

CITIZEN RUTH

**MUSIC BY MICHAEL BRENNAN
BOOK AND LYRICS BY MARK LEYDORF**

**ADAPTED FROM THE SCREENPLAY
BY ALEXANDER PAYNE AND JIM TAYLOR**

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

<i>Come Home</i>	Company
<i>Patio Sealant Chorale</i>	Company
<i>God Help Me</i>	Ruth
<i>Pretty Decent People</i>	Norm, Gail, Ruth, Company
<i>We Are Here to Listen/Abortion Is Murder!</i>	Nurse Pat, Doctor Charlie, Company
<i>Fresh and Pretty</i>	Gail, Kathleen, Diane
<i>It's a Crazy World</i>	Norm, Gail, Harlan, Company
<i>Prosperity (The Jarvik Homeownership System)</i>	Jarvik
<i>You Hit My Child</i>	Gail, Norm
<i>There's a War On</i>	Diane, Rachel, Norm, Gail, Blaine, Ruth, Company

ACT II

<i>You Don't Know What It Means to Be a Sister</i>	Diane, Gail, Rachel, Norm, Kathleen Company
<i>The Moon Is My Mirror</i>	Diane, Rachel, Ruth
<i>From Our Hearts</i>	Norm
<i>What About What I Want?</i>	Ruth
<i>Leg to Stand On</i>	Harlan
<i>Prosperity/I Got Plans</i>	Ruth, Jarvik, Harlan
<i>Tanya's Law (From Our Hearts Reprise)</i>	Blaine, Company
<i>Bad Daughter</i>	Jesse/Rachel/Company
<i>Finale: Make a Little Room/Flying/I Need a New TV</i>	Ruth, Jesse, Blaine, Company

CAST OF CHARACTERS

ACTRESS 1

Ruth Stoops. A homeless drug addict — specifically, she huffs paint and glue — in her mid-30s. Ruth basically trades sex for dope, cash or a place to stay. She's a mother several times over, but a bad one: Two kids are in her brother's custody; a few others are in foster homes. She is a completely instinctual person with no attention span, no boundaries and no taste.

ACTRESS 2

Gail Stoney. Gail, a suburban homemaker in her early 40s, hasn't worked since her second child, Matthew, was born, except maybe to substitute teach. She and her husband Norm are very active with her church (probably Baptist) and the Babysavers, a pro-Life group. Gail almost died giving birth to Cheryl — and actually raising her may finish her off — but her 10-year-old, Matthew, is perfect, her "Little Miracle."

Offstage Little Girl. One of Ruth's daughters, a 4-year-old being raised by her uncle Tony.

Woman with Bullhorn. Ruth's Mom, in her late 50s, is the Mayor of Crazy. She forgot about Ruth and Tony many years ago — now she is Born Again.

ACTRESS 3

Diane Siegler. Diane cut her teeth fighting for the ERA back in the '70s, but her main passion is protecting a woman's right to Choose. Like many women her age (nearing 50?), she was married as a young woman, but at some point in her 30s came out as a lesbian. She lives on the family farm where she grew up, and works as an administrator at the small liberal arts college an hour away (where she met Rachel). Diane is fearless: She even poses as a pro-Life Babysaver...

Hardware Saleswoman. A check-out clerk at a Mom-and-Pop hardware store in town, she has sold Ruth many, many, many cans of paint. Too many cans to care any more.

Stoner. One of Cheryl's friends — owns the head shop in town.

ACTRESS 4

Cynta Stoops. Tony's wife. Cynta works the night shift at a factory. During the day she is raising her drug-addict sister-in-law's children.

Nurse Pat. Pat is a very religious woman — she lost her job at a local hospital for letting her beliefs interfere with the care of a patient. In her early 40s, she found a new home as the pregnancy counselor at the Babysavers' pro-Life clinic.

Rachel. Diane's brilliant, younger lover, a Women's Studies professor at the local liberal arts college, she gives all her spare hours to helping Diane and the other advocates at Women's Way.

Stoner. Another of Cheryl's high school pals. Ally Sheedy in *The Breakfast Club*.

ACTRESS 5

Kathleen. Years ago, Kathleen had an abortion in the town's maternity clinic; the experience devastated her. Now settling into middle age, she runs Kitty Kat's beauty parlor and devotes her spare time to saving babies.

Briana Miller. The state chair of Women's Way, Briana has been a feminist activist with Diane since at least the '80s. Like a lot of people who actually make a living as activists, Briana lacks the charisma of a Diane or the intellect of a Rachel, but she is a capable if timid administrator.

Farmer. A neighbor of Diane's who'd like to make a buck.

Jesse Dove. Jesse scored a major hit in the early '80s with "Bad Daughter." In the years since, she has become a chick-rock icon. Her personal story — battling a very public addiction to cocaine and alcohol — only adds to her mystique. Though she is not a lesbian, her most loyal fans *are*. She's a little bit Cheryl Crow, a little bit K.D. Lang, a little bit Tori Amos.

Stoner. Unclear whose friend she is; this is that person at the party who just giggles in a corner.

ACTRESS 6

Cheryl Stoney. Cheryl is 17, and repeating her junior year at high school. Sex, pot, loud music, slovenly clothes — she is into anything that will piss her parents off. But she is no fool, she disdains superficial rebellions (Goth youth culture) and prefers older college drop-outs for boyfriends. Her little brother Matthew is her nemesis. At some point after the play ends, Cheryl will spend a lot of time trying to corrupt him.

