

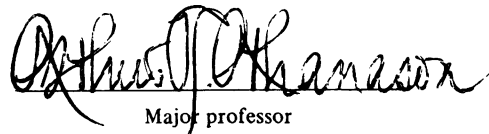
This is to certify that the
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YOU DELIVER ME, SARAH

A Play in One Act

By

Rick E. Amidon

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

YOU DELIVER ME, SARAH

By

Rick E. Amidon

You Deliver Me, Sarah is a play about two people who deal with repulsive pasts. The character of Sarah depicts an adolescent who learns to cope with the memory of an incestuous father, and the character of Timmerman portrays a middle aged man who is coming to terms with his sexual preference. The play probes into the emotional problems of each character, and explores the complexities of maintaining a livable self-esteem despite the seemingly destructive impact of ugly events.



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Also, thanks are in order to the University of Windsor Performing Arts Group who have produced my first two plays: Intruders in June, 1982; and This Thing of Darkness in June, 1983.

R.E.A.



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CHARACTERS

SARAH is a teenager who has had few friends, male or female.

She won't ask for favors, and wishes to travel alone in the world. She is vulnerable to being trapped, but will find a way to escape if possible. She is self-reliant in the best sense. She is usually a good judge of realistic qualities in people. She is naive and quick in emotional response. Afraid of utter poverty, she will always be self-supporting.

TODD truly believes he loves Sarah, and quite possibly might, but only by today's standards. There is something sinister about him which comes out of the fact that the lives of others seldom touch him deeply. He can stare into the sun for long seconds without ever really seeing it, or without the light ever stunning him.

TIMMERMAN is a born follower who would like to lead, just once, to see what it's like. He is not sad or even depressed. He is trying to discover why so much dirt must be cleared away before it is possible to see the pavement. He lost his soul in the war, and never forgets this fact. He is mordant, bitter. Life has taught him a disbelief



in everything, but, nonetheless, he will fight his way through. He scorns the inability of others to make their way in life, and his passionate outbursts come from a strong but contained emotional mechanism. He hears acutely all of the small sounds of life, and he might have been a poet in another time and place.



SETTING

The scene is an American garage. Shafts of sunlight punctuate a room laden with various articles. There is a series of large screened windows which frame the upper stage at the extreme left and right.

There is a musty feeling of dust swirling through sunbeams, and it is early afternoon of a brilliantly sunny day.

There is a rocker, a lamp, a sofa, a small dining table, a painting, a refrigerator, a stereo, and a stripped bed. A television set plays on a stand positioned carefully before the rocker. The furniture is arranged just as it might be in a living room.

Garden articles include a hose, a sawhorse, a broom, tires, a rake, a pair of jumper cables, and a weed killer.

There is a small, hand-printed sign which hangs on the sawhorse and reads "Garage Sale."

TIME

Present.



SCENE ONE

Enter a young couple, SARAH and TODD.

SARAH (leading the way) I've got a right to have something out of life, that's what we're doing here. I don't smoke, I don't drink. That right there should give me an edge on things, but it doesn't. Just like my first period. My father thought that I hurt myself. That's probably natural for a father to think, but I knew better. He thought I'd gone and messed up my insides, when all the time I knew it wasn't nearly that drastic. So when he sees this drip of blood racing down my leg, he goes and calls for the priest.

TODD What are you saying?

SARAH I'm saying that someone who doesn't smoke and doesn't drink shouldn't have to go through something like that. That's what I'm saying.

TODD (he's heard it before) I don't want to hear the history of your goddamn periods. I hear that every month as it is. "I swear to God, Todd, this one's the worse ever!"

SARAH I don't exaggerate things, not grossly anyway, and you'd better just say your little prayers at night that I keep having them.



TODD Why is that?

SARAH You know why.

TODD That still doesn't explain what the hell we're doing here.

SARAH (about to strike back, she sees the bed. Instead, she glistens with hope) Look -- there is a bed! I told you there might be a bed.

TODD I wonder what they're asking for it?

SARAH Whatever they're asking, offer them ten dollars less. It's a good policy, it was my father's. He didn't know a period when he saw one, but he sure as hell knew a good policy.

TODD What if it's already cheap?

SARAH Still offer them ten less. They should always be willing to go down ten, no matter what they're asking.

TODD (browsing) Neat garage. Things echo.

SARAH What?

TODD Things echo!

SARAH Please quit your muttering. Just because you've got mono is no reason to mutter, unless your jaws are fatigued.

(SARAH hops on the bed and bounces)

TODD What do you think, that you own the place?

SARAH (she's in flea market heaven) All sorts of marvelous things in here!

TODD (notices stereo) Even a stereo.

SARAH We don't need a stereo. We need a bed.

TODD What if I offer them ten dollars less for the stereo!

SARAH It's a good policy, but we still need a bed.

TODD (turns to sofa) We could use this neat sofa as a bed,
and it would be like buying two things in one.

SARAH It still wouldn't be like buying a bed.

TODD Where do you suppose she is?

SARAH How do you know it's a lady?

TODD I don't know. I just figured it's some lady selling
out. Too old or something. Old people need money.

SARAH They also need their beds.

TODD You know what I mean. Some old, widowed thing with
varicose veins up to her thighs who's been standing on
her poor head for six hours a day hoping that might reverse
the process. The kind you feel uncomfortable around because
you know that any second they could expire in your company.

SARAH (bounces on mattress) What's that got to do with this
bed?

TODD It's got lots to do with it. We're gonna have to deal
fast.

(SARAH is prostrate on bed, eyes closed)

TODD What are you doing now?

SARAH Waiting for a prince to cut through the woods and kiss
me on the cheek.

TODD I wonder if women had them then.

SARAH Had what?

TODD Periods. I just can't see a prince putting up with
that shit.

SARAH You're so damn malicious at times it's sickening.

TODD Malicious towards whom?

SARAH The race.

TODD Oh, the race.

SARAH That's right, the race. The human race of people!

TODD Do you know of any other human race?

SARAH Smart ass, taking liberties on my deficient education like that.

TODD Dig in, Sarah. Dig in some more!

SARAH Don't give me the chance, or I will dig! And just remember, whoever it is, don't let on to them that we're desperate. People tend to take advantage of other people once that's been established. And we need this bed.

TODD (investigating stereo) You know what I'm thinking? I'm thinking that the garage sale is over with and all of this is surplus. You know, free --

SARAH (rises, stands away from bed, scrutinizes it)
That's silly. Who wouldn't buy a bed like this? It feels nice enough.

(Enter TIMMERMAN. He carries a bottle wrapped in a brown paper bag)

TIMMERMAN Why not try it out?

(SARAH and TODD are startled, turn to him)

SARAH Who are you?

TIMMERMAN This is my garage. I just slipped out for some liquor.



SARAH We were just looking at the bed.

TODD Yes. We might want to buy it.

SARAH Of course, it depends on what price you're asking.

We're not desperate, or anything like that.

TIMMERMAN (unwraps bottle, pours himself a glass) Oh,

(scrutinizes the bed) twenty-five.

TODD Twenty-five dollars? (to SARAH) That sounds reasonable.

SARAH Will you take fifteen?

TIMMERMAN Fifteen?

TODD It's her policy. You'd have to know her.

TIMMERMAN (agrees) I'll take fifteen.

SARAH We're just married, you see, and we're furnishing an apartment.

TIMMERMAN Well, you've come to the right place. Would you like a drink?

SARAH I don't drink.

TODD It gives her an edge on things.

SARAH (to TODD) Smart ass.

TODD How much for the stereo?

TIMMERMAN (thinks, surveys it) How much would you say it's worth?

TODD Does it work?

TIMMERMAN It did this morning when it was in my living room.

SARAH You were playing it this morning in your living room, and now you're selling it in your garage sale?

TIMMERMAN Yes. One of those impulse-things.

TODD How about thirty dollars?

TIMMERMAN Thirty is fine.

SARAH (quick) Will you take twenty for it?

TIMMERMAN Well, I suppose so.

SARAH How about the sofa then?

TODD Yea, how much for this neat sofa?

TIMMERMAN (to SARAH) Why don't you name what you think it's worth. I've this feeling my method's costing me money.

SARAH Well, (examines sofa, sits on it) it looks to be a twenty dollar sofa, but. . .

TIMMERMAN It's yours.

SARAH Will you take ten?

TODD It's her policy. You'd have to know her.

TIMMERMAN Ten is fine.

SARAH (satisfied) I think I'll take that drink now.

TODD I thought you didn't drink?

SARAH (to TODD) It's only polite. Try and have some manners.

TIMMERMAN (pours drink, looks to TODD) How about for you?

TODD Have any beer?

TIMMERMAN (opens refrigerator door) You're in luck, I have one can.

SARAH Better not, Todd.

TODD (to SARAH) It's only polite.

SARAH Not when your blood's ill, it's not! (to

TIMMERMAN) Are you moving, mister?

TIMMERMAN The name is Timmerman.

TODD (offers hand to shake, TIMMERMAN greets him with beer can instead of his hand) I'm Todd, this is Sarah.

SARAH I'll bet you bought one of those new condos that are springing up like tulips over in Bloomdale Hills.

TIMMERMAN (sullen) No. (sits in chair) How is the bed?

TODD What?

TIMMERMAN It's mused.

SARAH It works fine.

TODD (embarrassed) Sarah!

TIMMERMAN Great day out. It's the sun. Gonna own me one just like it someday.

SARAH A sun?

TIMMERMAN (to TODD) Gullible thing, isn't she.

TODD Sometimes.

SARAH (leaps on bed again) I'm gonna make myself right at home. You don't mind, do you?

TIMMERMAN Why should I? You own most of what's in here.

