

GODLESS

By Derek Sikkema

## CHARACTER LIST

MAYBEL – Female. Late forties or early fifties. Sardonic. Exhausted. Emotionally numb. Suicidal. Broken.

CHARLEY – Female. 17 or 18. Attractive. Desperate. Terrified of her mother’s numbness. Does anything that she can to feel. Trying to get out.

MIKE – Male. Mid-twenties. A Neo-Nazi. The embodiment of toxic masculinity. Angry, but in control. Doesn’t need to act out. Has a broader plan.

WESLEY – Male. Early to mid fifties. Kind. Gentle. Compassionate. The antithesis of toxic masculinity. A big teddy bear. Feels his feelings.

## NOTE

A quiet is peaceful.

A pause is tense.

A silence is terrifying.

SCENE ONE

Early afternoon.

Living room. Center stage, a brown and black fire place with an old deer head mounted over it. Some bay windows with a clear glass door, which has been made blurry by dust, oil, spit, and other anonymous fluids, beside them stage left. Some black torn-up couches stage right, a black marble bar further upstage. Blurred shapes of trees visible through the grimy, disgusting windows. The house is a disaster. Maybel is sitting on the couch with a bong, staring off into space, some ground up weed beside her.

Charley enters through the glass door.

MAYBEL

There is a front door.

CHARLEY

I like the back door.

MAYBEL

Your sexual habits have thoroughly proven that.

Charley sits on the other couch and takes out her phone. She's texting someone.

CHARLEY

Why do I even bother coming home?

MAYBEL

Because you hate yourself.

CHARLEY

That's your job.

MAYBEL

It's our job.

CHARLEY

You do it way better than I do.

MAYBEL

Years of practice.

CHARLEY

You think I could be an existential, suicidally-depressed masochist too when I grow up?

MAYBEL

Well if you study real hard...

CHARLEY

Who taught you to hate yourself, Maybel? I wanna learn from the master.

MAYBEL

Life, kid.

CHARLEY

Well, thank God I'm alive.

MAYBEL

Yeah.

Maybel starts grinding up more weed.

How was your day?

CHARLEY

Fine.

MAYBEL

Devil's in the details, kid.

CHARLEY

You must be drowning in details then.

MAYBEL

Covered in them.

They laugh.

Maybel takes a hit on her bong.

CHARLEY

Stop smoking inside.

MAYBEL

I do what I want.

CHARLEY

And I do *who* I want.

They smile at each other.

Nice. MAYBEL

Trust fund check come yet? CHARLEY

Why do you care? MAYBEL

I don't. CHARLEY

Who does? MAYBEL

About the check or in general? CHARLEY  
Maybel shrugs.

Idiots, I guess.

Life is meaningless. MAYBEL

Amen. CHARLEY

Bow down at the altar of nothing. MAYBEL

For sure. CHARLEY  
Maybel half-smiles at Charley.

Check comes next week, kid. MAYBEL

I hate you. Pause.

I hate you too. CHARLEY  
Maybel laughs.  
Quiet.  
Charley's phone buzzes.

The school called today.

MAYBEL

Yeah?

CHARLEY

You spray-painted “Principal Handjob” onto Principal Hammond’s door?  
Quiet.

MAYBEL

Nice pun.

CHARLEY

I know, right?

MAYBEL

Yeah, it was great. Honestly, I’m impressed.

CHARLEY

Why?

MAYBEL

My beautiful little demon finally blooms.

CHARLEY

What?

MAYBEL

I always knew you were a terrible person. Just like me. It just takes the right conditions to bloom though. Like those trees that can only bloom after a fire.

Pause.

CHARLEY

Fuck you.

MAYBEL

What?

CHARLEY

Fuck you.

MAYBEL

Woah woah woah, what? What happened to our banter?

CHARLEY

O.K., Listen...

Pause.

Nevermind.

MAYBEL

What?

CHARLEY

You won't listen. You never listen.

MAYBEL

I do too!

CHARLEY

Not when it matters.

MAYBEL

Nothing matters.

CHARLEY

Yeah, sure.

Maybel takes a hit on the bong.

Smoke that shit outside, Maybel!

MAYBEL

This has literally never bothered you before.

CHARLEY

Well...Mike is coming over, and I don't want you—

MAYBEL

Ah the siren calls another to her distant den. I actually wondered at one point why people drove all the way to the middle of nowhere just to fuck you. Then I looked at you...

Maybel looks Charley up and down. Charley pulls her jacket tighter around herself.

...And I thought, nah, I get it.

CHARLEY

Mike is different.

MAYBEL

Well, sure, every guy is different. Some are big, some are small, some are long, some are crooked. You would know, right?

CHARLEY

I don't...

Fine.

Pause.

Charley goes behind the bar and grabs some air freshener. She starts spraying the stage. She makes a cloud in front of Maybel's face. Maybel takes a hit and smothers the air freshener with weed smoke. Charley stares at Maybel. Maybel stares back. Charley sprays more air freshener. Maybel takes a hit and blankets the cloud of air freshener particles with smoke. Charley stares at Maybel again. She lifts the air freshener. Maybel inhales from the bong.

Oh, come on!