Cindy Lyndstrom. A young newswoman at Action Four News, Cindy is a go-getter with national ambitions, but local talent.

Opal Schneider. Opal is the chief nurse at the local Planned Parenthood clinic. She is also active with Women's Way. She's a bit of a nerd.

ACTOR 1

Norm Stoney. Norm is the local chair of Babysavers, which is almost a full-time job. But he also is an assistant manager at the town's Wal-2-Wal-Mart. He was not religious until he met Gail, but now he is a genuinely spiritual man who is eager to do the right thing by God and his family.

Ruth presents a special complication for him, because, frankly, he finds her hot.

Little Boy. Ruth's second son is 5 and living with Tony and Cynta. We hear him offstage.

ACTOR 2

Judge Richter. Richter is not an "activist" judge, per se, but he has run out of ways to motivate Ruth to get her act together. Oddly enough, his impulses — to sentence Ruth to "felony endangerment of her unborn child" and then to encourage her get an abortion — are weirdly pro-Life *and* pro-Choice. He just wants to make the best of a bad situation.

Harlan. Harlan lost his leg in the invasion of Baghdad; the experience deepened his virulent (and peculiar) political philosophy. A left-wing libertarian, he believes gays should marry, everyone should carry a gun, and no one should pay taxes. And he is so avidly pro-Choice that he works as a guard at the clinic free of charge. He probably has a secret weakness for Rachel.

Stoner. The guy who everyone is just a little uncomfortable with...

ACTOR 3

Officer Iverson. Failed his exam to become a detective many years ago. Now he is a tired family man sleep-walking toward his pension. Iverson proves that, contrary to what you see on TV,

much police work is very, very dull.

Stoner. Cheryl's boyfriend, a drop-out, maybe a mechanic in town.

Cameraman. Good at his job. Despises Cindy Lindstrom.

Larry Jarvik. In reality, Jarvik is a charismatic shyster (not on the national level, though his CD sales are climbing) who has learned to package simple financial advice in honeyed bathos. In Ruth's fantasy, he is a stud who has all the answers to her problems.

TV Salesman. A clerk at the electronics counter at the Wal-2-Wal-Mart.

ACTOR 4

Tony Stoops. Ruth's brother would like to get on with his life. He'd especially like to start his own family with Cynta, but the pressure of raising Ruth's kids (and constantly bailing her out) is gradually sapping him drying. Whereas Cynta's on a night shift, Tony works days.

Dr. Charlie. Charlie is a dishevelled mess; a middle-aged pro-Life ob/gyn who may or may not have a valid license; the last person you would want to climb into stirrups in front of.

Senator Blaine Gibbons. Blaine has enjoyed a meteoric political rise ala John McCain: He achieved national prominence as a young man (in the ministry, in his case); was encouraged to run for office by GOP leaders and won a seat in Congress easily; then picked up a Senate seat in a surprise upset before he was even 40. Now into his second term, he has presidential ambitions. Like all national politicians, he has a thick veneer and extremely sharp elbows.

Stoner. The guy running the radio station at the Community College.

ACTOR 5

Matthew Stoney. Matthew is indeed a "Little Miracle" (Gail was not expected to bear more children after Cheryl), and the Stoneys give him everything they've got. Matthew is 10 and already a brainiac. He loves building models. He wishes with all his heart that he could help his big sister be a better person.

Eric. A Senatorial Page for Blaine Gibbons. Actually, Eric owes his life to Blaine, who talked Eric's mother out of getting an abortion. Heart-warming as that is, there may also be sexual abuse, but that's a different play (that probably ends with him tending bar in Key West).

ACTOR 6

Guy Fucking Ruth. We see this 30-year-old druggie at the top of the show. After he finishes fucking Ruth (and the coke runs out), he kicks her out of his place.

Officer Bundy. A young policeman, Bundy is still excited by his job, even though he is just a beat cop. Don Knotts to Iverson's Andy Griffiths.

Peter. One of Rachel's students, Peter is a gay guy who is uncomfortable with men (they do exist). He is interning for Women's Way.

Kirk. Like Harlan, Kirk left Iraq with deepened convictions. Unlike Harlan, his injuries were mental, not physical, and his politics are to the right of John Birch.

Stoner. The guy who makes out with Ruth.

CAST OF CHARACTERS (BROADWAY)**ACTRESS 1****Ruth Stoops****ACTRESS 2****Gail Stoney****Offstage Little Girl****Woman w/Bullhorn (Ruth's Mom)****ACTRESS 3****Diane Siegler****Hardware Saleswoman****ACTRESS 4****Nurse Pat****Rachel****ACTRESS 5****Kathleen****Jesse Dove****ACTRESS 6****Cheryl Stoney****Cindy Lyndstrom****ACTRESS 7****Cynta Stoops****Briana Miller****Nurse Opal Schneider****ACTRESS 7****Cynta Stoops****Bailliff****Briana Miller****ACTOR 1****Norm Stoney****Offstage Little Boy****ACTOR 2****Tony Stoops****Harlan****ACTOR 3****Guy Fucking Ruth****Larry Jarvik****TV Salesman****ACTOR 4****Judge Richter****Senator Blaine Gibbons****ACTOR 5****Matthew Stoney****Eric****ACTOR 6****Officer Bundy****Peter****Kirk****ACTOR 7****Dr. Charlie****Farmer****Dr. Milton****ACTOR 8****Officer Iverson****Cameraman**

ACT I

OVERTURE

[There should be something “American” about the design of this play; but for practical purposes, the stage is bare. Immediate physical juxtapositions — especially in TV interviews — will be important. From time to time, actors in character will “stage manage” the transitions with other actors. The lights go black as we here the briefest of overtures.]

