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Playscripts, Inc.
325 W. 38th Street, Suite 305
New York, NY 10018

Phone: 1-866-NEW-PLAY (639-7529)
Email: info@playscripts.com
Web: www.playscripts.com

Cast of Characters

RON, Fast.

CHRIS, Slow.

JAYNE MANSFIELD, Glacial.

Acknowledgments

Dead Wait was originally produced by Clubbed Thumb at HERE Arts Center on August 31st, 1997. It was directed by Randy White, who also designed the set, assisted by Valda Lake, with lighting design by Rick Martin, costume design by Carson Kreitzer, and special effects design by Kathleen Tobin. The cast was as follows:

RON Ian Helfer
CHRIS David Wilcox
JAYNE..... Abigail Gampel

Author Notes

A wig, thrown from Jayne Mansfield's death car, led to the persistent myth of her decapitation.

While these characters are inspired by actual people and events, they are fictions, based not on those people but on the myths they left behind.

DEAD WAIT

by Carson Kreitzer

(Darkness. The howling of a white Akita. Lights up to reveal RON, stage left, pacing, gesticulating, and attempting to fill salt shakers while he talks. Every time he spills salt, he throws a pinch over his left shoulder. In fact, there is a small pile of salt behind him already. CHRIS sits stage right, quietly folding napkins into an intricate restaurant design. On a back catwalk, JAYNE MANSFIELD reclines, her hair a blonde waterfall. She is not yet visible.)

RON. I have, had, this collection of Zippo lighters. Y'know? Only one I have left is the one that was in my pocket. When, Y'know. My sister Kim gave me this one. See, it's uh, it's Jayne Mansfield. And it flips up at, you know, heh, her head. Her head comes off.

(Flicks the lighter several times.)

The whole thing's just shitfucked. Fucking shit. Can't stop THINKING. I coulda been a STAR after this. I coulda USED it. There's no such thing as Bad Publicity. Know what I mean? Kato couldn't handle it. I coulda handled it. Been waiting all my life for an opportunity like this. I coulda played the media like my own personal violin section. And I mean ALL the media—TV, video, audio, radio, docudrama re-enactments. AMERICA'S MOST WANTED. ME! Everybody woulda wanted a piece. Wanted me for guest shots. I woulda had my own SHOW by now. Star witness at the Trial. *Purveyor* of Justice. Criminal, Civil. That's a nice thought, huh? Civil Justice. Nice, civil Justice. cos I gotta say that was some CRIMINAL JUSTICE first time around. wouldn't a happened like that if I coulda testified. If I coulda testified...on TELEVISION. The American People rapt before the screen, tuning in everywhere, a perfect Hundred Share.

Yeah, I coulda done it Right. Then I'd have a...have a...Crime show, or a Private Detective show, in the great LA tradition. Philip Marlowe. Nicholson in Chinatown.

But not old timey, you know, HIP. A HIP, NEW Private Eye show. Every week, for millions of viewers, I'd hop in the sack with some

gorgeous bimbo and solve a crime. People will come to ME because everyone knows the LAPD can't be trusted. Especially black people, right? So I'd get to fuck these gorgeous black chicks while solving their crimes and the LAPD would rough me up... Jumped in the Parking Lot. BAM! POW! Yeah, the cops'd hate me because I'm on the side of Right and Justice. And people would know they could come to ME because I'd given the crucial evidence. I'd been STAR WITNESS at the BIG FUCKING FAMOUS TRIAL.

Shit.

CHRIS. He just got here. He'll calm down. After he's been here a while.

RON. But No, I gotta be DEAD. All 'cos I'm a Nice Guy. Stabbed fifty fucking million times. Shit. Just cos I said I'd bring her goddamn GLASSES over after work. Oh, sure, Nicole, no problem. It's on my way home. Yeah, here they are in the LITTLE FUCKING ENVELOPE. THE LITTLE FUCKING ENVELOPE INTRODUCED AT THE TRIAL SOAKED IN MY GODDAMN BLOOD.

Coulda had my own fucking show.

CHRIS. A waiter's memory is a curse.

You see a guy on the street, you flash on it: blackened chicken with lemon caper mayonnaise. What he ordered. Three weeks ago, a month ago. You can't get this shit out of your brain. People get so damn flattered when you remember how they like their burger done. Medium-rare. Well. Bloody. They don't know you can't help it. Like it's stamped across their foreheads. Well Done. Rare. Three olives in the martini.

