've given any thought to naming a successor...

**PATTY.** Renee, not now...

**RENEE.** I took the liberty of drawing up a deed to The Bradley. You see, Jeanine and I are both fours...

*(MONIQUE gasps.)*

I know that must seem HUGE to you. I mean you got down to the Asian sizes. You were shopping in the children's department, and if you have any weight loss secrets, any at all, I do hope you'll share them because Bradley or no, I'm not gonna stop at four...

**MONIQUE.** Don't...

**RENEE.** What?

**PATTY.** She doesn't want to talk...

**RENEE.** She's trying to tell us something!

**MONIQUE.** Don't...

**PATTY.** Renee.

**RENEE.** Shut up!

*(MONIQUE doesn't say anything.)*

Not you, Monique.

**MONIQUE.** Don't forget...

**PATTY.** She doesn't want us to forget her.

**MONIQUE.** Don't forget...

**PATTY.** We won't!

*(MONIQUE shakes her head.)*

**MONIQUE.** Don't forget your...

**RENEE.** What? What is it?

**MONIQUE.** Don't forget your waters.

(MONIQUE *expires.*)

**PATTY.** She's gone.

**RENEE.** Damn.

(RENEE *sticks a pen in MONIQUE's hand and tries to make it sign the form.*)

**PATTY.** Renee! Stop that!

**RENEE.** It didn't work anyway. It doesn't look like a signature, it looks like a prescription. Come on, let's go.

**PATTY.** *Renee.*

**RENEE.** What?

**PATTY.** She's *dead.*

**RENEE.** So?

**PATTY.** We can't just walk out.

**RENEE.** What are we gonna do? Embalm her?

**PATTY.** We should close her eyes or something.

**RENEE.** Go ahead.

**PATTY.** I don't want to touch a dead girl!

**RENEE.** We have to tell The Bradley. Console him.

**PATTY.** I'm gonna pull the blanket up.

**RENEE.** Whatever. Wait.

**PATTY.** What?

**RENEE.** That's a cute necklace.

(PATTY *slaps her hand.*)

Ow! Like she's gonna know the difference.

**PATTY.** The Bradley probably gave it to her.

**RENEE.** I'll just say she gave it to me. Damn. I can't get the clasp undone.

**PATTY.** I'll *buy* you a necklace.

**RENEE.** I've never seen a necklace like this.

**PATTY.** My God Renee, her body's still warm!

**RENEE.** (*Touching MONIQUE.*) Tepid.

(*RENEE yanks the necklace.*)

There.

(*MONIQUE makes a final cry and collapses. The machines flatline and beep.*)

**PATTY.** Oh my God you strangled her!

**RENEE.** You can't strangle a corpse!

**PATTY.** She wasn't dead yet! She just made a noise!

**RENEE.** That was a death rattle. Didn't you read *How We Die*?

**PATTY.** No. Did you?

**RENEE.** I read the book jacket. I was looking for tips.

**PATTY.** Renee!

**RENEE.** Look, if she wasn't dead then, she is now.

**PATTY.** How can we be sure?

**RENEE.** Look.

(*RENEE shakes her and she's all floppy.*)

**PATTY.** Stop that!

**RENEE.** Why? She's a corpse!

**PATTY.** You have to treat a body with respect.

**RENEE.** I have total respect for Monique. But it's time to look to the future.

**PATTY.** She was our friend.

**RENEE.** Oh she was not.

**PATTY.** She was our acquaintance! You were always talking about what an inspiration she was!

**RENEE.** Look, make new friends and lose the old, one is silver and the other's gold.

**PATTY.** But old friends are the ones who are gold.

**RENEE.** No they're not, they're silver.

**PATTY.** They are so gold. And gold is worth way more than silver!

**RENEE.** I can't wear gold I'm a summer!

**PATTY.** Would you be like this if I died?

**RENEE.** You're not gonna die, you eat like a horse.

**PATTY.** Well if you died would you like me to be all...*(shakes Monique.)*

**RENEE.** What I'd like you to do is cry.

**PATTY.** I will.

**RENEE.** Now.

**PATTY.** Why?

**RENEE.** *The Bradley's* out there. We have to look in need of consolation.

**PATTY.** I am in need of consolation. I'm on a total bummer.

**RENEE.** Oh get over yourself and cry. Think about me for once in your life. What kind of bitch will I look like if I'm not bummed over Monique's death?

**PATTY.** A total bitch.

**RENEE.** See?

**PATTY.** Boo-hoo. Boo-hoo.

**RENEE.** "Boo-hoo? Boo-hoo?"

**PATTY.** Well *I* don't know how to fake it.

**RENEE.** Get your nose red and snotty.

**PATTY.** Are you going to get *your* nose red and snotty?

**RENEE.** No, I'm going to catch my breath...like this.

**PATTY.** Can't I do that?

**RENEE.** No, it will look totally fake. No two people cry the same way.

**PATTY.** Well *you* take the snotty way.

**RENEE.** Perhaps you didn't understand what I said. *The Bradley's* out there.

**PATTY.** Maybe we could *make* ourselves cry. By using The Method. Mrs. Blue showed us how in Drama class.

**RENEE.** What method?

**PATTY.** The acting Method. Like you think of really sad things.

**RENEE.** I missed the Barney's after-Christmas sale when we were away.

**PATTY.** That's not *sad*.

**RENEE.** It was *so* sad. I've *never* missed the after-Christmas sale before. I *begged* my mother to come back early but she wouldn't. There was like all this new powder and she *wouldn't*. By the time I got there it was like all picked over, and all that was left was the zeroes and the fourteens and the *orange* things.

**PATTY.** That is not sad. I mean think about Monique's parents. Her parents are gonna be really sad.

**RENEE.** She's *got* a sister. I mean, they have a *spare*.

**PATTY.** Still. She used to be their little baby.

**RENEE.** Babies are *fat*.

**PATTY.** They're never gonna see her graduate from high-school or get married or...

**RENEE.** Would you stop? You're totally depressing me.

**PATTY.** I'm trying to make myself cry. (**RENEE** *slaps her*.) Owwww. That hurt.

**RENEE.** That's the Renee method.

*(THE BRADLEY sits in the waiting room.)*

There he is. Oh, The Bradley.

**BRADLEY.** That's my name don't wear it out.

**RENEE.** Monica's gone.

**BRADLEY.** Who?

**PATTY.** *Monique.*

**BRADLEY.** She was right there a minute ago.

**RENEE.** No, gone gone.

**BRADLEY.** Dead?

**RENEE.** Way dead. Defunct.

**BRADLEY.** Jesus.

**RENEE.** You must be angry.

**BRADLEY.** Why?

**RENEE.** That's the first stage of grief.

**BRADLEY.** Whatever.

**RENEE.** Hold me.

**BRADLEY.** Why?

**RENEE.** Monique's defunct and I'm distraught.

*(She locks him in an embrace.)*

**BRADLEY.** Owwww. What was that?

**RENEE.** My hip bone.

**BRADLEY.** I guess I should go tell Monique's mom. She went to get a Mars bar.

**PATTY.** Do you need any help?

**BRADLEY.** Naw, I'm used to it. It's my third dead girlfriend. The mothers show you stuff. You know photo albums and booties and stuff.

**PATTY.** Would you like to see her one last time?

**RENEE.** Why would he want to see a corpse?

**PATTY.** It was his girlfriend.

**RENEE.** *Was* being the operative word.

**PATTY.** Would you like to see her?

**BRADLEY.** Naw, I'd sort of like to remember her how she was. Before she stopped menstruating. You know once you stop getting your period you lose your libido. Your body's all like why bother.

**RENEE.** You weren't getting any?

**BRADLEY.** Naw. Not at the end.

**PATTY.** But you stayed with her.

**BRADLEY.** Well you know. I got to go find Mrs. Deveraux.

*(THE BRADLEY exits.)*

**PATTY.** He seemed kind of sad.

**RENEE.** Oh he was not. It's not like she was sleeping with him.

**PATTY.** Maybe he liked her company.

**RENEE.** She was *comatose*.

**PATTY.** Not quite. She talked.

**RENEE.** She was blind and frigid. Some girlfriend.

**PATTY.** She wasn't always like that. She used to decorate his locker before the big game.

**RENEE.** What big game?

**PATTY.** Oh some big game. Some team. Some sport. He wore a jacket with a letter on it and he gave it to her. And she wore it and smelled his smell and it was love.

**RENEE.** Love had nothing to do with it. She was the thinnest. She earned him.

*(JEANINE enters.)*

**PATTY.** Jeanine!

**RENEE.** Jeanine, you look fabulous.

**PATTY.** A little green...

**RENEE.** A little green but fabulous...

**JEANINE.** Oh my God, I appreciate the validation but my clothes are like hanging off me.

**PATTY.** They look fine.

**JEANINE.** Stop. These fours are huge. I'm gonna have to shop for twos.

**RENEE.** You're a two? How did you become a two? You have a sweet tooth! You have no willpower!

**JEANINE.** I made peace with food.

**RENEE.** As if.

**JEANINE.** I learned to love my body.

**RENEE.** Who do you think you're talking to Jeanine? This is not the body image clinic!

**JEANINE.** I got the flu.

**RENEE.** The flu! The flu doesn't count!

**JEANINE.** There's nothing about it in the by-laws.

**RENEE.** How did you get the flu?

**JEANINE.** Who knows? Pay phones, door handles...

**RENEE.** *Door handles?*

**JEANINE.** I licked them. How's Monique?

**RENEE.** Who?

**JEANINE.** Monique. Did she ask for me? I heard she was at death's door.

**RENEE.** She's nowhere near death's door. She's still like three blocks away.

**JEANINE.** Then why's she in the hospital?

**RENEE.** For a *nose* job.

**JEANINE.** Monique already had a nose job.

**RENEE.** It didn't work out.

**JEANINE.** (*Disappointed:*) Oh. Is The Bradley here?

**RENEE.** He had to go. He said to say hi.

**JEANINE.** The Bradley said to say hi? Maybe I should wait.

**RENEE.** He said not to wait.

**JEANINE.** Oh. Well I guess I'll head home then. I'm still a little woozy. I just wanted to offer my emotional support. After all, now that I'm a two I'm next in line for The Bradley.

(*JEANINE exits.*)

**RENEE.** The flu! What a cheater!

**PATTY.** There's nothing in the by-laws about the flu not counting.

**RENEE.** Does that seem fair to you?

**PATTY.** Well what if you get the flu by accident? Are you supposed to lose the weight, put the weight back on, and then lose it again?

**RENEE.** If you're an honorable anorexic, yes.

**PATTY.** What's the worst that can happen? Jeanine will have him for awhile and then die and it will be your turn.

**RENEE.** Oh it's all so simple to you, isn't it?

**PATTY.** What'd I say?

**RENEE.** First of all, she'd take forever to die, she's made of that hearty peasant stock that survives sieges and famines, and second of all what if some skinny new girl moved here and cut in line?