Maybel exhales away from Charley.

What?

MAYBEL

Charley throws the air freshener onto the couch.

I hate you.

CHARLEY

I hate you more.

MAYBEL

I wish you were dead.

CHARLEY

Join the club.

MAYBEL

Die!

CHARLEY

I've tried. God, why are you so pissy today?

MAYBEL

Charley's phone buzzes.

Mike is here.

CHARLEY



Charley?

MIKE

Mike enters through the glass door. He wears leather clothes covered in spikes. His head is bare. Tattooed on the side of his head is a large dark swastika. Charley turns away. Maybel stares at Mike. Mike looks from Charley to Maybel. Silence.

Are you Mike?

MAYBEL

Yeah.

MIKE

One of Charley's new friends?

MAYBEL

I guess.

MIKE

Charley grabs Mike's hand and moves to exit through the glass door. Maybel stands.

Where are you going?

MAYBEL

CHARLEY  
Don't start caring now. I'm getting out of here, Maybel. I'm not going to be stuck. I'm not going to be like you, sitting on my ass, getting lost in myself for the rest of my life.

Charley, don't—

MAYBEL

Stay out of it.

CHARLEY

Charley and Mike exit through the glass door.  
Pause.  
Maybel returns to the couch and sits.

MAYBEL

Shit.

She takes another hit on her bong.

She takes out her cellphone and dials.

Hi Wesley. Yeah I know. Listen...it's about Charley.

Lights down.

END OF SCENE

SCENE TWO

Later that afternoon.

Maybel smokes a cigarette. She sits in the spot where she was sitting at the end of the last scene. Wesley stands upstage center, in his police officer uniform with a pen and notepad.

WESLEY

I can't just walk up and arrest him, Maybel.

MAYBEL

Free speech. Great.

WESLEY

Thank you, Mr. Madison.

MAYBEL

Thank you, societal construction of aggressively masculine whiteness that contributes to the illusion that free speech gives you the right to be a fucking asshole. Don't blame Madison, Wesley, it's not his fault.

WESLEY

Fair enough. But I can't do anything unless they told you they were going to commit a crime.

MAYBEL

I know, I'm not stupid.

WESLEY

I know that. You're one of the smartest people I've ever met. So why did you call me?

MAYBEL

Well, I was stoned out of my mind.

WESLEY

You *are* stoned out of your mind.

MAYBEL

Oh, yeah, right.

WESLEY

You sure you didn't call me because you're scared for Charley?

MAYBEL

Please, Charley can take care of herself.

WESLEY

The evidence for that is abundant.

MAYBEL

I mean, you can do something, can't you? Hate speech?

WESLEY

Doesn't matter, right? Life is meaningless.

Maybel shrugs.

I can't save your daughter, Maybel.

Maybel puts her cigarette out and flicks it at the window.

MAYBEL

I'm not asking you to. I'm just pointing out that Mike has probably done something terrible.

WESLEY

That's apparent enough.

MAYBEL

Aren't you Jewish? Shouldn't this wake you up a little?

WESLEY

Maybel.

Wesley sits on the couch.

Do you want to tell me what's happening? Do you want to admit that maybe, just maybe, you're worried about Charley and you don't know how to express it?

MAYBEL

Charley knows what's best for Charley.

WESLEY

She clearly doesn't!

MAYBEL

I can't judge her.

WESLEY

Maybel! Neo-Nazis are bad people. They're bad, bad, bad people and you should be scared.

MAYBEL

Are you scared?

WESLEY

Come on, Maybel, stop dodging the question.

MAYBEL

What question am I dodging, Wesley? Why don't you lecture me on everything I've done wrong? Why don't you tell me about how you stopped smoking and I didn't? Why don't you tell me that I drove Carl away, that I've ruined my house, that everything happening to me is all my fault?

Pause.

There's no sense in which we matter, Wesley. Love, connection, intimacy...they're chemical reactions designed to make us breed. We're just products of forces we can't control. Gravity. Evolution. Time. Death. We don't matter, Wesley.

Quiet.

WESLEY

We haven't really talked in ten years.

MAYBEL

Come on, we talk every month.

WESLEY

Not about stuff that matters.

MAYBEL

Nothing matters.

WESLEY

You matter. To me.

Quiet.

Friends forever. I meant it.

MAYBEL

I don't know what to do with that anymore.

WESLEY

Maybe tell me what's really going on?

MAYBEL

Just the same old shit.

WESLEY

That's all you said for five years now. I missed you.

You have a wife. Kids.

MAYBEL

I missed my friend.

WESLEY

Quiet.  
Wesley stands and walks to the other side of the room.

So do you have faith yet?

MAYBEL

We literally bonded over doubting everything.

WESLEY

So?

MAYBEL

We called ourselves “godless.”

WESLEY

And?

MAYBEL

You can’t doubt and have faith at the same time.

WESLEY

Says you.

MAYBEL

Says logic!

WESLEY

Whose logic?

Pause.

Mill’s? Kant’s? Nietzsche’s?

MAYBEL

It’s just...it’s a contradiction, Wesley, and that’s not logical.

WESLEY

Pre-Derrida, I guess, yeah.

MAYBEL

What’s your point?

