

THE FLING

written by

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INT. HOPKINS HOME -- KITCHEN -- NIGHT

CONSTANCE HOPKINS (10) sits alone at her kitchen table flipping through a family photo album. She is sad and crying as she gazes at a recent photo of herself smiling with her mother.

SUPER: PENDLETON, SOUTH CAROLINA - 1979

DANIEL HOPKINS (33) comes into the kitchen and sits across from his daughter.

DANIEL

You know you were your mother's greatest joy, don't you? Her blessed angel. She named you Constance after her sister. Your aunt. She died years before you were born. Before I met your mama even.

CONSTANCE

Mama told me about it one time. She was crying. She said it was hard for her to talk about since she still missed her so much. I'm gonna miss Mama forever the same way. I don't care how much it hurts to, I'm gonna remember her every single day.

DANIEL

Of course you will. We all will. Even if I tried to forget I'd have your lovely face here to remind me of hers every time I looked at it.

CONSTANCE

I wish I could be as beautiful as her, Daddy.

DANIEL

You're wrong if you think you're not already. I want you to promise me something.

CONSTANCE

What?

DANIEL

When I give the service tomorrow and we come to the part where you come up with the choir, I want you to see her right in the front pew where she sat every Sunday. I want you to sing your heart out to her and make her proud. The only thing she loved more than hearing me preach was hearing you sing.

CONSTANCE

Okay, Daddy.

DANIEL

Now come on. It's late. Put that away and get to bed. We got a long day ahead of us tomorrow.

INT. BAPTIST CHURCH -- DAY

The half-open casket containing Constance's dead mother sits in the area between the pews of gathered mourners and the podium where Daniel shouts holy exhortations while the choir sings a ferocious gospel song on a raised platform nearby. Constance is especially impassioned, singing, jumping and waving her arms with tears flowing down her cheeks.

DANIEL

God knows our pain! He knows our suffering and He is with us through all of it! My own is lessened by the knowledge that my wife had prepared herself for the coming glory. She was made ready through the blood of our savior Jesus Christ!

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL -- PARKING LOT -- DAY

With Constance seated beside him, Daniel pulls his pickup truck into the parking lot of the school she will be newly attending.

SUPER: EVERETT, WASHINGTON

INT. PICKUP TRUCK -- DAY

Daniel puts the truck in park and turns to Constance.

DANIEL

You got everything? Did you pack your Bible?

CONSTANCE

Yes, Daddy.

DANIEL

Good. Don't worry, I don't expect you to have it out on display or open on your desk all day for everyone to see or anything. Just for when you need the Lord's word to remind you you're not alone if you're feeling that way, you know, or missing your friends back home.

CONSTANCE

I know, Daddy. I'll make new friends. I know we're here because you want things to be better for us. You don't have to worry over me.

DANIEL

I don't? Well, what sweet relief. I don't have to worry over the most important thing in this world to me. I'm luckier than I thought.

CONSTANCE

Daddy, please, I don't want to be late on my first day. I love you bunches.

DANIEL

All right, okay.

Daniel musses her hair and gives his daughter a kiss on the cheek. Constance gets out of the truck.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL -- CLASSROOM -- DAY

SAM SHAKE (10) sits in a desk in front of his best friend, a black boy named WESTIE CONRAD (10) in their 4th grade classroom. MRS. BAILEY (26), the teacher, is busy scrawling something on the chalkboard. Westie taps Sam on his shoulder to get his attention.

WESTIE

Did you see the new girl registering in the principal's office this morning?

SAM
 (Turning in his seat
 slightly to be heard)
 I saw her. What, are you in love
 already?

WESTIE
 You know I only like black girls.

SAM
 That's not what Sue Kitzmiller told
 me. She told me you mowed her
 parents' lawn for her.

WESTIE
 That doesn't mean anything. I mowed
 their lawn for money like everyone
 else in the neighborhood.

SAM
 She said you were in her bedroom.

WESTIE
 Only after she snagged me on my way
 to using the upstairs bathroom.

SAM
 She said you kissed her.

WESTIE
 No, I never. What are you doing
 talking so much to Sue Kitzmiller
 anyway?

SAM
 We're not. I wasn't even sure you'd
 been in her bedroom until just now.

WESTIE
 I'm gonna kick your ass, Sam.

The door to the classroom opens and PRINCIPAL WHEELER (50)
 enters with Constance Hopkins following close behind. Mrs.
 Bailey puts her chalk down and turns her attention to the
 principal along with the rest of her class.

WESTIE (CONT'D)
 (Whispering to Sam)
 There she is.

PRINCIPAL WHEELER
 Mrs. Bailey, class, this is
 Constance Hopkins.
 (MORE)

PRINCIPAL WHEELER (CONT'D)

She's a new student who joins us
all the way from Kentucky.

CONSTANCE

(To Principal Wheeler)
South Carolina.

PRINCIPAL WHEELER

I'm sorry, South Carolina. Please
make her feel welcome.

MRS. BAILEY

Well, welcome to Washington,
Constance. I'm still getting
today's lesson started, so just
find a free desk and I'll give
everyone a moment to introduce
themselves to you. Thank you, Mr.
Wheeler.

Principal Wheeler nods, departs, and closes the classroom door behind him. Mrs. Bailey returns to writing something on the chalkboard. Everyone in the class watches Constance approach and take the empty desk parallel to Sam's. Sam and Westie watch as she unpacks her supplies and a Bible from her backpack. A CREEPY STUDENT in the desk in front of her turns around to study her. He is the first student to speak to her.

CREEPY STUDENT

I guess you'll be needing a
boyfriend.

Constance calmly finishes putting her things in order before replying. She looks at the Creepy Student and her face breaks into a smile.

CONSTANCE

You ever done you-know-what behind
a church?

The Creepy Student smiles back briefly before realizing he wasn't prepared to deal with a girl who would reply, unfazed, to what was a brazen come-on in his 4th-grader mind.

CREEPY STUDENT

Yeah?

CONSTANCE

Well, then I'm afraid you're
disqualified, creep.

Overhearing this exchange, Sam bursts out laughing. Westie looks almost as confused as Creepy Student at how Constance talks. Creepy Student turns to face forward again.

Westie sees that Sam isn't confused at all. Westie addresses Constance.

WESTIE

I'm Westie.

Constance looks at Westie and then to Sam and then back to Westie.

CONSTANCE

You're Westie.

SAM

Hi, Constance. I'm Samhain.

CONSTANCE

Nice to meet you, Samhain. First proper introduction I've gotten so far today.

WESTIE

(To Sam)

You never tell anybody your name is Samhain.

CONSTANCE

I like it. It's unusual.

WESTIE

(To Constance)

Is it the name of anyone in that version of the Bible you carry around with you?

CONSTANCE

No, it's a Gaelic festival. It's Halloween way back in the pagan days.

WESTIE

No, it's not.

CONSTANCE

Yes, it is. My Mama taught anthropology at a community college where I'm from.

SAM

Yeah, Westie, I think she's right.

WESTIE

(To Sam)

Well it's weird then. And so is she.

CONSTANCE

(To Sam)

You two seem to be in cahoots. Is he always so cantankerous?

SAM

I'd say yes if I knew what that word meant. He just wants you to like him is all.

WESTIE

Shut up, Sam.

CONSTANCE

Westie, I'd really enjoy being your friend.

WESTIE

Sam don't know what he's talking about. I got enough friends. You wanna swap seats so you can teach Sam some more big words?

CONSTANCE

That'd be great, thanks.

Not expecting his sarcastic remark to be taken literally, Westie is briefly disoriented. He gets over it and begins collecting his things to switch desks with Constance. DAISY HAIM (11), a girl who'd been silently observing their exchange from the desk behind him, giggles at all this.

WESTIE

(To Daisy)

What are you laughing at?

Daisy ignores Westie and stands to reach out a hand in introduction to Constance.

DAISY

Hi, I'm Daisy.

CONSTANCE

Nice to meet you, Daisy. See, Westie? That's how you tell a stranger who you are.

Westie, sneering bitterly at her the entire time, takes his books and supplies and swaps desks with Constance so she can sit behind his best friend. As she settles in, Sam peeks over his shoulder at her.

SAM
It's okay. He's actually pretty cool.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL -- CAFETERIA -- DAY

Sam and Westie are seated with their lunch trays across from each other at a table. Another friend, an Asian boy named MITCH LEE (10) seats himself beside Westie.

WESTIE
So, is this Constance girl gonna give you some booty, Sam?

SAM
Her mother just died not too long ago.

WESTIE
So what does that mean? You have to wait before she gives you some?

SAM
I didn't ask her for any booty. Why don't **you** ask her for some?

WESTIE
Because, like I keep telling you, I only like black girls.

MITCH
(To Westie)
Then why did Sue Kitzmiller tell my brother you asked to sniff her used panties?

Sam laughs at this.

WESTIE
Mitch, who was even talking to you?

MITCH
My brother. I just said.

WESTIE
That's not what I meant. Stop being stupid.

MITCH
Sorry, it's just what I heard.

WESTIE

Why is she talking to all these guys and lying about what we did in her bedroom anyway? Never mind. I don't care. Look, Sam, you should be careful.

SAM

Careful about what?

WESTIE

The new girl.

SAM

All we did was talk about why she moved here to Washington with her Dad. Why are you freaking out over her?

WESTIE

I'm not freaking out. I can just tell she's not like other girls. Not like the girls we know and grew up with around here.

SAM

Maybe that's not a bad thing.

MITCH

As long as she's not like Sue Kitzmiller.