**PATTY.** There ought to be something about *that* in the by-laws.

**RENEE.** Well there's not. Anyway I'm not temperamentally suited to waiting in line. I'm a Type A. I push the elevator button again and again.

**PATTY.** Well what are you gonna do about it? Jeanine's still the smallest.

**RENEE.** I have a plan.

**PATTY.** Does it involve violence?

**RENEE.** It involves chocolate.

**PATTY.** Oh my God.

*(They exit. An awning unfurls that says DAVID'S COOKIES. PATTY and RENEE enter, RENEE on a motorized cart.)*

**PATTY.** Look where you're going Renee. You ran into a stroller in the food court. That baby is going to need stitches.

**RENEE.** Oh, babies always find something to cry about.

**PATTY.** Let's wait in front of that fan that blows the cookie smell.

**RENEE.** Are you crazy? There's airborne calories!

**PATTY.** Wouldn't it be weird if David were in the back baking cookies and he came out and we fell in love?

**RENEE.** David who?

**PATTY.** *David.* David of the Cookies.

**RENEE.** Yeah, and Mrs. Fields could be your maid of honor. Not.

**PATTY.** I mean who was David? They never show you a picture of David.

**RENEE.** There is no David.

**PATTY.** How do you know?

**RENEE.** There is no anybody. Aunt Jemima. Betty Crocker.

**PATTY.** There's an Ann Landers.

**RENEE.** There's an Ann Landers *factory*. A bunch of little know-nothings answer those letters. "Seek counseling." I could tell you that.

**PATTY.** Maybe you should.

**RENEE.** Maybe I should what?

**PATTY.** Seek counseling.

**RENEE.** Why? So some fat woman wearing organic cotton can tell me I have body image problems? Well maybe I do. But I'd rather have that than body problems any day.

**PATTY.** You should really think about the media's role in this.

**RENEE.** We're supposed to take a number.

**PATTY.** I mean all the magazines have thin models, all the movies have thin actresses...

**RENEE.** Who wants to look at fat models? Who wants to watch a bunch of flabby movie stars jiggling around? Of course the media has a role in this. Thank God. Somebody's upholding standards.

**PATTY.** Which kind are you going to get?

**RENEE.** The fattening kind. Where the hell is the cookie girl?

**PATTY.** Are you going to have one?

**RENEE.** Me? As if.

**PATTY.** Can I have one?

**RENEE.** The cookies are for Jeanine.

**PATTY.** What if Jeanine doesn't eat them?

**RENEE.** She will. She has a thing for cookies. My brother worked at 7-11 and she was in there all the time making Pepperidge Farm runs.

**PATTY.** That was me.

**RENEE.** It was her too. Before she went anorexic. Hello?!

**PATTY.** But she won't go up an entire size just from eating a bag of cookies.

**RENEE.** Well it won't just be the cookies. She'll feel so ashamed she'll binge.

**PATTY.** What if she throws them all up?

**RENEE.** She's not a spewer. I've seen her try. She has a lazy gag reflex.

**PATTY.** Some people just don't have what it takes.

**RENEE.** We'll smear chocolate at the corner of our lips. We'll tell her we went on a total macadamia binge. Then she'll think she has a calorie cushion and she'll binge.

**PATTY.** Well if I'm gonna say I binged, why can't I binge?

**RENEE.** This is not about you. The whole world doesn't revolve around you.

It revolves around me. And Jeanine is in my way.

**PATTY.** If this were a musical, this is where you'd break into song.

**RENEE.** Where'd you learn that? In Mrs. Blue's drama class?

**PATTY.** Yeah.

**RENEE.** Isn't she the one who said her husband liked her love handles?

**PATTY.** Yeah.

**RENEE.** Stay far, far away from that woman. She's out of her mind.

**PATTY.** She was in a class with Marlon Brando once. And they were all like doing an improv and you had to guess what everybody was and he was doing the pom-pom on the tip of a sultan's slipper and he was such a good actor that everybody guessed!

**RENEE.** Those classes are rotting your brain.

**PATTY.** You should go to class.

**RENEE.** I went to gym the day they had the caliper test!

**PATTY.** That doesn't count!

**RENEE.** I was in my very own percentile.

**PATTY.** You should go to the classes with books!

**RENEE.** I don't want my brain to get fat. C'mon, let's go to Mrs. Fields.

**MILA.** Twelve!

**PATTY.** They just called 12.

**RENEE.** I'm not a 12!

**PATTY.** That's the number on your ticket.

**MILA.** You twelve?

**RENEE.** I don't answer to twelve. Go get another ticket. Make it four or less.

**MILA.** Girl, you holding a twelve.

**PATTY.** It's not a twelve, see? It's a one and a two.

**MILA.** You twelve?

**RENEE.** It's not a twelve. It's a one and a two.

**MILA.** Unnhuh. Whatchoo want?

**RENEE.** Which cookie has the highest fat content?

**MILA.** They all got fat.

**RENEE.** Well I know that. I want the fat grams.

**MILA.** We got a low fat muffin.

**RENEE.** I don't want a low fat anything. I want a cookie that will make you really fat.

**MILA.** They all make you fat you eat enough of them.

**RENEE.** May I see the nutritional breakdown?

**MILA.** The *what?*

**RENEE.** McDonald's provides a nutritional breakdown of all their foods.

**MILA.** They all gonna make you fat. Now which one you want?

**RENEE.** Well which ones have you been eating?

**MILA.** Excuse me?

**RENEE.** I mean which are your favorites?

**MILA.** We not allowed to eat the cookies. Less they break.

*(MILA bangs a cookie with her fist and chomps on it.)*

**RENEE.** I'm simply asking which ones taste good.

**MILA.** They all taste good fool. They cookies.

**RENEE.** Is there a discount if we buy in bulk?

**MILA.** How many you buying?

**RENEE.** I don't know. A dozen?

**MILA.** You wasting my time, girl. You gonna buy a damn dozen or not?

**RENEE.** Do you offer a sampler?

**MILA.** Yeah I offer a sampler. I'm gonna throw this one in the bag. I'm gonna throw that one in the bag. I'm gonna throw twelve cookies in the damn bag.

**RENEE.** I thought fat people were supposed to be cheerful.

**MILA.** I ain't fat. I'm a good-sized woman. I'm a powerful woman. I'm a woman gonna keep my man warm at night.

**PATTY.** Wow. Self-esteem.

**RENEE.** Complete and total denial.

**PATTY.** Whatever happened to the baker's dozen?

**MILA.** You wanted a dozen, I gave you a dozen. Twelve.

**PATTY.** You're supposed to give us thirteen.

**MILA.** You want thirteen, I'll give you thirteen.

**PATTY.** We're supposed to pay for twelve and then you give us thirteen.

**RENEE.** Don't you give her that extra cookie. *(To PATTY:)* You are on *probation*.

**MILA.** Your friend hungry. She want a cookie.

*(MILA gives PATTY the cookie.)*

Girl, you look like you could use a cookie. Looks like you got that Carpenter thang.

*(PATTY eats the cookie.)*

**RENEE.** What are you *thinking*? The walls have eyes.

*(Sharp, sudden light change. PATTY and RENEE fall to their knees.)*

**TRIBUNAL.**

We the bonkable  
We the doable  
We the size 2-able  
Question the cookies.

**PATTY.** Oh, these cookies? They're not for *us*...they're a gift!

**RENEE.** For her mom!

**TRIBUNAL.**

By daring to enter the House of David  
You honored dessert before beauty  
The dark side of food is calories  
And Patty's pants are not wedge-free...

**PATTY.** They shrunk in the dryer!

**TRIBUNAL.**

The wind should blow between your legs  
A keyhole of daylight we should see  
With your thighs touching each other  
How dare you look at a cookie!

**PATTY.** What do we do now?

**RENEE.** Run for it.

*(Crossfade. JEANINE in a canopy bed.)*

**RENEE.** So we got like two dozen cookies at David's Cookies and just like pigged out in the smoking court, I mean we were like picking the chips off the butt-filled ground and licking our shirts where the crumbs landed, and then we were so parched we marched right into the cafeteria and took a gallon of milk from the cooler and just chugged it, whole milk, not even skim, and then we thought, we cannot eat any more cookies or we'll die of nausea and be on a sugar high through Labor Day and we thought who would help us eat the rest of these cookies, and we thought of you, since my God, you just had that terrible flu and have to get your strength back.

**JEANINE.** What I hear you saying is that you thought of me, which is really sweet, but I don't know about the cookies, you guys, I'm a two now. I'm next in line for The Bradley.

**RENEE.** Like one or two cookies is going to make you go up a size.

**JEANINE.** Chocolate chip cookies are an issue for me. They are the biggest red light food imaginable. If I eat one, I eat twenty, and then I eat everything in sight.

**RENEE.** You do *not!*

**JEANINE.** Swear!

**RENEE.** Jeanine if anyone deserves a little reward, it's you.

**JEANINE.** Yeah, but nothing tastes as good as thin feels.

**RENEE.** Yes, it does, it so does. Patty, weren't those cookies *amazing?*

**PATTY.** Oh...yeah.

**RENEE.** Tell Jeanine how *amazing* they were.

**PATTY.** They were really...gooey.

**RENEE.** Gooey, that's the word for them, they weren't like those slightly stale ones, you know those damp sort of cookies that taste like everything tastes when you go to your beach house...

**JEANINE.** Oh my God, I hate those!

**RENEE.** Anyway, Jeanine, I'm your closest competition, and if *I* just ate a *dozen* cookies, you don't have to worry about eating *one*...

**JEANINE.** This is probably about me and my trust issues, but I can't help feeling that you're trying to spoil my chance at The Bradley...

**RENEE.** As if! It's all a moot point until Monique dies anyway. And we were just over there and it was like a rave, she was playing her tunes and dancing like a crazy person. She is nowhere near giving up the ghost. Is she Patty?

**PATTY.** She was really...talkative.

**RENEE.** Oh my God, we couldn't shut her up! She was like "don't forget your waters," and "I miss wearing bathing suits," and "read me the June Vogue!"

**JEANINE.** Why did she want you to read it to her?

**RENEE.** You know Monique, she's like the queen, right and we're like the handmaidens, I mean Monique has gotten so out of control since she's been the Bradley-Girl.