WESLEY

Well, I got older. And I had a realization. You have to have faith in something.

MAYBEL

I've never had faith, and I turned out fine.

Quiet.

Well, what do you have faith in?

Wesley picks up Maybel's bong.

WESLEY

Foxholes.

MAYBEL

What?

WESLEY

There are no atheists in foxholes. In foxholes, with nothing but your gun and your heart and your arms and your legs, you can't be an atheist. Even if you're godless. Because if you don't have faith, you don't have anything. Without faith, nothing means anything. People and foxholes. I have faith that even the faithless can find their way out.

Quiet.

I'd say you're in a fox-hole, and you could use a little faith.

MAYBEL

We're all in fox-holes.

WESLEY

Yeah. Maybe.

Wesley looks at the bong. Wesley moves to exit through the glass door.  
Maybel stands.

MAYBEL

Woah woah woah—

WESLEY

Eminent domain. I'm confiscating this.

MAYBEL

What's the government going to do with my bong?

Wesley turns to Maybel.

WESLEY

I know you never liked feeling. But you have to now. Come on, Maybel. Feel.

Wesley exits through the glass door.  
Maybel returns to the couch and starts rolling a joint. Then she stops. She knocks all of her weed and associated paraphernalia off the table and onto the floor.  
Charley enters through the glass door.

MAYBEL

God damn it, is no one going to use the front door anymore?

CHARLEY

Was that Wesley?

Maybel and Charley make eye contact.  
Pause.

MAYBEL

Yeah.

CHARLEY

He's a cop?

MAYBEL

Yeah.

Charley moves to exit through the stage right hallway.

Charley, wait—

CHARLEY

Stay out of my life.

MAYBEL

You don't want this.

CHARLEY

You don't know what I want because you never listen.

Charley exits through the stage right hallway.

MAYBEL

Charley! Charley!

Mike enters behind Maybel.  
Maybel turns, sees him, and jumps.

JESUS!



MIKE  
Hi, Ms. Murphy.

MAYBEL  
There's a front fucking door!

MIKE  
Don't fuck with us.

MAYBEL  
What?

MIKE  
I saw the cop.

Pause.

MAYBEL  
How painful was getting that tattoo? Like, on a scale of one-to-ten?

MIKE  
Don't fuck with us.

MAYBEL  
I'm thinking of shaving my head and getting one just like it. Except that I want to get a big union jack. Full color too. All the blues and reds and stuff.

MIKE  
Don't fuck with us.

MAYBEL  
How do you move in all that leather? It looks really sticky. Like walking around with a car seat stuck to your butt. Did you attach the spikes yourself or is there a spike store?  
She gestures as if to a huge billboard.  
Come to Spike's spike emporium at the intersection of 8<sup>th</sup> and spike boulevard or call 1-800-SPIKE.

CHARLEY  
I'm ready.

Charley enters through the stage-right hallway with a baseball bat in her right hand. It has nails sticking out of it. Maybel's eyes follow it through the space. Charley and Mike exit through the glass door.

Maybel starts trembling. Then she starts breathing rapidly and shallowly. She runs to the couch and has a panic attack.

MAYBEL

FuckfuckfuckfuckfuckfuckfuckfuckfuckfuckfuckFUCK!

Lights down.

END OF SCENE

SCENE THREE

3 AM the next morning.  
Charley and Mike enter through the glass door. They are drunk. The bat with nails swings in Charley's hand, bloody and matted with fur. Mike is carrying an empty bottle of Jack Daniels.  
Charley sings badly.

CHARLEY  
HOW MUCH IS THAT DOGGY IN THE WINDOW?

Mike shushes her. Charley kisses him.  
Charley drops the bat on the ground. She takes Mike by the hand and leads him to the couch.

Come on...

MIKE  
Charley...

CHARLEY  
Come on.

MIKE  
Charley, that was amazing.

CHARLEY  
Make me squeal like Hammond's dog.

MIKE  
I haven't seen someone that angry in a long time.

CHARLEY  
Show me how angry you can be.

Charley falls back on the couch and looks up at Mike.

I want to feel like that dog did. Come on.

MIKE  
Maybe I will.

Mike gets on top of Charley and kisses her.

CHARLEY

I can get my mom to give me everything she owes me. Just fuck me. Hurt me. Make me bleed.

Mike kisses Charley's neck.

Just love me, Mike. Like me. And I'll give you everything.

A creak upstairs.

Mike stands quickly.

Shit!

MIKE

Hide the bat!

CHARLEY

Liquor cabinet!

MIKE

What?

CHARLEY

She never drinks!

A creak offstage right. Mike exits through the glass door.

Charley picks up the bat and hides it in a cabinet beneath the upstage marble counter.

Then she sits on one of the couches.

Maybel enters through the stage-right hallway, dressed in a robe and slippers.

MAYBEL

Real nice.

Maybel walks to the empty bottle of Jack and kicks it.

Impressive. What is that, 42 proof?

CHARLEY

What's up, Maybel?

MAYBEL

Other than Mike's dick?

Charley puts her jacket on.

Don't do this, Charley.

CHARLEY

What?

MAYBEL

This.