I.1 SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDWEST

[The lights rise to reveal a GUY fucking RUTH on a mattress while SHE watches TV. Some seconds pass. The GUY gets closer to orgasm; RUTH remains barely engaged.]

GUY: Fuck! Fuck! Take it... yeah. Take it.... Fuck! FUCK! Take it — Fuck! ...

[A WOMAN and a MAN enter and sing to RUTH.]

COME HOME

A WOMAN: *When you're sunk into a deep despair,*

A MAN: *Or you got a broken heart —*

DUET: *Come find a friend or two you know who'll care,
And get a brand new start!*

[The full COMPANY comes on.]

COMPANY: *Come home —
Every day you wrack your brains —
Wanna way to break your chains —
You know you wanna
Come home —
You need Pappa holding you,
Saying, Baby, don't be blue...
Cause home*

*Is where, when you go there, they have to take you in!
Come on home —
It don't matter where you been.*

[The COMPANY watches RUTH and the GUY face off. HE throws her jeans at her.]

RUTH: *[Struggling to put on her jeans]* But you said I could stay — I could sleep here tonight.

GUY: No way, bitch.

RUTH: Fuck. FUCK! Well, give me my fucking TV!

GUY: You want your TV? *[HE flings it offstage; there is a crash.]* There ya go, bitch.

RUTH: Fuck you! Fuck! *[SHE runs after the TV.]*

COMPANY: *Come home, and leave behind the drama,
Save it for TV.
Come home, you know you need your mamma...
What's it gonna be?
What have you been missing?
We are here to listen!
Come home —*

RUTH: *[Reentering with busted TV] GODDAMN MOTHER FUCKER! MOTHER-FUCKING ASSHOLE!*

COMPANY: *Come home —
When you've lost your way we're here —
Watch your problems disappear.
You know ya gotta
Come home —
Come on now, pick up the phone,
Why'd you want to be alone?
Cause home
Is where, when you go there, they have to take you in —*

[RUTH arrives at her brother's house. SHE knocks (or calls "Tony"). CYNTHIA appears.]

CYNTHIA: It's your fucking sister! I told you not to let her come around no more!

TONY: *[Entering, also shabbily dressed]* No.

RUTH: Come on, Tony, it's an emergency —

TONY: No —

RUTH: Please, Tony — just this once — I really need you.

[A LITTLE BOY and GIRL are heard offstage. THEY murmur softly throughout the scene.]

LITTLE BOY: Is that Mommy?

LITTLE GIRL: Mommy!!!!

TONY: *[Calling off]* No, it's not Mommy. Finish your Cocoa Puffs. *[pulling RUTH away from the "door"]* Are you high?

RUTH: No.

TONY: Sure.

RUTH: You gotta let me stay here a coupla days — I don't have anywhere to go.

TONY: I'm not letting you push and pull those kids like that. If you can't stay away from here, I'm gonna get a restraining order like the lady said.

RUTH: At least let me sleep in the garage again. I'm your sister — I don't got anywhere to go.

TONY: You'll probably be in jail again soon anyway.

RUTH: Did my check come?

TONY: I just gave you the last one a week ago. You probably don't even know what fucking day it is.

RUTH: I do too. *[TONY waits... SHE doesn't know.]* I just need money.

TONY: Get a job.

RUTH: *[Breaking down]* Tony, I need some money. I don't have anywhere to go. I'm hungry— what am I sposed to do? You're my only brother. Oh God...

TONY: Goddamnit... *[Digging out some money]* Here's fifteen dollars, but this is the last time. When your next check comes, you get it from me at work. Don't you ever, ever come here again.

RUTH: You're my brother, man.

TONY: I gotta think about those kids. When you show up all stoned, it just upsets 'em.

RUTH: How are they?

TONY: Del took a few steps yesterday...

RUTH: Can I have twenty?

[TONY leaves.]

I.2 A HARDWARE STORE, A LITTLE LATER

PATIO SEALANT CHORALE

[COMPANY members enter, bringing paint cans.]

SOPRANO: *Something stuck up in your craw?*

BASS: *Got a splinter in your paw?*

COMPANY: *Suckin Happy through a straw...*

[RUTH takes a spraycan to a SALESWOMAN.]

RUTH: Just the sealant.

HARDWARE LADY: May I ask what you're planning to use this for?

RUTH: I got money. Can't I buy something without being asked personal questions?

HARDWARE LADY: Yes, if you are going to use this product in a legal way.

RUTH: I got home improvements, okay?

[RUTH shakes the sealant as she goes. SOMEONE hands RUTH a beer in a paper bag.]

WOMEN: *Semi gloss latex... .*

Methyl-bromide-hydro-oxy .

Methyl-bromide-hydro-oxy. Vomiting!

Patio sealant! Patio sealant...

MEN: *Flammable...*

Out of reach of children...

May induce vomiting...

Quickly wash your eyes. Quickly wash your eyes!

[RUTH chugs the beer then tosses it offstage, but keeps the bag. SHE empties the sealant inside the bag, sucks in deep and throws her head back.]

WOMEN: *Shake it! Shake it!*

Flammable...