WESTIE

Shut up, Mitch. That bitch is a liar.

One of a few who patrol the cafeteria during lunch, a female TEACHER happens to have been near enough to overhear Westie using the word "bitch".

TEACHER

Westie Conrad, am I going to have to escort you to the Principal Wheeler's office for a paddling? Do you talk like that around your parents at home?

Westie looks up in barely disguised exasperation at the fact that he can't say what he really wants back to the woman.

WESTIE

No, ma'am. I'm sorry.

The teacher continues her patrol. Sam, Westie, and Mitch all turn their attention to Constance coming towards them carrying her lunch tray. She exchanges a smile with Sam before proceeding by their table on Westie's side. Westie stretches his heel out behind him and Constance trips over it, falling forward and dumping her tray of food on the floor. She looks up to see the other students laughing, one of which is Sam, who immediately ceases when he realizes she's glaring right at him.

WESTIE (CONT'D)

Sorry, Constance. I didn't know anyone was behind me.

Constance glares at Westie but says nothing as she slowly rises to her feet. Some of the food has stained her clothes. The teacher who had just scolded Westie rushes over.

TEACHER

(To Constance)

Are you okay, young lady?

CONSTANCE

Yes, thank you, I'm fine. I'm just a little clumsy today.

TEACHER

Well, go get yourself cleaned up and then we'll get you another lunch tray. You're in Mrs. Bailey's class?

CONSTANCE

Yes, ma'am.

TEACHER

I'll let her know to give you an extra ten or fifteen minutes for lunch.

Constance gives Westie and Sam another cold glare as she heads off to the girl's bathroom.

MITCH

(To Westie)

Why didn't she rat you out?

WESTIE

What are you asking *me* for?

SAM

You shouldn't have done that, Westie.

WESTIE

You laughed.

SAM

Yeah, and she probably hates me now. You shouldn't have done that.

WESTIE

You saw she didn't tell on me. How mad could she be?

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND -- DAY

Sam and Westie are hanging around and on the monkey bars during recess as they talk.

SAM

I can't believe your Mom let you go see "Animal House" at the multiplex. Did she know it had naked titties in it?

WESTIE

Now why would she know that? You think they'd put titties in the TV trailers for the movie?

SAM

Well, she knew it was rated R. That'd be enough for **my** mom to want to know why.

WESTIE

Well, my mom lets me do what I want, as long as I don't tell Dad anything about Mr. Teroni coming around whenever he's gone working night shift.

SAM

What's he come around for?

WESTIE

All I know is it's something Mom doesn't want Dad to know she's giving him. Anyway, John Belushi was great, man. His character was named Bluto. He sees this girl's titties through a window and falls off a ladder.

SAM
 (Laughing)
 He falls off?

WESTIE
 Well, actually he didn't fall off,
 he was hanging on at the top of the
 ladder and the whole ladder fell
 backwards. I about spilt my popcorn
 laughing.

Sam turns his attention to Constance walking through the middle of the playground alone.

SAM
 There's Constance.

Westie, hanging from a wrung, looks to where Sam's looking to see her.

WESTIE
 Hey, Constance!

SAM
 (To Westie)
 What are you doing?

WESTIE
 I'm gonna apologize to your
 girlfriend so you can stop moping
 about it.

Constance comes towards Westie as he drops from the wrung to his feet to face her.

WESTIE (CONT'D)
 (To Constance)
 I wanted to say thanks for being
 cool and not tattling on me in the
 cafeteria.

Without a word or warning, Constance kicks Westie in the balls. Sam looks surprised and a little amused at the sight of Westie dropping to his knees in pain, hands to his crotch.

CONSTANCE
 (To Westie)
 You're welcome.

WESTIE
 What the fuck, girl?

CONSTANCE

I didn't tell on you because I wanted to be the one to give you what you deserved. I thought maybe a prank, but when you called me over here I decided kicking you in the balls was easier and quicker. You gonna tell on me?

WESTIE

(Shaking his head)

No.

CONSTANCE

Good. Then we're even and can start over again fresh.

Constance extends a hand down to Westie. He takes it and she helps him to his feet.

SAM

(To Constance)

I guess he had it coming, right?

Constance walks over and punches Sam in the stomach, causing him to double over.

CONSTANCE

(To Sam)

You shouldn't have laughed.

Constance walks away. Sam watches her leave as he labors to regain the breath she knocked out of him. Westie vomits on the ground.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT -- DAY

SUPER: 1983

Sam, Westie, Mitch, all now 14, are with a few other friends playing basketball on a neighborhood fenced-in basketball court. A boombox against the wire fence is playing "Something in the Water (Does Not Compute)" by Prince.

Constance and Sam's nerdy, bookish younger sister TINA SHAKE (12) are walking by when Mitch hollers an obscenity at Constance.

MITCH

Why don't you let me bust that ass sometime, Constance?

The girls stop. Constance walks up to the fence and laughs at Mitch.

CONSTANCE

Mitch, you'd jump out your bedroom window if you ever found a woman crazy enough to want to give it to you waiting in your bed one night.

Constance sees Sam dribbling the basketball and staring vacantly in her direction.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

Hey, Sam.

SAM

Hey, Constance.

MITCH

How about you, Tina?

Tina, standing a short distance behind Constance, bows her head bashfully.

SAM

Chill out, Mitch. Our father would have a Vietnam flashback if my sister brought you home.

TINA

Shut up, Sam! He's not even Vietnamese, he's Korean.

MITCH

(To Sam)

Yeah, dick. Your little sister knows more than you do.

CONSTANCE

It okay, Tina. It's your brother's job to protect his sister from guys like Mitch, no matter what race they choose to disgrace by acting like creeps.

Mitch puckers his lips at Constance playfully, and Constance puckers back. Westie laughs and steals the ball from Sam mid-dribble. He holds it up toward Constance.

WESTIE

Hey, Constance, why don't you show us some moves?

Constance comes around to the inside of the fence and catches the basketball from Westie. She begins to dribble in a way that makes it apparent she knows what she's doing.

CONSTANCE

Is anyone gonna guard me?

WESTIE

Bring it on.

MITCH

Yeah, bring it on, girl.

The boys all get into game mode. Westie gets outmaneuvered, Mitch gets evaded, and Sam gets knocked over and falls onto his back. Constance goes for the basket and makes a layup. The ball drops down to her hands and she tosses it down to Sam, still laying on his back. She kneels beside him.

CONSTANCE

(To Sam in a whisper)

Now I got you where I want you.

She kisses Sam's forehead.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

Up your game, kid.

Westie and Mitch howl and laugh at Sam as Westie extends a hand to help him up. Constance lobs the basketball to Mitch before exiting the court and continuing on her way with Tina.

INT. THE SHAKE HOUSE -- TINA'S BEDROOM -- DAY -- LATER

Tina and Constance are sitting on Tina's bed looking through teen magazines as "Perfect Circle" by R.E.M. plays on Tina's stereo.

HALLWAY

Sam appears at the the top of the staircase with the basketball, having just come in from outside. On his way to his room, he stops just shy of Tina's room to eavesdrop on her conversation with Constance.

BEDROOM

TINA

Boys are such dogs. I'm glad I'm not pretty.

CONSTANCE

Stop it, you **are** pretty, Tina. Just wait until you fill out. Their tongues will be dragging. They'll be wild for you.

TINA

I'm not sure if I want that. How do you put up with it?

CONSTANCE

(Shrugging)

I don't know. I've gotten used to it I guess. I've had grown friends of my Dad give me lusty looks in church. If I can put up with them I can surely handle boys who are just all talk, like Mitch or Westie.

TINA

What about my brother?

CONSTANCE

What about him?

TINA

Does Samhain ever say crude things to you like the other boys?

CONSTANCE

Samhain. Ha. I like how you call him that.

HALLWAY

Sam crouches and leans in, straining to hear better.

BEDROOM

TINA

That's his name.

CONSTANCE

I know. Sam isn't like the other boys.

TINA

He seems like any other boy to me.

CONSTANCE

Of course he does. He's your brother, silly.

(MORE)

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

I mean he's different. He doesn't seem interested in trying to impress girls by pretending not to be a virgin, for one thing. And I like how he looks out for you.

TINA

He's a pain in my butt.

CONSTANCE

Seriously, he's always telling everyone in class how smart his kid sister is.

TINA

No he doesn't. Does he?

Sam dribbles the basketball in the hall to alert the girls to his presence and nonchalantly steps into their view outside Tina's doorway.

SAM

Oh, hey Constance. Tina, did Mom buy anymore crab chips at the store?

TINA

And I'd know because she keeps me totally informed about groceries I don't even eat, I suppose?

CONSTANCE

(To Sam)

Where's your sidekick?

SAM

Westie's Mom drove up to the basketball court and told him to get in the car. We hadn't even finished the game. I think he's in trouble. What else is new, right? My sister got you listening to some of her weird music?

CONSTANCE

It's R.E.M. And it's mine. They're a band. I have a cousin in Athens, Georgia who mailed me a tape. You don't like them?

SAM

No, I mean, they're cool. I like it.

TINA

No he doesn't. He's in love with Michael Jackson.

SAM

(To Tina)

Who asked you?

Constance stands in preparation to leave.

CONSTANCE

Well, this has been fun, but I have to get back home. My Dad has Bible study for us tonight after dinner.

SAM

(To Constance)

You really believe in all that stuff, huh?

CONSTANCE

Do I not seem like the type?

SAM

You seem too smart.

CONSTANCE

Gee, thanks, I guess. See you heathens later.

HALLWAY

Sam watches as Constance walks past him, descends the staircase, and exits the front door. He looks back at Tina.