RON. But no, I'm stuck HERE. The TV cameras roll, careers are being made, and I'm stuck HERE.

CHRIS. I still remember what the specials were the night I died. Steak au poivre. Grilled Salmon. Duck in plum sauce with wild rice pilaf.

For dessert, apricot torte or a tartuffo, which is vanilla and chocolate ice cream in a chocolate shell, topped with whipped cream.

And Jack Henry Abbott, personal friend of Norman Mailer, recently released from the Belly of the Beast, lit a cigarette.

And I said, I'm sorry, sir, there's no smoking in here.

I was recently married. Her name was Chris, too. We were both named Chris.

It was...like that.

She worked at a restaurant a few blocks away, but it was her night off. We met when she did choreography for this show I was in at La Mama. I'm not much of a dancer. The way she can move—you wouldn't believe it.

There's no smoking in here.

Please put that out. Sir.

There's no smoking in here.

RON. It was gonna happen for me, anyway, you know, because I KNEW. I KNEW how to play the GAME. That's what I was doing at that restaurant, anyway, you know, it was a very hot spot. You get seen in a place like that. You WORK there, a lot of very important people get to know you, they feel like they can talk to you, you know? Really pays to get some friends on the inside, restaurant like that's the whole CURRENT OF EXCHANGE for LA, you know? Where the deals are made, flashbulbs snap, who's got what table, that kind of thing. I knew what I was doing, right? Not just another actor waiting tables, no. Not just another Armani Model SLASH Actor waiting tables. I was POSITIONING myself carefully, right on the PULSE of the fucking town, you know? People knew me, it was all gonna come together real soon, the auditions, the shows, the magazines, the right parties.

I mean, that was how I knew Nicole. From the restaurant.

CHRIS. *(To audience:)* You think the waiting time is gonna be over. And then you'll be a star. You think it's just the waiting you've got to do. Pay your dues. Pay the rent. Earn the money you've already spent on the lessons and the place to live and the 8x10 black and white glossies.

So you wait.

For a dollar sixty one plus cash on the barrelhead, that's what you're there for. Waiting until your time comes, and then you're gonna be a star.

But sometimes something happens and you get derailed.

You know what being dead is like if you've ever waited tables. That's what we always called it—the Dead Time. When there's nothing to do, but you can't leave and do something else. Dead time.* Sometimes the boss makes you do busywork, wipe down all the menus.

RON. (*Overlaps at *:*) Oh yeah, oh yeah, Dead Time. Like, man, it's Dead in here. Yeah, and you could be someplace else, like delivering your headshots around to various agencies, making some important phone calls, but No, you've got to stay here and wipe down the fucking menus, windex the goddamn mirrors, dust off all the decorative bottles on the lit-from-below barshelf. Yeah. Uh-huh. And you're not making any fucking money.

CHRIS. (*Waits for him to finish:*) Or you can get your sidework done ahead of time, maybe get to go home a little early.

I've been talking to them about being allowed to do the sidework for Chris, my wife. That way, when she gets here, we can both just leave.

They're thinking about it.

(He stops, quietly overcome.)

JAYNE. (*Her voice is low and sonorous, almost like a rock formation moving.*) I've been Miss Corn Belt. Miss Sun Belt. Miss Fan Belt. Miss Watch Out Daddy's Taking Off His Belt.

Never was Miss Bible Belt. Hadda get out.

RON. Holy shit, what was that?

CHRIS. Jayne Mansfield.

RON. Jayne Mansfield? No kidding—I've got a

CHRIS. I know.

RON. Was in my pocket when

CHRIS. You said.

RON. Jeez. Jayne Mansfield.

(CHRIS nods. Continues working.)

Do you think I could—talk to her?

CHRIS. She won't notice.

RON. (*Not listening:*) Miss Mansfield?
Miss Mansfield, I'm a big fan...

CHRIS. She won't notice.
She's been here a long time.

She...doesn't speak very often.

RON. wow. Jayne Mansfield.

Jayne Mansfield.
Imagine that.

(*Pause. CHRIS continues his task.*)

So, how long do we stay here?

(*CHRIS just looks at him.*)

Okay, dumb question. Just pardon the fuck outta me. New kid on the block. Dunno how things *work* yet, arright?