TODD Which reminds me, what are we going to put these things in, Sarah?

SARAH (to TIMMERMAN) You wouldn't happen to have a truck to rent, would you Mr. Timmerman?

TIMMERMAN Afraid not. I'll tell you what. You're free to leave your things here until you're able to move them. Sound fair?

TODD Sounds fair to me.

SARAH (rises from bed) Wait a minute. Not that I don't trust you, but how do we know it'll all be here when we return?

TODD Sarah, you're drinking the man's liquor, for God sakes. You can at least trust him.

SARAH My father warned me about deals which look too smooth on the surface.

TODD To hell with your father.

TIMMERMAN Don't worry. You don't have to pay me until you pick them up.

TODD That sounds fair.

SARAH Yes, that sounds fair. Don't think I'm over particular or anything, Mr. Timmerman, it's just that young couples have to be cautious today. Even highly educated ones! (meaning herself and TODD, a lie) Todd here is graduating from high school soon, he's that smart.

TIMMERMAN And handsome.

SARAH And handsome is right. Smart and handsome people still should be cautious. Don't you think?

TIMMERMAN I don't blame you. I think you should even try the bed out first, before you buy it.

TODD (unnerved) What?

TIMMERMAN I could step in the house with my drink and watch T.V. until you're through. (remembers) Of course, my T.V.'s out here, though, isn't it. Do the two of you need a T.V.?



TODD (considers) What are you asking for it?

SARAH No, Mr. Timmerman.

TODD (adjusts the rabbit ears) Hauls in a clear picture,
Sarah.

SARAH (between themselves) We don't have the money.

TODD With all these good things for sale, it's a shame you
don't make more.

SARAH You think I don't try?

TODD I think you don't make more!

SARAH (to TIMMERMAN) Mr. Timmerman, how does it sound if
we trade that stereo in for the television?

TODD What?!

(again, this exchange happens between them)

SARAH I'm bargaining!

TODD What gives you the right to bargain with my stereo?!

SARAH It's not your stereo, it's mine!

TODD Not if I pay him first for it.

SARAH You wouldn't.

TODD I would. Why don't you bargain with your bed?

SARAH That's our bed, and we need that bed!

TODD It's your bed.

SARAH You're not going to use it?

TODD Not unless I have to.

TIMMERMAN Look, why don't you take the television and then
come around some time when you've got the money. Sound
fair?

TODD That sounds fair.

SARAH That sounds pretty fair.

TODD (to SARAH) And don't bargain for ten dollars off that deal!

TIMMERMAN I'm in no hurry for the money. Just let me watch the end of my show here.

SARAH Do you mind if we try the bed out?

TODD Sarah!

TIMMERMAN Sure, go ahead. Make yourselves to home. Hump away, if you like.

TODD (to SARAH) You're always embarrassing the hell out of me.

SARAH He's joking, I can tell.

TODD How can you tell? The guy probably hasn't had it for years and has resorted to donating all of his furniture here just to spectate.

SARAH You're silly. He's nice. There's a chemical-thing between us. Besides, I meant to try the bed out just to watch T.V. with him. He's lonely, can't you tell?

TODD (to TIMMERMAN) Are you lonely sir?

TIMMERMAN What do you mean?

TODD I mean, is that why you're selling all this studd, just for the company which comes around to browse?

TIMMERMAN (thinks about it) Never thought about it in those terms, but maybe so.

SARAH Then you are lonely?

TIMMERMAN Yes. I'm usually lonesome until my wife comes home. Then I'm usually desolate.

TODD Wife?

SARAH You're married?

TIMMERMAN (an inward smile) Yes, I'm married.

SARAH So you went through the same thing we're going through, furnishing an apartment with all of the modern appliances.

TIMMERMAN Oh yes. Although I admit I never knew about that ten dollars off bit.

SARAH Oh, that's from my father. He was the only person I've ever loved so I remember things he said. We were very close, until he died.

TIMMERMAN Sorry to hear that.

TODD (to TIMMERMAN) It's okay. (to SARAH) Tell him how he died.

SARAH Killed himself.

TODD That's why I say it's okay. I don't think you need to feel sympathy for someone who killed himself.

TIMMERMAN I am sorry for her, not for him.

TODD But he killed himself because of her, so to me it's the same thing.

SARAH Let's just drop it, Todd. The man doesn't want to hear my life story.

TODD He killed himself because Sarah here quit high school and went into construction. That's right. I don't know

why he was so shook up, unless they slept together or something. (finishes beer)

SARAH Shut up about it, Todd! You got your stereo, now shut up!

TIMMERMAN Would you care for another drink?

TODD No.

SARAH (gulps her drink) Please. (TIMMERMAN pours) Todd's head becomes ethereal when he drinks, because he has bad blood. Mono-blood. His lymph nodes should swell any second now.

TIMMERMAN That's sad.

TODD I'm not requesting your sympathies.

SARAH Now he's upset because he can't have any more booze.

TIMMERMAN (to TODD) How do you cope then?

TODD Cope?

TIMMERMAN Yes. I thought that people need liquor in order to cope with things.

SARAH That was before. Get with it, Mr. Timmerman. Kids now don't need that.

TODD That's right, we no longer cope. At least I don't. I just erupt when I can't handle a situation. So beware.

SARAH (laughs) Yes, beware. He's real vicious. He's that way because he's insensitive. He just blows up, says "Fuck you all to hell!", and leaves. But it's okay to be that way now, isn't it Todd?

TODD What do you know?

SARAH He always asks me that. "What do you know?" he says, implying all the while that I know nothing because I quit high school. See, I quit because it was hard for me to take orders. Do this, do that. Write this, think that. You know the story. So I cut my hair real short and wore a jean jacket and bike boots in order to get a job in construction. See, I like to build things. Up in the air! And my father always resented it because he never built a thing in his life but a bad marriage. My mother and I left him when I was about twelve, but I couldn't bear the thought of leaving him with nothing or nobody so I ran back to him. . . (she stops, looks to TIMMERMAN who is ignoring her and watching the T.V., and then to TODD who is wiring up his stereo)

SARAH (realizes they are ignoring her, she sees weed killer)
What is this?

TIMMERMAN (turns) That? A weed killer. We had "creeping charlie" one year.

SARAH Did it work?

TIMMERMAN On the lawn it did. Not on my wife.

SARAH What?

TIMMERMAN Didn't I mention that I have a wife?

SARAH Yes, you did.

TIMMERMAN Oh, well she had "creeping charlie" too.

TODD (amused) She did?

TIMMERMAN Indeed. Still does.



TODD Where'd it creep to?

TIMMERMAN Me, of course. It started in the usual place, the crotch. Then it spread like a brush fire all up and down my arms and legs. Little sprinkly things with tentacles crawling all over my body, straggly germs becoming widespread, and eating up my skin.

TODD I didn't know people could get it.

TIMMERMAN Sure can.

SARAH I think he's talking about something else, Todd.

TIMMERMAN It was something else, all right.

SARAH (puts down sprayer) Where is your wife now?

TIMMERMAN Out, I think. She's probably out buying more things for my little sale here.

SARAH She buys things and you turn around and sell them?

TIMMERMAN That's right. We work best that way. She doesn't know it, of course.

SARAH Doesn't she notice when things like the T.V. and the bed are missing?

TIMMERMAN Never thought of that. I suppose she will.

See, this is an experiment of mine. One in a long line of many to test the perimeters of marriage.

TODD You mean to say that you're holding this garage sale, practically giving away all of these nice things, and your wife doesn't even know about it?

TIMMERMAN It's more than that. It's more like we're stepping back in time together. Retracing our tracks. Ya see what I mean?



SARAH (to TODD) I think we'd better take our things out of here before this man reneges on his deals or something.

TIMMERMAN Oh no. A deal's a deal. (sits in rocker)

SARAH You're damn right a deal's a deal! We're furnishing an apartment, and we need these deals now that we found them.

TIMMERMAN (amused by her spunk, he gives a big hearty laugh) Ha, ha. You deliver me, Sarah.

(slight pause)

SARAH What did you say?

TIMMERMAN I said that you deliver me. It's an expression. Why?

SARAH (removed) Nevermind. I thought you said something else.

TODD (feels faint) That beer really got to me, made my head light.

SARAH (to TODD) I told you that you better not. (to TIMMERMAN) He's got the kissing disease, mister. Alcohol doesn't help the blood.

TIMMERMAN (suddenly bitter) Don't "mister" me anymore! Something's wrong. Without even looking, I can tell. Can't you feel that something's off?

SARAH Like what?

TIMMERMAN The T.V. It's out of place. Look at the position it's in! You may have bought the damn thing, but as long as it's still here, don't mess with it.



SARAH Sorry.

TIMMERMAN Do something about it, Sarah!

SARAH Yes, sir. (she crosses to the T.V., and squats down, prepared to turn the stand it sets on)

TIMMERMAN What are you doing? Why are you squatting? I didn't ask for squatting! I asked you to quit messing with the T.V., but just look at you!

TODD Mr. Timmerman, does liquor give you high blood pressure?

TIMMERMAN Only when it's gone! (to SARAH) Get back! (she stands quickly) Can't you see what's called for? Do I have to guide you young people every step of the way? Take a step back! Away from it! (SARAH steps back from the T.V. and looks at it, then looks back at TIMMERMAN)

TIMMERMAN There. Now look. Can't you tell now?

SARAH (to TIMMERMAN) I don't think I'm sure what you want.

TIMMERMAN What I want? What I want, miss, is for you to know what I want! Beforehand. Without hints. Without administering. Without implications! For you to be alive inside the impulses of my every needs, my intense inclinations! (SARAH moves to the T.V. and turns it very slightly)

TIMMERMAN Get away! Put it back! Put it back like it was! (SARAH moves the T.V. to its original position) No, now what are you doing? That's not where it was! It's getting worse!