SAM

She forgot her tape.

BEDROOM

TINA

She's loaning it to me.

(Thumbs through her magazine silently.)

She knew you were standing in the hall the whole time you know.

SAM

What are you talking about? I just got back.

TINA

Right, because *I'm* the one you're supposed to be convincing of that.

Sam lingers outside Tina's door watching her flip through her magazine. She looks up at him, stands, and puts a hand on the knob of her open door.

TINA (CONT'D)

Is there anything else?

Tina closes the door in her brother's face.

EXT. THE HOPKINS HOUSE -- BACKYARD POOL -- DAY

Sam, Westie, Mitch, Tina, and Daisy Haim are all in swimwear attending a pool party at Constance's house during summer break from school.

Tina is lying on a patio chaise lounge chair and Mitch is talking to her from a seated position on the concrete beside her.

In the pool, Sam and Daisy are paired off against Westie and Constance in a game of chicken fight. The girls are perched on the boys' shoulders, laughing and trying to topple each other into the water.

Daniel Hopkins is sitting at a table poolside with KATRINA HOPKINS (35), his new wife and Constance's new stepmother.

MITCH

(To Tina)

I mean, what's the big deal?

TINA

I don't know. What if it hurts?

In the pool, Constance gets hold of Daisy's arm and pulls her and Sam forward into the water.

WESTIE

Ha! We got you! Suck it, chumps!

CONSTANCE

(To Westie in a hoarse
whisper)

Hey, that's bordering on the kind
of talk my daddy does **not** approve
of.

WESTIE

My bad, Constantinople.

CONSTANCE

And if you're gonna call me by a
nickname, think of a better one,
will ya?

Constance dismounts Westie's shoulders and swims, submerged, to the edge of the pool. Her head emerges and looks over to where Daniel is focused in on Katrina, her one hand wrapped in both of his while her other holds a glass of lemonade. As Westie and Daisy playfully splash each other, Sam swims up from behind Constance.

SAM

You're not over here plotting, are
you, Constance?

CONSTANCE

No, but I still don't get what he
sees in her.

SAM

Is she mean to you?

CONSTANCE

Just because Katrina's my
stepmother doesn't make me
Cinderella, Sam. I want Daddy to be
happy, but..

SAM

But what?

CONSTANCE

I don't know. It's just harder than
I thought it'd be seeing him with
someone other than Mama I guess.

Sam touches Constance somewhere beneath the water in a way that causes her eyes to flare with surprise and makes her smile. She gently splashes water at him.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

When did you get so brave?

SAM

Since seeing you in that bathing suit.

CONSTANCE

I should tell Daddy on you. You're going to Hell. You know that, right?

SAM

I don't believe in Hell.

CONSTANCE

Yes, you've told me. Doesn't mean you're exempt from damnation.

SAM

What would it get me if I came to a service at your church?

CONSTANCE

Attending one service won't get you salvation, silly.

SAM

But what would it get me from you?

Constance stares silently at Sam with a slight smile of intrigue.

CONSTANCE

What do you want from me?

SAM

I want to be your boyfriend.

Constance maintains her silent smile but doesn't reply. Sam's courage expires.

SAM (CONT'D)

I didn't mean that.

CONSTANCE

You didn't?

SAM

I mean, I know your Dad doesn't let you have boyfriends.

CONSTANCE

And still you asked me anyway. Why?

SAM

(Irritated)

You know what? Forget it. All you had to do was say no. You didn't have to be like...

CONSTANCE

Be like what?

SAM

Be like whatever this is. How you are. How you **always** are.

Constance stays silent, contemplative. She puts her hands on the edge and lifts herself out of the pool. She looks back down at Sam.

CONSTANCE

I'm going inside to get a soda. Do you want one?

Sam swims away without answering her.

INT. BAPTIST CHURCH -- DAY

SUPER: 1985

Sam and Constance (both now 16) sit beside Katrina on the front pew as Daniel delivers a sermon to a full congregation from behind his podium.

DANIEL

Our faith, brothers and sisters, does not exist in a vacuum. For us to expect it to endure on its own, untested and without challenge from those who would have us betray it, is to fail to understand that our faith must be fostered and fed. Through prayer. Through diligent study of scripture. Through **sharing** of faith with believers and non-believers alike.

A peppering of affirmative "Amen's" can be heard coming from the congregation. Sam and Constance exchange a loving glance. Katrina diverts her attention away from the sermon to retrieve something from her purse and catches sight of Constance and Sam's arms crossed, with each one's hand resting on the other's upper thigh. Upon noticing Katrina's troubled expression, Constance gives her an innocent smile before returning her attention to her father's sermon. Katrina does the same.

EXT. LAKESIDE AT THORNTON A. SULLIVAN PARK -- DAY -- LATER

Barefoot and still in her church dress, Constance sits smoking a joint on the hood of Sam's Chevy Cavalier. Sam, also still in a formal suit, stands beside his car and fiddles with rocks and sticks, occasionally throwing one into the lake. They pass the burning joint back and forth between them.

CONSTANCE

You should've seen Katrina's face. It took all I had in me to keep from bursting out laughing in the middle of the sermon.

SAM

Yeah? Well, you weren't the only one ready to burst. Next time you want me to help you pull a stunt to rattle your stepmother's cage, make sure it's not one that's gonna give me blue balls.

CONSTANCE

Aw, I'm sorry, baby. Do you want me to jerk you off?

SAM

That's all you ever do. Doesn't it get boring for you?

CONSTANCE

Don't pretend your getting off ever depended on *me* having fun before. Is this the part where you tell me you only want to make me feel as good as I make you feel? Because seeing where you're going before you get there *does* get boring for me.

SAM

Why can't we just fuck and get it over with?

CONSTANCE

And here we go. Well, for one, and for the two-hundredth time, I don't believe in premarital sex. And two, even if I did, it's still not something I'd look forward to just getting over with like a flu shot.

Sam takes a toke on the joint and holds it up to her as a lawyer holds up evidence to a jury.

SAM

I don't get it. You smoke weed. You take the Lord's name in vain. You're pro-choice --

Constance comes off the car hood abruptly and snatches the joint from Sam's fingers on her way to retrieving her shoes.

CONSTANCE

Oh, spare me. I have plenty of reasons for not wanting to fuck that have nothing to do with my faith.

SAM

Really? Like what?

Constance slips back into her shoes, hits and hands back the joint, and makes her way around to the passenger side door.

CONSTANCE

Just take me home.

SAM

No, seriously. I'd like to hear some of your reasons.

CONSTANCE

Maybe I don't want to get pregnant, genius. Maybe I just don't wanna fuck **you**. Ever consider that? Huh? Maybe I converted Westie over to white girls and I've been fucking him behind your back. That cross your mind?

SAM

Any and every possibility has crossed my mind, and it's driving me crazy.

CONSTANCE

Every possibility except the one where I love you and want my first time with you to be special apparently. Can we go now, Samhain?

INT. SAM'S CHEVY -- DAY -- LATER

Sam pulls the car to the curb outside Constance's house and puts it in park without cutting the engine. His hands still gripping the steering wheel, he stares straight ahead. Constance looks at him expectantly for a moment before speaking.

CONSTANCE

Why don't you shut the car off and come have dinner with us?

SAM

(Still not looking at her)
I'm not really hungry.

CONSTANCE

You barely said a word the whole drive back. You think you might be able to come up with something to say and call me later tonight?

SAM

You'll probably predict what I'll say before I say it anyway, so what's the point? I wouldn't want to bore you.

CONSTANCE

Don't be like that, Sammy.

Constance reaches up to touch Sam's face but he brushes her hand away, still petulantly avoiding her gaze.

SAM

Listen, I was thinking on the way over here... Actually, I've been thinking about it for a while now, and maybe, I dunno, maybe we should cool it for a while.

CONSTANCE

You've been thinking that for a while? Or just since I wouldn't fuck you at the lake?

SAM

Since I've gotten tired of trying to convince you how much I need this.

Constance looks incensed and hurt, but does her best to only let her anger show.

CONSTANCE
 Wow, so my love just isn't enough
 for you I guess?

SAM
 I didn't say that.

CONSTANCE
 Well what the fuck are you saying
 then?

Sam goes to speak but can summon no response. He bows his head.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)
 You know what? Fine. Forget it.
 (Singing)
 When the rain washes you clean,
 you'll know!

Constance exits the car and slams the door behind her.

EXT. DRIVEWAY -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

Constance marches towards her front door. With her back to Sam's car, her rage turns to anguish and she starts crying. She stops in her tracks and seems to be contemplating whether to turn around and go back. As she goes to look back over her shoulder, Sam's car has just started pulling away. Resolve returns to her expression and she continues her forward march.

INT. HOPKINS HOME -- DINING ROOM -- DAY -- LATER

Daniel, Katrina, and Constance are seated around a cornish hen dinner on the dining room table. Their hands are all joined as Daniel says grace over the food.

DANIEL
 Lord make us truly thankful for the
 food we are about to receive for
 the nourishment of our bodies, for
 Christ's redeeming sake. Amen.

All hands part to take up utensils. Katrina's attention is divided between her plate of food and Constance.

KATRINA
 Why didn't you invite Sam to join
 us for dinner?

CONSTANCE

Because I decided to break up with him.

DANIEL

(To Constance)

Did he do something out of the way to you?

CONSTANCE

Out of **which** way, Daddy?

KATRINA

(To Constance)

Surely, he must have done **something**.

CONSTANCE

Well, we can be grateful he didn't get me pregnant, otherwise the decision to break up would have been **much** more complicated for me.