**JEANINE.** I know it. Just because she got a gurney.

**RENEE.** Just because she's got an IV drip.

**JEANINE.** Oh. That necklace is so cute. I really respect your choice of that necklace.

**RENEE.** Oh my God. Thanks. It's new.

**JEANINE.** Monique had one like that. I remember it lying on her prominent clavicle.

**RENEE.** She gave it to me.

**JEANINE.** How come?

**RENEE.** She felt bad cause she was nowhere near dying. I mean we'll probably all graduate before she dies.

**JEANINE.** What a waste of Bradley.

**RENEE.** A total waste of Bradley.

**JEANINE.** Do they have nuts?

**RENEE.** Macadamia.

**JEANINE.** Oh my God. I wonder if my stomach is up to this. I hope it doesn't make me throw up.

**RENEE.** You can't throw up!

**JEANINE.** What do you mean?

**RENEE.** I mean, you have been so sick you just have to be over this.

**JEANINE.** I know. I haven't washed my hair for like *six hours*.

**RENEE.** You deserve this.

**JEANINE.** I so deserve this.

*(JEANINE takes a bite of cookie.)*

**RENEE.** Amazing?

**JEANINE.** It is so good. It's like when you haven't eaten for awhile you can taste everything, the sugar, and the butter, and the chocolate...

**RENEE.** I'll just leave the bag.

**JEANINE.** I'm not comfortable with that!

**RENEE.** There is a *grease spot* on the side of the bag. It'll get on my clothes.

**JEANINE.** Patty you take it.

**PATTY.** Thanks.

**RENEE.** Oh my God, Patty had even more than I did. And she's allergic to chocolate. She's about to break out in hives as it is.

**JEANINE.** How many are left?

**RENEE.** Like two. Can we use your bathroom?

**JEANINE.** Time to spew?

**RENEE.** You know Patty. Total Diana.

*(Crossfade to bathroom.)*

**RENEE.** What's the matter with you? Taking the rest of the cookies!

**PATTY.** I didn't!

**RENEE.** Only because I stopped you! Does the word *probation* mean anything to you? They're *watching* you!

**PATTY.** I was hungry!

**RENEE.** We're trying to get *her* fat, remember?

**PATTY.** What are you doing?

**RENEE.** I'm resetting her scale to give her a false sense of security.

**PATTY.** She probably weighed herself this morning.

**RENEE.** I'm going to be subtle. I'm going to make it five pounds light. Then she'll definitely eat the rest of those cookies.

(RENEE strips off her clothes.)

PATTY. Here?

RENEE. I want to weigh myself.

PATTY. You already weighed yourself after gym.

RENEE. I may have lost.

PATTY. But the scale's not accurate anymore.

RENEE. I'll just add the five pounds. Oh my God.

PATTY. What?

RENEE. I've gained! I hate my breasts! They must weight five pounds at least.

PATTY. I don't think so. Not anymore.

RENEE. Oh my God, Patty. You always know just what to say.

PATTY. Why don't you take off your rings?

RENEE. That's it. They're huge. Here. (*Looking at numbers:*) That's better. Your turn.

PATTY. I weighed myself this morning.

RENEE. You need confirmation.

PATTY. I'm going to be heavy cause I have a full bladder.

RENEE. Well *pee* first.

PATTY. Why bother.

RENEE. Why bother? Why bother? You've got a weigh-in coming, Missy. And you've ballooned up to five pounds over the weight limit!

PATTY. I get hungry.

RENEE. Just think about something else. Think about books. Or art or something.

PATTY. Do you remember the Rubens paintings we saw in art class?

RENEE. This is why I don't go to class. Those women were beyond disgusting. He must have gone to some trailer park to find models.

**PATTY.** There weren't any trailer parks then.

**RENEE.** There were hovels. Where fat people lived. Look, if you want to stay at this school you've got to at least get back to a respectable eight. The Tribunal was merciful last time. You don't get a second warning.

**PATTY.** I don't want to get on the scale. I have to pee and I'm wearing denim.

**RENEE.** Then take off your clothes like a sane person.

*(Beat.)*

You'd better touch up your make-up. It got spewed after lunch.

**PATTY.** Can I borrow your lipstick?

**RENEE.** Did you do your lipliner?

**PATTY.** No.

**RENEE.** Patty! The lipstick is going to bleed all over the place!

**PATTY.** I know but like sometimes, the lipstick goes away and the lip liner stays there and I look like a new coloring book.

**RENEE.** Who worked at the Estée Lauder counter? Do the burnt cinnamon. You wear that pink you'll look like a candystriper.

**PATTY.** I *was* a candystriper.

**RENEE.** You are the only person I know who could get fired from a volunteer job.

**PATTY.** I stole the amphetamines for *you*.

**RENEE.** They were inferior pharmaceuticals. They made my eyeballs shake.

**PATTY.** I had to give the dress back.

**RENEE.** Just as well. Dirndls are death. Speaking of which we have to buy something black for Monique's funeral.

**PATTY.** I already have a black dress, from Andrea's funeral. And Sarah's.

**RENEE.** This is a fabulous excuse to buy a dress in that most slimming of color!

**PATTY.** I already spent my clothing allowance.

**RENEE.** We'll just buy it and take it back tomorrow.

**PATTY.** They'll know we wore it. The tags will be off.

**RENEE.** Not necessarily. Just tuck the tags. I do it all the time. I hate to keep anything because by the following week I need a smaller size. It's like recycling, only fashionable.

**PATTY.** Don't drink from that. It's Jeanine's glass.

**RENEE.** You think?

*(RENEE chugs a glass of water.)*

**PATTY.** If you want to throw up just do a Diana.

**RENEE.** This is better. The flu is all purge, no binge. Come on, let's go to the mall. Flush.

**PATTY.** There's nothing to flush.

**RENEE.** Duh. We just have to suggest a spew.

**PATTY.** What about Jeanine?

**RENEE.** She'll never notice we've gone. She's alone in a room with a bag of cookies.

*(RENEE pushes PATTY offstage. They return with RENEE carrying an armful of dresses. RENEE is trying things on. PATTY is not.)*

**RENEE.** What's the matter? Couldn't you find anything?

**PATTY.** I'm supposed to be doing my homework.

**RENEE.** As if.

**PATTY.** My Mom really wants me to go to college.

**RENEE.** College is a anorexic's nightmare. There are keg parties and mashed potatoes and counselors who intervene.

**PATTY.** There are counselors in high school.

**RENEE.** Where?

**PATTY.** Somewhere. There's an office. Look, you have to go to college if you want to be something.

**RENEE.** Like what?

**PATTY.** A doctor or a lawyer or something.

**RENEE.** You a lawyer. "May I approach the bench?" (*Puts her finger down her throat, makes a retching noise.*)

**PATTY.** Well I won't be spewing then.

**RENEE.** Try this on.

**PATTY.** It won't fit.

**RENEE.** I don't know why you bother to go shopping if you're not gonna *participate*.

**PATTY.** Nothing's gonna fit me here. The racks are full of fours.

**RENEE.** You used to be a size four.

**PATTY.** That was for a day and a half after I had five teeth extracted.

**RENEE.** Oh forget it, just forget it. Go home and read A Christmas Carol.

**PATTY.** I already read it.

**RENEE.** Why?

**PATTY.** Didn't we have to read it?

**RENEE.** I'm only going to say this once. Patty, you don't *have* to do anything.

**PATTY.** I liked the story.

**RENEE.** It was alright when everyone was starving, but when Mr. Magoo showed up with that turkey I could have killed him. The way you suck up to that English teacher. Honestly. She's a *cow*.

**PATTY.** Well she's old.

**RENEE.** That's no excuse.

**PATTY.** She's really nice.

**RENEE.** Niceness is the refuge of the fat. Look at this. How great is this?

**PATTY.** Really great.

**RENEE.** This dress screams Bradley girl. I can't just sit in the audience wearing this dress. I need the stage.

**PATTY.** Why don't you do the eulogy?

**RENEE.** You're a genius!

**PATTY.** You hardly knew her!

**RENEE.** I felt very close to her!

**PATTY.** You want to steal her boyfriend!

**RENEE.** The Bradley does not belong to Monique, he belongs to the world.

**PATTY.** You can't just go up and do the eulogy, you have to be like a relative.

**RENEE.** What do you suggest I do then?

**PATTY.** Maybe you could be the bagpipe player.

**RENEE.** You are so retarded. Plaids make me look fat. Anyway I hate that Loch Lomond thing.

**PATTY.** My mother loves that song.

**RENEE.** That's it! I'll talk to Monique's mother.

**PATTY.** Don't bother her mother when she's all sad.

**RENEE.** *I'm* all sad. I have a really great dress and nobody's going to see it. Everyone will see the big fat ruddy priest in his bathrobe but no one will see me.

**PATTY.** I can't listen to this. I'm a practicing Catholic!

**RENEE.** Don't go. I didn't mean that thing about the priest. I love priests. I save up calories to splurge on the little wafer.

**PATTY.** Communion wafers don't have calories.

**RENEE.** What do you think they're made from?

**PATTY.** Jesus's body.

**RENEE.** Bread dough! They should make them with olestra. We should write the Vatican.

**PATTY.** Like the Vatican needs food tips from us.

**RENEE.** Well fish on Friday was a really good idea, who do you suppose thought of that?

**PATTY.** They do that because Jesus was a fisherman.

**RENEE.** Well why don't they eat fish every day then? Everybody eats nothing but meat! You'd think Jesus was a rancher.

**PATTY.** Jesus was not a rancher!

**RENEE.** I'm not harshing on Jesus, he's our patron saint. Look at any crucifix. Ribs. He fasted all the time.

**PATTY.** Not to lose weight.

**RENEE.** How do you know?

**PATTY.** They wore those flowing robes. He didn't have to worry about losing weight.

**RENEE.** You think Mary Magdalene would go for a fatty? No way.

**PATTY.** She wasn't his girlfriend.

**RENEE.** She washed his *feet*.

**PATTY.** They were *dirty!*

**RENEE.** And who would follow a fat God? Seriously.

**PATTY.** What about The Buddha?

**RENEE.** The Bradley?

**PATTY.** The Buddha!

**RENEE.** The guy on the incense? He wasn't God!

**PATTY.** You really ought to read some books, you know that? All you ever read is labels.

**RENEE.** I read more than that!

**PATTY.** Yeah, catalogs!

**RENEE.** And magazines! And if you read Vogue a little more faithfully you would know that nobody's [rolling their jeans up] anymore! Nobody! That's O-U-T, out!