SARAH How do you want it?

TIMMERMAN I can't believe it's getting worse! Look, this may be your T.V., but as long as it's in my garage, in front of my chair, in front of my life, leave it put.

(SARAH nears the T.V. to turn it again) Get back from the damn thing! Stand back away from it! Now come here!

SARAH What?

TIMMERMAN Come here, I said. Turn my chair a bit. (TODD has the stereo wired up. He flips on an "old" phonograph album, and music from the "big band" era blurts out. He lowers the volume, just so that their voices can be clearly heard.)

SARAH Turn it?

TIMMERMAN Twist me! Shift me! Swing me! Rock me! Until you get the picture.

SARAH What picture.

TIMMERMAN The picture of things inside my head.

SARAH Sir?

TIMMERMAN The picture of the position of the television in relation to my position in this chair! There's one inside my head just like it.

SARAH How can I get that picture?

TIMMERMAN I'll let you know until you get used to seeing it yourself. I tried describing it once, but you fucked me over. Keep rocking, Sarah!

TODD Sarah, don't take this.

SARAH What next, sir?

TIMMERMAN No more "sir" that's what's next.

SARAH Sorry. I used to call my father "sir". He enjoyed it. Now, how's the picture?

TIMMERMAN Forget the picture. I can see already you're not picking it up. On my lap. Now!

SARAH You're lap?

TIMMERMAN Read my lips. On my lap. You should be there already, but you're not. I don't understand.

SARAH (she sits on his lap) This is cozy.

TIMMERMAN Damn right it's cozy.

TODD Sarah, what's gotten into you?

SARAH Music. Some kind of music.

TIMMERMAN Miller.

SARAH Miller. Steve Miller.

TIMMERMAN Glenn! Glenn Miller!

SARAH Glenn Miller. Now we're going to dance.

(they rise and dance close together, slower than would be appropriate for the tune)

SARAH We're going to dance close, like this, intimately, until our innermost rhythms agree, identify, syn-the-size -- (TIMMERMAN and SARAH are very close, SARAH cuddling up to him as snug as possible, and enjoying it.

TIMMERMAN's face remains expressionless)

TODD (violently scratches the phonograph needle across the album, stops the music. They still dance) What kind of place is this?

SARAH If only you knew. Now get out.

TODD What?

SARAH Mr. Timmerman here is wanting you out of his garage. I can sense that.

TIMMERMAN You're learning.

SARAH (to TODD) Now get out. The sale is over with. The goods are gone. I believe that's what his inner rhythms are feeling.

TIMMERMAN That a girl, Sarah.

TODD Sarah!

TIMMERMAN The beer can.

SARAH Take the beer can with you.

TODD Why?

TIMMERMAN It's evidence. (He returns to his rocker, SARAH returns to his lap).

TODD Evidence of what?

TIMMERMAN Evidence of your presence. Take it. Drive to the nearest lake in your car. Fill the can with beach sand. Rent a Hobie cat and sail out six miles. Drop the can into the water, tip the sailboat with the sail down until she sinks, and swim back to shore. When you're at the shore, destroy your car. Leave no evidence.

TODD (feels faint) I'm getting a headache, Sarah.



SARAH It's the beer. I warned you about the beer.

TIMMERMAN I wasn't thinking of all this chitchat!

SARAH We didn't know.

TIMMERMAN You've been here for how long now, and you didn't know? I want for you to sense what I feel!

TODD Goddamn beer.

TIMMERMAN What it does to the blood is a cunning mystery, isn't it Todd! Go and nap before you sweat. I couldn't bear your sweltering. Go nap on your new bed with your mononucleosis!

TODD It's her bed.

TIMMERMAN Don't you share?

SARAH I was lying before, Timmerman. We're not really married.

TIMMERMAN Shacked up, huh. What would your father think?

SARAH (a lie) He'd think it was fine.

TIMMERMAN That's what I think, all right.

TODD Sarah, what are you still doing on his lap?

SARAH The chemicals. I can't really explain it, but they fuse for some reason. Mine and his.

TIMMERMAN She's living inside my impulses, that's what. She knows what I want by reading my tendencies. My proclivities. My partialities. My penchants. My addictions with things. She's becoming acquainted with my inner cadences and you're not helping. If you are to stick around, I want you to read them too.



TODD What if your wife comes home?

TIMMERMAN Could you use any "creeping charlie?"

TODD Is it good or bad?

TIMMERMAN It's herpes, you fool!

TODD (to SARAH) This guy's a riot, Sarah. (to TIMMERMAN)

What are you going to do now, Tim?

TIMMERMAN (harsh) I don't know! Don't ask me! My mind doesn't even know, not until it acts. Haven't you ever heard of . . .

TODD What?

TIMMERMAN It's gone now. Too late. Forget it!

SARAH I think he was going to say spontaneity.

TIMMERMAN It was ruined when it was too late, and now it's ruined even more by your mentioning it and making it stale.

SARAH Sorry.

TODD What about me, Sarah?

SARAH He wants you to leave now, Todd. He wants me. He's obsessed with me. I'm his real hunger. I'm his only hunger! Me more than anything.

TODD (furious) Listen! You stay here, Sarah? You just stay and regret the whole chemical business!

SARAH He's stuck for words.

TIMMERMAN He's not coping very well.

TODD FUCK YOU! FUCK YOU ALL TO HELL! (TODD exits)

SARAH Do I really deliver you?

TIMMERMAN Yes. (slight pause) Beyond private holdings.

SARAH No one's ever said that to me before. What'll we do?

TIMMERMAN Hide, of course. Alone. Solitary confinement.

You and I, monks in exile, delivering one another. In
recluse.

SARAH Who will know? Who will care?

TIMMERMAN Good question.

SARAH Thanks.

TIMMERMAN But a stupid one if you knew my wife. She'll know.

And care. She picked it up somewhere and she still cares.

SARAH Picked what up?

TIMMERMAN "creeping charlie."

SARAH Oh, the herpes.

TIMMERMAN Yes.

(SARAH stands)

TIMMERMAN Shut the door.

SARAH (shuts it) Sorry. I'm late.

TIMMERMAN You should have known. (pause) What do you think,
Sarah? Nevermind. Don't bother now, it's too late.

SARAH I think I was about to get married, just like everyone
else does. Same old thing. But I guess if you don't get
married, why that's the same old thing too, isn't it?

TIMMERMAN Is following your inclinations the same old thing?

SARAH Is that what we're going to do?

TIMMERMAN I'd rather lead, but that's not how it works. Even
when I lead, I end up following them.

SARAH What?

TIMMERMAN My inclinations, that's what. I'm a prisoner of
my biological urges.

SARAH Meaning--

TIMMERMAN Meaning, like you, I do the best with what I
have. Damned inclinations. I follow them. (he sits
on the rocker once more)

SARAH (she gets on his lap again) Damned inclinations, all
right.

(a quick black)



SCENE TWO

One week later. SARAH is on the bed, asleep. She awakes with a startle, as if she doesn't know where she is at. When she comes too, she breathes deeply, and realizes TIMMERMAN is climbing in through one of the windows. He carries a sack. When inside, he closes the window, sees SARAH still panting.

TIMMERMAN (bitterly) What's the matter?!

SARAH (not yet awake) I was frightened. I thought it was someone else.

TIMMERMAN Who?

SARAH (knows, but won't say) I don't know. You know the feeling when you awake in some strange environment, don't you?

TIMMERMAN Quit being hypothetical!

SARAH What do you mean?

TIMMERMAN I mean quit your pretending. Your simulating. You've been here a week now, things gotta start becoming familiar to you.

SARAH I'm a slow adjuster.

TIMMERMAN You're not going to run me, manage my life like my wife did without my knowing it, are you?

SARAH Why?

TIMMERMAN You didn't answer me.

SARAH No. No I won't run you.



TIMMERMAN (removes eggs from sack, flips them to her, she catches them, but loses her breath) Good. Then fix me breakfast. Can you adjust to that?

SARAH (looks around) With what?

TIMMERMAN I don't care, just do it. You've been assigned a province of responsibility, now respond and adjust to it!

SARAH What if I don't want to be assigned?

TIMMERMAN There you go, being hypothetical again.

SARAH What's that word mean?

TIMMERMAN It means you've been appointed egg duty, now do it!

SARAH I suppose I'll have to simulate them.

TIMMERMAN Then simulate the damn things! Go ahead, give them the illusion of being cooked!

SARAH How are these simulated eggs supposed to taste?

TIMMERMAN (simmering down) I'm sorry. You're right. One can only simulate so much before one realizes the truth. So much for breakfast.

SARAH (cheering up, she hugs him) You know, sometimes I think that this is far too perfect to last. I'm so content. Secure.

TIMMERMAN Don't fool yourself, Sarah. Things are hopeless, destitute, forlorn!

SARAH (surprised) What?

TIMMERMAN (a cut) Lacking! Things are lacking! They're totally impoverished!

SARAH (a threat) You show some respect for my happiness or else I'll go back to bed.



TIMMERMAN Go back to bed, why don't you. That's the only place where you're good for anything anyway.

SARAH (sets eggs down, threatens again) Say you're sorry.

TIMMERMAN (backs off) I'm sorry. It's just that for some reason my soul feels like it's being undermined!

SARAH By who?

TIMMERMAN (sits on sofa) By you!

SARAH (to herself) Jesus. He lays the heavy stuff on me even before my coffee. (depressed, she climbs back into bed) Good night! (restless, she jumps out of bed) That's no good either.

TIMMERMAN What's the matter now?