KATRINA

I don't think that's anything to joke about.

CONSTANCE

I've noticed you don't think **anything's** anything to joke about.

DANIEL

Now that's enough, Constance! I understand you're upset over something with Sam, but that doesn't give you the right to disrespect me **or** your stepmother. Is that understood?

KATRINA

Daniel, please don't intercede on my behalf. If Constance has some grievance with me, I think it's best that she feel free to voice it.

CONSTANCE

My only grievance is that you're asking about my private life and I don't feel like talking about it right now. Okay?

KATRINA

I'm really trying, Constance. I've **been** trying from the start.

CONSTANCE

I know you have, Katrina. And under different circumstances, I'm sure we could have been totally indifferent strangers to each other. But as fate would have it, you married my father, and now I'm expected to accept you as the replacement for a mother I adored and miss so much I scream into my pillow at night sometimes.

Constance's raw confession leaves a brief, awkward silence at the table in its wake.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Daddy. I'm sorry to the both of you. I wish I hadn't said any of that.

KATRINA

No, it's fine.

DANIEL

(To Katrina)

Well, you may be okay with it, but I'm not quite ready to stitch this open wound yet.

(To Constance)

How many years after your mama died was it just you and me?

CONSTANCE

Daddy, may I please be excused?

DANIEL

No, you may not. Don't I get a chance to share? Or are you the only one here who's been cursed with a situation not of their own making?

KATRINA

Daniel, please.

DANIEL

(To Katrina)

This is something you need to hear. Too many things have gone unsaid in this house for far too long.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

It's quite evident my daughter thinks so too.

(To Constance)

Now when she died, you not only lost your mama, I lost a wife. But as I recall, that's not all we lost, was it?

Katrina watches Constance grow increasingly emotional, restraining tears.

CONSTANCE

Daddy...

DANIEL

When your mama died in that delivery room, she took our son with her. My child. Your unborn brother. And while I would have **never** thought to measure and compare our losses at the time, it's clear now you need to have your score-keeping put in perspective. Until you're a parent, you'll never know the pain of losing a child. I loved your mama, and I had love saved up for that baby -- the same way I had it reserved for you before you were born. All the love I had saved for a child I never got to know was pain piled on top of the pain of losing your mama. Knowing I had to be there for you was the only thing that kept me from losing my mind. Taking care of you is what brought me through everything. Putting all I had into loving you is what gave me the strength to eventually risk finding love again. Katrina was my risk. She's the replacement I chose and will be sharing the rest of my life with long after you've gone off to start your own family. So I advise you to find a way to fit some of **my** happiness into your world.

Tears flow down Constance's cheeks as she looks at her father.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- HISTORY CLASS -- DAY

World History teacher MR. HARVEY (40) stands before his class outlining events of the American Civil War on the chalkboard.

MR. HARVEY

And so in suspending habeas corpus, Lincoln once again demonstrated a willingness to subvert executive tradition in the face of an unprecedented threat to the Union. Preservation of the Union was of paramount importance to Lincoln. Above the preservation of his own presidency in fact. Can anyone name another example where this priority was made apparent?

Listening from his desk, Sam raises his hand.

MR. HARVEY (CONT'D)

Sam?

SAM

He made a point to emphasize that the abolition of slavery was not the North's goal in the war.

CHANTEL, a female black student, interjects.

CHANTEL

I thought he was against slavery?

MR. HARVEY

He was, Chantel, but --

Constance interrupts the teacher.

CONSTANCE

But allaying the fears of Northern racists and Southern slaveholders trumped human decency when it came to preserving the precious Union. Mr. Harvey, why did Lincoln pretend that saving a poisonous union was worth betraying the principles it was supposedly founded upon?

MR. HARVEY

Miss Hopkins, please refrain from commenting without raising your hand first. And it wasn't that simple.

CONSTANCE

(Without raising her hand)
When a union results in human suffering, is it really worth saving?

Westie looks over at Constance from his desk. Sam interjects before Mr. Harvey can reply.

SAM

Lincoln was against the spread of slavery to the territories, but was pragmatic enough to realize he'd get more support for the war by not making abolition the primary goal. He knew slavery would eventually be starved of political support in congress as the country grew.

CONSTANCE

(To Sam)
How do you know what he knew? Did you know he didn't believe free blacks could be assimilated into white society?

SAM

(To Constance)
Did you know he came around to a more enlightened viewpoint with the help of people like Frederick Douglass because people can change?

MR. HARVEY

Okay, you two, I'm not overseeing a debate here. I have a lesson plan to get through, and this class has a test to prepare for next week.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- HALLWAY -- DAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Westie opens his locker and switches out his history book for his science book. Among a flow of other students, he sees Sam and Constance squeeze out of the history classroom at the same time and assumes they're walking together.

WESTIE

(To Sam and Constance)
Hey, you guys still coming to my cousin's party Friday?

Constance and Sam, walking a coffee table's length apart from each other, both look Westie's way and then briefly at each other, as if unaware they were in proximity at all.

CONSTANCE

(To Westie)

Yes, I'm coming.

SAM

(To Westie)

I'll be there.

Westie watches as Sam comes towards the lockers and Constance veers off in another direction. Sam opens a locker near to Westie's.

WESTIE

(To Sam)

What's going on with you two?

Sam shuffles things around in his locker.

SAM

Don't ask *me*, man.

WESTIE

Well, I can't ask Constance. She took off from you like you'd just ripped a nasty fart.

SAM

We had a fight. Or something.

WESTIE

About what? Is that why you and her were trading shots in class?

Sam retrieves a textbook and shuts his locker.

SAM

Look, Westie, I really don't feel like going into it if you don't mind.

WESTIE

If I don't mind? You shouldn't have added that dumb shit if you really wanted me to shut-up. I mind, dickweed. So spill it.

SAM

We got into a fight over me not wanting to wait.

WESTIE

What's new about that? I don't ever remember that causing her to act the way she just acted towards you now.

SAM

That's because I never broke up with her before.

Westie takes a moment to silently take Sam's revelation in before laughing in his face.

WESTIE

You're such a dumbass!

SAM

What?

WESTIE

You've put in how many years fooling with this girl? Three?

SAM

Two.

WESTIE

And you decide after wasting all that time to just **dump** her?

SAM

See, Westie? That's why I didn't even want to tell you anything. Fuck you.

WESTIE

(Still laughing)

Don't go trying to fuck **me** now when you only have two years of high school left. Spend your time chasing someone who puts out like Ruda James or Faith O'Malley.

SAM

Yeah, thanks, I'll pass.

Westie winds down his teasing as he notices the depth of Sam's sadness.

WESTIE

Hey, Sam, it's cool, man. You don't think I know how much you love that girl? But you can't let her see you all broke up.

(MORE)

WESTIE (CONT'D)

At least **talk** to one of the girls at Chantel's party tonight. If Constance sees you moving on, she might change her tune and let you in her drawers just to get you back.

SAM

You really think so?

WESTIE

It'll work better than you telling her you made a mistake and you're sorry.

INT. CHANTEL'S HOUSE -- BASEMENT -- NIGHT

Chantel descends the stairs leading to the basement. Mitch and Tina, holding hands, and Constance trail behind her. Schoolly D's "PSK, What Does It Mean" blasts from a boombox.

CHANTEL

Look who found their way down to my dungeon, everybody!

Beside the beer keg in the corner, Westie, Sam, and a PRETTY BLACK GIRL are sitting on a couch drinking beer from plastic party cups. Several other teenage guests stand around talking and drinking from their own cups.

Sam's eyes meet with Constance's. He moves his face close to the ear of the Pretty Black Girl to whisper something. Constance sees the Pretty Black Girl smile at whatever Sam has said. Constance quickly averts her gaze when she sees Sam peek back at her from his profile.

Constance sees Sam stand and take the Pretty Black Girl by the hand. He then leads her away to an adjacent room. Holding two cups of beer, Mitch sits in the vacated space beside Westie on the couch with Tina and hands her one of the cups. Chantel comes and takes Constance by the arm.

CHANTEL (CONT'D)

Come on, girl, I had Westie save some tequila for us.

She leads Constance over to the couch as Westie pulls a tequila bottle from behind the couch. Chantel hands him three shot glasses and he begins filling them from the bottle.

MITCH
 (To Chantel)
 Why are you three the only ones who
 get to take shots?

CHANTEL
 Just drink your beer, Mitch. I need
 you to stay seeing straight so you
 can watch out for Tina.

MITCH
 I'm her date, not her babysitter.

WESTIE
 (To Mitch)
 And Sam and me are gonna be your
 undertakers if you get his sister
 fucked up.

MITCH
 Y'all ain't doing shit.

WESTIE
 Think what you want.

Westie passes two tequila shots to Chantel and Constance
 before lifting his own to toast them.

WESTIE (CONT'D)
 (To Chantel and Constance)
 To new beginnings.

The three friends down their shots.

CHANTEL
 (To Westie)
 What the fuck does that mean, new
 beginnings?

WESTIE
 (To Chantel)
 The fuck you mean what does it
 mean, cuz?

Chantel gives Constance a look of skepticism over the
 innocence of the toast.

CONSTANCE
 Pour me another, Westie. I'm here
 to get hammered.

Westie obliges and watches with Chantel as Constance downs
 the shot and offers her glass up for another fill.

MITCH

Damn, Constance, what you trying to prove?

CONSTANCE

(After downing the third shot)

Nothing. Shut up and drink your beer, Mitch.