**PATTY.** You should give your money to charity instead of spending it on clothes all the time!

**RENEE.** I gave that guy a quarter!

**PATTY.** Only when he threatened to piss on you.

**RENEE.** You are so judgmental. Judge not lest ye be judged.

**PATTY.** As if you don't judge people...calling Tricia a capon.

**RENEE.** I called her a fat little hen.

**PATTY.** Just stop talking about people's bodies all the time. Who gave you the right?

**RENEE.** I earned the right! I deprived myself, why can't they?

**PATTY.** Later, Renee.

**RENEE.** Go with me to Monique's house. Please!

**PATTY.** Why would Monique's mother let you do the eulogy?

**RENEE.** I'll convince her that I was Monique's best friend.

**PATTY.** Isn't she going to wonder why she never saw you before?

**RENEE.** We were friends in Cyberspace!

**PATTY.** You don't even know Monique's last name.

**RENEE.** I do too!

**PATTY.** What is it?

**RENEE.** It begins with a "D."

**PATTY.** Whatever.

**RENEE.** Whatever!

**PATTY.** WHATEVER!

**RENEE.** WHATEVER!

*(Beat.)*

**RENEE.** *(Baby-talk pig latin:)* Attypay!

**PATTY.** Eneeray!

**RENEE.** Who da wittle attypay yelling at me for?

**PATTY.** I am so orry-say. You are my best iend-fray.

**RENEE.** Eneeray lovey you so much. Give her wiggle wiggle hug.

*(They hug.)*

**PATTY.** Oww!

**RENEE.** What?

**PATTY.** Your hipbone.

**RENEE.** Did you hear something?

**TRIBUNAL.**

We see that you have found a dress

A size four, we're impressed

Patty is there no dress for you?

Weren't you able to shed the few?

**RENEE.** Of course Patty bought a dress. We're shipping it.

**PATTY.** It's for your funeral Monique!

**TRIBUNAL.** Do not address a we as me!

**PATTY.** Sorry, Monique. Hey Andrea. Hey Sarah.

**TRIBUNAL.**

We are those girls, we are the gone

We see the clothes that you try on

We watch the scales that you step on

The Teen Tribunal, The Pantheon

**PATTY.** It was really nice to see you! I mean...hear you! I love the a cappella!

*(RENEE and PATTY exchange a look. JANE, mother of Monique, rolls in, seated at a kitchen table.)*

**JANE.** Tissues, girls?

**RENEE.** I feel sort of cried out.

**JANE.** I know just what you mean. The tears stop and you think they've dried up and then something tiny sets you off again. Like the microwave. Monique pushed those buttons. *(She weeps.)*

**RENEE.** Not too often I bet.

**JANE.** Oh but she did. We always sat down to dinner as a family. We'd eat our casserole and she'd sip on her hot water and lemon.

**PATTY.** Monique talked about you a lot.

**JANE.** Did she? What did she say?

**PATTY.** About how you were a really nice mother and all.

**JANE.** Anything more specific?

**PATTY.** *(Flailing:)* She liked that necklace you're wearing. I remember her talking about that.

**RENEE.** It's good you have another daughter.

*(PATTY hits her. RENEE mouths "What?")*

**JANE.** Fortunately, Eleanor doesn't have an eating disorder. She eats and eats. And eats. Eleanor was never as pretty as Monique. Monique was always pretty, even at her most cadaverous. I'm so glad you girls stopped by.

**PATTY.** We didn't know where else to go.

**RENEE.** We were thinking about the funeral.

**JANE.** Celebration. A celebration of the life of Monique Deveraux.

**RENEE.** Whatever.

**PATTY.** And we were thinking about how we could help.

**JANE.** Would you like to be pallbearers? I know that normally pallbearers are men but that's because bodies are normally heavy and in this case I think she could be borne aloft by cats. By kittens. Tiny little kittens. *(She weeps.)*

**PATTY.** Renee can't even lift a liter jug of soda.

**RENEE.** I was thinking maybe I could give the eulogy.

**JANE.** Have you had any experience giving eulogies?

**RENEE.** Well I was on the debate team.

**PATTY.** When?

**RENEE.** I handled the con-side of prayer in the schools.

**JANE.** What was your argument?

**RENEE.** That if we prayed in the multi-purpose room we'd get sneaker dust on our knees and we'd have to wash our pantyhose more often and deplete the world's natural resources that much sooner.

**JANE.** Monique was very concerned with the world's natural resources.

**PATTY.** I know! She hardly used any.

**JANE.** If she left a room, just for a moment, just to get a sweater, she was always cold not having any subcutaneous layer, she would turn out the lights.

**PATTY.** I know and she made the maintenance guys at school put a rubber trash can by the soda machine so that people would recycle their cans.

**JANE.** *(Sobbing:)* Isn't that just like Monique!?

**RENEE.** With Monique's eulogy I would be arguing like pro-Monique, anti-Death.

**JANE.** I don't know. I think Jeanine was expecting to do the eulogy. She was Monique's best friend.

**RENEE.** I know. They were so close. It's too bad about the stutter.

**JANE.** Jeanine stutters?

**RENEE.** Only when she's in front of crowds. And people can be so cruel. They laugh and laugh.

**JANE.** If I let you do the eulogy, will you promise me something Renee?

**RENEE.** Anything.

**JANE.** That you'll eat. For your mother's sake. You have no idea how much your mother loves you.

**RENEE.** I don't think so. If she really loved me she'd buy me a canopy bed.

**JANE.** I always wanted a canopy bed. I never bought Monique a canopy bed!

**PATTY.** Maybe she didn't want one.

**JANE.** Will you promise me you'll eat, Renee? You too, Patty, although you don't look quite as ephemeral.

**RENEE / PATTY.** We promise.

**JANE.** Renee, do her justice.

*(Crossfade funeral. Open casket wheels on. Big organ chord. Spotlight on RENEE.)*

**RENEE.** ...And every day was Lent with her around. A Mother Teresa without the hunchback and wrinkles, she lived a life of denial that we can only aspire to. She entered the Peace Corps of the body, doing her part for world hunger by offering up her portions to the starving children in Africa. Although I'm not entirely clear on how they got the food, I know that by doing so we were all able to see what she was made of. Bones. Monica, we will never forget you.

**PATTY.** *(Hissing:)* Monique.

**RENEE.** Amen.

**JEANINE.** You told me she was dancing!

**RENEE.** She was when we saw her!

**JEANINE.** She was *blind!*

**RENEE.** You can dance when you're blind! Look at Stevie Wonder!

**JEANINE.** You've got a lot of nerve stealing my eulogy!

**RENEE.** Her mother asked me to do it.

**JEANINE.** Telling her mother I had a stutter, you big fat cheater! You flout the by-laws every chance you get!

**RENEE.** What about you? You're out there licking doorknobs!

**JEANINE.** You told me she was in the hospital for a nose job!

**RENEE.** They did it posthumously! It was her dying wish!

**JEANINE.** Why would anyone care what their nose looked like when they were dead?

**RENEE.** Open casket, hello?

**JEANINE.** Her nose doesn't look any different to me.

**RENEE.** The nose isn't the problem. Do you see the make-up? I could kill that mortician. She's clearly a summer and he did her all winter.

**JEANINE.** Why is there a scar around her neck?

**RENEE.** What scar?

**JEANINE.** *That* scar. There.

**RENEE.** Birthmark?

**JEANINE.** I heard the two of you were the last to see her alive. If you murdered Monique, you are SO disqualified!

**RENEE.** I didn't murder anybody! I accessorized!

**JEANINE.** You what?

**PATTY.** My client has nothing further to say at this time.

**JEANINE.** You can't be her lawyer, you're a suspect.

**PATTY.** *(To RENEE:)* You have the right to remain silent, you have the right.

**RENEE.** The *lawyer* doesn't say that...

**JEANINE.** You know what they give you in jail! Meat loaf! Mashed potatoes! And pudding!

**RENEE.** Well why don't *you* confess to the crime and then you can keep stuffing your face.

**JEANINE.** I may have eaten your heinous mall cookies and ballooned back to a four but I'm still the same size as you, and according to the

by-laws he gets to choose between us. You think he's actually going to choose his girlfriend's murderer?

**RENEE.** How do we know you didn't do it? You're the one who just got out of the looney bin!

**JEANINE.** It was a Body Image Clinic!

**RENEE.** There were locks on the door!

**JEANINE.** I had some issues with exercise!

**RENEE.** You were trying to exercise your head!

**JEANINE.** There are muscles in your head!

**RENEE.** If you so much as breathe a word about your little murder theory to The Bradley, you'll be pushing up daisies with your pal Monique.

**PATTY.** Quiet. It's The Bradley.

**JEANINE.** The Bradley, it's me Jeanine. A two.

**RENEE.** You are so not a two.

**JEANINE.** I'm the former two.

**RENEE.** The former two, the present four.

**BRADLEY.** Are you talking about your dress size?

**JEANINE.** Uh-huh.

**BRADLEY.** This is a fucking funeral! You should be sad. And if you're not sad, you should leave.

**RENEE.** You heard The Bradley, Jeanine. He wants you to leave.

**JEANINE.** Me leave? Why don't you leave?

**RENEE.** The Bradley needs me.

**BRADLEY.** Why would I need you?

**RENEE.** You're distraught.

**BRADLEY.** Why don't you both leave?

**JEANINE.** You heard The Bradley, Renee.

**RENEE.** I'm afraid I can't leave. I have a charley horse.

**JEANINE.** So do I.

**RENEE.** You can't have a charley horse. I have a charley horse.

**JEANINE.** I'm here, The Bradley, to listen, to share, to give whatever you need from me now.

**BRADLEY.** Would you get me a Kleenex?

*(RENEE smiles serenely.)*

**JEANINE.** Sure.

**RENEE.** You help her Patty.

**JEANINE.** I think I can find a Kleenex, Renee.

**RENEE.** Make sure it's the kind with lotion. The Bradley's nose is chapping.

*(JEANINE exits, followed by PATTY.)*

**BRADLEY.** It is?

**RENEE.** Oh my God, it's total Rudolph.

**BRADLEY.** Don't let the guys see me. I'm like crying all the time.

**RENEE.** Oh The Bradley. The Bradley, The Bradley. Poor you. Poor Monique. I miss her so.

**BRADLEY.** What do you miss?

**RENEE.** Her...smile?

**BRADLEY.** She didn't smile too much. She was embarrassed about her teeth. Her gums were pulling away.

**RENEE.** I miss the way she'd wear your letter jacket.

**BRADLEY.** That wasn't my letter jacket. That was the last guy's. She couldn't wear mine. It made her tip over.

**RENEE.** I tell you one thing I miss, the way that girl starved.

**BRADLEY.** Monique was totally fucked up.

**RENEE.** *(Admiringly:)* Wasn't she?

**BRADLEY.** Totally. Her breath smelled bad, her hair was like a Brillo pad. Her little arms were as tiny as a T Rex's, and she got a stress fracture just from walking down the street! I tried to get her to eat something but her digestive system had like shut down. I mean I would like to have a girlfriend with breasts.

**RENEE.** The thing you have to remember about breasts is that those bulges are fat.

**BRADLEY.** But it's fat in the right place, see what I'm saying? It's fat where it's supposed to be. Like dirt in a garden isn't dirty. It's *soil*.