SARAH I can't sleep. My mother always used to force me to sleep when I didn't want to, when I wasn't tired. Hell, if I slept all the time she wanted me to, I'd still be asleep. For a hundred years, I would sleep!

TIMMERMAN You know why, don't you?

SARAH Oh, don't get analytical with me!

TIMMERMAN (matter of factly) To keep your father from you.

SARAH (startled inside, but won't show it) What makes you say that?

TIMMERMAN Do you know The Sleeping Beauty?

SARAH Of course, what do you take me for?

TIMMERMAN Well, that's why the good fairy made the princess and everyone else in the castle sleep for a hundred years, except for the king and the queen.



SARAH (catching on) I--don't-- follow.

TIMMERMAN It was a defense! To keep the king from the princess, Sarah!

SARAH You're sick! You're the only one I know who can take a sweet and simple fairy tale and corrupt the hell out of it!

TIMMERMAN What else are we to do?

SARAH (viciously) Well, what are we to do! (pessimism)
I knew things were far too perfect to last, but you didn't have to prove me right!

TIMMERMAN What do you want?

SARAH It's not what I want, it's what I need! I need guarantees!!

TIMMERMAN Well, people don't get 'em.

SARAH That's right, they don't get them. But I want them!

TIMMERMAN What kind?

SARAH Ever holding! Life binding! That's what kind.
Guarantees that I won't have to wake up in the morning next to a stranger.

TIMMERMAN Is that who I am?

SARAH I'm not talking about you, I'm talking about people like him. Todd! He's the stranger. He comes and goes and gets mono out of life. Well, I don't want it. (she weakens)

TIMMERMAN What were you expecting?

SARAH Nothing, I suppose. Nothing but a tragedy.



TIMMERMAN Don't. You'll be let down again. Tragedies don't occur anymore. Not since Willy Loman, have they happened.

SARAH Who?

TIMMERMAN Nevermind, I was pressing it a bit with The Sleeping Beauty. Anyway, they're just extinct. People don't feel enough for tragedies to happen.

SARAH I feel!

TIMMERMAN Not enough.

SARAH How do you know?

TIMMERMAN We don't have the tragic blood in our veins, people don't.

SARAH After my father died and was laid out in his long brown casket and everyone was shaking their troubled heads as if he'd let them all down again, I stood there. Alone, above him, frozen still. Like there was no wind left in the world. Then, then all of a sudden, his eyes popped open at me. Both of them. Reflex or something. It startled the shit out of me. I panicked. I didn't want no one there to see that he wasn't dead to me. So I reached into my pockets and pulled out two nickles and set them on his eyelids after I'd pulled them down first with my young, nervous adolescent fingers. And it worked! Now, tell me to my face that that isn't a tragedy. To this day he's down there wearing my ten cents on his eyes! I thought I had the right kind of blood in my veins for



tragedy then, by God. (pause, she begins to cry) I just want some guarantees.

TIMMERMAN There's only one thing for it, then. Your knees.

SARAH Pardon?

TIMMERMAN Your knees! Get down on your knees, and pray for guarantees! They still won't come.

SARAH I should have thought you are a non-believer.

TIMMERMAN I am?

SARAH Aren't you?

TIMMERMAN In what?

SARAH God, silly.

TIMMERMAN I believe in God. I believe in praying to what you can't see just as much as the next fellow. I told you to get down on your knees and pray for guarantees! I didn't tell you they'd come, though. Things like that don't ever work out. They're not papal enough or something.

SARAH Well, it wouldn't work for me anyway, praying wouldn't.

TIMMERMAN Why do you say that?

SARAH Perdiction.

TIMMERMAN What?

SARAH Perdiction. I got it!

TIMMERMAN Where'd you ever come up with a word like that?

SARAH I was skimming through a dictionary one day, not too long ago, when I mysteriously came across that word. I



was writing a letter to him, my lonely father, and--

TIMMERMAN I thought he was dead?

SARAH Oh, he is. But I still write him. Just because he's dead doesn't mean he isn't lonely anymore. So, I was printing out this letter and came to a word I wanted to use but wasn't sure if the spelling was right and--

TIMMERMAN Why does it matter?

SARAH It matters because my father matters, now let me finish my story!

TIMMERMAN He was a quitter!

SARAH (vicious) My father quit a world which was fast quitting him! (calmed) So, as I was saying, I thumbed through the pages and, and my fingers stuck on this page, and I just stared at the letters of that word until my eyes crossed. Perdition. You know what it means, don't you. It means I've lost my soul. I know when it was, too. It was almost as if God made me find that word just to diagnose my case, like a doctor. Seeing it in print for myself kind of just made it official. And don't think that perdition's not a failure. It's the biggest failure one can have. And ever since that day I discovered that word, failure's gone to my head. Right where I don't want it to be.

TIMMERMAN (he feels that this heavy confession has injured her. He tries to cheer her up by opening the carton of eggs and juggling three of them. This practice is simple



to master) You know what I do when my self-esteem's gone to hell? I do something real risky. Like juggling eggs.

SARAH (a scream) NO!

TIMMERMAN That's right. Just for the hell of it, I juggle eggs, and that way if I drop one I know that it's all right to be human because smashing an egg isn't all that drastic of a failure to begin with. All in all, that is. Just a minor miscarriage, you might say.

SARAH (catches the eggs before they fall) No, NO! Don't you dare do that again! It hurts my heart.

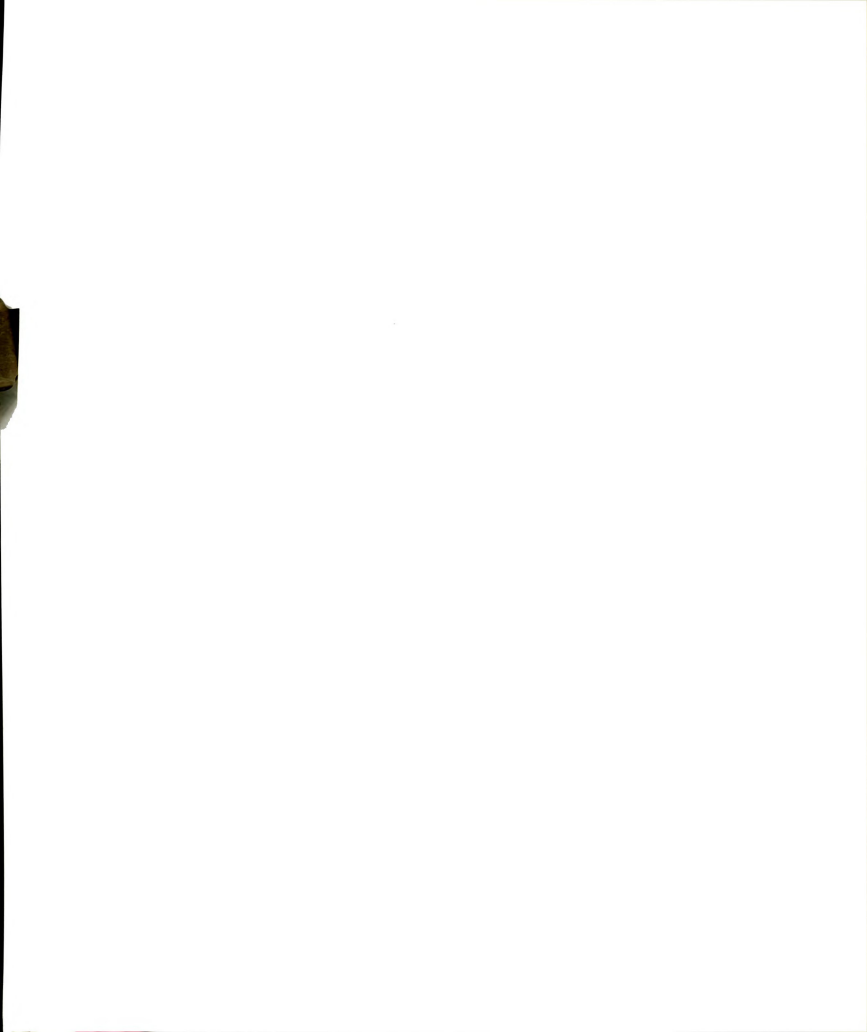
TIMMERMAN (furious) Don't you ever interrupt my system of living again, you little bitch, you!

SARAH Before I thought you were so damn creative, but I'm wrong. I am so wrong! I don't know what I was referring too when judging you, probably to things I could never possibly know. I honest to God don't know why I believed you were something you're not. I thought you were funny, you're not. I thought you were smart, you're not. I thought you were lonely, but you're not. The only thing you are that I thought you were is old, and your immaturity's ruined even that for me. Juggling eggs to make a point is. . . (can't think of a word)

TIMMERMAN Macabre?

SARAH That's right!

TIMMERMAN What's it mean?



SARAH (starts to leave) I'm leaving this hole. And that's what it is, a hole for souls to be buried in!

TIMMERMAN Leave! Go ahead, escape! Flee! Just like you fled your boyfriend for me, like this was some castle hidden in wood!

SARAH Dream unfulfilled number one!

TIMMERMAN (touched, a desperate strain in his voice) Don't you think I'd like to be creative? Huh? I try, God knows I try. I had you going for awhile. I had my wife going for awhile too. Just long enough to get her to marry me. I've tried everything. Got jobs. Quit jobs. Bought things. Sold things. Tried a piano. Even a drum once, but I couldn't be creative in beating it, so I quit. I even tried to write. I wanted so bad to do something original in this world, I even tried to write. God, was that a disaster. I thought if I could write plays that maybe then I could invent characters who could live more visibly and perilously than myself, than I was living! But even that failed. I used interesting enough names, Skipper and Gerald and Birkin, but then the characters would come out just as stale and dry and lonely as me, lonely for something to say and lonely for something to do. So what happened to them? They didn't die, that would be too good for them. They, too, got married and led my own boring and conventional life because even on paper it seemed like the thing to do.