INT. CHANTEL'S BASEMENT -- NIGHT -- LATER

Constance is in full party mode, bouncing and singing in a cluster with Chanel, Mitch, Westie, and Daisy Haim along to "One Night in Bangkok" by Murray Head.

STUART CROSSLAND (18), a burly high school football player sits on the couch beside Tina watching them. Sipping his beer, he is particularly focused on Constance, who's exuberantly tipsy.

CONSTANCE

(Reciting the lyrics)

I DON'T SEE YOU GUYS RATING
THE KIND OF MATE I'M CONTEMPLATING
I'D LET YOU WATCH, I WOULD INVITE
YOU
BUT THE QUEENS WE USE WOULD NOT
EXCITE YOU

Stuart looks down at his beer.

STUART

(To Tina)

So where's your brother Sam at?

TINA

Why?

STUART

I'm just surprised he's not out there carrying on with his girlfriend. Constance is still his girlfriend, right?

TINA

Don't you think you should be asking her that?

STUART

I don't know. You're a huffy thing, aren't ya?

TINA

No, it's just I wouldn't want to say anything that could cause you to overestimate your personal charm any more than you already do.

Tina takes a drink from her cup as Stuart's expression takes on a look of perplexity. Tina looks off to give Mitch a tiny wave.

STUART

Huh?

TINA

(Deadpan, casual)
I said I love you, and I want you to take my virginity.

Stuart's perplexity intensifies.

STUART

What?

TINA

Exactly. I'm gonna go now.

Tina stands and leaves Stuart alone on the couch. He shakes his head at her and returns his attention to Constance, who's now walking toward the couch with Chantel. They are still hyped up and singing lyrics from the song as they sit on either side of Stuart, even though the song is no longer playing.

CHANTEL

(To Constance)
Girl, I don't think I've ever seen you this drunk before.

CONSTANCE

(To Chantel)
That's because I've never been properly motivated to get this drunk before.

(beat)

(To Stuart)
What are **you** looking at?

STUART

You. It's kind of hard not to.

CONSTANCE

I don't care how hard you are, stop it.

Stuart chuckles at Constance's confrontational stare.

STUART

I mean it's hard to ignore you when
I'm sandwiched in your
conversation.

CONSTANCE

You were looking at me before I sat
down. You've been checking me out
since you got here in fact.

STUART

You're not gonna tell Sam on me,
are you? I'd hate to see him get
hurt.

CONSTANCE

I don't know what you looking at me
has to do with Sam, but I'm sure
he'd be touched by your concern for
him.

CHANTEL

Don't come to my party startin' no
shit, Stuart. I only invited you
because Westie's cool with you.
I'll put your ass out in a
heartbeat.

STUART

(To Chantel)

Relax, I just came to have good
time like everybody else.

CONSTANCE

(To Stuart)

Well, that would be true if
everybody else's idea of having a
good time involved doing nothing
but drinking and checking me out.
Was that your idea, Chantel?

CHANTEL

(Laughing)

You're cute and all, but no, girl.
I ain't been checking you out.

STUART

(To Constance)

I get the sense you like friction.

CONSTANCE

I hope that wasn't a come on.

STUART
Do you know who I am?

CONSTANCE
You should ask if I care first.

STUART
Do you care who I am?

CONSTANCE
Have you given me a reason to care?

STUART
I think you **do** know who I am.

CONSTANCE
That would make your asking me if I
did pretty pointless then.

Westie stands at the base of the stairs, calling and waving
at Stuart.

WESTIE
Hey, Stuart! My boy's parked out
front. Meet me outside.

Westie trots up the stairs. Stuart looks at Constance.

STUART
Be right back.

CONSTANCE
I'll be waiting with bated breath.

Stuart leaves and Constance's attention turns to Mitch and
Tina. Mitch is leaning back against a far wall, Tina leaning
back in his embrace with her lips turned up kissing his.
Constance watches their gentle affection for a moment before
standing and going into the adjacent room where Sam had taken
the Pretty Black Girl.

INT. ADJACENT ROOM -- NIGHT -- MOMENTS LATER

Sam and the Pretty Black Girl sit facing each other, tailor
fashion, on the floor of a smaller basement room containing
the water heater.

SAM
I mean, I don't try to pretend to
be anything I'm not. I don't have
anyone to impress, you know?

PRETTY BLACK GIRL

(Laughing)

That's not the impression I get
whenever I see you in school.

The Pretty Black Girl is the first to notice Constance enter the room, and Sam's eyes follow.

CONSTANCE

(To Sam)

Any way I can talk with you
outside?

Sam hesitates, shifting his gaze between Constance and the girl in front of him, unsure how to respond.

PRETTY BLACK GIRL

It's okay, Sam. I have to get home
anyway to babysit for my brother.

The girl rises to her feet.

PRETTY BLACK GIRL (CONT'D)

(To Constance)

He's really cute, Constance. You
should cut him some slack. See you
guys in French class.

Constance feigns a polite smile as the girl walks past her and leaves.

SAM

What's up?

Constance looks at Sam but says nothing. She lowers herself onto the same spot and into the same seated position across from Sam as the Pretty Black Girl.

CONSTANCE

So what's this?

SAM

It **was** a conversation up until a
few seconds ago. Don't ask me what
it is now. You're the one who
wanted to talk.

CONSTANCE

I didn't want to talk. I wanted to
get you outside, lure you someplace
secluded and murder you. Maybe
cover up your corpse with dead
leaves.

SAM

You'd get caught. You're so drunk you'd come back in here and end up telling somebody what you did.

CONSTANCE

What lies did you tell that girl about me?

SAM

I didn't tell her anything. She was probably just fucking with you because she knows, like everyone else in school, that we were dating. Look, I wouldn't say anything bad about you.

CONSTANCE

Why not? I'd say something bad about **you**.

SAM

Yeah, I know you would. But that's because you're evil.

Sam and Constance stare grimly at each other in silence for a moment before Sam begins to smile despite himself and drops his gaze. Constance smiles in turn and the tension eases.

CONSTANCE

(Softly)

I can't believe you just left the room when you saw me. Dick.

SAM

I didn't want to. But I couldn't risk you blowing me off in front of everyone if I spoke to you first.

CONSTANCE

You might have run that risk.

Sam smiles again and tenderly takes Constance by the hand.

SAM

I didn't know how much I'd be drinking tonight, so I didn't drive here. But I can walk you home if you want.

Constance leans forward to kiss Sam's lips. She considers his offer briefly before shaking her head no.

CONSTANCE

That's sweet, but I don't want to give anyone here the wrong idea about us.

SAM

What wrong idea?

CONSTANCE

That we're back together or something.

Sam jerks back erect and withdraws his hand from hers.

SAM

Okay, going back to you asking me what this is and me not knowing? This is me not knowing what this is even less. What? Are you afraid I'm gonna ask to fuck you again?

CONSTANCE

Of course not, but I'm drunk, Sam, and I need a little time to sort some things out in my head before we dive right back into this. I'm glad that we're talking again because I **want** to be with you, and I might just let you do something I'd regret if we were to walk home together. And I don't want that.

SAM

You don't want it?

CONSTANCE

I don't want it like **that**, and neither should you. Not now. Not tonight. Understand?

Constance snatches Sam's hand back and kisses it playfully. His anger subsides and he gives her a weak, disappointed smile.

SAM

I guess if I love you I have to, don't I?

CONSTANCE

Yes, motherfucker.

Sam holds her face in his hands and kisses Constance again. He lets his gaze linger on her smile before releasing her and standing to leave.

SAM

Call me when you get home so I know you got back okay.

CONSTANCE

Don't worry, I'll catch a ride with Mitch and your sister. Goodnight, my sweet prince.

Sam leaves.

EXT. CHANTEL'S HOUSE -- BACKYARD -- NIGHT -- LATER

Constance is hunched over vomiting into some hedges. Chantel appears from inside the house and rushes over to her.

CHANTEL

There you are, girl! I been looking all over for you. Are you all right?

CONSTANCE

I need to go home. I came out here looking for Mitch and Tina, and then this wave a nausea swept over me. Are they still inside?

CHANTEL

Mitch and Tina thought you were out here with Sam. They left twenty minutes ago.

CONSTANCE

Sam walked home way before I even came outside.

CHANTEL

He did? I never even saw him leave.

CONSTANCE

Where's Westie?

CHANTEL

(Rubbing Constance's back)
He ain't goin' nowhere. He passed out on the basement couch. You can stay the night here, Constance, in my room.

CONSTANCE

Thanks, but I really should get back.

(MORE)

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

Daddy made me promise I wouldn't be out too late, and I promised Sam I'd call him. I thought of some more things I wanted to tell him, and I don't want to wait 'til morning and forget them.

CHANTEL

You can call him from here.

Stuart steps over to the girls, slightly startling Chantel who hadn't heard his approach.

STUART

(To Chantel)

Why don't you let me drive her home? I haven't had too much to drink, and I was about to jet anyway.

CHANTEL

I'm not so sure that's a good idea.

Constance wipes her mouth with the back of her shirt sleeve. She gives Chantel a pat of reassurance on the shoulder.

CONSTANCE

It's okay, Chantel. Him wanting to give me a ride after I was so bitchy to him earlier must mean he's got a decent streak.

STUART

That's right, and it's not like we're total strangers.

CHANTEL

(To Stuart)

You're strange enough.

CONSTANCE

(Hugging Chantel)

Oh, come on, Chantel be nice. I'll call you when I get home.

(To Stuart)

Where are you parked?

INT. STUART'S CAR -- DRIVING -- NIGHT -- MOMENTS LATER

Stuart drives and Constance, groggy and trying to refrain from nodding off, sits in the passenger seat. Stuart silently observes her in snatches from the corner of his eye.