**RENEE.** Soil, yes, I see, I've never thought of it that way before.

**BRADLEY.** I actually don't remember you being around too much. Were you really a friend of hers?

**RENEE.** I gave the eulogy, didn't I?

**BRADLEY.** Monique's sister didn't know who you were.

**RENEE.** Sedatives.

**BRADLEY.** You made it sound like it was good what happened to Monique.

**RENEE.** She achieved her goal, didn't she?

**BRADLEY.** I guess she did. She was very goal-oriented.

**RENEE.** I remember that about her. I was like Monique, chill!

**BRADLEY.** Me too! Like how she was nuts with the lists! She'd put things on the list like "Drink water."

**RENEE.** Those crazy lists! You're right. Let's take it slow. Let's just sleep together and see how we feel.

**BRADLEY.** I'm not gonna sleep with you.

**RENEE.** Why not?

**BRADLEY.** She just died.

**RENEE.** So?

**BRADLEY.** So, I'm not gonna be all...on the day of her funeral.

**RENEE.** Monique would have wanted it this way.

**BRADLEY.** No she wouldn't. She was really jealous.

**RENEE.** Obladee, obladah, life goes on.

**BRADLEY.** I got to go.

**RENEE.** Why don't I just stop by tonight? See where you are in the grieving process.

**BRADLEY.** I don't know. I can't think about this now. I got to drive Monique's mother to the reception thing.

**RENEE.** Reception? Oh, the reception, the one at...

**BRADLEY.** Her house. You were supposed to bring something. Like a ham or something. There's gonna be home movies.

**RENEE.** Sweet.

**BRADLEY.** I took some. But we switched to slides after she stopped moving.

**RENEE.** I've got the ham in the car!

**BRADLEY.** Great.

**RENEE.** A big fat juicy ham!

**BRADLEY.** I'll be seeing you there then.

*(THE BRADLEY exits.)*

**RENEE.** *(Calling after him:)* With ham in hand!

*(JEANINE comes running in carrying a roll of toilet paper.)*

**JEANINE.** Where is he?

**RENEE.** What's with the toilet paper Jeanine?

**JEANINE.** It's for The Bradley. Monique's mom ran through all the Kleenex. She's still in the grief stage of grief.

**RENEE.** He's gone to Chuck E. Cheese. To help Monique's Mom set up.

**JEANINE.** Chuck E. Cheese? But the reception is at Monique's house.

**RENEE.** There's been a change of location. Monique's mom wanted it to be more of a celebration.

**JEANINE.** Well, I'd better get over to Chuck E. Cheese's. After all, I am the best friend.

*(JEANINE walks out slowly, and then dashes out in pursuit of The Bradley. PATTY re-enters.)*

**RENEE.** *(Urgently:)* Where do you get a ham?

**PATTY.** From a pig.

**RENEE.** Well, I know that, but where can you buy one?

**PATTY.** At the grocery store. You're gonna eat a ham?

**RENEE.** Get real. I've got to bring one to the funeral reception.

**PATTY.** Why?

**RENEE.** When people are sad they eat. That's why I try never to feel anything. It's counter-productive.

**PATTY.** Who told you to bring a ham?

**RENEE.** The Bradley.

**PATTY.** You're not gonna be able to carry a ham.

**RENEE.** Well you'll just have to carry it then. And you can't eat it!

**PATTY.** You think I'd really scarf an entire ham?

**RENEE.** I've seen you do it.

**PATTY.** That was a roast beef. I hadn't eaten for like three days.

**RENEE.** I know. You were doing so well. Now, where is a grocery store?

**PATTY.** Everywhere.

**RENEE.** Talk about an epidemic.

**PATTY.** I can run in for you. I need to pick up a few things.

**RENEE.** Oh no you don't. The last time you went to the grocery store it was like \$200 and you sent the check-out girl into overtime. We're going in together.

*(RENEE pushes PATTY offstage. They re-emerge with PATTY pushing RENEE in a grocery cart. PABLO, a grocery boy, crosses through carrying fruit crates.)*

**PATTY.** Doesn't anything in here tempt you?

**RENEE.** That guy with the boxes was pretty cute.

**PATTY.** I mean food.

**RENEE.** If I eat food, I get fat, I get huge, it's out of the question.

**PATTY.** You were never huge, you looked fine. You were a figure-skater.

**RENEE.** So I wore sharp shoes and went round and round. Let's get a ham and get the hell out of here.

*(A ham drops from the ceiling. PATTY picks it up.)*

What's that?

**PATTY.** It's a ham.

**RENEE.** Thirteen dollars!

**PATTY.** Food is expensive.

**RENEE.** Would you get that big fat ham out of my face!

**PATTY.** Does it look like a good one?

**RENEE.** Oh, who cares? It's just a prop. Give me some cash.

**PATTY.** I don't have any money!

**RENEE.** What do you mean?

**PATTY.** I never have any money! I'm poor!

**RENEE.** Oh you are not.

**PATTY.** I'm the working poor!

**RENEE.** You don't even have a job.

**PATTY.** My parents do.

**RENEE.** That is so retro having two parents. Check your pockets! You must have some change. We've got to bring a ham. It's like a cover charge.

*(PATTY pulls out her pockets to show RENEE.)*

**PATTY.** All I have is McDonald's gift certificates. Maybe we could bring Happy Meals instead.

**RENEE.** You can't bring Happy Meals to a funeral reception!

**PATTY.** Well use your credit card.

**RENEE.** I maxed it out buying this dress.

**PATTY.** Well, I guess we'll have to show up ham-less.

**RENEE.** I can't! I told The Bradley I had a ham in the car!

**PATTY.** Tell him stray dogs ate it.

**RENEE.** I'll tell him you ate it. That's a little more plausible.

**PATTY.** Don't tell him that! He'll think I'm disgusting!

**RENEE.** Well we have to have a ham. Otherwise he'll know I wasn't invited. Here, I'll just put the ham in your backpack.

**PATTY.** I'm not shoplifting a ham! I'm not gonna steal from that poor grocer!

**RENEE.** What poor grocer? It's a giant conglomerate that's exploiting third world livestock. They can't even turn around in their cages.

**PATTY.** Renee?

**RENEE.** What?

**PATTY.** You sort of know about something.

**RENEE.** And that's not all they do. They mutilate their genitals and test mascara on their eyes. I'm just sick about it. I signed a petition. Come on, let's go.

**PATTY.** I'm not walking out with this.

**RENEE.** Well *I* can't carry it.

**PATTY.** I might get arrested. How would that look on my transcript?

**RENEE.** They don't put arrests on your transcript! They put it on your record.

**PATTY.** I don't want an arrest anywhere. It will hurt my chances.

**RENEE.** Not at Harvard! They let murderers in!

**PATTY.** Then you've still got a shot.

**RENEE.** Oh, give it a rest would you? Look, an old receipt. I'll just stick it on there.

**PATTY.** This receipt is for Maxi-pads.

**RENEE.** Not from a distance.

**PATTY.** I am not going to steal a ham. It's a venal sin!

**RENEE.** Patty, you are so conventional, did you know that? Locked into this whole Ten Commandments thing...

**PATTY.** Why don't we just skip the reception?

**RENEE.** Are you crazy? I've got to get a date with The Bradley before Jeanine does.

**PATTY.** I thought you sent Jeanine to Chuck E. Cheese's.

**RENEE.** She won't be there forever! Once she finishes inhaling a deep dish pizza she'll realize she's been duped.

**PATTY.** So what?

**RENEE.** It's in the by-laws. In case of a tie and no designated successor, she who bones him owns him.

**PATTY.** Well, I'm not shoplifting.

**RENEE.** Give it to me. I'll carry it and you wheel me.

**PATTY.** I'd still be shoplifting. Only I'd be shoplifting you and the ham.

**RENEE.** I swear. I have to do everything.

**PATTY.** Just the felonies.

*(PATTY crosses her arms, not backing down. RENEE climbs out of the cart and takes the ham.)*

**RENEE.** Oh all right. What a hamophobe!

*(RENEE tries to lift the ham and careens around, finally finding her balance.)*

Let's go.

**PABLO.** You got a receipt for that?

**RENEE.** *(Waving it:)* Chyeah.

**PABLO.** *(Looking at it:)* That's for Maxi Pads.

**RENEE.** God. Say it louder next time. I think Aisle 5 missed it!

**PABLO.** That's not those, that's a ham.

**RENEE.** I know what it is.

**PABLO.** Nobody saw you go through the line.

**RENEE.** Well pay attention next time.

**PABLO.** You didn't go through the line.

**PATTY.** Well which is it? She didn't go through the line or nobody SAW her go through the line?

**RENEE.** My lawyer.

**PABLO.** Aren't you kind of young to be a lawyer?

**PATTY.** I'm a lawyerette.

**PABLO.** Look, my boss sent me. I got to get some money from you or I'm gonna lose my job.

**RENEE.** Would you get to lose the smock too?

**PABLO.** I need this job.

**RENEE.** I need this ham. I'm a homeless person and I'm starving.

**PABLO.** Homeless people don't have purses. They have shopping bags.

**RENEE.** I have shopping bags! In the car!

**PABLO.** You're a homeless person with a car?

**RENEE.** I'm a migrant worker. I'm one of your people.

**PABLO.** Which people?

**RENEE.** Mexican?

**PABLO.** Not.

**PATTY.** She is starving.

**RENEE.** I haven't eaten for days.

**PABLO.** Well take an apple or something, not a whole fucking ham.

**RENEE.** I have expensive tastes.

**PATTY.** Can't you just tell them you saw the receipt?

**PABLO.** They can check the tape. They'll know.

**PATTY.** Wow this is like 1984 or something.

**PABLO.** Excellent book. Big Brother.

**RENEE.** Can we return to speaking English please? Tell him WHY we need the ham.

**PABLO.** I don't fucking care why you need the ham.

**PATTY.** We're going to a funeral reception.

**PABLO.** Oh man.

**RENEE.** For one of our very dearest friends.

**PABLO.** What'd she die of?

**RENEE.** Perfection.

**PABLO.** Whatever. You gotta pay for it. Look, I really need this job. My mother needs to buy a respirator. Our insurance is running out.