Ooo-ooo-oooh...

Induce vomiting! Vomiting...

If unconscious, give mouth to mouth resuscitation...

Give it mouth to mouth...

Give it mouth to mouth.

If unconsious, ahh-ahh!

MEN: *Shake it! Shake it!*

Flammable...

If ingested —

Induce vomiting! Vomiting...

Give it mouth to mouth,...

Give it mouth to mouth.

If unconsious, ahh-ahh!

[RUTH passes out, dropping the bag to reveal a face smeared with silvery paint. After a beat, TWO POLICE OFFICERS, BUNDY and IVERSON, tiptoe up to her.]

OFFICER IVERSON: Well, if it isn't the Benjamin Moore Bandit.

BUNDY: She looks like the tin man.

OFFICER IVERSON: Come on, Ruth...

[THEY bring RUTH to her feet.]

RUTH: HUUUUNNNH? Leave me AAAAHNG! — LEAVE ME ALONE!

[RUTH barfs on BUNDY.]

BUNDY: Christ — why can't she smoke crack like the rest of the country?

I.3 THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM, THE NEXT DAY

[A gavel bangs. The lights shift dramatically. BUNDY and IVERSON hold RUTH upright.]

JUDGE RICHTER: Ruth, do you know how many times you have appeared before me on the charge of criminal inhalation of flammable gases?

RUTH: Ff — seven?

JUDGE RICHTER: Fifteen. And how many times have we sent you to court-ordered rehabilitation in a detox facility?

RUTH: *[Makes an effort to count.]* Six?

JUDGE RICHTER: Ten, Ruth. Ten times.

[SOMEONE hands RICHTER a form. He scans it, takes off his glasses in disgust.]

JUDGE RICHTER: Ruth, are you aware that you are pregnant?

RUTH: Pregnant?

JUDGE RICHTER: Ruth, you have already been declared an unfit mother four times —

RUTH: No, wait, I was only unfit for the last two —

JUDGE RICHTER: Shut up. Given your record, and your willful negligence, I am going to do something unusual here. Now, I don't know if this will set a precedent, but I see no alternative but to charge you with a felony count of willful endangerment of your unborn child!

RUTH: Now wait a — !

JUDGE RICHTER: Court adjourned!

[As the POLICEMEN start to take RUTH out, RICHTER pulls RUTH aside.]

JUDGE RICHTER: Let me speak to her for a second.... Ruth, why don't you just make everything easier for all of us and just... Take *care of it*.

RUTH: Are you telling me to get rid of my baby?

JUDGE RICHTER: I'm just saying when you go to prison you can ask to see a doctor there, and...take care of it. And then we'll see about those charges.

[HE exits. The OFFICERS deposit RUTH by a dirty toilet. We hear bars slam shut.]

IVERSON: Sleep tight, Ruth.

BUNDY: Why don't they just get her spayed?

[RUTH slumps against the toilet.]

GOD HELP ME

RUTH: What am I gonna to do?

*God, I know we don't —
Our-Father-Art-whatever much.
Guess I'm always stoned,
And stoned you just don't stay in touch.
God, I know my brother —
He's right about me, I'm no good.
I'm a sucky mother —
I fuckin' did the best I could —!
I'm sorry, God.
I'm so, so bad,
And so, so sad.
Please, please help me God...
God, help me?*

*God, I'm such a mess.
I can't do rehab anymore,
Like I need the stress?
Guess nothin's easy when you're poor.
Prison — God, no way!
My kids won't see me for, like, a year.
Fucking Judge is gay —
He's fucked me good right up the rear —!
I'm sorry, God.*

*It's all been wrong,
For so goddamn long.
Please, please help me God...
God, help me... God, help me...
God help me?*

[RUTH collapses. We hear the sound of bars; some women's voices.]

BABY SAVERS: *We are marching onward,
Marching for our Savior.
Jesus, thou art Lord of all!*

[RUTH looks up, surprised, hopeful. Segue to NORM STONEY, in another pool of light, counting out money for the BAILLIFF/BUNDY.]

NORM: ...four hundred and sixty, eighty, ninety, ninety-five, ninety-six... *[GAIL and the BABY SAVERS join him.]* ...ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine, FIVE hundred!

BUNDY: Okay, sign here...

GAIL: You got here quick!

DIANE, KATHLEEN, PAT: Yeah Norm/Thanks/You're the best.

NORM: That's my job, girls. Now — Gail, I don't know about this woman —

GAIL: Ruth —

NORM: It's an awful lot of money.

GAIL: We'll get it back. Norm — she told us the Judge *ordered* her to get an abortion!

NORM: Well, I know, but...

[There's a buzz; RUTH enters from the other side.]

RUTH: Gosh, no one has ever paid my bail before! I feel like I won the lottery...

I.4 THE STONEYS' RESIDENCE, LATER

PRETTY DECENT PEOPLE

[NORM leads everyone out of the jail and into the Stoney residence: There's a dining table before a picture window; to one side, a fold-out sofa bed; to the other, a bathroom; somewhere there is a "nice" armchair.]

GAIL: Ruth, when we met you and heard about your case, why, I just knew we had to help.

NORM: *In a world that's mean and crazy,
With idiot judges who oughtta be judged,
Words are cheap and morals lazy,
Each good endeavor gets instantly fudged —
Still, if you look high and low
You will find wherever you go...
There are still some pretty decent people in the world.*

MATTHEW: *[Running on]* Mommy! Mommy!