CHARLEY

You haven't left me much of a choice.

MAYBEL

He's not going to get you what you want.

CHARLEY

You don't know what I want.

MAYBEL

Yeah, well, neither do you. And you're still gonna spend your whole life looking for it. Whatever you want, it's not out there. It's not in people. It's not in your work, not in neo-Nazis, not in calling principals names. And it's not in your vagina or some guys dick.

CHARLEY

So where is it, Maybel?

MAYBEL

It doesn't exist.

CHARLEY

It did when dad was around.

Silence.

Remember dad? Daddo? The way he could make rooms light up by walking into them? The way he brought people back to life by looking at them? His eyes and his smile, his great big bear hug.

MAYBEL

Charley...

CHARLEY

Sure, he was a drunk. Sure, he wanted a son. But I never minded. I rode his tractor with him. I let him cut my hair short. I let him call me "son" and "Charles" and "kiddo." I did everything I could to give him a home. And you failed him.

MAYBEL

He was violent.

CHARLEY

I wish he'd taken me with him.

MAYBEL

He raped me.

CHARLEY

And you fell in love with him.

MAYBEL

I hate his fucking guts.

CHARLEY

Then say that you're glad he's gone. If you hate him so much, that shouldn't be a problem, should it? Tell me how glad you are that he's gone. Tell me how fulfilled you feel. Tell me how alive you are. If you hate him so much, tell me that you're enough on your own. Tell me. Tell me.

Quiet.

He loved me. He listened.

Pause.

I wish I wasn't here.

MAYBEL

That makes two of us.

Charley stands.

CHARLEY

Stop! Stop! Stop throwing your suicidal shit in my face! If you're so suicidal that you're throwing it in everyone's face to make them feel guilty, why don't you save yourself the breath and save everyone else the time and just fucking do it?

Charley exits through the stage-right hallway.

Maybel takes out a cigarette and lights up.  
Lights down.

END OF SCENE

SCENE FOUR

A few days later. Early Afternoon.  
Maybel is pacing in the living room. Wesley  
sits on the arm of the couch. He's not in his  
police uniform.

WESLEY

Everything's gonna be O.K.

Pause.

How long has it been since you met Mike?

MAYBEL

Days?

WESLEY

Anything more specific? Hammond still has an investigation out on his dog. I have a hunch.

Maybel stops pacing. She turns to Wesley.

MAYBEL

You didn't say this before?

WESLEY

I'm here for Charley. I'm not on duty.

MAYBEL

But—

WESLEY

I agreed to talk to Charley as your friend.

MAYBEL

He's a Neo-Nazi.

WESLEY

Freedom of speech, Maybel. They're protected.

Maybel paces.

MAYBEL

Fuck you. Hate speech. You can get him under hate speech. You're just a closeted white supremacist.

WESLEY

Yep, you got me, that's why I'm here to try to save your daughter from Neo-Nazis. Not wanting to arrest Mike yet has nothing to do with avoiding a lot of court hearings asking what the hell I booked him on and what free speech means.

Quiet.

MAYBEL

Thank you, Wesley. For coming out.

WESLEY

Of course.

Quiet.

What did you tell Charley to get her home on time?

MAYBEL

I told her the trust fund check came early.

CHARLEY

It didn't?

Mike and Charley enter through the glass door. Charley is wearing all leather, including combat boots. Her leather jacket is covered in spikes.

Charley and Wesley make eye contact. Maybel looks at Charley. Mike looks at Maybel.

Wesley.

WESLEY

Charley.

CHARLEY

It's been a while.

WESLEY

Seven years?

CHARLEY

Something like that. Is this my interrogation?

MIKE

Your what?

WESLEY

I'm not here as a cop.



MIKE  
As a what?

CHARLEY  
Then why are you here?

WESLEY  
To talk to you.

MIKE  
The fuck you will.

Mike reaches for something at his belt.  
Charley grabs his arm.

CHARLEY  
Mike!  
You worried about me, Maybel?  
Don't be. Wait here, Mike.

Pause.  
Pause.

Charley moves to exit through the stage-  
right hallway. Maybel follows her.

MAYBEL  
Charley...

Charley and Maybel exit through the stage-  
right hallway.

MIKE  
Charley, don't leave me here with...

Mike turns to Wesley.  
Wesley smiles.

WESLEY  
Have a seat, bud.

MIKE  
Fuck you.

WESLEY  
S'matter, you have something to hide?

Mike starts to respond but doesn't. He sits at the base of the windows.  
Pause.

Lovely weather we're having.

WESLEY

Mike looks at Wesley.

It's kind of cloudy actually.

MIKE

T.V.?

WESLEY

No.

MIKE

Movies?

WESLEY

No.

MIKE

Books?

WESLEY

I like German diaries.

MIKE

Pause.

Sports?

WESLEY

Depends.

MIKE

Hockey?

WESLEY

No.

MIKE

Pause.

WESLEY  
Look, I'm just trying to break the tension, chief.

Pause.  
Mike sighs.

MIKE  
Football?

WESLEY  
No...Golf?

MIKE  
No...Basketball?

WESLEY  
No...Croquet?

MIKE  
Who the fuck likes Croquet?