**RENEE.** Like we're gonna buy that old respirator line.

**PATTY.** Renee.

**RENEE.** Like he's gotta buy air for his mother? Maybe he's got some land in the desert. Or some anti-cellulite cream.

**PATTY.** Pay for the ham, Renee.

**PABLO.** Renee? Like don't walk away Renee.

**RENEE.** You're a tool, I hope you realize that, a tool for the whole... capitalistic...thing.

**PABLO.** Hey, I'm only sixteen.

*(RENEE hands over a twenty. PABLO bags the ham.)*

**RENEE.** There.

**PABLO.** You know you'd be cute you ate something.

**RENEE.** Thank you for the Latino perspective.

*(They exit. Crossfade to reception. PATTY and RENEE enter. In one hand PATTY carries the ham in a plastic grocery bag. In the other, she carries her backpack.)*

**PATTY.** I feel like Lucky.

**RENEE.** You are lucky.

**PATTY.** No, Lucky, Lucky. In WAITING FOR GODOT. Fifth period English, remember?

**RENEE.** I had cramps that day.

**PATTY.** For someone who doesn't have a period you sure get a lot of cramps.

**RENEE.** I risk reform school for that stupid ham, and The Bradley isn't even here to see it.

**PATTY.** Ummmm, hot cross buns, Chex mix, deviled eggs...try a deviled egg!

**RENEE.** Would you get that out of my face? I despise potluck. If it's your party feed the damn guests!

**PATTY.** We're not really guests. We weren't invited.

**RENEE.** Well the other ham-bringers were.

**PATTY.** It's what the Native Americans used to do. Only they called them potlatch ceremonies.

**RENEE.** It's got nothing to do with *Indians*. It's like you bring a pot and everybody else brings a pot and the pots don't match and people end up eating like hummus and nachos and jello and feel like they're gonna spew.

**PATTY.** So? What's wrong with that? Buffet is the binger's delight.

**RENEE.** You're gonna spew here?

**PATTY.** Why not?

**RENEE.** Show some respect. The girl was anorexic. Why is that girl staring at me?

**PATTY.** Oh, that's Monique's sister.

**RENEE.** A fourteen at least. Oh my God. Jeanine is here. How the hell did she get here first?

**PATTY.** Maybe she sprinted.

**RENEE.** The girl's like one of those punching bag clowns. You keep bopping her and she keeps popping back up. Oh my God she's talking to The Bradley. Go over there and see what she's planning.

**PATTY.** Jeanine's not smart enough to have a plan. She got a D in Driver's Ed. How smart is that?

**RENEE.** If she flutters her lashes any more, she's gonna take off.

**PATTY.** You really think he'd sleep with Jeanine?

**RENEE.** Well, he doesn't seem to want to sleep with me.

**PATTY.** (*Gasps:*) The Bradley? Is it possible that...?

**RENEE.** Don't even say it.

**PATTY.** He is taking Home Ec.

**RENEE.** It isn't Home Ec. It's Thai cooking!

**PATTY.** Maybe that's why he dates girls that look like boys.

**RENEE.** I don't look like a boy, I look like a model!

**PATTY.** Whatever.

**RENEE.** I'm a dead ringer for Kate Moss.

**PATTY.** She's a waif.

**RENEE.** So am I.

**PATTY.** You are so not a waif.

**RENEE.** I am a total waif!

**PATTY.** Waifs are like helpless. You're not helpless. You're smart and schemy and evil.

**RENEE.** Well it doesn't matter what I am, it matters what I look like. Now get your nose out of the trough and go.

**PATTY.** They're going to see me hovering. She'll know I'm your minion.

**RENEE.** You're not my minion, you're my sidekick.

**PATTY.** You're *my* sidekick!

**RENEE.** I'm not the sidekick, I'm the protagonist.

**PATTY.** You are not.

**RENEE.** Fine. I'm the antagonist.

**PATTY.** We're both the protagonist.

**RENEE.** Whatever.

**PATTY.** Whatever.

**RENEE.** WHATEVER. GO.

*(PATTY exits. Home movies of Monique are projected across RENEE.)*

Excuse me. Do I look like a projection screen?

*(Exit RENEE. JEANINE and THE BRADLEY cross down. PATTY follows, lingering and nibbling at the buffet table.)*

**JEANINE.** This is not your fault, you know. There's no need to carry around all that guilt.

**BRADLEY.** What guilt?

**JEANINE.** Maybe it's time to forgive yourself a little, huh? You cut everyone else a break. How about cutting The Bradley a break?

**BRADLEY.** Forgive myself for what? It's not my fault. It's Monique's fault.

**JEANINE.** There's no need to carry around all that anger.

**BRADLEY.** I'm not angry...

**JEANINE.** There's a book I want you to read. It's a Dummies' Guide to Coping with Loss. It's about coping with loss.

**BRADLEY.** I don't really need a book. I've had a lot of experience.

**JEANINE.** You can always learn how to grieve a little better.

**BRADLEY.** I been grieving wrong?

**JEANINE.** No, no, no, Bradley, you haven't done anything wrong. Look me in the eye and say it, "I haven't done anything wrong."

**BRADLEY.** I think I'm gonna go get another soda.

**JEANINE.** What's that all about?

**BRADLEY.** Thirst?

**JEANINE.** Resistance. How about I drop it by this afternoon?

**BRADLEY.** I got to go to my cooking class.

**JEANINE.** You're taking a cooking class?

**BRADLEY.** Thai cooking.

**JEANINE.** Ah, a coping strategy.

**BRADLEY.** I just like the noodles.

**JEANINE.** I'll stop by after your class. What time is it over?

**BRADLEY.** Well it sort of depends on what we're cooking...

**JEANINE.** I'll wait. I'll just park myself on your doorstep and wait.

**BRADLEY.** Why don't I pick it up?

**JEANINE.** When?

**BRADLEY.** Whenever.

**JEANINE.** On your way home from class?

**BRADLEY.** I guess.

**JEANINE.** Perfect!

*(THE BRADLEY exits. PATTY sidles up to JEANINE.)*

**PATTY.** Cooking class?

**JEANINE.** *Thai* cooking. What?

**PATTY.** Monique did sort of look like a boy.

**JEANINE.** She had breasts!

**PATTY.** No, she didn't.

**JEANINE.** What are you saying?

*(PATTY shrugs. JEANINE exits huffily. MRS. BLUE, eating from a paper plate, walks up to PATTY.)*

**MRS. BLUE.** Hello Patty.

**PATTY.** Hey Mrs. Blue.

**MRS. BLUE.** There aren't as many people here as at the last funeral.

**PATTY.** Well some of the girls have died since then.

**MRS. BLUE.** I can't help but think of Jimmy's funeral.

**PATTY.** Jimmy?

**MRS. BLUE.** You probably know him as James. Dean. Like Monique he died young, too young. Motorcycle accident.

*(MRS. BLUE hands PATTY her plate, rummages through her purse.)*

Have you got a Kleenex?

*(PATTY hands her a napkin. MRS. BLUE looks at it, uncomprehendingly.)*

**PATTY.** It's a cocktail napkin.

**MRS. BLUE.** It will chafe, but never mind.

**PATTY.** Was he your boyfriend?

**MRS. BLUE.** Oh no, no, no. Just a fellow traveler.

**PATTY.** Were you on the motorcycle?

**MRS. BLUE.** Oh no, no, no. We were in the same acting class. At The Studio. Me, Jimmy, Marilyn, Marlon. We always knew Jimmy would be a star. One day he brought in coffee and a bagel and he sat there and drank it and ate it and it was riveting. RIVETING.

**PATTY.** Wow. Did they always know you'd be a high school teacher?

**MRS. BLUE.** Silly as it is, they all thought I would be the star.

**PATTY.** They did?

**MRS. BLUE.** They did.

**PATTY.** Wouldn't they be like older than you?

**MRS. BLUE.** I was the baby, fresh out of...barely out of...still wet behind the ears when I arrived in New York. Baby Shirley, he called me.

**PATTY.** Jimmy?

**MRS. BLUE.** No, Marlon. Jimmy never joked, he was in too much pain.

**PATTY.** From the accident?

**MRS. BLUE.** You felt it to look at him. Jimmy, Jimmy, I'd think, what have they done to you...?

**PATTY.** What had they done to him?

**MRS. BLUE.** Many times Elia begged me to come back to New York. Shirley, he'd say, we need you. No one else can do this part. But I'd say really Elia, I am not the only actress who can do that part. What about Jessica?

**PATTY.** Jessica?

**MRS. BLUE.** Tandy. And do you know what that role was?

**PATTY.** Miss Daisy?

**MRS. BLUE.** Blanche du Bois.

**PATTY.** Wow. Why didn't you do it?

**MRS. BLUE.** I fell in love with a young attorney and the rest, as they say, is history.

**PATTY.** But in the summers you could still go back and do plays and stuff.

**MRS. BLUE.** Oh they still call me, but I tell them I'm needed here. My students need me.

**PATTY.** Not in the summers we don't.

**MRS. BLUE.** The Community Players do. I am, and I say this only because they have told me so many times, I am the box office draw.

**PATTY.** You were really good in DARK OF THE MOON.

**MRS. BLUE.** Thank you. Oh God when I think of the... *waste*, Jimmy, Marilyn, Marlon, *gone*, and *me*, sharing a dressing room with software distributors...

(MRS. BLUE *exits sobbing*. RENEE *enters*.)

**RENEE.** Well? Did you hear anything?

**PATTY.** He's stopping by her house. To pick up a book on coping with loss.

**RENEE.** Oh my God. I cannot believe she used that old coping with loss line.

**PATTY.** I took care of it.

**RENEE.** *You* took care of it?

**PATTY.** I can be crafty!

**RENEE.** Yeah, like *macramé*.

**PATTY.** I told her he was gay.

**RENEE.** Why? He's not gay.

**PATTY.** To shake her confidence. She has self-esteem problems.

**RENEE.** Women with self-esteem problems LOVE gay men.

**PATTY.** They do?

**RENEE.** Of course.

**PATTY.** Why?

**RENEE.** Then the rejections aren't *personal*.

**PATTY.** Ohhh.

*(JEANINE, passing through, sees RENEE.)*

**JEANINE.** Renee. The Bradley and I are having a little tryst today which will no doubt lead to a forever love. I'm thinking of naming our first child Chuck E. In honor of you, Renee.

**RENEE.** Your first child? Who are you kidding? You don't even have a period!

**JEANINE.** Once in a while I do!

**RENEE.** Some tryst! It's a book drop-off!

**JEANINE.** Have you been spying on me?

**RENEE.** Your life's not all *that* interesting. May I suggest a title for your autobiography? "String of Clichés: The Jeanine Story."