GAIL: Here's my little miracle!

NORM: *Pretty decent people —
We anticipate your needs.
Good, upstanding people
With the guts to do good deeds.
Though the country's gone to hell
And every other soul's on sale —
There are still some pretty decent people in the world.*

[GAIL hands RUTH a glass of juice.]

MATTHEW: How was jail?

GAIL: Well, I made a new friend. Say hello to Ruth.

MATTHEW: Are you pregnant?

GAIL: Matthew!

*We know things are not real rosey
 When you're out there toughing it out on the streets.
 We'll make sure that you feel cozy —
 How long has it been since you slept on clean sheets?
 You can stay as long as you like...
 No one to tell you, Take a hike!
 There are still some pretty decent people in the world.*

Pretty decent people **[RUTH starts to sit in a chair.]**

To put a roof above your head.

Fine and friendly people **NORM:** Ruth, we don't really sit in that chair.

Who will tuck you into bed.

You can rest assured tonight, **RUTH:** Oh, Sorry.

NORM: *Su casa es mi casa, right?*

NORM AND GAIL: *There are still some pretty decent people in the world.*

RUTH: This is so great, cause I'm kind of, you know, between places right now.

GAIL: Why don't you freshen up, and we'll get dinner going.

[As NORM and GAIL start dinner, the COMPANY enters, celebrating RUTH's good luck.]

COMPANY: *God looked down on you and he sent
 Angels merciful and kind.
 They're your friends in every season —
 Just the best folks you can find.
 Yes, they're so generous and decent,
 They won't punish or rebuke.
 No, they don't care just how recent
 You were passed out in your puke!
 Pretty decent people
 Like good neighbors, they are there.
 Clean, good-smelling people
 With some righteousness to share.
 Now it's time wash away
 All the stench of yesterday.
 Thank God there are pretty decent people in the world.*

NORM: You do like steak, don't you?

[GAIL has handed RUTH a towel. RUTH sings a gentle reprise.]

RUTH: *Sure the world is mean and crazy:
Judges and cops and my brother, that fuck!
Maybe I'm a little hazy,
But I think I just stumbled into some luck.
Ruth, forget the mess you were
Try some deep conditioner!
There are still some pretty decent people in the world.*

[There's a pause. The STONEYS are sitting at the table, waiting...]

MATTHEW: Mom. I'm hungry. Do we still have to wait for that lady?

GAIL: Yes, young man. She's our guest.

NORM: She's been in there over an hour, for gosh sakes.

GAIL: Norm, don't start. It's probably the first bath she's had in God knows how long —

NORM: Gail, I'm just saying you have to be more careful with these people — think of Matthew.

MATTHEW: Mom, can I at least have a snack?

NORM: That's it.

[NORM marches over and calls politely.]

NORM: Ruth? Ruth, soup's on...

[RUTH runs on half dressed.]

NORM: Uh, sorry. I was just... Dinner's ready. *[Beating a hasty retreat.]* She was just — uh, I think I — uh — gave her quite a shock!

GAIL: Poor thing.

[RUTH enters.]

RUTH: I must have fell asleep...

GAIL: Of course you did... Bless your heart. Here.

MATTHEW: Who's wearing all the perfume?

NORM: Matthew, manners.

[A door slams somewhere.]

GAIL: That must be Cheryl. She's our oldest. *[Calling inside.]* Cheryl?

CHERYL: What?

NORM: Aren't you going to welcome your mother back?

CHERYL: Hi Mom.

GAIL: You're just in time for dinner.

CHERYL: I'm not hungry.

GAIL: We have a guest. Sit down with us anyway. I'd like you to meet Ruth Stoops. She's going to be staying with us for a while.

CHERYL: You pregnant?

RUTH: How'd you know?

CHERYL: Lucky guess.

NORM: Matthew, would you care to do the honors?

MATTHEW: *Bless our humble dinner,
Jesus, Lord and savior.
And we pray for Africa.*

NORM: And Jesus, thank You for reuniting our family around this table, and for the miracle of

bringing Ruth into our lives.

GAIL, NORM, MATTHEW: Amen.

NORM: So, Ruth, have you, uh, told...you know?

RUTH: Told what?

GAIL: Norm —

NORM: You know, told the father?

CHERYL: Any idea who it is?

GAIL: Cheryl!

MATTHEW: What do you mean?

NORM: Matthew — Why don't you get your models to show Ruth?

RUTH: I think — could it be — the last time we fucked was like three days ago —

GAIL AND NORM: RUTH!

RUTH: It better not be Raoul — Fuck!

GAIL AND NORM: RUTH!

MATTHEW: Who was Raoul?

RUTH: This total asshole. He was all, I want you to be my girl — and then he robbed me.

NORM: Ruth —

RUTH: I was staying in my brother's garage — and they didn't want him there, so Raoul says, I got this apartment — I just need a hundred dollars, and I got Tony to give it to me, and like, Raoul disappeared.

GAIL: That's awful. Well —

RUTH: — And then he just shows up one night, and he’s got this big gnarly bruise, And I’m like, Where’s my fucking money!?

NORM: Ruth — language, Ruth.

MATTHEW: Did he spend it?

RUTH: He doesn’t remember, he says. So I says, “Raoul, get out of here! I hate you! Get out! You’re like all the others — I trusted you and you let me down.”

MATTHEW: Then what happened?