WESLEY  
Old half-Jewish police officers.

Pause.

MIKE  
Oh.

WESLEY  
Yeah.

MIKE  
Interesting.

WESLEY  
You could say that.

Pause.

MIKE  
Um...Soccer?

WESLEY  
U.S. or national teams?

National.

MIKE

I love the World Cup.

WESLEY

Yeah, it's pretty great.

MIKE

U.K.'s looking good this year.

WESLEY

Yeah, I heard they're getting a guy from Man U.

MIKE

Who's your favorite team?

WESLEY

Germany.

MIKE

Pause.

You're...you're kidding.

WESLEY

Why would I?

MIKE

Pause.

Cricket?

WESLEY

What's with these obscure fucking sports?

MIKE

They all involve large, blunt objects that could beat a dog to death.

WESLEY

What about baseball?

Mike looks up at Wesley.

Mike stands.

Wesley stands.

Are you...a fan...of baseball?

MIKE

The fuck are you implying?

Charley enters from the stage-right hallway, carrying a hair razor. Maybel enters behind her.

MAYBEL

Charley, I can't do this, I'm terrible at this, I'm just so terrible, just listen to Wesley.

MIKE

Charley, let's go, I don't like this.

CHARLEY

Yeah, let's.

Mike and Charley move to exit through the glass door.

MAYBEL

Wesley, please!

WESLEY

Charley.

Pause.

Quiet.

Wesley sits on the arm of the couch again.

How you doing, kid?

CHARLEY

What do you mean?

Wesley smiles.

WESLEY

Come on, it's been seven years. You're not getting away without a proper conversation. How are you?

Pause.

CHARLEY

I'm...good.

WESLEY

Good.

CHARLEY

Why do you care?

WESLEY

Because you matter to me.

Maybel sits on the other side of Wesley.  
Mike stands back.

CHARLEY

I've heard that a lot in my life.

Charley looks at Wesley.  
Wesley and Charley make eye contact.  
Quiet.

WESLEY

I know.

CHARLEY

Really that's kind of a bullshit question. It doesn't really mean anything. It's fake.  
Quiet.  
And if it's not fake, then it's a lot. It's too much.

WESLEY

Yeah.

Quiet.

CHARLEY

What are you trying to do?

WESLEY

Find out if you need anything.

CHARLEY

You can't give me anything that I need.

WESLEY

Maybe. But I have a house. And some food.

CHARLEY

I have those things.

WESLEY

I have them too.

Pause.  
Quiet.

CHARLEY

How are you. What bullshit.

Pause.

You ever been torn apart every time you come down for breakfast in the morning? Told what you are, what you do when you're not even really sure if you do it? Have you ever wanted to be hugged so bad that you can feel it aching in your bones?

Quiet.

It hurts. It really sucks.

WESLEY

You have hope.

CHARLEY

Damn right I do.

Pause.

I don't belong here, Wesley. I don't belong anywhere. But I have to keep hoping that if I get out, if I find a way, maybe there's a place out there where I do fit in. Maybe there's a place I belong.

WESLEY

There is.

Quiet.

You are loved, Charley.

CHARLEY

Fuck you.

WESLEY

Okay.

Quiet.

CHARLEY

What?

WESLEY

You're okay. You're alright. Everything's okay. You can do whatever you want, tell me to go fuck myself, get mad, throw things. I'll still love you.

CHARLEY

Creep. I'm like a third your age.

WESLEY

That's not what I mean. I love you for your faults. Because you tell me to fuck off. Not in spite of it. I love you for the world that you can see. You're not a bad person, Charley.

CHARLEY

You don't know what I am.

Quiet.

WESLEY

I don't know if your mom ever told you, but she and I used to date in college. We broke up, but we stayed friends after we graduated. Then she met Carl. And he couldn't get past it. He stopped your mom from seeing me. When Carl left, your mom wasn't the same. I didn't see her much. Then, I didn't see her at all. Five years ago, I called. She picked up. She never told me much, but we were talking again. It was a start.

Maybel puts a hand on Wesley's knee.

Wesley looks at her.

She removes the hand.

But I was there when you took your first steps. Carl was out, so your mom called me. She said you were walking. And she wanted to hug someone. So I came over. And I watched you walk. There's nothing like watching a baby take her first steps. That was the last time I saw Maybel smile.

Quiet.

CHARLEY

I didn't know.

WESLEY

It's okay, Charley. It's all okay. Everything's going to be okay.

Quiet.

Charley drops her razor. She turns away from everyone. She cries.

CHARLEY

I hate this. I hate this. I hate this.

Wesley stands and crosses over to her.

I can't stay here. This is too hard.

WESLEY

I know.

CHARLEY

I can't do this.

WESLEY



You can.

CHARLEY

I don't want this. I never wanted any of this to happen.

WESLEY

I know.

Charley leans on Wesley's shoulder.  
She grabs onto his arm.

CHARLEY

Get me out of here. Please.

Quiet.  
Mike steps forward and grabs Charley's  
arm.

MIKE

Alright, that's enough.

Maybel stands.

MAYBEL

Mike...

MIKE

Let her go.

WESLEY

She's grabbing me, Mike.