(*Looks at his task:*)

Like what's all this SALT for?
WHO THE FUCK IS EATING UP HERE?

(*Suddenly looks concerned:*)

Down here?

CHRIS. Up here.

RON. Oh *whew* that's a—wow—saw my—you know, I don't know the way they count minor infractions. A little coke, a little, you know, you're not always the best person you *can* be, I guess, an I was so *young*, so young

She told me she was pregnant and I just *flipped*. I mean, I hadda career to attend to. I hadda get out of that Illinois cowtown, hadda go to LA. Get my eight by ten glossies done, begin distribution, start the meet-n-greet. And she wanted to TIE ME DOWN.

(*Stops:*)

No. I don't think that...anymore. I don't know what she...if she...*wanted* anything it was comfort. It was just an accident. She wanted my help. The boy she loved. The boy she opened her legs for.

(CHRIS turns his head to stare:)

She came to me all quiet-like, eyes like dinner plates, told me and I said Well, you know what I said. I said what you say in that situation. I said

(Evil, loud voice:)

HOW DO I KNOW IT'S MINE?

(Quiet:)

Jesus, I can still see the...tears running down her face. I—

(Presses the heels of his hands into his eyes:)

OF COURSE I'LL *PAY*FOR IT, 'COS I'M A GOOD GUY.
HEY, I'LL EVEN GO WITH YOU—
IF YOU *WANT*....

No. She said. I never want to see you again.
Which, I guess is what I was trying to achieve.
OH GOD I—haven't thought about her in years.
Jeannie.

Still had a little *(Gestures)* baby fat around her cheeks. So beautiful.

But I guess we've all

(Turns to CHRIS:)

I mean you've— Right, man? Done things you weren't proud of?

CHRIS. *(Nods slowly:)* Nothing like *that*.

RON. Oh THANKS.

CHRIS. Not a judgment

RON. That's right, kick me when I'm down.
I try to open up a little and I get shit on. Fine.

CHRIS. Just the truth. *(Beat.)* So you always thought you'd go to hell for that?

RON. Well, I haven't thought about it in years...

CHRIS. But?

RON. But, yeah, I guess so.

JAYNE. I worried that spelling my name with a Y would make me sound cheap.

(Again, her voice is magma. The boys stop, transfixed.)

I worried that big tits would go out of style.

I did not fear the highway.

I did not fear steel girders.

I experienced no shiver of recognition as I passed construction sites.

No premonition of the steel beam that would snap my neck.

RON. Shit.

Shit I missed it.

Didn't I? Didn't I? Kato left to lap up the crumbs.

And poor dumb Nicole. Shit, I knew she was in trouble.

We all knew she was in trouble but it wasn't my Business, you know? None of my fucking business. Not my business to interfere in something like that. When you see the Panic behind her eyes it's—

Well not my not my business. But I got myself fucked with it anyway, didn't I?

CHRIS. Yes.

RON. RHETORICAL QUESTION.

CHRIS. Sorry. You lose track of these things.

RON. An NOW. Now everybody wants to know did I FUCK her. Was that why he was gunning for me. Was I a COKE dealer, they were really after ME. Yeah, right. That's how come I busted my ass five nights a week. Hello, Mezzaluna... But that theory runs a definite second to WAS I FUCKING THE TEUTONIC BLONDE? And

that's the funny thing is I didn't wanna. Didn't wanna. Fuck this up.

Coulda led to something. Something big. She was way the fuck Up There at this point. FUCKING GORGEOUS APARTMENT. Not bad for an ex-waitress. Worked her way up the hard way. No question there. Looks easy maybe, but you're better off making salads for another ten years. Don't end up with your head hanging by a—
NO I DIDN'T FUCK HER.

I was giving her tennis lessons.

I have an excellent backhand.

CHRIS. I remember...Chris...she looked up to me.

(Beat. He tries to figure out if he's said the right thing.)

I was...taller. She would look up to me. At a...curb, waiting for the light to change. I could *feel* her, my arm around her, but I wanted to *look* at her, too. I'd look down, and there she'd be, her face raised, looking up to me.

RON. You're a fucking fruitcake.

(CHRIS looks at him placidly.)

Did she fuck other guys?

CHRIS. What?

RON. Cos you're dead. She fucks other guys, right?

CHRIS. I want her to...find comfort. I wouldn't want her to be unhappy.

RON. How soon?

How soon after you were ashes was she hopping some other guy's bones?