**JEANINE.** I have another title in mind. "She Who Bones Him Owns Him. "

**PATTY.** Or how about "He Who Bones Him Owns Him?"

*(JEANINE gives PATTY a sharp dirty look, then wheels towards RENEE.)*

**JEANINE.** You've got a lot of nerve showing up here, uninvited.

**RENEE.** An oversight I'm sure. After all, I did give the eulogy.

**JEANINE.** Monique's mom told me about your little promise to eat something and I think you need to honor that.

**RENEE.** *(Grabbing something off the buffet table:)* I am eating something!

**JEANINE.** That's a toothpick.

**RENEE.** Yum.

**JEANINE.** How about a deviled egg?

**RENEE.** I can't eat eggs! There was a childhood trauma! It involved multiple yokes!

**JEANINE.** You promised her mother you'd eat!

**RENEE.** I said I'd eat! I didn't say what!

**JEANINE.** Eat an egg or get out of her house!

**RENEE.** Have you considered grief counseling?

**JEANINE.** I totally want to see you eat an egg!

**RENEE.** Why? So you don't feel so fat after your little Chuck E. Cheese binge?

*(JEANINE thrusts an egg at RENEE's mouth. RENEE turns her head away and JEANINE smears the egg down her dress.)*

**JEANINE.** I may be a big fat cheesy four but at least I don't look like a Jackson Pollock painting!

**RENEE.** I may be abstract but at least I don't look like the Macy's parade!

**JEANINE.** I hate you! I hope you die of osteoporosis!

*(JEANINE exits.)*

**RENEE.** Osteo...did you hear that?

**PATTY.** She's distraught!

**RENEE.** I'm distraught! Look at my dress! It's ruined!

**PATTY.** I'll get a sponge.

**RENEE.** I *told* you to give the gay thing a rest. This is serious. We've got to get over to Jeanine's house and sabotage the tryst. I'll be damned if she bones him first.

**PATTY.** What about your dress?

**RENEE.** Oh my God. Gimme your clothes.

**PATTY.** Give you my clothes?

**RENEE.** Sir Walter Raleigh gave his cape to Queen Elizabeth.

**PATTY.** That was a cape.

**RENEE.** Point?

**PATTY.** He wasn't left naked.

**RENEE.** Give me your cape then.

**PATTY.** I haven't got a cape! People don't wear capes! This isn't Jamestown!

**RENEE.** Oh never mind. We'll just stop at the mall on the way to Jeanine's for an even exchange.

*(Sales counter. RENEE holds a tablecloth around her shoulders and sets the eggy dress on the counter.)*

**PATTY.** Don't you get embarrassed about returning things?

**RENEE.** Why should I? I'm making capitalism work for me.

*(Enter MARCEL.)*

I'd like to return this dress please.

**MARCEL.** I'm sorry but it appears to be crusty.

**RENEE.** I know. We got it home and we were like, "Oh my God, there's deviled egg on the front of this dress."

**MARCEL.** How did you know it was deviled egg?

**RENEE.** Well we didn't, what we actually said was "Oh my God, I just bought this dress and there's some crusty thing on it." All you have to do is scratch it off.

**MARCEL.** Excuse me?

**RENEE.** See? It comes right off.

**MARCEL.** Then why are you returning it?

**RENEE.** It was too small.

**MARCEL.** Small?

**RENEE.** Big.

**MARCEL.** Then why did you buy it?

**RENEE.** It was an impulse buy.

**MARCEL.** And I should care...why?

**RENEE.** My parents won't let me wear it.

**MARCEL.** They're philosophically opposed to wool crepe?

**RENEE.** May I speak to the manager?

**MARCEL.** I am the manager.

**RENEE.** You're not the usual manager.

**MARCEL.** She got fired. For being too lax about the return policy.

**RENEE.** She wasn't lax, she was compassionate.

**MARCEL.** I think she's at the Disney shop now. Selling Goofy mugs. I'm sure she'd love to see you.

**RENEE.** I could do without the attitude.

**MARCEL.** Do you have the receipt?

**RENEE.** Of course I have the receipt.

**MARCEL.** This receipt is for Maxi-pads.

**RENEE.** The tags are still on the dress!

**MARCEL.** These tags have been tucked. I can see the holes from the safety pins that attached them to the inside of the dress.

**RENEE.** *(Snatching the receipt back:)* This dress has never been worn!

**MARCEL.** May I ask why you're wearing a tablecloth?

**RENEE.** This isn't a tablecloth! It's gingham!

**MARCEL.** It's got little strawberries on it!

**RENEE.** Tell him Patty, tell him the dress has never been worn!

**PATTY.** Renee.

**RENEE.** What?

**MARCEL.** *(Smelling the dress:)* Chanel Number Five. Ban Roll-On. Estée Lauder matte foundation.

**RENEE.** I tried it on, that's all! Tell him!

**MARCEL.** It's black. I'm guessing funeral.

**PATTY.** I'm not gonna lie for you anymore.

**RENEE.** Oh can't somebody else chop down the cherry tree just this once?

**MARCEL.** (*Pointing:*) Sweat stain!

**RENEE.** You're about to lose my business.

**MARCEL.** Promises, promises.

**RENEE.** I promise you'll lose my business.

**MARCEL.** Fine.

**RENEE.** If you give me that dress in the same size and make it snappy.

(*MARCEL sweeps out.*)

**RENEE.** Where were you out there? You're my partner! I needed back-up!

**PATTY.** Well don't be all.

**RENEE.** Well I am all. After all the things I do for you.

**PATTY.** You don't do anything for me.

**RENEE.** I go to the bathroom with you after every meal. Despite the stench and the retch.

(*PATTY starts to exit.*)

**RENEE.** Where are you going? I'm in crisis.

**PATTY.** Call the Teen Hotline.

**RENEE.** That is so cold.

**PATTY.** Why should I help you get your Bradley? What's in it for me?

**RENEE.** Borrowed prestige?

**PATTY.** See ya.

**RENEE.** Patty. Stay. I'll do anything.

**PATTY.** Stop at McDonald's?

**RENEE.** You're *not* still hungry.

**PATTY.** I want to get some Happy Meals. I've nearly got the entire [Furby] collection.

**RENEE.** Those things are for *kids*, Patty.

**PATTY.** They'll never know! We'll use the drive-thru!

**RENEE.** There are 83 grams of fat in each of those Happy Meals, you do know that, don't you?

*(Beat.)*

Oh alright, as long as you promise not to digest!

*(McDonald's drive-thru. Two chairs that suggest a car. DENNIS is an o/s voice.)*

**PATTY.** Twenty Happy Meals please.

**DENNIS.** Two?

**PATTY.** Twenty.

**DENNIS.** Very funny. Ha ha. Get out of the drive-thru asshole.

**RENEE.** Excuse me?

**DENNIS.** Hayley, I know it's you. "Twenty Happy Meals please." That is so lame.

**PATTY.** I'm not Hayley.

**DENNIS.** Oh. Look, you're supposed to be a kid to get the Happy Meals. How old are you?

**RENEE.** If you'd look in your stupid convex mirror you wouldn't have to ask.

**DENNIS.** What's up? You girls like on a scavenger hunt?

**RENEE.** There are cars lining up behind us.

**DENNIS.** So, what, is there like a slumber party somewhere?

**RENEE.** She wants Happy Meals. Give her Happy Meals and stop being such a tool.

**DENNIS.** They're all for her?

**RENEE.** She's dying okay? Of a very rare...disorder. And this is her dying wish.

**DENNIS.** Oh I get it. This is like a hazing or something.

**RENEE.** I'd like to speak to the manager.

**DENNIS.** He's in the bathroom. He's gonna be a while. He took a magazine.

**RENEE / PATTY.** Yuk.

**RENEE.** Don't you have twenty Happy Meals?

**DENNIS.** We're McDonald's. Over a billion served.

**RENEE.** Then this shouldn't be so hard.

**DENNIS.** So like where you guys headed?

**RENEE.** Oh for God's sake.

**DENNIS.** Look, if you want to meet me you don't have to like come up with bogus meat orders.

**RENEE.** Meet you? Why would we want to meet you?

**DENNIS.** Maybe you been checking me out in the convex mirror.

**RENEE.** Oh yeah we checked you out. We checked out the smock. We checked out the stupid little hat. We checked out the acne. We checked out the mouth breathing. We checked it all out and decided we'd rather have the fucking food!

*(Beat.)*

**DENNIS.** Drive up please.

*(A McDonald's bag drops from the sky and lands in PATTY's lap. PATTY is chomping on cheeseburgers.)*

**PATTY.** What's with the balls? Who thought of balls? Kids like to jump into a bunch of balls. How did they find that out?

**RENEE.** Are you done?

**PATTY.** What?

**RENEE.** You sound like a stand-up comedian. So kids like balls. Get over it. Finish your many hamburgers.

**PATTY.** Cheeseburgers.

**RENEE.** The Bradley's class is almost over.

*(Pause. PATTY shovels food in.)*

**RENEE.** I ought to charge admission.

**PATTY.** What?

**RENEE.** The way you wolf your food. It's like a National Geographic special.

**PATTY.** I have a system. First I eat all the burgers, then I eat all the French Fries then I drink all the drinks.

**RENEE.** Why don't you alternate bites?

**PATTY.** Because that would be normal. I have an eating disorder.

**RENEE.** Patty, have you been to see a counselor?

**PATTY.** Just once.

**RENEE.** I can't believe you!

**PATTY.** I was on a bummer.

*(Enter GUIDANCE COUNSELOR with her own chair. Ticking clock. Pauses.)*

**COUNSELOR.** You know I care about you, don't you Patricia?

**PATTY.** Yes?

**COUNSELOR.** You sound like you're not sure of that.

**PATTY.** Well it's just I never met you before.

**COUNSELOR.** You don't think it's possible that someone might actually care about you?

**PATTY.** Well like my Mom does. And Renee.

**COUNSELOR.** We want our friends' approval, don't we?

**PATTY.** Yes?

**COUNSELOR.** You sound like you're not sure.

**PATTY.** I just wasn't sure whether we were talking about you or me.

**COUNSELOR.** We can talk about me if you like. I mean that's only fair isn't it? That we have an exchange. When I was a teenager, yes I was a teenager, my friend had the (*Making quotation marks with her fingers:*) grooviest pair of embroidered jeans, and I wanted some just like them, and do you know what I did?

**PATTY.** Stole them?

**COUNSELOR.** I did. I stole them. And do you know what? I could never wear the jeans because she might see them and discover that I stole them. Do you see my point?

**PATTY.** Yes?

**COUNSELOR.** Have you ever thought about why they're trying to control our bodies?

**PATTY.** Who?

**COUNSELOR.** Them.

**PATTY.** So we look good?

**COUNSELOR.** So we spend all our time worrying about looking good.

**PATTY.** What do you spend your time worrying about?

**COUNSELOR.** I worry about girls like you.

**PATTY.** Um. The bell just rang.

**COUNSELOR.** I worry about what kind of message the media is sending. Why aren't men taught to hate their bodies?

**PATTY.** Well Renee's brother takes steroids.

**COUNSELOR.** Good. I'm glad to hear it. I'm glad to hear that self-loathing is now spanning the genders.

**PATTY.** Um. The bell just rang.

**COUNSELOR.** I heard it. But I want another kind of bell to go off in your mind. The bell that says I can be large, I can go gray, I can wear sweatpants.