SARAH Look! Stop it! Let's not talk about our, our failures. It's too dangerous.

TIMMERMAN I've tried my whole life to be taken for something, but look at me, a major movement in nothing. Emptiness!

SARAH (she gives in) At least your soul's only being undermined, and not corrupted.

TIMMERMAN (snaps out of it) I don't know what you mean, but you're right. Let's not go into the dark, important things like our lives. Let's stay clear of the memory. We'll only talk about light, surfaceable things, like other's do, that which keeps people safe and sane.

SARAH Okay, you're right. You start.

TIMMERMAN Starting's easy.

SARAH (optimistic) All right, let's see.

TIMMERMAN I travelled about, after the war. Went round the world, even.

SARAH How was it?

TIMMERMAN The world?

SARAH Yes.

TIMMERMAN Big. Damn big. Just as huge as you'd imagine, only huger!

SARAH Huger?

TIMMERMAN Yes, huger!

SARAH (laughs) I don't think there is a word such as huger.



TIMMERMAN Well, there outta be. And it outta just be used in describing the world. And only for that purpose!

SARAH (away from him) Your conscience--

TIMMERMAN (probing) What about it?

SARAH Is it torturing you?

TIMMERMAN I don't think so. You're forgetting something.

SARAH Mine is!

TIMMERMAN Well, it shouldn't! (pause) Is it my wife?

SARAH No. Probably not. (the truth) In a way. It's certainly not Todd. So don't think for a moment that it's him. God, we're hard on each other, me and Todd.

TIMMERMAN So are we. When I first met Monica, she pawed like a kitten. Now, she scratches like a cat!

SARAH Monica?

TIMMERMAN Oh, yes. As in Santa Monica. That's where I met her. After--

SARAH The war?

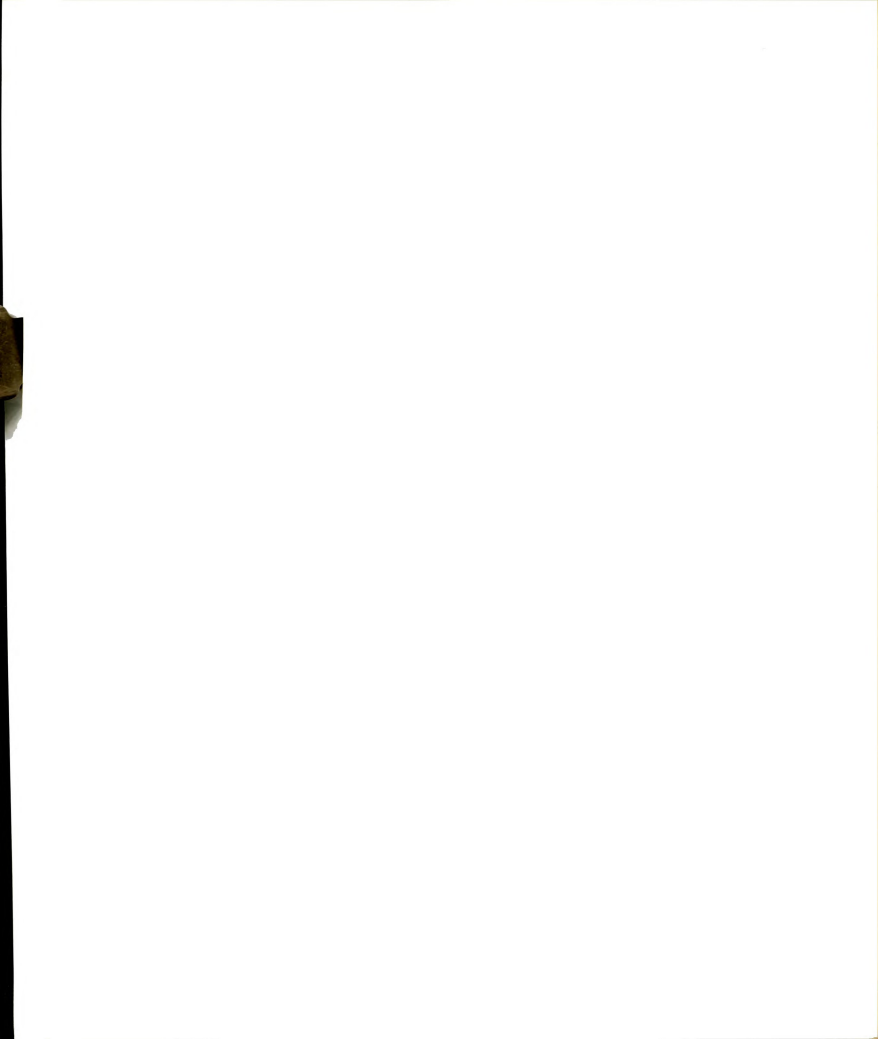
TIMMERMAN (bitter) Yes!

SARAH (pause. trying to lighten up subject) I knew a Monica once. Can't be the same one, things just don't happen like that. But now that you mentioned her name, every thought of your wife will bring to mind the picture of Monica I have. What's she like?

TIMMERMAN Dangerous.

SARAH Why is she dangerous?

TIMMERMAN She's not dangerous, your asking about her is! You're trying to ruin it! Trying to compare, form images,



yardstick likenesses!

SARAH I'm sorry. I didn't realize I was ruining it.

TIMMERMAN Although, she isn't totally harmless, either.

SARAH I won't ask "why so" and run the risk of ruining things.

TIMMERMAN Because if you're down, she'll take a swint at you! And below the belt if she can manage! That's why she isn't totally harmless. In fact, she's totally the opposite of harmless.

SARAH Listen to us!

TIMMERMAN You're right. Let's take everything back!

SARAH Yes. Everything. (slight pause) But before we take it all back, I just want to say how fundamentally Todd is.

TIMMERMAN Fundamentally what?

SARAH Fundamentally stupid, that's what@ I think I am at the age where ignorance angers me. I'm also at the age where I know what's coming.

TIMMERMAN What is coming?

SARAH We're acting ourselves out.

TIMMERMAN What?

SARAH I haven't got many philosophies in life, but the one that I do have says that if you put two people together, two hungry people--

TIMMERMAN Hungry for what?

SARAH Hungry for something that they don't even know what it is yet. The meat, I guess. The meat of life. Why,



if you put two people together who are both hungry enough for that meat of life they'll act themselves out. Like in a play, maybe that play you were trying to write. Maybe we're the real characters you should've been writing about.

TIMMERMAN Those plays were finally about death, Sarah.

Death! That's the only way they ever end.

SARAH (she tried) Here we go again. Trying to get the worse out of things instead of--

TIMMERMAN Instead of what?

SARAH Why, instead of the best, like we're supposed to do!

TIMMERMAN If we're supposed to how come we keep forgetting?

SARAH I think it's our nature. As failures.

TIMMERMAN (laughs) Our tragic nature. Maybe we do have potentially tragic blood in our veins.

SARAH I just have the feeling she's out there listening to us.

TIMMERMAN Who?

SARAH Monica.

TIMMERMAN Which one? My wife or your friend?

SARAH Now you're being silly.

TIMMERMAN No, she's out making use of someone.

SARAH What do you mean?

TIMMERMAN She knows how to love. And knowing how to love is knowing how to make the proper use of someone. And those who know how to love, hunt, seek, and capture love.



She probably came home, found nothing to use here, and sought elsewhere. Weeds only grow for so long in a terrarium before they begin to scratch their green against the glass. It's only inevitable that sooner or later they bust loose. Nature works like that, and so does Monica.

SARAH Do you really believe that?

TIMMERMAN Oh, yes. Not always, though. I thought it was a two-party-deal, marriage and commitment. Until once, about the hundreth time Monica realized I was a failure, she ventured outside of the terrarium and pursued a winner! That's when I realized the "third-party-clause" in the pact of life.

SARAH I don't understand.

TIMMERMAN It's the third one that always spoils everything! It's that third anonymous party that always prompts one of the original two to bite that damned apple. Like the sly garden snake. But be careful, it's not always that third party that you have to watch out for. Sometimes, it's one of the original two!

SARAH I think I see. It's just so hard to get a grip on things, is what you're saying. Makes me think of my father. He always had a grip on things. Right up till he died. He killed himself when Mother left him, but even his final act of suicide was a way of disrupting the natural order of things--(as reciting poetry)--of somehow controlling man's own uncontrollable destiny.



TIMMERMAN How do you know?

SARAH I know because he was my father. And I loved my father!

TIMMERMAN You used him, all right!

SARAH How so?

TIMMERMAN You used his grip on things and called it your own, then you realized he didn't have a grip on a thing. That's what his suicide was all about, an affirmation of his own slipping that you, the person he lived for, never even saw.

SARAH (afraid to fight with a professional) You may be right, but I loved the man.

TIMMERMAN Todd wasn't so far off base when he accused you of sleeping with him.

SARAH (vicious, protective) You are disgusting!

TIMMERMAN You slept with your old man!

SARAH I did no such thing!

TIMMERMAN You slept with me last night.

SARAH You're not my old man. You're simulated!

TIMMERMAN Fooled you, didn't it.

SARAH Fooled me, nothing. You're trying to trick the wrong things into my head, is what you're trying to do. And some criminal Freudian-thing on top of it!

TIMMERMAN You think you're up on things, but you're really late on them, Sarah. Just like all the rest!

SARAH (to herself) I am late.



TIMMERMAN (tempting her, wants to fight) What's that?

SARAH (now vicious) I AM LATE! (pause) I am two months late.

TIMMERMAN What?