RUTH: He just, like, freaks out — and takes this knife and cuts his arm, and all this blood shoots out all over and he, like, tries to wipe it all over me before I can even get my clothes on—

GAIL AND NORM: Ruth — Ruth —

MATTHEW: Wow!

GAIL: Go get your models!

MATTHEW: But —

NORM: Matthew!

MATTHEW: OK.

[MATTHEW exits.]

GAIL: Norm, would you set up Ruth’s bed while I clear the table? You just relax, Ruth.

RUTH: Huh?

GAIL: Cheryl, you wanna help me out with the dishes?

CHERYL: I’ve got homework.

GAIL: Cheryl!

[CHERYL’s gone. MATTHEW brings over a few models.]

MATTHEW: *These are all my models,
Cars and boats and airplanes,
And my latest — Noah's Ark.*

Pretty neat, huh? There's Noah on top, and when it's finished...there's all the animals, see?

[RUTH isn't listening; SHE's found MATTHEW's model glue.]

MATTHEW: Look out you guys, we're caught in a big storm... Arrrrgggggh... So — why don't you have any kids?

RUTH: I got a little boy about your age somewhere.

[GAIL turns back to the table. RUTH stuffs the glue into her pocket.]

GAIL: OK, bedtime, Matthew. Say goodnight to our guest...

MATTHEW: Goodnight, Ruth.

RUTH: Night?

[As GAIL leads RUTH over to the sofa, we hear blaring rock music.]

GAIL: He's our little miracle. After I gave birth to Cheryl I almost died. *[In a sudden fury]* **CHERYL!** They told me I couldn't have another baby. Then God sent us Matthew.

RUTH: Wow. *[Pause]* Can I watch TV?

GAIL: Oh, we don't have a TV.

[NORM appears with sheets and starts unfolding the sofa bed.]

NORM: Let's get you settled, huh?

GAIL: You're gonna need some more blankies!

[GAIL exits.]

NORM: Now Ruth, we want you to get a good night's sleep and tomorrow you can tell me

everything about your case. We're going to help you fight this, Ruth. *[NORM gets distracted looking at the bed.]* Well, this brings back memories. My old bachelor bed.

RUTH: Yeah? *[RUTH collapses next to him.]* This couch?

NORM: Uh huh. This couch saw quite a few...wrestling matches...

RUTH: God I'm beat. *[SHE closes her eyes.]*

NORM: I wasn't always such a fuddy duddy.... I smoked a few roaches in my time. Yes, I was quite a sinner before I married Gail.

[GAIL enters with a blanket.]

GAIL: Norm, you're not boring Ruth to death now, are you? Can't you see she's all ready for the sandman? *[To Ruth]* You know, Ruth, it's hard for us to understand all you've been through. But we do understand pain, and we know that sometimes the Lord tests us.

NORM: Yes, He does.

GAIL: But you're safe here.

RUTH: *[Breaking down]* I...I've been so lucky to meet you. Nobody's been nice to me in — a long time.

GAIL: Oh... Now, first thing in the morning, we'll take you to the clinic. They're real professionals. Everything's gonna be just fine.

RUTH: I'm really gonna clean up my life this time. Everything would be great if I could just get off the paint.

NORM: Well, it's been an emotional day. But we're together now in an atmosphere of Christ's love.

GAIL: Praise him.

GAIL AND NORM: *Jesus watches over, watches while we slumber,
Heavens praise his loving gaze.*

GAIL, NORM AND RUTH: *Amen.*

[Blackout. A door creaks. CHERYL, tiptoeing across the room, bumps into RUTH's sofa.]

RUTH: What? Who is it?

CHERYL: It's me, Cheryl. Go back to sleep.

RUTH: What do you want?

CHERYL: I'm just on my way out — you know, through the garage. Don't narc on me, okay?

RUTH: Where you going?

CHERYL: Just out... to party.

[RUTH sits up.]

RUTH: Party? Fuck yeah!

[Black out. Suddenly it is morning. MATTHEW skips across the stage singing as the STONEY's house transitions into the clinic.]

MATTHEW: *Sun is shining brightly!
Birds are singing sprightly!
Hope ya had a good night's sleep...
When you're livin' rightly,
Angels hold you tightly —
And you can't wait to hear the clock go BEEP!*

I.5 A MATERNITY CLINIC, LATER

[GAIL walks in with RUTH, who is deathly hungover.]

GAIL: I guess eight was too early to make your appointment, huh, Little Miss Sleepyhead? I had a devil of a time getting you up! You sure you don't want to go grab an Egg McMuffin — ?

[RUTH almost barfs, but GAIL doesn't notice.]

RUTH: You got a cigarette?

GAIL: Of course not, Ruth. And you shouldn't be smoking anyway with a baby on the way!

RUTH: I don't feel like doing this. I don't feel so good.

GAIL: I know it's scary, but you have to be brave. You're gonna be in the best hands at the clinic. Before you know it, you'll be as right as rain.

[NURSE PAT enters.]

GAIL: Here's Pat!

NURSE PAT: You must be Ruth! So happy to meet you. Gail, why don't you — *[PAT hands her Good Housekeeping.]* — we won't be a minute.

[GAIL gives RUTH a squeeze and exits. PAT sits RUTH down.]

PAT: So. Congratulations! I understand that you have a baby on the way! How about that?

RUTH: Well, I guess I need to find out about getting an abortion.

[Awkward pause.]