CHRIS. I want her to be happy.

RON. That soon, huh?

CHRIS. You wouldn't understand.
You've never been in love.

RON. HOW DO YOU KNOW?

(Beat.)

CHRIS. I'm not wrong, am I?

JAYNE. Miss Motor City Shopping Center
Miss Combustion Engine 1953.

Never had many women friends.
Left my mother's house at sixteen because I wanted her job.
got it, too.

VERA JAYNE. Don't be leanin off the porch that way for everybody
to look at.

RON. Miss Mansfield—

JAYNE. I was so bursting with life all that boy had to do was touch
me and I got pregnant.
It was my idea.
Everything was my idea.

Willful.
Power. House.
Stubborn little

My daddy always said Gonna have to get that one married off
young. I was outta their hair soon enough.

RON. Miss Mansfield—

CHRIS. Give it up.

JAYNE. They slept through the whole thing
Like a nest of little puppies.

Who could sleep through a thing like that?

It's kind of funny, when you think about it. You wake up and
Mommy's been decapitated in the front seat.

(A low, disturbing chortle:)

Is that funny?

CHRIS. I remember, the city was hot sometimes.
Even at night.
I remember...sweating.

JAYNE. What the hell were their names, anyway?

CHRIS. I woke up one night and she was...her head was on my arm. She was asleep. Hot summer no air tenement. Mattress on the floor. And she was there. In the crook of my arm. The hollow of my body. Sweat-stuck together. So hot it was too hot to touch but you can't not touch. I opened my eyes and there she was. Breathing so softly she was barely breathing.

If she was breathing.

And suddenly I was so scared. I wanted to wake her up to make sure she wasn't dead. But I knew I was—I didn't want to wake her up. I knew I was being IRRATIONAL. And if she *was* dead, I didn't want to know. Just wanted to feel the sweet weight of her head, all full of *stuff* there on my arm.

I saw a vein pulse in her neck and I knew she was alive. By then my heart was beating so loud she heard it and turned a little in her sleep.

I—

I didn't move until she woke up.

Then I asked her to marry me.

RON. Traditional-assed fruitcake, aren't cha?

CHRIS. (*Smiles to himself:*) Yes, I suppose so.

JAYNE. Pink was my idea.

The heart-shaped pool was my idea.

Leopard Print.

Diving in and losing my top on that swim suit publicity shot was my idea.

Photographers everywhere

by the next day my career was made.

Exploited, my ass.

You'd have to get up pretty early in the morning to exploit this girl.

CHRIS. At the trial, I was described as Belligerent.

Do I strike you as belligerent?

It's ridiculous. They couldn't have found a less belligerent person to stab one fatal blow in the chest at four a.m. on second avenue.

Really.

I'd worked a double shift that night, as a favor.

I'll never get the sound of that match striking out of my head.

Hissing, sulphur smell. That's all I can remember, most days.

I waited a long time to meet the devil. That sulphur smell.

But I suppose we'd already met.

RON. Of course, you've got to keep fit, keep *cut* and defined, not so much for the Tennis though of course it helps to be the handsome young Tennis Instructor. Armani model SLASH Tennis Instructor. Let's not kid ourselves, right? Not that I'm not the best Tennis Instructor these women could have had, they just wouldn't know it without a little *plumage*, right? Brightly colored feathers. Attract the female of the species. Only way the fucking cunts know to pay attention. No, I mean, really they're taking lessons cos they don't know, right? Cos they've got something to learn. Wanna get the hang of the backhand.

At any rate, I was saying it's very important to keep fit, stay in shape. Don't want to add any unsightly extra poundage. And THAT AIN'T EASY working at a truly great restaurant like Mezzaluna. I mean, staff meals that could make your mouth water just thinking about them. Talented crew back in that kitchen. And they took care of us. They knew we worked hard out there, we were really busting our asses on that floor, and if a dupe came back there and it said STAFF, you know, they wouldn't cook it with any less care than they used for the paying customers. That was the kind of RESPECT they had for us, the kind of PRIDE they took in their work.

And that food—oh.

The Pastas! The chicken Saltimboca. In marsala wine, with prosciutto....unh.

Do you know what it takes to go up to that window and say Could you guys just grill me a chicken breast, nothing on it, I'll make myself a salad?