MIKE

LET HER FUCKING GO!

CHARLEY

MIKE, STOP!

Charley pushes Mike away from her.

MIKE

Don't trust him, Charley. He's just another guy telling you who you are.

WESLEY

Awful ironic of you to say that of all people.

Pause.

Mike pushes Charley out of the way and walks up to Wesley.

MIKE

And who the fuck are you? Do you know me? Do you know where I come from? Who I am?

WESLEY

I know everything that I need to know about your movement and what you stand for.

MIKE

Then hit me.

CHARLEY

Mike!

MIKE

Shut the fuck up, Charley!

Pause.

Do it. I dare you. If you hate me so much.

WESLEY

I don't hate you.

MIKE

Do it, you fucking pussy. You limp-dick old man. Punch me. Punch me. PUNCH ME!

WESLEY

I'm not that kind of man.

MIKE

You're nothing but a lie. A privileged lie. You watch your people lose jobs, education, land, money, everything they've ever had. You sit and you watch the disintegration of your race, of your people, and you don't do anything, you lazy, greedy, manipulative kike!

Silence.

Wesley starts laughing.

WESLEY

O.K., you got me.

Wesley grabs Mike and pushes him up against the wall.

I hate you. I hate you so fucking much. You are the scum of the earth. You are everything wrong with the way things are. But I don't have to punch you. You know why? Because I'm mature enough to feel my god damn feelings. Instead of blaming them on a world that I can't control.

Wesley throws Mike on the ground. Wesley starts to cry.

I feel sad because you exist. I feel angry because you stand for the eradication of people like me and my mother. I feel hopeful because we live in a world with people like Charley. People who still haven't made up their minds.

Wesley turns to Maybel.

THIS IS HOW YOU FEEL YOUR FEELINGS! God damn it. Let it go. Let everything go. Feel.

Wesley turns to Mike and steps towards him.

You know what you are, Mike? An emotionally repressed man from an emotionally repressed movement. Repression becomes aggression. Aggression becomes oppression. You're weak, Mike. Like Hitler and Stalin and every other strong-man dictator the world has ever known. You have to choose to feel. You have to take responsibility for your own shit. It's not on other people to deal with your emotions. It's on you. When you're ready to talk about your feelings, I'll listen. But as long as you blame my Jewish heritage for your own inadequacies, I will hate you. It's not my job to make you happy. It's yours.

Charley exits through the stage-right hallway.

Mike runs around Wesley. Wesley tries to grab him.

Mike exits through the stage-right hallway.  
Pause.

I need a drink.

MAYBEL

I thought you didn't drink.

WESLEY

Today, I drink.

MAYBEL

Wesley, I'm sorry.

WESLEY

For what?

MAYBEL

For getting so distant.

WESLEY

It's O.K. I understand.

Wesley crosses around to the marble bar.

MAYBEL

Nothing but some old Whiskey that Carl left in the cabinet. No telling how old it is.

WESLEY

The older the better.

Charley enters through the stage-right hallway. Mike enters behind her.

CHARLEY

Get away from me Mike please.

MIKE

Listen to me, damn it!

Wesley pulls up the baseball bat with the nails, holding it from two of the nails. Everyone in the room looks at the bat. Silence. Wesley and Mike make eye contact.

WESLEY

So it was baseball.

Mike exits through the glass door. Wesley steps towards the glass door. He turns to Charley.

His fingerprints on this?

CHARLEY

Yeah. Mine too.

WESLEY

You're a good kid, Charley, and I don't think prison is your best alternative to here.

Wesley takes her downstage, away from Maybel.

Call me, O.K.? Here's my number.

Wesley gives her a card.

I'll work on getting you out of here. If you need a place to stay, let me know.

Charley hugs him.

Everything's gonna be O.K., kiddo.

Wesley moves to exit through the glass door.

If you want me to, I'll check in tomorrow. Give me a call. Let me know.

Wesley exits through the glass door.  
Charley sits on the couch.

MAYBEL

Well?

Pause.

That's better.

CHARLEY

Better than what?

MAYBEL

Running off with Neo-Nazis.

CHARLEY

Well, duh.

Quiet.

Pause.

I'm not going to be like you, Maybel.

MAYBEL

Look, I know I'm a mess, you don't have to—

CHARLEY

That's not what this is about.

Pause.

MAYBEL

Leaning on Wesley's shoulder was a funny way to flirt with him.

CHARLEY

Jesus, what?

MAYBEL

He just gave you his number. One conversation won't change you, will it?

CHARLEY

Jesus, Maybel!

MAYBEL

His dick bends a little to the left, just so you know.

CHARLEY

You're the worst. The absolute worst. I don't know why the fuck you're making this so hard.

Gunshot in the distance.  
Silence.

CHARLEY  
A neighbor?

MAYBEL  
Too close. It came from the driveway.

CHARLEY  
Wesley?

MAYBEL  
He didn't bring his gun.

CHARLEY  
No. No no no no, someone would see. It's broad daylight.

MAYBEL  
Not way out here. People would think it's a hunter. Charley.  
Silence.

Did Mike have a gun?

Silence.

DID MIKE HAVE A GUN?