STUART
You never said whether you knew who
I was.

CONSTANCE
(Half coherent)
Who really knows anyone?

STUART
I know you.

Constance's eyes widen and her expression takes on a look of sudden distress.

CONSTANCE
I think I'm going to be sick.

Stuart pulls his car to the shoulder of the road.

EXT. STUART'S CAR -- EMPTY HIGHWAY -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

The passenger's side door opens, Constance stumbles out and over to a patch of grass, drops to her knees and begins to vomit.

Stuart exits from the driver's side and walks over to where she kneels and stands over her.

STUART
You shouldn't have drank so much.

CONSTANCE
I'm alright.

Constance gets to her feet. Stuart takes hold of her arm.

STUART
Come on. Don't puke on me.

He steers Constance towards the car and opens the rear side door.

STUART (CONT'D)
Get in. Lay down.

CONSTANCE
I told you I'm alright.

STUART
I'm not asking. You know what this
is.

CONSTANCE

Let go of my arm.

The two begin to struggle as Stuart tries to force Constance onto the backseat of his car.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

Stop it!

INT. SAM'S HOUSE -- KITCHEN -- NIGHT -- LATER

The phone mounted on the wall of the darkened kitchen rings. Sam's hand lifts the receiver and puts it to his ear.

SAM

Hello?

INT. CONSTANCE'S HOUSE -- BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Constance speaks into the phone by her bed. Her lip is bleeding and her eyes are puffy from crying.

CONSTANCE

Sam?

INTERCUT BETWEEN SAM AND CONSTANCE

SAM

Hey. Sorry, I fell asleep. I didn't think you'd call so late.

Constance says nothing right away. She chokes back inaudible tears.

CONSTANCE

Sam?

SAM

Constance? Yeah, it's me.

Constance says nothing again.

SAM (CONT'D)

Are you alright?

CONSTANCE

I just wanted to let you know I got home okay. Yeah, I'm alright. I'm really tired, so we'll talk Monday at school, okay?

Sam says nothing right away.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)
Okay, Sam?

SAM
I was hoping we could continue our conversation from earlier.

CONSTANCE
We will, baby. Monday, okay? At school. I love you.

SAM
Love you too.

Sam hangs up. He doesn't look like he believes everything is all right with Constance.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- PARKING LOT -- DAY

Sam pulls his car into the school parking lot with Westie sitting in the passenger seat. They get out and walk toward the school, Westie carrying a book bag, Sam carrying nothing.

WESTIE
(To Sam)
Why don't you just admit you're pissed I made you late?

SAM
If turning around three quarters of the way here to drive back because you forgot your geometry book pissed me off I wouldn't have turned around. That's not what I'm pissed at. You're not what I'm pissed at. I'm not even really pissed, okay?

WESTIE
What are you then? You had your jaw clenched all the way here.

SAM
I'm trying to prepare myself to not flip out on Constance when I see her. I'm not pissed, I just don't know why she wouldn't answer any of my calls yesterday. Her dad finally told me she had a fever and said she'd see me in the morning.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

What kind of fever is it okay to go to school with?

WESTIE

One day you'll look back on this and say, yeah, even though I said I wasn't, I was pissed. And it's also what I'm gonna tell anyone today who asks me what's wrong with you.

SAM

I don't know why I tell you anything.

WESTIE

Because I'm the only one who'll tell you what you need to hear.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- HALLWAY -- DAY

Students move through the hall during class change. Constance is retrieving books from her locker. She notices Sam coming towards her but doesn't look at him directly. He stands behind her.

SAM

Hey.

CONSTANCE

(Face still averted)

Hey. I waited outside for you this morning until the bell rang for class to start.

SAM

Yeah, I was late because of Westie. Why didn't you take my calls all weekend?

Constance turns her face up to him, her busted lip on full display.

SAM (CONT'D)

What the fuck, Constance?

CONSTANCE

Sam, I can't talk to you about what happened right now.

SAM

We don't have to talk about it, you can just tell me what the fuck happened.

CONSTANCE

I'm alright.

Constance shuts her locker door and goes to leave, but Sam grabs her by the shoulders and walks her back against her locker. She sees that he is seething as he stares at her expectantly.

SAM

Tell me.

CONSTANCE

Jesus fucking Christ, Sam.

SAM

I'm not seeing where he was all that big a help to you. Why call on him now?

Constance's eyes well up with tears. Sam doesn't remove his hands from her shoulders.

SAM (CONT'D)

Please tell me.

CONSTANCE

(Restraining her tears)

I want to. I can't.

Sam and Constance stare at each other in silence for a moment.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

Please. I can't.

Sam releases her and Constance walks away.

INT. WESTIE'S HOUSE -- KITCHEN -- DAY

SUPER: 1992

LITA YANCY (40), Westie's black divorcée mother, stands over a pot of something cooking on the stove. "War Ensemble" by Slayer can be heard in a muffled roar from another part of the house. She hears a knock on the kitchen door and finds Sam (23) standing there, smiling, when she goes to answer it. She greets him with excitement.

LITA

Sam Shake! How've you been, boy?
Come on in here and give me a hug.

SAM
(Hugging Lita)
Hey, Mrs. Conrad.

Lita steps back and fixes Sam with a harsh, scolding glare.

LITA
Boy, when you gonna remember to call me by my right name? I been divorced from Westie's daddy for going on four years now.

SAM
Shit, I mean, sorry, Miss Yancy. I don't know what's wrong with me.

LITA
(Laughing)
I do. Same thing that's wrong with Westie probably, smoking that weed. You better be getting good marks in college.

SAM
I am. Graduate this spring.

LITA
About time you get that degree. I hated to hear about you taking all that time off from school when your daddy got sick.

SAM
Only two semesters.

Lita goes back to her pot on the stove.

LITA
That's a year of your life, honey. You think I wouldn't take back any one of the last years I wasted on Percy after Westie was born? How is your daddy anyway? Still in remission?

SAM
Yeah.

LITA
Well I hope you had a good Christmas with him. How long is your holiday break?

SAM

Semester starts in two weeks. Is Westie in the basement?

LITA

Yes, plucking my last nerve with that music. Could you tell him to turn that noise down when you go down to there? It's like the soundtrack to a massacre in Hell.

SAM

I'll tell him. Pleasure seeing you, Miss Yancy.

LITA

Nice seeing you too, honey.

Sam heads to the basement.

INT. BASEMENT -- DAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Westie (23) sits in a wicker peacock chair smoking out of a large glass water bong. The Slayer song is cranked loud on the stereo and blankets and clothing lie in disarray on a mattress by the wall.

Sam comes into the basement waving his arms as though the pot smoke were overwhelming.

SAM

Happy New Year. Your mom said turn this shit down.

Westie aims a remote control towards the stereo and reduces the volume.

SAM (CONT'D)

I stopped by your place and Sue told me I could find you here. Why'd she kick you out this time?

WESTIE

According to her I kicked myself out. I wasn't fixin' to argue with her about it like before. I just took my shit and left.

Westie sets his bong on the floor and rises to give Sam a one-armed bro handshake/hug. He then lifts the bong and hands it to Sam before sitting back in his chair.

SAM

You been telling your mom I smoke weed?

WESTIE

Well, don't you?

SAM

Yes, but you know that's not the point, asshole. Nevermind.

Sam grabs a wooden chair and seats himself across from Westie. He puts the bong to his lips and motions for a lighter from Westie, who hands him one. He puts the flame to the weed in the bowl.

WESTIE

Constance is in town.

Sam's eyes lift at the mention of Constance, his mouth still sucking in smoke. He detaches and coughs it out.

SAM

Yeah?

WESTIE

I saw her at the sports bar on Evergreen. She was lookin' fine. I thought about trying to fuck her myself.

SAM

She have her husband with her?

WESTIE

Motherfucker, didn't I just say I thought about trying to fuck her? Would I do that if she'd had her man with her?

SAM

Yeah, motherfucker.

Westie briefly feigns an offended expression before chuckling.

WESTIE

You can't even pretend I might have developed some scruples since you been away, can you?

SAM

I might have if Sue hadn't already told me why she kicked you out.

WESTIE

Give me my bong, fool.

Sam laughs and hands him the bong.

WESTIE (CONT'D)

Always playing. Knew full well why she kicked me out when you asked. Just wanted to see if I'd lie about it.

SAM

Well, didn't you?

WESTIE

No, I just didn't go into detail. She **did** say I kicked my own ass out. What am I supposed to do though? I get tired of the same pussy all the time. And them girls down at the cafe be practically trying to force it on a nigga.

SAM

You still working the grill there, huh?

WESTIE

Not everyone has a degree in... What the fuck you getting a degree in again?

SAM

Computer science.

WESTIE

Not everyone has a degree in computer science on their résumé.

SAM

You have a résumé?

WESTIE

Fuck you, man.

Westie hands Sam the bong and lighter again. Sam hits it and hands it back.

SAM

She looked good, huh?

WESTIE

Constance? Yeah. She's visiting her dad. Left her husband back in Montana. Said he had to work.

SAM

She have any more kids with him?

WESTIE

Far as I know she only has the one she was pregnant with when she left Everett.

Sam falls silent at the mention of this. He seems troubled by the memory. Westie notices and sets the bong on the floor by his chair.

WESTIE (CONT'D)

Hey, man, if it makes you feel any better --

SAM

Who said I'm not feeling any better?

Westie throws a hand up in surrender.

WESTIE

Not me. Because what the fuck do I know, right?