Not only the deprivation, but the INSULT to our caring and talented kitchen staff. Cooks never understand about strict adherence

to a diet. Goes against their whole...raison d'être, I guess. They're food people, you know?

Possibly the worst temptation was the Carbonara. Oh, the carbonara. so fucking good. Do you know—it's, like, it's pasta in this garlic cream sauce, mmmmm, with pancetta, that's Italian bacon, onions, oh god it's so good. And we—the Mezzaluna Carbonara was actually done Arrabiata, with spicy peppers. Mmmm. So your mouth is burning, but you keep shoveling more of that fantastic pasta dripping with cream and the garlic—

CHRIS. *(Breaking into his reverie:)* Do you remember what it tasted like?

RON. *(Annoyed:)* Of course. Whaddaya think I was just saying—

CHRIS. I mean, really. Remember the taste.

RON. Yeah.

CHRIS. *(Knocks over the entire pile of folded napkins, sweeping them onto the floor with one furious gesture of his arm. Beat. Quietly.)* That'll go.

JAYNE. He was so scared to touch me on our wedding night. He was shaking.

I liked his name. Paul. Mansfield.

Sixteen years old and tits ascending skyward.

(CHRIS winces, doubling slightly over his sternum, placing a hand there.)

It was the sort of thing you could write inside a heart. Paul Loves Vera Jayne. Vera Jayne Mansfield.

RON. What's wrong?

CHRIS. *(Straightening, lightly:)* I am envying you.

(Slowly, he rises from his chair and begins collecting the napkins he swept to the floor.)

JAYNE. Mother always said Don't Lose Your Head.
hahahahahahaha

Can't argue with your mother.

(Nervous, RON takes the lighter out of his pocket and begins flicking it repeatedly.)

RON. My sister Kim gave me this one. She knows I like a Sick Joke.

(Glances quickly over his shoulder at JAYNE:.) No Offense.

(Continues to flick the lighter.)

CHRIS. Could you NOT DO THAT.

RON. Sorry.

JAYNE. Platinum was my idea.

The Element.

Bay of Pigs. My idea.

The Rosenbergs. My idea.

Mickey Hargitay, the only man I really loved, was my idea. Envisioned him in my bedroom before I'd hit my teens. I knew I'd run into him sooner or later and when I did I'd love him forever. And I do.

Getting my teeth capped was my idea.

Going on television.

Television was my idea. Radio waves. Morse code. SOS. All my idea.

That handsome, handsome man made President and then executed for it was my idea.

RON. I am very good at what I do. Know what I mean? Whatever I choose to do, I do it well. Armani model? I was an excellent Armani model. Tennis instructor? Fucking great Tennis instructor. And I was a fucking great waiter. WE'RE TALKING TWENTY PERCENT TIPS *ROUTINELY*, *ROUTINELY* I would receive TWENTY PERCENT OR HIGHER. On some whopping big bills, I might add. People would CRY if the maiter'd couldn't seat them in my section. People would SUE.

(Singsong:)

Mezzaluna.

Oh sure Nicole. No problem.

Yes, I see them. They're right here. I'm putting them in an envelope right now. Sure.

Of course I remember where your house is. I dropped you off after your tennis lesson when your car was in the shop. Yeah, that was a while ago.

I've got a pretty good memory, I guess.

LISTEN MY SECTION IS *FULL* RIGHT NOW, so I've gotta go. But I'll drop them off for you on my way home.

Okay?

Hey—for you... No Problem.

CHRIS. At the trial, I was described as half Cuban. As though that in itself made me a hazard.

RON. Our specials tonight are a pan-seared swordfish on a bed of roasted new potatoes
Or a scallop and crab saffron risotto
it's wonderful

Need a minute to think? Sure.

Can I interest you folks in some dessert?

CHRIS. Prone to hot-headed Latin-ness.

Cocaine.

Stacked heels.

The knife he thought he saw glinting in my hand.

For christ's sake, I was studying at Stella Adler.

I wasn't even supposed to be at work. It was a favor. Double shift. One of the managers didn't show. I was doing a few shifts waiting, one a week managing at night. It's not good, though, really throws off your schedule.

But that night I said Sure.
As a favor.

How about I just roll the
cart over and do my spiel about
each mouth watering delicacy
and we'll see how long you hold out.
(Laughs pleasantly with the table.)

Sure I'll stay.

I called home and told her
not to wait up.
Don't wait up. I'll be home
late.