**PATTY.** You mean like a lesbian?

**COUNSELOR.** Take this. It's The By Women For Women Organic Cotton Catalog. Discover the freedom of the elasticized waist.

*(Exit COUNSELOR.)*

**RENEE.** See, the problem with counselors is they think the way we eat is a *problem* and it's not, it's a *philosophy*.

**PATTY.** There was a weird smell in her office. That middle-aged smell.

**RENEE.** Decay.

**PATTY.** It's kind of like a mix of sweat, perfume, and disappointment.

**RENEE.** You should totally write that down. That was poetry.

**PATTY.** Eat your pickles.

**RENEE.** It has ketchup on it.

**PATTY.** Ketchup is just tomatoes.

**RENEE.** And sugar. It's fifteen calories a teaspoon.

**PATTY.** Just wipe the ketchup off.

**RENEE.** With what?

**PATTY.** A napkin.

**RENEE.** I can't eat when somebody's watching me!

**PATTY.** Well don't look at me!

**RENEE.** I'm not!

**PATTY.** You were!

**RENEE.** Oh my God, I'm gonna hurl!

*(RENEE retches.)*

**PATTY.** *You?*

**RENEE.** I've got the flu!

*(RENEE throws up.)*

This is great! I've just lost oodles of water weight. When Jeanine makes her move on The Bradley I'll demand a weigh-in!

**PATTY.** You can't do that!

**RENEE.** Why not?

**PATTY.** If you demand a weigh-in everybody gets weighed!

**RENEE.** So?

**PATTY.** *I'll* get weighed. And I'm on the double-digit precipice!

**RENEE.** But now I have the influenza edge! I could win the weigh-in!

**PATTY.** What if you don't? An unsuccessful challenge leads to immediate forfeiture.

**RENEE.** That's right. I've got to sabotage the tryst somehow!

**PATTY.** I've *already* sabotaged the tryst! With my crafty alternative sexuality strategy!

**RENEE.** You think that's going to stop Jeanine? She's like an Irish setter in heat!

**PATTY.** At least give it a chance! Maybe I psyched her out with my sharp-witted "He Who Bones Him Owns Him."

**RENEE.** Your witty repartee got me smelling like a henhouse!

**PATTY.** We're supposed to be partners! But you never let me be schemy! You might as well just go to Jeanine's by yourself!

**RENEE.** Oh alright. We'll *try* your lame-brained plan. I won't risk a weigh-in unless it's absolutely necessary.

*(The Tribunal light appears.)*

**PATTY.** *Damn.*

**TRIBUNAL.**

We have the testimony of a McDonalds' worker  
You're a Happy Meal-eater of some renown  
That's fine and good for a binge and purger  
But we see you keeping dinner down.

**PATTY.** I'm going to purge! I haven't had the chance!

**RENEE.** I should never have let you come here. I'm such an enabler!

**PATTY.** Do you think they heard? About the special weigh-in?

**RENEE.** *Drive.*

*(Jeanine's house. Two large urns. RENEE and PATTY sneak on.)*

**PATTY.** Is this burglary?

**RENEE.** It's only burglary if you take something.

**PATTY.** I don't want burglary on my transcript.

**RENEE.** If I hear another word about that fucking transcript...

**PATTY.** My mother says I need more activities.

**RENEE.** You're in the Renee club, it's a service organization.

**PATTY.** Yeah, it's a charity!

**RENEE.** Get your urn.

**PATTY.** I need a charity. Since the candy-stripers let me go. I'm thinking about working in a soup kitchen.

**RENEE.** You? In a soup kitchen? The bums would never see the food.

**PATTY.** You can't binge on soup.

**RENEE.** You could. Now hide.

**PATTY.** I can't. I have to spew. The Tribunal saw me binging.

**RENEE.** Well you can't spew now. She'll hear the hacks.

**PATTY.** She's got a cat. She'll think it's a hairball.

**RENEE.** She'll smell the smell. She'll see the bile.

**PATTY.** But you're gonna call a weigh-in...

**RENEE.** You should have thought of that before you ate twenty Happy Meals!

**PATTY.** Thirteen. You threw away the rest, remember?

**RENEE.** Not soon enough. You were totally busted by the Tribunal.

**PATTY.** Where do they send you, if you're a ten or more?

**RENEE.** Nobody knows. The Midwest, I think.

**PATTY.** Oh my God.

**RENEE.** Now hide! Check it out. Urns. That's where I'll be spending all eternity.

**PATTY.** You want to be cremated?

**RENEE.** Of course! My body weight will be down to ounces!

**PATTY.** You won't have a body.

*(RENEE climbs into an urn.)*

**RENEE.** Exactly. It's a dream come true. Does this urn make me look fat?

**PATTY.** You look like a person in an urn.

**RENEE.** I know, but do I look like a skinny person in an urn?

**PATTY.** I wonder why guys like to do it with skinny girls.

**RENEE.** I think your brain arteries are clogging with special sauce. A concave belly is the ultimate turn-on, not to mention a butt they can grab with one hand. I mean all over the world men are paying top dollar to do it with ten year old girls.

**PATTY.** That is so sick.

**RENEE.** I looked fabulous at age ten. Puberty is the worst thing that ever happened to me.

**PATTY.** Shhh. Somebody's coming up the walk.

**RENEE.** Oh my God. It's The Bradley. Get in the urn! Get in the urn!

**PATTY.** Now remember, give my plan a chance.

*(PATTY tries to get into the urn and gets stuck. She can't slide down and she can't climb out either.)*

I can't fit!

**RENEE.** Why not?

**PATTY.** Mine is defective!

**RENEE.** *I got in!*

**PATTY.** You're a four! With the flu!

**RENEE.** Well hide someplace else!

**PATTY.** Where? The scenery is minimalist!

**RENEE.** Get out your lip gloss! Grease up your hips!

*(Doorbell rings. JEANINE rushes to answer it. PATTY glosses her hips and slides into the urn.)*

**JEANINE.** The Bradley!

**BRADLEY.** Hi Jeanette.

**JEANINE.** Jeanine.

**BRADLEY.** Sorry. I'm not really thinking straight. Is my nose still red?

**JEANINE.** It's a little Yeltsin.

**BRADLEY.** You got a Kleenex? I can't stop crying all the time.

**JEANINE.** You must be working through some stuff.

**BRADLEY.** Naw. I'm just sad. Like I hear a song on the radio, you know, and I think about Monique. She had a really good voice. We went camping once and she sang Kumbaya. She did all the movements you know. Like the clapping and everything.

**JEANINE.** What I hear you saying is that that was a very happy memory.

**BRADLEY.** Yeah, like when I think about it, I get happy and then when I remember she's dead I get all sad.

**JEANINE.** Was it a very passionate love affair?

**BRADLEY.** Yeah. Until her periods stopped.

**JEANINE.** I love when that happens.

**BRADLEY.** It isn't healthy.

**JEANINE.** I hate when that happens. It's so unnatural.

**BRADLEY.** The whole thing is so unnatural, you know? Like Romeo and Juliet. They had a problem, okay. A feud. Fucked-up parents. But there was nothing standing in our way except her disease. Which isn't even a real disease cause it's not like caused by a germ.

**JEANINE.** What I hear you saying is that you're very angry.

**BRADLEY.** Yeah.

**JEANINE.** What I hear you saying is "Yeah."

**BRADLEY.** I came by to get that book you were telling me about?

**JEANINE.** The Dummies Guide to Coping With Loss?

**BRADLEY.** I guess.

**JEANINE.** Or would you rather have *When Super Sad Things Happen to Really Happy People*?

**BRADLEY.** Whatever. I was just stopping by to have something to do. I never know what to do after the funerals, you know.

*(JEANINE raises her hand flirtatiously.)*

**JEANINE.** I know.

**BRADLEY.** Are you like hitting on me?

**JEANINE.** I know you've been experiencing some...confusion.

**BRADLEY.** Confusion?

**JEANINE.** It doesn't matter to me who else you love as long as I'm the only woman.

**BRADLEY.** Huh?

**JEANINE.** I need to know that I'm the one. And not Renee.

**BRADLEY.** Who?

**JEANINE.** The other four.

**BRADLEY.** With the big head?

**JEANINE.** Ummhmmmm. Oh look, a bunny!

*(They look.)*

**RENEE.** *(Over THE BRADLEY and JEANINE, who are oblivious:)* Like I've got a big head! Do I have a big head?

**PATTY.** It just looks like a big head.

**RENEE.** I *look* like I've got a big head?

**PATTY.** Compared to the rest of your body.

*(They pop back into their urns.)*

**BRADLEY.** I mean you're cute and all but...

**JEANINE.** I know. I'm not a man.

**BRADLEY.** What?

**JEANINE.** Maybe you could just pretend I was.

**BRADLEY.** Why?

**JEANINE.** To get stimulated.

**BRADLEY.** Why would I pretend you were a man?

**JEANINE.** If you were of a different persuasion...

**BRADLEY.** Like gay?

**JEANINE.** Now I know how Elizabeth Taylor felt. When she loved Monty.

**BRADLEY.** Monty who?

**JEANINE.** Clift.

**BRADLEY.** Didn't he love her back?

**JEANINE.** He couldn't.

**BRADLEY.** Montgomery Clift?

**JEANINE.** Montgomery Clift, James Dean, Tom Cruise...

**BRADLEY.** Tom Cruise? Really?

**JEANINE.** And now The Bradley.

**BRADLEY.** Look I'm not gay.

**JEANINE.** You're not gay?

**BRADLEY.** No. My cousin's gay.

**JEANINE.** Everybody at school is saying you're gay.

**BRADLEY.** Why?

**JEANINE.** Well you're taking that Thai cooking course...

**BRADLEY.** I didn't want to take shop. I already knew how to make a cutting board in the shape of a pig. But I'm straight!

**JEANINE.** Prove it.

**BRADLEY.** Oh man.

**JEANINE.** Would that really be so awful?

**BRADLEY.** No but...

**JEANINE.** But what?

**BRADLEY.** It doesn't feel right. Not on the day of Monique's funeral.

**JEANINE.** Monique's the past, I'm the present.

*(JEANINE moves to kiss THE BRADLEY.)*

**RENEE.** I demand a weigh-in!

**BRADLEY.** A what?

**PATTY.** Nothing! Don't listen to her! She's out of her mind with hunger!

**RENEE.** Take off your clothes and go get the scale!

**JEANINE.** Keep her away from me! She killed Monique!

**BRADLEY.** She what?!

**JEANINE.** That scar on her neck! Renee choked her to death!

**RENEE.** I did not! I merely accessorized!

## **THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!**

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