SAM

I'm over it. Really. It's been years.

WESTIE

What the fuck ever, man. Anyway, her and Chet, this guy she married must be stackin' the paper man. She took the Montana real estate agent exam a couple years ago, and he already was a tax attorney when they met. Designer shit was all she was wearing. Gucci handbag, and her shoes were something called Prada. And check this, she was driving a Bentley Turbo R. She's really got her shit together.

Sam looks towards the speakers blasting Slayer's "Blood Red" with an expression of displeasure.

SAM
What the fuck are you listening to
anyway?

WESTIE
Slayer. It suits my mood.

SAM
And what mood is that? Coked-up
serial killer?

Sam produces a cassette from his front pocket and holds it up
to Westie.

SAM (CONT'D)
You mind?

Westie gestures his consent to change the music and Sam puts
in his cassette. Nirvana's "Territorial Pissings" commences.
Sam reclaims his seat.

SAM (CONT'D)
If you're gonna go hard, then **this**
is the way you go hard.

WESTIE
Who's this?

SAM
Nirvana. Girl in my dorm turned me
on to them last fall.

WESTIE
She said she wanted to see you.

SAM
Who?

WESTIE
Who the fuck you think? She must
have known you might be back around
during holiday break. You should
call her.

SAM
I don't know.

WESTIE
What don't you know?

SAM
Her number for one thing.

WESTIE

She's staying at her dad's.
Number's still the same. Can you
come up with a lamer excuse?

EXT. SPORTY'S BEEF & BREW -- PAY PHONE -- DAY

Sam puts change into a pay phone on the edge of a parking lot
of a sports bar.

INT. HOPKINS HOME -- DEN -- DAY

The phone rings and Constance enters the den to answer it.

CONSTANCE

Hello?

INTERCUT BETWEEN SAM AND CONSTANCE

SAM

Oh, good. I was hoping you'd be the
one to answer.

CONSTANCE

Well, hello, Samhain. To what do I
owe the pleasure of your call?

SAM

I was told you wanted to see me.

CONSTANCE

By whom? Westie? I was just making
small talk.

SAM

Why don't you come join me for a
drink at Sporty's and you can make
it bigger?

CONSTANCE

Why don't I? I don't know. I don't
have a good excuse prepared so I
suppose I'll have to agree to that.

INT. SPORTY'S -- DAY -- LATER

Sam sits at the bar.

SAM

Hey, Stu. Let me get another
Icehouse.

STUART
Sure thing, Sam.

The bartender, Stuart Crossland, fills a mug under the beer taps.

SAM
Thanks.

Constance enters Sporty's looking as prosperous as Westie had described. She halts her advance near the entrance upon seeing who the bartender is. Sam turns to see her motioning for him to come to her. He slides off his stool and walks over to her.

CONSTANCE
I don't want to drink here. Let's go someplace else.

SAM
Why? I just ordered another beer.

CONSTANCE
Just, let's go, okay?

SAM
Okay. How about Players up the road?

CONSTANCE
Fine. Wherever. Let's go.

INT. PLAYERS SPORTS BAR & GRILL -- DAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Sam and Constance sit across from each other at a small table. Sam has a beer and Constance is drinking a cosmo. They are well into their conversation.

CONSTANCE
That's where you got it wrong. I never said I didn't want to fuck you, I said I wanted to **wait** until the time was right.

SAM
And then, inside of three months, you went and got knocked up by Kip Matthews and got sent off to live on a farm with your uncle in Montana. Did I leave anything out there?

CONSTANCE

You had every reason to be miffed. There are things I never told you. I only went out with Kip a couple times, and we never had sex. The baby wasn't his. Sam, I was raped the night of Chantel's party.

SAM

By the same person who busted your lip?

CONSTANCE

Yes.

SAM

Are you going to tell me who it was?

CONSTANCE

You have to promise me you won't do anything crazy.

SAM

Fine. I promise.

CONSTANCE

Stuart Crossland. He's the father. He's the reason I had to leave Everett.

SAM

And the reason you wanted to leave Sporty's.

CONSTANCE

Yes.

Sam sits back to absorb Constance's revelation. Anger wells up in him.

SAM

You wait here. I forgot something in my car.

Constance grabs Sam's arm as he attempts to leave.

CONSTANCE

Sam, you promised.

SAM

I know. And I hate that I lied to you.

Sam pulls his arm from her grasp and exits the bar. Constance looks on helplessly.

INT. SPORTY'S -- DAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Sam enters the bar and marches straight to where Stuart is behind the bar, busy doing something at the cash register. Stuart looks up just as Sam shatters an empty glass pitcher against his head. Stuart topples to the floor and Sam gets down to punch him some more. He stops. Stuart is moaning.

SAM

You better be glad this was seven years too late. I'd have fucking killed you if I'd known what you did to Constance back when it happened.

Stuart moans some more and Sam exits the bar.

EXT. SPORTY'S PARKING LOT -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

Constance pulls up in her Bentley just as Sam is exiting the bar.

CONSTANCE

I saw you left your car at Players.

SAM

I was afraid I'd drive it straight through the front door.

CONSTANCE

What did you say to him?

SAM

Nothing until after I got my point across.

CONSTANCE

Great, I'm sure someone's calling the cops now. Get in. No one will be looking for my car.

EXT. LAKESIDE AT THORNTON A. SULLIVAN PARK -- DAY -- LATER

Constance and Sam return to the site where the argument that precipitated their breakup occurred years before. Constance appears amused as she stands watching Sam glide his hands along the contour of her luxury Bentley.

SAM

I can't believe how warm it is out here for January.

(Still rubbing the car)

Listen, you really have to give me this car.

CONSTANCE

If only you'd touched *me* that way when we were dating.

SAM

Something wrong with the way I touched you?

Sam steps over to face Constance and slips his arms around her waist.

CONSTANCE

When did you get so brave? I'm a married woman.

SAM

I'm sorry, Constance. I'm sorry I left you exposed.

CONSTANCE

Typical man.

SAM

I'm not typical.

CONSTANCE

You are if you ever thought you could protect me or save me from anything. You ever think maybe God put a woman like me in this world to save *you*?

SAM

To be honest, I'm just glad you got made, whoever's fault it is. If God is real, it was her sweetest, dirtiest trick on me.

CONSTANCE

Her, huh?

SAM

Of course. If she's real.

CONSTANCE

I taught you well.

EXT. LAKESIDE AT THORNTON A. SULLIVAN PARK -- NIGHT -- LATER

Constance lies on her back and Sam makes love to her on a blanket by a tree near the lake.

CONSTANCE
 (Softly into Sam's ear)
 Samhain, is it wrong that we're
 doing this?

SAM
 It doesn't feel wrong to me.

CONSTANCE
 You're going to send me to Hell
 with you.

SAM
 That's my plan.

Constance sinks back into rapturous reverie. She begins reciting scripture.

CONSTANCE
 Strengthen me with raisins, refresh
 me with apples, for I am faint with
 love. Let his left hand be under my
 head, and his right hand embrace
 me.

Sam puts his left hand under her head and his right beneath her back as he moves upon her.

SAM
 Can you stay with me?

CONSTANCE
 Sam...

SAM
 I don't ever want you to leave me
 again.

Constance cries out in orgasm.

EXT. LAKESIDE AT THORNTON A. SULLIVAN PARK -- NIGHT -- LATER

Constance and Sam lie side by side looking up at the night sky.

CONSTANCE
 How's your father? Is he still
 sick?

SAM

He's further away from death than he was is the most I can tell you. How's Pastor Hopkins?

CONSTANCE

He's happy. With Katrina. Just like he said he would be after I moved away and started my own life.

SAM

I wonder how happy **you** are?

CONSTANCE

That sounds like you don't think I'd give you an honest answer if you asked me straight on.

SAM

Or I'm letting you know I think I already have some idea.

CONSTANCE

You don't. What we just did here wasn't far off from what I thought might happen if I ever saw you again. We left so much unfinished.

SAM

So this? What is this? A fling? This finishes it for us?

CONSTANCE

I heard what you said right before I came. And I wish nothing more in this world that it could be possible. But before you press the issue any further, I have to show you something.

INT. HOPKINS HOME -- FOYER -- NIGHT -- LATER

The front door eases open and Constance and Sam slowly, silently enter the darkened foyer. Sam carefully shuts the door behind them before following Constance into the living room.

LIVING ROOM

A little boy, DANNY (6), lies asleep under a blanket on the couch. Constance gently strokes his forehead as she and Sam watch him sleep.

CONSTANCE

(Whispering to Sam)

I named him Daniel after my father.
I know why you haven't asked me
about him. Probably because you
knew there'd be other questions
with answers you might not like.
Especially now that you know where
he came from.

Sam takes Constance's hand and kisses it.

SAM

What I know is that he came from
you.

CONSTANCE

Choosing to keep him was the
hardest decision I've ever had to
make. It was also the best. Yes,
he's a painful reminder every day
of what happened to me. But it was
God's will that Danny be born to
me.

Sam releases her hand.

SAM

You gotta be fucking kidding me.

Constance meets his gaze directly.

CONSTANCE

No, I'm not.

Sam shakes his head in disbelief and walks off without a
word.

EXT. HOPKINS HOME -- DRIVEWAY -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

Sam starts down the driveway and Constance exits the house,
following close behind him.

CONSTANCE

Sam!

Sam stops and turns around to face Constance.

SAM

Help me to understand this,
Constance.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

Help me to understand this faith you have that God's hand is working behind everything, no matter how vile.

CONSTANCE

My son is not vile.