Silence.  
Maybel exits through the glass door.  
Silence.  
Charley finds her hair razor and picks it up.  
Charley exits through the glass door.  
Lights down.

END OF SCENE

SCENE FIVE

That evening.

Maybel enters through the stage-right hallway. She's going into a panic.

She grabs a throw pillow and throws it at the wall.

MAYBEL

FUCK!

Grabs another throw pillow and throws it.

FUCK!

Grabs a third pillow, throws it, and falls to her knees with the scream.

FUUUUUUUUUUUCK!

Pause.

Mike enters through the glass door.

Maybel stands.

YOU!

Maybel runs at Mike. Mike takes out a bowie knife.

MIKE

Back the fuck off.

Mike circles Maybel, looking at the house.

MAYBEL

Bastard bastard son-of-a-bitch racist fucking sexist homophobic ANTI-SEMETIC—

MIKE

It's not about race, it's about preservation.

MAYBEL

You killed Wesley because he was Jewish!

MIKE

The cop was in the way. I'll kill you for the same reason.

MAYBEL

How does she love you? How does Charley love you?

MIKE

Because she hates herself. I have you to thank for that actually. And for the house and money.

MAYBEL

The...money? The...house? Wait—

MIKE

Anyway, I just came in to check out the—

MAYBEL

Do you even love Charley? Why are you—

MIKE

What?

Mike laughs,

No. Oh, Jesus, no, you're daughter's a fucking whore. Wow, that's rich.

Mike laughs.

That's fucking rich. You actually thought I...

Mike trails off into laughter.

MAYBEL

You asshole.

MIKE

You're funny, Maybel.

MAYBEL

Fuck you.

MIKE

There's bigger shit to deal with. You know that the United States will have a minority majority soon? We're disappearing, Maybel.

MAYBEL

No, fuck you, fuck you, FUCK YOU!

MIKE

We have to protect ourselves. This house will make a real nice fortress.

MAYBEL

The police are on the way. I called them when I found Wesley.

MIKE

Way out here? They won't be here for forty-five minutes. Maybe longer. They'll send ten, maybe twenty guys. We'll gun them all down. It's a national tragedy, but the focus will be on the cops, not us. We lay low. People forget we're here. Then we start spending that money. Recruitment. Big time recruitment. But I'm not here to tell you that.



YO, CHARLEY! COME ON IN GIRL!

Mike walks to the open glass door.

Pause.

Charley enters through the glass door. Her head is shaved now. She wears all the same clothes from the last scene. She's holding Mike's pistol.

MAYBEL

Charley...

Mike walks over to her.

MIKE

She has a little initiation to wrap up. After you're dead, she gets the trust fund. Then she gets her tattoo. Then this place becomes the headquarters for the Maple Valley division of the National Socialist Movement of Washington State. The name's a bit long, but we'll get around to shortening it soon.

Mike slaps Charley on the butt. Mike moves to exit through the glass door.

Anyway ladies, I gotta get down to the gate. That's one long-ass driveway you got, Maybel. See you soon, Charley. And Maybel? Thanks again for raising...

He laughs.

...such a fucked up little child.

Mike exits through the glass door.  
Charley moves further into the space.  
Pause.

MAYBEL

Charley—

CHARLEY

He loves me.

MAYBEL

He doesn't.

CHARLEY

Like you ever did?

MAYBEL

Charley...the world is meaningless...when it fucks you over and over and over how can you—

CHARLEY

I don't care about your philosophical ramblings, you stupid fucking bitch.

MAYBEL

O.K., O.K., right I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry—

CHARLEY

Sorry won't help you now.

Charley aims the pistol at Maybel.

You're done. I'm getting rid of you and leaving you behind.

MAYBEL

Wesley. Wesley got to you.

CHARLEY

Yeah, and he died.

MAYBEL

I wish I'd seen this earlier I wish I wish I wish—

CHARLEY

SHOW ME!

MAYBEL

I saved you, Charley, my darling, my baby, my little demon—

CHARLEY

SHOW ME!

Maybel turns to Charley. She takes a step towards her. Charley cocks the pistol.

SHOW ME!

Maybel runs at Charley and hugs her. Charley stands there with her hands outstretched.

Quiet.

Charley drops the pistol. She hugs Maybel back.

MAYBEL

I love you, Charley. Totally. Completely. With every piece of me. And I love every piece of you. I love the way you open the door. I love the way you walk. I love the hope that you have in the world. I love the faith you have in yourself. I love the way you sass me when I make fun of you. I love the way you hate me. I love the way you learn. I love the way you watch the pine trees. I love the way you shake your head when you know that no one could ever understand but you just don't know what else to do because the world left

you alone but you see the world breaking in you, and it does it breaks, in every piece of you, and you feel with the world, you feel with it. And it's beautiful. You are beautiful.  
Maybel cries.

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

CHARLEY

Mom...

MAYBEL

I'm so proud of you. I'm so unspeakably, inexpressibly proud of you.  
Maybel steps back.

My beautiful little demon.

CHARLEY

Thanks, Mom. I love you too.

They both start laughing.

That's all I ever needed. Just, you know, consistently.

Quiet.

Sorry I pointed a gun in your face.