Hey Arturo, couldja just grill me a
chicken breast, I'm gonna make a Caesar.

CHRIS. I loved to come in and watch her sleep. Just the cool street-
light through the blinds. I'd come in smelling of smoke and grease,
she'd always wake up and smile, making room with her body. In
her arms, where she'd been waiting for me.

JAYNE. Marilyn Monroe taking those pills was *not* my idea.
Poor bitch. She ruined me.
Me and Mamie Van Doren.
Nobody wanted to see a bleach blonde after that.

CHRIS. *(Rapidly:)* The devil smells of sulphur.
The devil is the small man you throw out of the cafe at four in the
morning.
The devil is the one who pushes you too far
Who thinks he can show off for the high class whores he's there
with by ordering you around
AND YOU'RE NOT EVEN HIS WAITER
AND YOU WORKED SIXTEEN HOURS
You push the devil hard
out the front door onto second avenue
The devil pulls a knife out of his sportcoat
makes a hole
for your blood to escape
which is what it's always secretly wanted to do.

RON. It was a good year for me.

I'd been going on some very important auditions. Network stuff. Pilot season was—I was all over Pilot season. And the modeling, of course. Always with the modeling. Really get you noticed, modeling. Especially Armani. Commands respect. Armani. I mean this was no fuckin Bugle Boy assignment, this was Class. I was practically getting to be their symbol, really. Well, especially with the glasses. I look great in those college-boy frames. Andover-Exeter-Harvard-Law. Not that I—you know—but I can Portray that. Give off that Image. That's where the acting comes in. And so the Tennis The tennis lessons were really just a stopgap measure until there was more actual money coming in from the acting work. It's hard you gotta—

A career is something you gotta Attend to. Tend to. But when it— Kicks Back when the money starts rolling in and the Guest Shots and the SHIT

I mean even without this Cataclysm I was gonna Make It.

JAYNE. Jayne Marie for me. And Mickey, Jr. we agreed on. But Zoltan?

What was he supposed to be, an extra on Flash Gordon?

Never let a Hungarian name your child while you're zonked out on painkillers in a sterile white room. That's what I say.

CHRIS. Some people wait their whole lives and never find her.

I've got to consider myself lucky.

I remember sometimes the city was very hot. Even at night. When it was dark. It was like an oven. Heat radiating off her skin.

JAYNE. Do

CHRIS. I not only found her I
swallowed my fear I
asked her to leave the party with me
to get some more beers
and we got to talking and we
really hit it off
and I
slept next to her for three years

you

smell

whether it was cold
 or hot like an oven
 doesn't work
 pilot's out gas just hisses
 wanna burner
 gotta strike a match
 sulfur
 IT'S JUST MY HEAD

something

Burning?

(Beat.)

JAYNE. Never shoulda taken Mamie Van Doren's gig. It was Mamie Van Doren's gig. Oh Honey I'm stuck in the airport how about you switch with me? My night was the week after. But I was down there anyway, what the hell.

Lotta bills to pay with five kids and a pink mansion needs upkeep.

CHRIS. I remember things.

If I can just.....remember things.

She used to wear this Dress...
 that I...liked.

JAYNE. They'd fired me offa
 that European tour
 cos my legs were too bruised to
 show off.

Whadda they know about too
 bruised to show off.

CHRIS. And that old pair of jeans of mine that hung way down on her hips.

White speckles on her skin when we painted the kitchen
 I'M SORRY SIR THERE'S NO SMOKING IN HERE.

(Beat.)

You think the waiting is gonna be over.
 But sometimes something happens and—
 You're stuck
 with the smell of a struck match in your nostrils
 and four inches of steel
 confounding the mechanics of your body.

And the last thing you said to your wife was “I love you,” telling her not to wait up, but that doesn’t seem to matter much now as blood pours wet and warm onto your hands and you wonder if she’s asleep yet.

I told her to go to sleep.

I told her I’d be home.

JAYNE. The first shall be last and the last shall be pissed.

Who said that?

CHRIS. The first time she slept with someone else, she was so angry at herself. Sobbed for hours and hours. Her little body all crumpled and I wanted to tell her it was alright, that I understood.

I hadn’t been in the ground a week. But it was alright. I knew, she was unhappy. She needed comfort. She needed to make herself believe it was real.

Stop waiting for me to come in the door.

(He turns his head to one side, then back.)