SARAH (this is hard for her, as if she's telling it to herself for the first time) I'm going to have a baby
(slight pause. Now, she's sure of herself) I'm going to have a baby.

TIMMERMAN (moved) A baby?

SARAH A baby.

TIMMERMAN (a genuine concern) Oh, my God. A, a baby.

Are you taking care of yourself, I mean are you doing all the things you're supposed to be doing?

SARAH Like what?

TIMMERMAN (emotional) Like, are you, are you taking classes yet? Breathing classes? People, when they have babies, they're supposed to take breathing classes or something.

SARAH (comic relief) Breathing's what got me into this mess in the first place. Heavy breathing!

TIMMERMAN (serious) No, breathing. A special kind of breathing. You think you know what you're doing by the time you're an adult, and then suddenly you have to learn something as fundamental as breathing all over again! You find you don't know shit about it!

SARAH What on God's earth will Todd say when he discovers I'm a breeder?



TIMMERMAN He doesn't know?

SARAH No. See, something really strange happened to me when you said, "You deliver me, Sarah" last week. Since I was given the news of my pregnancy, I've been having these doubts whether to have this child or not. That's right, I've been considering aborting it, sending it away to God only knows who before ever giving it the chance, the opportunity to form into something unsimulated, something real. But, but I've been having these nightmares, these awful nightmares where I'm trapped inside of this hot room with these eggs. These white eggs. I'm stuck inside this incubator with my unborn child is all I can interpret from them, and this voice, this infant's cry for help is calling out of these eggs, one after another, crying: "YOU DELIVER ME, SARAH, YOU DELIVER ME!!" And then the eggs multiply and multiply and more voices plead: "YOU DELIVER ME, SARAH, YOU DELIVER ME!!" until I can't stand it. And that's it! So naturally when you said those same exact words out of no where, I thought maybe you had, in some odd way, something to do with my dreams.

TIMMERMAN (benumbed) You mean with your nightmares.

SARAH Yes. I mean with my nightmares. And another thing that attracted me to you was your authority. Your control. Just like my father's. Sometimes I want someone to tell me what to do. Not all the time, just sometimes. Todd never does. We just fight until he ends up no longer



caring and I end up winning.

TIMMERMAN People are never in total control.

SARAH Why?

TIMMERMAN They won't allow themselves to be, that's why.

Not even your father. Especially not even your father.

From the story you sketch of him he had less a grip on things than did anyone, myself included.

SARAH He was strong, I tell you! Strong armed, strong legged, strong hearted! Don't let that little suicide mislead you.

TIMMERMAN What you've described is a coat of arms, Sarah.

If you peel beneath that shield, beneath that rugged rind you've given him, you'd have found a human being. Just like you've found in Todd and just like you're finding in me.

SARAH I don't think we should talk about this anymore.

TIMMERMAN You're right. Why intrude upon the truth?

SARAH I know the truth!

TIMMERMAN You don't know the truth! The truth isn't interesting enough for you, so you create these nebulous images and call them the truth!

SARAH All right, maybe I don't know the truth. About nothing! My father. Todd. My pregnancy. Maybe that's an image I call truth too. What do you expect? A month after Mother and I left my father I returned to him, and he insisted on bringing me up in seclusion! In a naked



sanctuary, so that I would be too naive and ignorant to be deceived--or to deceive him! He wanted me left plain, untouched, virgin white. We would go strawberry picking for our ice cream in the spring and we'd have to track through rows and rows of perfectly fine patches first before we got to the best, unharmed and bruiseless strawberries. Then, when we got home, we'd sit down together and eat our ice cream and strawberries and he'd insist that we eat them in separate bowls. That's right! A dish for my ice cream and a dish for my strawberries! The mere sight of red on white made him angry at the world! And when I left, when I ran away from him the second time, this time for good, it was because I wanted to get dirty, I wanted to live! I wanted to eat my strawberries on top of my ice cream! But I'm still in seclusion, just look at me. Trapped in some man's garage. When my father took his life, he dragged mine along with his!

TIMMERMAN Why didn't you two act yourselves out, like you say?

SARAH Because (choked up) because--

TIMMERMAN Because he wasn't hungry enough for his own meat, so instead he had to pursue yours?

SARAH (unpleasant outrage) NOW YOU'RE EVEN PERVERTING MY OWN PHILOSOPHY IN LIFE!

TIMMERMAN Look how far you've come, Sarah. You're not still in seclusion. You've come from eating your strawberries on top of your ice cream to getting "creeping



charlie".

SARAH What are you talking about?

TIMMERMAN "Creeping charlie." Remember, my wife's friend whom she introduced to me? Well, I'd like to take this opportunity to formally introduce him to you. (looks to her crotch) "Creeping charlie" this is Sarah. Sarah, meet "creeping charlie". "CC for short".

SARAH (furious) What do you mean I have "creeping charlie"?

TIMMERMAN I told you he's a member of my family. Now, he'll be a member of yours. And what's his name, the handsome boy?

SARAH Todd?

TIMMERMAN That's it.

SARAH But I thought you got rid of it!

TIMMERMAN It doesn't go, we've tried. We've tried germicides. Pesticides! Close your eyes! Nothing helps. Look, it's nothing awfully miserable. A scratch here, an itch there.

SARAH (leaps on bed face-first, buries face) Oh, God!

TIMMERMAN Look, if you want my opinion, last night was worth it.

SARAH (turns) Maybe for you! If you weren't such a failure maybe you wouldn't have gotten "creeping charlie" in the first place!

TIMMERMAN (inert) I failed again?

SARAH I wasn't going to tell you, but since we're coming to terms with things, why not.



TIMMERMAN (his tone has become somber) How do you know
what failure is, you're only fifteen?

SARAH I'm a failure too, remember?

TIMMERMAN I mean in the "sex" department.

SARAH I'm pregnant, remember?

TIMMERMAN You mean to say that that scrawny kid is better
than me?

SARAH (more to herself) I don't know for sure, but I'd bet
he's the best.

TIMMERMAN I thought I tried.

SARAH Look, I don't know if I'm qualified to critique sex,
either vocabulary-wise or experience-wise, but if you
want my opinion you're much too quick.

TIMMERMAN Quick?

SARAH That's right, quick. My God, it was like you were
on some T.V. game show and competing against a clock.
You wouldn't give me the chance to--

TIMMERMAN To what? Lead? Goddamn, no! I want to be the
leader! For once! For once let me be the goddamn
leader! (he begins to cry)

SARAH I, I didn't mean to touch a soft spot.

TIMMERMAN Well, you did! You've been probing all morning
long and now you've zeroed in. I've been a follower all
my life. Hell, this whole garage sale is the carbon copy
of something I read in the newspaper classified. I just
followed the trend. Everyone has garage sales. I would



read the classified and wonder to myself why people have them: merely to make money, or in order to get rid of articles which bring about bad memories, or are they just lonely and enjoy the company of browsers which, in turn, makes the whole garage sale a front for something: a front for something possibly naughty! Intimate! Well, if I'm a bit quick in bed it's because I'm rushed for something intimate! I'm hurrying for something intimate!

SARAH You should slow down. Pacing. Think things through first.

TIMMERMAN Think what through first? Sex? Pure, sudden sex?

SARAH Yes! Among other things in life, more important things. Plan. Just like I plan. Why, once I decided to have this child, I decided that he or she's gonna be free as can be. Just free to do whatever he or she desires. I've thought about names, too. Dawn if she's a girl, Day if he's a boy. But I'm not predicting a thing yet, I'm being patient. Just learn to be patient, I guess is my advice . Not so quick to lead.

TIMMERMAN You're contradictory.

SARAH How so?

TIMMERMAN First you say you want a man with control, that that's what attracted you to me was my authority, now you criticize me for humping like a hot rooster in a cock fight, no pun intended.

SARAH There's got to be some happy medium.



TIMMERMAN You're too damned demanding! And you're only fifteen. It's no wonder you've been let down so much. My advice to you would be to prepare for more of the same.

SARAH You think it's too demanding for a girl, for a person, to ask for a little unwritten patience? Hell, I had to bribe Todd with a new paint job for his car to get him to sleep with me the first time, and even then he didn't want to be there. I'm looking for something in the middle.

TIMMERMAN You're never gonna have it in the middle if you're that picky.

SARAH You turn my stomach!

TIMMERMAN Good! Maybe if I turn it enough I'll be doing that poor helpless embryo in there a big favor by aborting it!

SARAH You are scum!

TIMMERMAN So I am scum! Am I slow scum or quick scum!

SARAH Quick! Quick to nauseate!

TIMMERMAN How was Todd, slow scum or quick scum?

SARAH Slow! He curdled near the top until he coagulated! He knew how far to go, but not you! You go overboard!

TIMMERMAN Okay, so he's slow. And I'm fast. One would think you'd welcome the initiative.

SARAH Initiative, yes. Plundering, NO!

TIMMERMAN (furious) Plundering?! Did you accuse me of plundering?

SARAH Yes. Plundering.



TIMMERMAN Raping?

SARAH If you say so.

TIMMERMAN (about to strike her) Goddamn you little slut!

SARAH (slaps his face) No one calls me that and gets away with it. I slap them!

TIMMERMAN I'll bet you slap a face a day.

SARAH I didn't say rape, you did.

TIMMERMAN You said plundering!

SARAH I didn't say rape!

TIMMERMAN May as well have!

SARAH Why should I? You did!

TIMMERMAN I didn't rape!

SARAH You plundered!

TIMMERMAN I didn't plunder! I'm not even sure what plundering is!

SARAH Then how do you know you didn't do it?

TIMMERMAN Because I'm not a plunderer! I'm a person.

SARAH A plunderer can be a person.

TIMMERMAN A rapist can be a person, too.