MAYBEL

No, I'm sorry—

CHARLEY

I don't need you to be sorry, mom! All you ever did was throw your guilt in my face like it was supposed to make everything okay. You don't need to be sorry. Guilt doesn't make anything better. All it does is waste time.

MAYBEL

Yeah.

CHARLEY

Regret. Guilt. All it does is waste time.

MAYBEL

You're a smart kid.

CHARLEY

Yeah, well, I take after my mom...in a way.

MAYBEL

I wish I'd listened to you more.

Quiet.

Charley's phone buzzes. She checks it.

Shit. CHARLEY

What? MAYBEL

The NSM. CHARLEY

Charley and Maybel make eye contact.

Let's go. MAYBEL

Mom— CHARLEY

Pack your stuff. Let's go. MAYBEL

Mom, you can't come with me. CHARLEY

Maybel and Charley make eye contact.

I'm sorry, but I don't want you to. We're toxic for each other. If I'm going to run...I'm running alone.

Pause.

O.K. MAYBEL

Really? CHARLEY

Yes. Get some stuff. Quick. Including your credit card. MAYBEL

Charley moves to exit through the stage-right hallway.

Mom? CHARLEY

You're leaving too, right? Pause.

MAYBEL

Yeah, of course.

CHARLEY

I don't want you to die, mom.

MAYBEL

I think that's the nicest thing you've ever said to me.

CHARLEY

Mom, don't die to give me the trust fund.

MAYBEL

I'm not...Hurry! They'll be here soon.

Charley exits through the stage-right hallway.

Maybel finds a cigarette. Then she finds a lighter. She lights up and takes a deep inhale. She coughs.

I could've done it all differently. Well. Too late now.

She looks at the cigarette and coughs again.

Jesus, these things are gonna kill me.

Charley enters through the stage-right hallway with a half full backpack. Maybel puts the cigarette in an ashtray, walks up to Charley, and puts her hands on Charley's shoulders.

O.K.?

Charley nods.

CHARLEY

O.K.

MAYBEL

O.K.

She and Charley hug.

You take care of yourself, alright?

CHARLEY

Mom—

MAYBEL

You'll get the trust fund soon. Don't buy anything on credit that you can't pay off. Always look for buy-one-get-one-frees at the supermarket. And if you ever have water

stuck in your ear, make a suction between it and your hand and pump until the water comes out.

CHARLEY

Mom—

MAYBEL

Quiet, I'm trying to parent. Now, when a mommy and a daddy love each other very much—

CHARLEY

Mom—

MAYBEL

I'm right behind—

The sound of tires on the gravel outside.  
Men shouting. Maybel pulls away suddenly.

Go. Now. NOW!

CHARLEY

Mom—

MAYBEL

Out your window. Down the roof. Through the pasture. Now!

CHARLEY

MOM, I WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

Pause.

MAYBEL

The trust fund is set to go to you if I die. You've been my everything, Charley. My everything.

CHARLEY

Mom—

MAYBEL

Let me go, Charley. Like Wesley said.

Maybel crosses to Charley. She puts one hand on Charley's back and another on her face.

Hold on tight. Feel your feelings. Then let them go.

CHARLEY

I love you, mom.

Sound of cars parking outside and doors slamming.

MAYBEL

I love you too. So much.

She backs away.

Now go!

Charley exits through the stage right hallway.

Maybel picks up the cigarette and takes a drag.

There are no atheists in foxholes.

She laughs.

God damn you, Wesley. Why'd you always have to be right?

Mike enters through the glass door.

MIKE

You're still alive. Where's Charley?

MAYBEL

Gone.

MIKE

WHAT?

MAYBEL

Gone. Gone, gone, gone, gone, gone. With the money. So ha-ha-ha. Take the house. Have fun with the pasture. FYI, the dandelions take over if you don't spray some weed killer every two weeks.

MIKE

Alright.

Mike hits Maybel on the head with the butt of the knife. She falls to the ground, still conscious.

MAYBEL

I have faith in my anger.

MIKE

WHERE'S CHARLEY?

MAYBEL

I have faith in my sadness. And in my jealousy.

Mike slashes her hamstring.

MIKE

WHERE'S CHARLEY?

MAYBEL

I have faith in my fear and in my pride. I have faith in my happiness.

Mike rolls her over and cuts off her upstage arm.

MIKE

WHERE'S CHARLEY?

MAYBEL

I have faith in my shame. I have faith in disconnection. In weakness, in incapability, in confusion, in guilt, in gratitude, and in inadequacy, I have faith.

Mike stabs Maybel through the chest.

MIKE

Where's Charley, you philosophical fuckwad?

MAYBEL

I have faith in you, Charley...I have faith in us...I love you...good luck. I'm glad that I knew you.

MIKE

Where's Charley?

Maybel dies.

Mike shakes her a few times, then he stands. He pulls out his phone and makes a call.

Jason? Anyone seen Charley?

Pause.

Well fuck you too. Keep looking. Start fortifying the house.

Mike lowers his phone. He looks at it. He throws it at the wall. It shatters. He screams and falls to his knees.

Pause.

Mike starts crying.

Lights down.

END OF PLAY