Sometimes, if you get your sidework done ahead of time, they let you go home early. I’m talking to them about doing the sidework for Chris, so when she gets here...

They’re thinking about it.

RON. How do you know she’ll even come through here?

CHRIS. She will. It’s the only thing I’ve asked for.

RON. And do you get what you ask for here?

(Beat.)

CHRIS. I remember what the specials were the night I died. Jalapeño penne with crawdad remoulade. Skillet cornbread on the side.

JAYNE. Mickey Hargitay was my idea. Dreamed him up in my teens. I knew when I found him I’d love him forever.

CHRIS. There are no more specials at this hour. Late-nite menu only.

JAYNE. He used to lift me up, high above his head.

CHRIS. I am not your waiter. See that guy? He's your waiter. Okay?

JAYNE. Crowds of people would stop and stare. We were gods together.

CHRIS. Sir?

I'm sorry, sir there's...there's NO SMOKING IN HERE.

JAYNE. Built that heart-shaped pool with his big, Hungarian hands.

CHRIS. And the colors drown.

Everything gets farther away.

But I remember

I remember

Her

Sometimes I can almost remember the way she smelled

And I remember

Blackened chicken with lemon caper mayonnaise.

Would you like mixed baby greens or a Caesar salad with that?

Mixed baby greens.

RON.

That fuckin' dog.

I can still hear that fucking dog.

An' let me tell you,

if you've never heard a white Akita keening for the dead, you ain't heard nothin.

Paws soaked in the blood
rivering outta her neck.

CHRIS.

There is the house vinaigrette
or Balsamic Vinaigrette

Dijon Vinaigrette

Basil Vinaigrette with Sherry
and Honey

Cracked Peppercorn

Vinaigrette

Thousand Island

Ranch

Roquefort

Blue Cheese

or Creamy Italian

We also have the

Dog so filled with love and failure.	Wide-angle lens vinaigrette
He couldn't protect her.	The End of the Cold War Berlin Wall Memorial Vinaigrette
He tried, I mean	The Right to Remain Silent Vinaigrette
That's a dog's whole reason for existence, right?	The All-One-God Vinaigrette
And he failed.	The Dime Bag Vinaigrette
Jesus, and I heard that white Akita scream.	The Victims Defense Fund Vinaigrette
Or maybe it was me.	The Indetectable Prosthetics Vinaigrette
I didn't think anything could make that sound.	The 63rd and Lex Vinaigrette.
You know what they keep saying about how I put up quite a struggle. Quite a struggle, right? YER DAMN RIGHT I put up a struggle.	The Bathtub Suicide Vinaigrette.
I—	The Inopportune Moment Vinaigrette.
tried but what can hands—	The Turning Blind Eyes to the Sun Vinaigrette
over and over hands, arms up and that blade coming down. And down and down.	The Red Scare Blacklist Vinaigrette
	The Balsamic Thalidomide Vinaigrette
	The You Don't Remember Me, Do You Vinaigrette
	The Insufficient Minimum Wage Vinaigrette

What can flesh do no matter what
 force you put behind it The J. Robert Oppenheimer
 soft tissue parts for steel Vinaigrette.
 BONE will stop steel for an instant
 but you're getting so tired The Inoperable Carcinoma
 and wet leaking out sinking down Vinaigrette
 Jesus
 I heard that Akita shriek The Faith In Plastics Vinaigrette.
 OH SURE NICOLE. I am not your waiter.
 NO PROBLEM.
 I'LL BRING THEM OVER AFTER Ya see that guy? HE'S YOUR
 WORK. WAITER.
 MEZZALUNA. Put that out sir.
 MEZZALUNA, HOW MAY I HELP
 YOU? We don't allow.

(RON GOLDMAN begins to leak spontaneously from his 17 stab wounds.)

CHRIS. I'm going to have to ask you to step outside.

RON. Oh, god, they're opening up. What do I do?

CHRIS. That's because you're getting upset.

RON. What do I do?

CHRIS. It'll stop.

RON. WHEN?

CHRIS. *(Beat.)* Eventually.
 It helps when you... don't get upset anymore.

JAYNE. Is my house still there?

RON. *(Touching his wounds, blood on his hands:)* Oh god, I

JAYNE. Is my house still there?

RON. *(Looks up, amazed:)* You talking to me?

JAYNE. The little one who smells like blood.

RON. I'M SORRY

THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!

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