SARAH They mostly are!

TIMMERMAN Now you're getting smart with me. Now you're testing my emotional stamina, aren't you? If anything, you stayed here under your own free volition.

SARAH You prompted it. You willed it all up in your head. You had it figured!

TIMMERMAN You're saying that I seduced you, Sarah?



SARAH I'm not saying that.

TIMMERMAN You're saying that I seduced you!

SARAH I'm not saying that, you are.

TIMMERMAN I am not!

SARAH Twice now you've said it. Are you trying to convince me, is that it? I'm convinced!

TIMMERMAN (slaps SARAH, the same as she slapped him) You little rag, you.

SARAH (about to explode, the calm before the storm) Nobody slaps Sarah. Nobody!

TIMMERMAN I thought nobody calls you a little slut?

SARAH THEY DON'T.

TIMMERMAN I did! I'm guilty on two counts!

(SARAH goes to slap him, TIMMERMAN catches her arm. SARAH lifts her knee up and connects with him directly in the groin. TIMMERMAN yelps!)

SARAH There! Maybe that'll slow you down a bit!

TIMMERMAN (groans) You'll get yours. . . (with all of his effort, and it takes his all, TIMMERMAN hobbles over to the egg carton. He reaches for a handful of eggs and charges SARAH. He plops them down on her head)

SARAH (screams) You murderer, you!!!

(she does the same, they cover each other with yoke and shell. When the eggs are gone, yellow spent all over their faces



and bodies, they wrestle. At one point, SARAH grabs the weed killer and sprays TIMMERMAN. This is meant to be twofold: to harm him and to rid him of his terminal herpes. When exhausted, they hold each other in a touching, tight embrace on the floor, until SARAH breaks away)

SARAH (cries) The eggs are gone. Gone!

TIMMERMAN There will be more. These are just silly chicken eggs, Sarah. They're not symbolic for anything.

SARAH There's, there's still life in me?

TIMMERMAN Not still life, life. Just plain life.

SARAH How can you be sure?

TIMMERMAN I just can.

SARAH Timmerman. Timmerman, you didn't rape me.

(to convince him) You didn't.

TIMMERMAN I did. I remember now. You were right.

SARAH No, no. Don't think like that. That's how failures think.

TIMMERMAN (acknowledges it) I know.

SARAH I thought you did. At first. You see, the truth is going to come out. It just takes time. Once the event happens, you're not really sure what exactly happens. But when you're ahead of the event, far ahead, you can look back and find the truth. We can step back in time, like you said before.



TIMMERMAN So what?

SARAH So, you're right. (pause)

TIMMERMAN What good's it do then?

SARAH All kinds of good.

TIMMERMAN All right. It's settled. I didn't rape you last night. Right?

SARAH Right. (slight pause. to cheer him up) You still plundered, though.

TIMMERMAN (laughs) I plundered. That explains it all. I'm a plunderer. And Monica's known it for years. At least now there's some motivation behind her getting the "creeping charlie" on me.

SARAH (dead serious, a tear in her eye) You see, I just thought you raped when you really just plundered. (pause) It's just that you remind me so of my father, remember, and it was my father who raped. (pause) Not you. Over and over he raped.

TIMMERMAN (sees it all now) Oh, God.

SARAH The thing is, I didn't really know what was happening. Even when I left him the first time with my mother, there was something which drew me back to him. Like a magnet and a paper clip. Some inner fear which made my heart heavy told me that if I didn't return to him he'd come and get me, come and get me some time when Mother wasn't around, and then it'd be worse for us all, far worse, because he would slap me. That's right. Slap! He would slap me and



slap me, over and over, and large red strawberries would appear on my white cheeks, and he would cry. He would break down and cry because the sight of red on white would frighten him so and make him angry at the world!

TIMMERMAN Didn't she do anything about it?

SARAH Mother? She left him, like I said. That's about the worse thing you can do to someone you love, is to leave them. That was worse on him than calling the authorities would ever have been.

TIMMERMAN But you say you love him.

SARAH And I do. There was more to my father than that which I mentioned. Granted, he was sick. Very sick! But there was a part of him that could never let go of his childhood. Do you know what I mean? Many parents live out their lives through their children, he didn't. He became a child. He re-experienced first-hand his own childhood sensuality in his relationship with me. He was young again, and I kept him young! I don't admire him for it, but I love him for his sins.

TIMMERMAN Where does Todd fit into the picture?

SARAH Todd? Todd's wonderful. He doesn't want to touch me, for fear that he'll hurt me. He's touched me once, and he doesn't have the faintest idea in the world just how much he's helped me.

TIMMERMAN Helped you?

SARAH That's right. I'm going to love this child so hard that it's going to have none of the things in life that I



had. I'm gonna love it hard, but not that hard.

TIMMERMAN I'm sorry to hear about your ugly past.

SARAH Don't be. Please, don't be. Todd's felt sorry enough for me.

TIMMERMAN He knows?

SARAH No. But he senses something.

TIMMERMAN Hell, no wonder he wanted the stereo instead of the bed. So would I.

SARAH God, that's enough! That's enough!

TIMMERMAN What's wrong now?

SARAH That part of my life is over now! My mother's gone, my father's dead, I've got my own job doing construction which I love because I love to build things, and I'm having my own child! I want to live now! Now, and in the present. Not in the past!

TIMMERMAN I guess I was jumping to conclusions again.

SARAH Quit your jumping! Quit your being quick!

TIMMERMAN (outraged) Well, maybe there's a reason why I'm quick, miss!

SARAH Well, maybe there is.

TIMMERMAN Maybe I'm quick because of habit! Pure impulse. Maybe I recognize the urgency of a situation out of instinct, pure primitive reflex! Maybe I've had problems being un-quick in my life and now that's the only way I know how to live, comprehend things, respond!

SARAH Well, you're going to have to slow down, no matter what the reason. I don't care what it is, even if it's



the herpes that makes you accelerate at such a furious rate.

TIMMERMAN Maybe it is the herpes, goddamn it! In the first place, in the initial locale, maybe it is the damn crawling animals that make me so quick now. It's a goddamn war down in my drawers, that's what it is. A goddamn war. And the war travels, it never stops. From one battlefield to another. Different battlefields, same war. Millions of casualties. Surplus soldiers moving about, itching themselves crazy! Herpes on the track. The prowl. Searching for other, diverse battlefields to set up camp. Nothing helps. We could blow up the entire universe with a single push of a button, but we can't get rid of old "creeping charlie." And what's the use? Why make the best of things, when we've got an edge on the worse?

SARAH You're losing me fast, as quick as you--

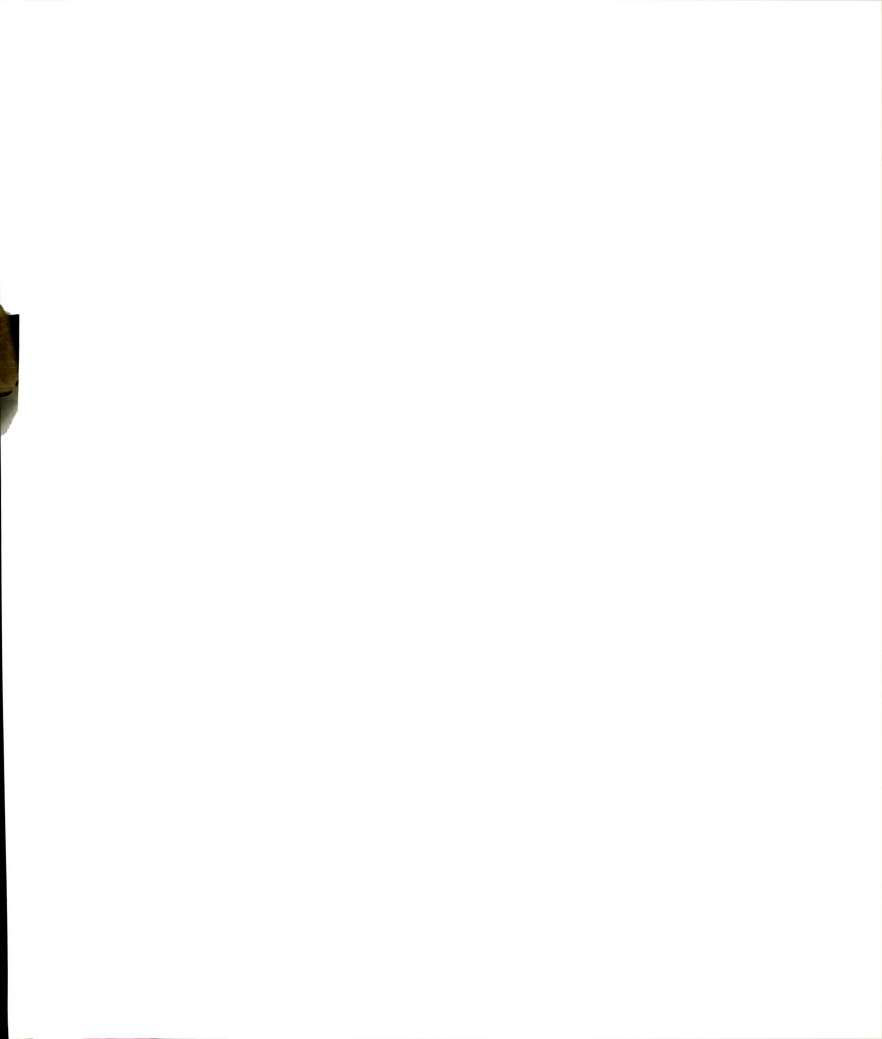
TIMMERMAN As I what? As I fuck? You want to know why I fuck quick, Sarah?

SARAH I really don't care to go into the details of your style!