WE ARE HERE TO LISTEN

PAT: *I think you're upset right now,
Take a breath, relax...
You don't have the Whys and Hows
All the brutal facts.
I want you to talk to me,
Tell me how you feel.
I'm your friend, and I can see
You need time to heal.
We are here to listen,
We are here as friends.
Here to get you through this
And help you make amends.
Yes, we are here to listen —*

*Cause you'll be back next year
The baby you'll be kissin'
Will be so glad he's here.*

RUTH: Yeah. I can't have another baby right now. I mean, I am in a awful, awful situation right now —

PAT: I know, Ruth.

*It's time for you to stop and think,
Why don't we assume:
A little baby, cute and pink,
Is growing in your womb!
Let's just sit and talk this out.
Tell me what you need.
Though your heart is filled with doubt,
Don't make your baby bleed!
We are here to listen.
Would you like to pray?
Spend some time with Jesus —
He'll show you the way.
Yes, we are here to listen
And keep your baby well.
Just think what you'll be missin',
If he winds up in a pail!*

COMPANY: *[Offstage back-up vocals.]*

Ruth, I don't think you realize what it means to have an abortion.

RUTH: Uh, it means I don't have to go to jail, and I don't have to have another baby, and I get to start getting my life together —

PAT: I, I, I, I, I. Pretty selfish, aren't we? Isn't there someone we're leaving out of our considerations?

[RUTH stares at her blankly. NURSE PAT calls into the next office.]

PAT: Dr. Charlie, would you like to come in here and tell Ruth about her baby?

DR. CHARLIE: *[Entering]* Why, yes, of course.

PAT: Ruth here has a baby on the way, but she's thinking she might like to get an abortion.

DR. CHARLIE: Oh my! *[He pulls out a plastic walnut-sized baby.]*

*Your baby is already well on his journey.
He's got his own teeny heart beat!
His little arms wiggle, his head he can turn,
He's stretching his tiny feet!*

Here... you want to hold him? *[Handing RUTH the doll]* How's it feel to hold your baby?

RUTH: He has a little thingy.

DR. CHARLIE: Well, of course he has a little thingy. He's a boy! Would you like a little boy?

RUTH: What do you mean?

DR. CHARLIE: Well, we're just talking.... Suppose you decide to keep your baby. Would you like a little boy or a little girl?

RUTH: A girl, maybe?

DR. CHARLIE: Awww. A little girl. And what are we going to name this little bundle of love? Jennifer?

RUTH: Tanya?

PAT AND DR. CHARLIE: *Okay! We'll call her Tanya!
Such a pretty name!
If you can't take her on-ya,
Adoption is okay!*

CHARLIE: *Course, she might be retarded
If you keep sniffin' paint.*

PAT: *Her new life has just started,*

But some day, if you quit, she will look up at her loving adoptive parents and say:

PAT AND CHARLIE: *“My real Mommy was a saint!”*

RUTH: Are you people fucking deaf?!?! I said I wanted a fucking abortion!!

[Another pause]

CHARLIE: You like the movies, Ruth? We have a nice movie to show you...

ABORTION IS MURDER!

[THEY swivel RUTH around. Stark light slashes the stage. NOTE: If actual film is used, it should be of May Day in Red Square, landfills, forest fires—not actual pro-Life propaganda.]

COMPANY: *Abortion is murder! Abortion is murder!
Innocent children slaughtered!
A holocaust! A holocaust! A holocaust!
Babies' bodies dumped in dumpsters!*

[Lights up on RUTH in a horrified daze; GAIL has moved in beside her.]

GAIL: Good movie, huh?

RUTH: I slept in a dumpster once... Maybe I slept on some babies?

GAIL: Someone needs cheering up! We need to visit Kitty Kat's!

I.6 KITTY KAT'S SALON, A LITTE LATER

[GAIL and RUTH enter KITTY KAT's salon. DIANE and KATHLEEN are waiting for them.]

GAIL: Hey, Kitty Kat!

KATHLEEN: Well, hello, Gail!

GAIL: Diane, what are you doing here?

DIANE: Oh, I was just up at Curves. Just — saying hi. Hi, Ruth!

GAIL: You remember Diane, from jail? And Kathleen?

RUTH: Hey...

GAIL: Ruth here could sure use a little Kitty Kat magic. We just came from the clinic —

KATHLEEN: Aren't they nice?

[RUTH doesn't say anything.]

GAIL: Ruth got a little emotional, you know?

DIANE: I bet you did.

KATHLEEN: Well, you know what, a makeover is just the thing.

GAIL: Kathleen's done my hair for years.

RUTH: Wow.

KATHLEEN: Thanks, thanks.

DIANE: You have such pretty hair, Ruth — I bet Kathleen'll do something real special.

KATHLEEN: Sure thing! What should we try?

RUTH: Just — something new, I guess.

FRESH AND PRETTY

[During the song, KATHLEEN does RUTH's hair, DIANE and GAIL helping as needed.]

GAIL: When Kat is done with you, no one will ever suspect you were out sniffing drugs a few days ago.

KATHLEEN: *Fresh and pretty...squeaky clean!
You'll look like a kitty who's licked all in between.
It's time to purr, forget who you were,
That was just a nasty dream...
You'll look great, it ain't too late*

*To feel real fresh and clean.
You've had such a nasty ride —
So many bruises and bumps on your hide!
Your luck lost, your karma cooked:
When they gave out guardian angels,
You got overlooked!
Don't look back — slam that door!
Forget the drugs and whore no more!*

DIANE: Gail!