SAM

You know that's not what I'm saying.

CONSTANCE

You seem to be saying that my keeping the baby is less important than my reason for keeping it. Look, I know you have a problem putting faith in things you can't see or comprehend, but you can't expect **me** to --

SAM

I can't expect you to what, Constance? To live and take the world for what it is, and not make excuses for bad shit and fucked up people?

CONSTANCE

I don't make excuses for anybody, least of all myself.

SAM

You know, when my dad got cancer and got so sick from chemo he was shitting himself, don't you think I wished there was some overriding, universal plan to explain it? The difference between me and you is I can't just trust there **is** one, whether it's beyond my scope or not. If it **looks** pointless and hopeless, then in my experience, it probably is. You kept that asshole's baby because you thought it's what **God** wanted?

CONSTANCE

You got a lot of nerve passing fucking judgement on me. **I** was the one who was raped. I was 16.

(Begins to cry)

(MORE)

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

I couldn't bring myself to even tell you, and so I lost you and it shattered my world. Me finding out I was pregnant and having to break the news to my father shattered it again. He left the choice of whether to keep it up to me, but I knew my getting rid of it would only disappoint him. After a while, with all the whispering at school, and all of the friends who stopped talking to me. **You** wouldn't even talk to me.

Sam bows his head in shame at her mention of this

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

I couldn't stay. I couldn't spend the rest of my pregnancy here with all the looks and gossip they barely tried to hide. I couldn't stay and have to see the hate on your face every day.

SAM

I didn't hate you.

CONSTANCE

Yeah? Well, it felt like you did. Since we're pointing out differences in our approaches to life, you should know the difference between me and you is I would **never** have done that to you. I would never have made you feel like I didn't love you anymore because I was too hurt to show it. Because I **did** love you.

SAM

I really fucked up, huh?

CONSTANCE

You're goddamn right you did. And now I have a life hundreds of miles away. I can't just give it up because you made me remember how much we had together. How special it was. I came back here to give you the goodbye I never got to give you in high school.

(MORE)

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

God only knows I gave myself a hundred practical reasons to leave it alone and move on, but you're in my heart, Sam, and I needed to leave you in love again because I'm selfish, and maybe a little crazy.

Sam steps up and wipes Constance's tears with his thumbs. He smiles.

SAM

It was your little crazy that I could never seem to get enough of.

Sam kisses Constance tenderly. She sobs, sniffs, and composes herself.

CONSTANCE

It's late. I'll drive you back to your car.

INT. PLAYERS SPORTS BAR & GRILL -- NIGHT

A few nights later, Sam and Westie are joined by Mitch and Tina in a booth having drinks. The bar is crowded.

WESTIE

(To Sam)

So she left without saying goodbye?

TINA

(To Westie)

Weren't you listening? She already **gave** him her goodbye.

MITCH

(To Westie)

Yeah, pay attention, man.

WESTIE

(To Mitch)

Don't think I won't whip your ass in front of your woman, Chinaman.

SAM

(To Westie)

He's Korean. And he's my brother-in-law now, so let's give him a break, okay?

WESTIE

Your brother-in-law, not mine.

SAM

(To Tina)

Which reminds, my little sis, I'm so sorry I couldn't make it back in time for the wedding. I wish you hadn't scheduled it so close to finals.

TINA

I wouldn't have had to if *someone* wasn't due to be fit for an ankle bracelet for his second D.U.I.

Tina tilts her head towards Mitch.

MITCH

(To Tina)

That's not for sure yet.

SAM

(To Tina)

I still don't see why you guys couldn't have fit in a quick honeymoon.

TINA

How could I have a good time with his trial hanging over us?

MITCH

Sex on the beach all day might have helped with that.

TINA

(To Mitch)

That's right, have these guys thinking you can go at it for 25 minutes without a two-hour smoke break, let alone all day.

WESTIE

(Laughing)

Ooh! Burn!

SAM

I'm going to pretend I'm not hearing about my little sister's sex life.

(To Tina)

Do you talk to Dad or Mom that way about it? Or am I the only one you privilege with that embarrassment?

MITCH
 (To Sam)
 Chill out, dude, we're all adults
 here.

WESTIE
 (Standing)
 I gotta go take a piss.

TINA
 (To Westie)
 Gotta go jerk off now?

SAM
 Seriously, Tina?

Westie heads to the men's room and Mitch gets up to follow.

MITCH
 I gotta go too. And yes, Tina,
 before you ask, I'm gonna hold it
 for him.

Westie and Mitch leave Sam and Tina alone in the booth, Tina
 laughing at her brother's attempt to feign outrage over her
 lewd comments. He softens and smiles at her.

SAM
 You know I've missed you, little
 sis.

TINA
 You know I hate when you do that.

SAM
 Do what?

TINA
 Get all stupid and mushy.

SAM
 Maybe I love how you hate it.

TINA
 You would, dick.

SAM
 I mean it though.

TINA
 I know, I missed you too. Now can
 you shut the fuck up about it?

Sam laughs at Tina with brotherly affection and the two share a silent moment of renewed familiarity.

SAM

Does he treat you good?

TINA

I thought you didn't want to hear about my sex life.

SAM

I don't. Don't be a smartass.

TINA

He's barely a provider. If he didn't treat me well, I'd have had no reason to marry him at all.

SAM

Good point.

TINA

What about you? How are you doing?

SAM

I'm okay.

TINA

It can't be easy for you. She was everything to you for as long as I can remember.

SAM

She was a lot. Not everything.

TINA

What else was there?

SAM

Mom. Dad. You. That's part of everything. Also all the everything I've yet to know. She helped prepare me for whatever's coming.

TINA

Knowing you it'll be a shitload of heartbreak, loser.

SAM

Yeah, thanks, I love you too. Your being cute is the only thing that makes you bearable to be around.

TINA

Your being cute is the only self-delusion that keeps romantic hope afloat on the ocean of your heart.

SAM

You saying I got a big heart?

TINA

Maybe.

SAM

Poetic.

TINA

And I love you too. I missed this. You letting me berate you.

SAM

As if anything could ever stop you.

Sam and Tina smile at each other.

INT. PLAYERS SPORTS BAR & GRILL -- LATER

Westie and Sam stand at the now nearly empty bar chatting.

SAM

Maybe I'll start believing in God again.

WESTIE

Again? When did you **ever** believe in God?

SAM

When I was 6.

WESTIE

Fool, you must be drunk. I ain't got time to be listening to no drunken nonsense.

SAM

Well, then you talk some drunken nonsense and **I'll** listen. How's that?

WESTIE

Seriously, man, I got to get home. Sue's supposed to be calling. We're talking about me moving back in possibly.

SAM

Which means you asked her if you could move back in.

WESTIE

Fine, motherfucker, **I** asked about me moving back in possibly. I gotta split either way. I'll hit you up tomorrow.

Westie turns to leave.

SAM

Westie.

Westie turns back to Sam.

SAM (CONT'D)

Thanks. You know, for telling me Constance was here. I needed to see her again more than I realized.

WESTIE

You know I got you, bro.

Sam and Westie bro hug.

WESTIE (CONT'D)

But if I thought I had a shot with her I'd have hit it and never told you shit.

SAM

I know. Thanks for underestimating yourself. Goodnight.

WESTIE

I'll talk to you tomorrow.

Westie departs the bar. Sam stands alone with his drink, scoping out the few patrons around him. A beautiful FEMALE STRANGER emerges from the ladies' room and takes up a position at the bar beside Sam to summon the bartender POLK.

FEMALE STRANGER

(To bartender)

Hey!

The bartender remains preoccupied on the other end of the bar. The Female Stranger looks to Sam.

FEMALE STRANGER (CONT'D)

(To Sam)

Do you know the bartender's name?

SAM

Polk.

FEMALE STRANGER

Thanks. Hey, Polk!

Polk comes down to her end of the bar.

POLK

(To Female Stranger)

What can I get you?

FEMALE STRANGER

Vodka cranberry.

(Gesturing toward Sam)

And get him another of whatever he's running low on.

POLK

(To Female Stranger)

You sure you wanna get mixed up with this one? He's heartbroken. He'll depress the hell out of you with tales of romantic woe.

SAM

Easy, Polk. She might mistake you for someone who **wasn't** born with his head up his ass.

The Female Stranger giggles.

FEMALE STRANGER

(To Polk)

I just wanna buy the guy a drink for helping me get your attention. As for further entanglements, **I'm** the one you should be cautioning **him** about. My legend is scrawled on men's room stalls all over Seattle.

POLK

(To Female Stranger)

Suit yourself.

Polk pours the drinks.

SAM

(To Female Stranger)

You're from Seattle, huh?

FEMALE STRANGER

Grew up there, but I live in Olympia now.

SAM

I go to college in Olympia.

FEMALE STRANGER

Evergreen State? Me too! Wow, have I seen you around?

SAM

You have. Several times. In fact we've slept together on more than one occasion.

FEMALE STRANGER

(Laughing)

We have?

SAM

Yeah, but I guess I shouldn't be surprised you don't remember, what with the way you get around and all.

FEMALE STRANGER

Right. Toilet stall legend. Is this your elaborate way of telling me it was a dumb question?

SAM

Yeah, but if you hadn't asked it I'd still be trying to figure out what to say to make you laugh.

The Female Stranger smiles at Sam and plays with her hair in the way interested women do. Sam offers a hand in introduction.

SAM (CONT'D)

Hi. I'm Samhain.

Sam and the Female Stranger's conversation continues. Possibly, or possibly not, another important chapter in Sam Shake's everything has begun.

THE END