TIMMERMAN Why not? You're fifteen and you've gone into about everything else!

SARAH That was mean.

TIMMERMAN It was meant to be mean. Meant to grab your undivided attention. Now listen here. I don't talk about war because I hate war. I was in war and I hate war's



guts! And I hate the guts of everyone who's ever written a book about it, made a movie about it, taken a picture of it. It's wrong, but it's the past and it's there.

It's there in the mind, Sarah. Always present, just like old "creeping charlie" himself. Most vets have a repertoire of stories, full of sensational gore, that they keep on hand for when they've nothing else to say, but not I.

I've tucked all mine away. All except one, one which keeps coming back and back to haunt me like the persistent itch between my legs! We were in combat see, I'm not going to tell you where or when or even why because I don't know, I forget, but we were in combat and there were a bunch of us, ten or twelve, and we used to get bored and go round to partially abandoned villages and take the women by surprise and rape them. And we were quick about it, not because we had to be, but because we wanted to be! It wasn't a challenge to do it, it was a challenge to be quick about it. Well, we did this for months and months, the ten or twelve of us, and it was okay for awhile until it stopped being fun for two or three of us. For two or three of us, myself included, the whole thing became a chore and we weren't certain why. The women were pretty enough, but our hearts weren't into it and pretty soon our loins weren't into it either!

Now, now something was happening to the two or three of us, something strange. Something remote. Well, we discovered



TIMMERMAN (continued) what that strange and remote thing that was happening to us was. One night when we were in this foxhole together and we were lonely and frightened and cold and wet and one of us mentioned that there was a village about two hundred yards over where we could find us a nice warm hut, a couple of warm women, some food and liquor, and we all agreed to it. But we were somehow apprehensive, somehow skeptical about the whole proposal, and, and (this is hard) when one of us had the courage to mention the idea of us just staying put here, why, why, in this hole, we all knew what he meant and we, we didn't utter a word, not a single word, we just stayed! Right there in that cold, wet, mud-filled foxhole all two or three of us discovered that, that it was each other we needed and, and not those nondescript, anonymous women. It was us. We needed each other and we had each other and we were not quick about that!

(long pause)

SARAH My God. Oh, dear God, I see--

TIMMERMAN You say that as though now you know why I'm a failure.

SARAH When you returned home, why didn't you stay the course?

TIMMERMAN Why didn't I get back on the wrong track you mean? I don't know. That's what makes me a failure. I suppose it's because I came back alone. My other two buddies never climbed out of that foxhole, never scaled up from the



depths. One had cholera, the other syphilis. Real bad, he had it. But that's not what killed them. They killed themselves. I didn't have the guts. I had the syphilis, though. Caught it from the one, but when I got home I was cured. I was relieved, and even happy, to have it then. It made me a hero when I returned home.

SARAH A hero?

TIMMERMAN Oh, yes. When I told the doctor that I had caught it by way of foreign women, he lit right up. He was proud to treat me with that seven-inch long syringe.

SARAH (laughs) If only he knew where you really got it.

TIMMERMAN (an inward smile) Yes, if only. What's even better is the way things are.

SARAH How do you mean?

TIMMERMAN Look at me! I've got the herpes! And from my wife!

SARAH (laughs, stops) I feel really lonely for you.

TIMMERMAN Just like you felt for your father?

SARAH No! He was ill. You're not.

TIMMERMAN And what burns me is all the commotion about the vets from this most recent war who came home and expected everything in the world owed to them. Well, they should realize that there are no war heroes. None. And there never should have been before. It was someone's mistake to make us heroes. Those vets from this most recent war had one thing we didn't, they could come home themselves if they wanted to. They could find themselves over there



in some foxhole and come home that way. Natural. I couldn't and I'm bitter about it. I had to come home a goddamn hero instead!

SARAH Is it too late?

TIMMERMAN It's too late, Sarah. It's too late now. (she walks to TIMMERMAN who is still kneeling, and she holds his head in her arms).

SARAH It's okay, Timmerman.

TIMMERMAN How is it okay?

SARAH Well, just look at us. We delivered each other once before, we can do it again.

TIMMERMAN What can you deliver, some man? (laughs, but is depressed) Go ahead, produce some man for me now, see if it's not too late.

SARAH (appalled) Is that what we've been delivering, Timmerman?

TIMMERMAN What?

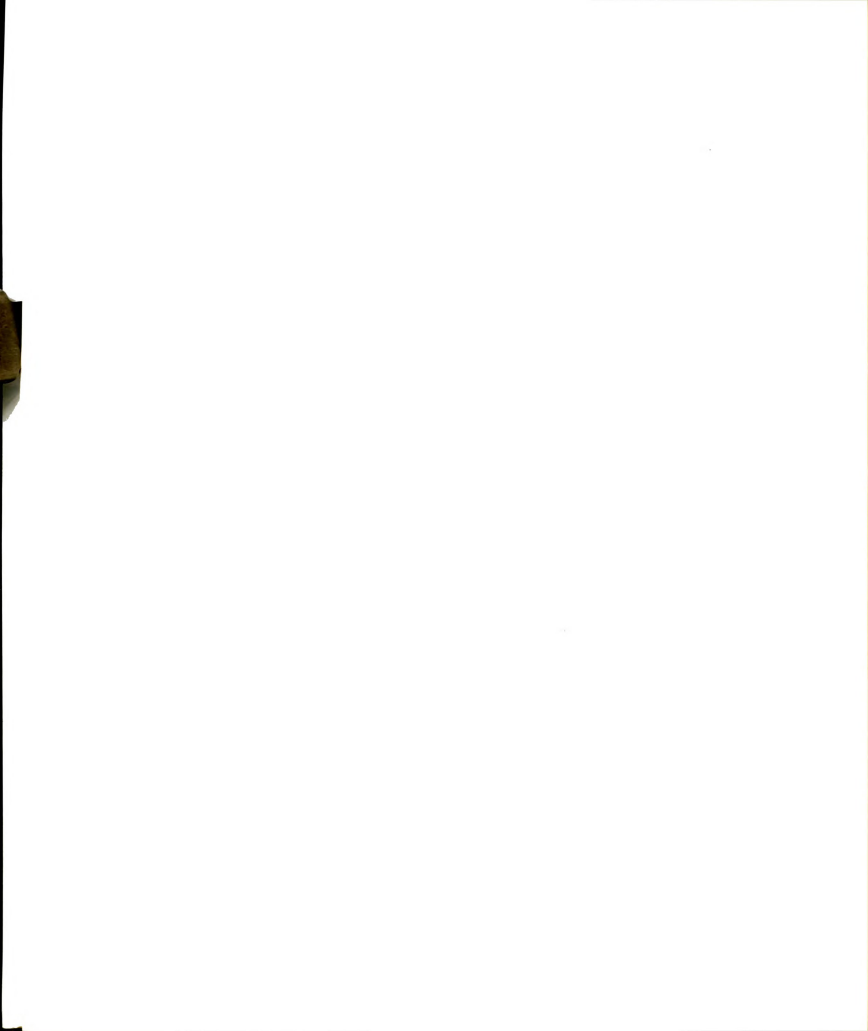
SARAH To each other! Is sex what we've been delivering to each other?

TIMMERMAN (realizes) Funny how all of the importance in the world can somehow be reduced down to that. Sex.

SARAH It's so simulated.

TIMMERMAN (laughs) You're goddamned right, it's simulated.

SARAH I want to live, Timmerman. Live! I want to take the past and somehow abort that, not this life which expands (holds stomach) right here beneath my very heart, and lungs, and within my soul.



TIMMERMAN So you do have a soul!

SARAH (slow) I certainly do have a soul, a good one, and it's mine to keep! Just like something else inside of me is mine to keep!

TIMMERMAN You can't erase the past like that.

SARAH I know. But you can live with it! You're living proof and I will be too!

TIMMERMAN (he is touched. He begins to tear at the eyes) I want to confess to you one last bit of truth. Sarah, one last bit. I was wrong before. About love. Jesus, I'm fifty-five years old and I still am not positive what it is, but I know it's not what I mentioned before, that bit about using people. If I had to come up with a definition right this moment, I'd have to say that love is temporarily being towed inside of that soul of yours. Love wasn't there yesterday, and it may not be there tomorrow, but by God you keep it there today!

(SARAH rises, walks slowly toward the garage door)

TIMMERMAN You go and find that handsome boy and you deliver your love to him, where it belongs!

SARAH (inspired with hope) I will! (pause) What's next for you, Timmerman? I want to know what's next for you.

TIMMERMAN Ask yourself what happens next. After the prince arrives and the whole palace comes to life along with the princess. What happens next?

SARAH I forget.

TIMMERMAN (a playful bitterness) Must I lead you through life by the hand?



SARAH (to build his self-worth) I wish you would.

TIMMERMAN (a snap) They're hungry! All of them. All in the palace are starving, just dying with hunger, and so...

SARAH (remembers, joyfully) And so they feed! I remember. Most people think that's the end of the story, but it's not. They feed until they're nourished with energy, life!

TIMMERMAN (a pleased sigh) And so they feed.

SARAH But that's not the end of the tale either.

TIMMERMAN You're goddamned right! It's nowhere's near the end of the tale.

SARAH (to leave) Of course.

TIMMERMAN We're all strong, beautiful people, Sarah. All of us are! I know it seems, at times, as though we demand a lot and we fail a lot, but I think it's so we have that much more to deliver when the situation calls for it.

(a pause. he says, timidly) Don't you think, Sarah?

SARAH (states very firmly) Why, that's what I think!

(she exits quickly)

(as the lights dim out, TIMMERMAN frowns, he cleans himself up with a wash towel, lifts the television from the stand, and walks toward the door and in the direction of the house. Lights go to black.)







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