GAIL AND KATHLEEN: *Fresh and pretty...*

DIANE: *Squeaky clean...*

GAIL AND KATHLEEN AND DIANE: *Goodbye to gritty, this girl has got a gleam!
With just a touch of girly blush
We'll paint your church Sistine!
You look swell, no one could tell —
All the beds you've seen.*

GAIL: Do you have any girlfriends, Ruth?

RUTH: I ain't a lesbian.

GAIL: Oh gosh — Yuck! — No, that's not what I mean... You know, a buddy?

RUTH: Oh — no, mostly I hang out with guys, you know.

GAIL: You're a real tomboy, huh?

*Bet you've never had a friend,
A real gal pal to comprehend
All the things that us girls go through.
If I only had my husband,
Boy would I be screwed!*

DIANE: Gail!

GAIL: *He can't grasp a woman's mind...*

His brain is stuck in my behind!

KATHLEEN: Ain't it the truth!

GAIL, KATHLEEN AND DIANE: *Fresh and pretty, squeaky clean...*

KATHLEEN: *Though it's a pity your past is so obscene.*

DIANE: *The cure for yer odometer,
Is just a new routine.*

GAIL: *Prayer's the grease to give you peace —
And keep your engine clean.*

[Praying] *I ask you, God, with all my soul:
Forgive our sins and make us whole.
Pretty is as pretty does —
You'll be gorgeous here with us!*

[Back to RUTH]

GAIL, KATHLEEN AND DIANE: *Fresh and pretty, squeaky clean...
Come-back committee, it's time to crown a queen!
You're Marilyn, but turned again
To little Norma Jean!
Trust your gut, you're not a slut!
You're really fresh and clean.*

GAIL: *Like Magdalene, you'll start again,
The prettiest, niftiest Mamma
That's ever, ever been!*

GAIL, KATHLEEN AND DIANE: *Clean and pretty, fresh and fair,
Pretty, fresh and clean!*

[NORM enters in his Wal-2-Wal-Mart vest, holding a big box of flyers.]

NORM: Well hello there!

KATHLEEN AND DIANE: Hi there, Norm.

NORM: I figured you'd be here —

GAIL: Are those the Baby Savers flyers? Weren't you gonna leave those at the checkout?

NORM: Well, I did — and, well, Frank was mainaging today —

GAIL: Oh God.

NORM: He wasn't too happy about it.

DIANE: Oh, isn't that just stupid!

KATHLEEN: Idiot.

NORM: I had to collect carts.

GAIL: I'm sorry honey.

NORM: Ruth! Don't you look pretty...

RUTH: I feel like a princess.

NORM: Listen — there's something I want to show you.

[NORM hands RUTH a newspaper.]

GAIL: *[Reading over her shoulder]* "Homeless Woman Charged With Endangering Fetus."

RUTH: Shit! I hate that picture.

NORM: It's a fine picture.

RUTH: I don't want anyone knowing my business. Why do they care about me? I didn't do nothing...

NORM: Now, now. Try to calm down. Ruth, I'm afraid that, whether you like it or not, this article's only the beginning.

GAIL: Well. We need to scoot. Gotta get supper going. Kathleen — thank you SO MUCH! Ruth?

RUTH: I hate this! I don't want anyone knowing anything.

[RUTH ignores the women. THE STONEYS exit as their hone emerges.]

I.7 THE STONEYS', MOMENTS LATER

NORM: A lot of reporters are calling, even from TV stations. They're so antsy one of them even tracked me down at the store. Pretty soon we're gonna have to decide what to do about 'em.

RUTH: Shit!

GAIL: Ruth. Now. Don't you worry about any of that. You just relax while I put dinner on.

[GAIL and NORM begin microwaving leftover Kentucky Fried Chicken.]

RUTH: Okay.

[RUTH sits on the sofa. After a beat, SHE pulls out her walkman and pushes PLAY. Nothing happens. SHE pulls out the CD and sees it is terribly scratched. SHE puts it down.]

RUTH: Fucking piece of shit. *[To GAIL and NORM]* Why don't you guys have a TV?

NORM: If we did, we might start watching it!

[HE laughs. RUTH doesn't get it. SHE looks around and sees a CD case. SHE opens it, puts the CD in her walkman, returns to the sofa and pushes PLAY.]

A WOMAN'S VOICE: The Larry Jarvik Homeownership System, Disc One.

[LARRY JARVIK, drop-dead gorgeous and covered in sequins, saunters in, giving RUTH quite a shock. After a huge arpeggio, the underscoring for "Prosperity" begins.]

LARRY JARVIK: Want to own your own home? Good. Get a pen handy.

[RUTH looks around for a pen but sees none.]

RUTH: Shit. *[RUTH screams for NORM and GAIL]* You got a pen?

NORM: Dinner's about ready, Ruth.

LARRY JARVIK: *The Jarvik homeownership system is here to make your day.
The Jarvik homeownership system will take your cares away!*

GAIL: Come on, Ruth!

RUTH: Whatever.

[RUTH turns the tape off. JARVIK vanishes. RUTH joins the STONEYS at the table.]

GAIL: Matthew?

MATTHEW: *Bless our humble dinner,
Jesus, Lord and savior.
And we pray for India.*

GAIL: Now, tuck in! Ruth, remember, you're eating for two now.

[The doorbell rings. PETER, SONIA and RACHEL wait in a clump upstage.]

NORM: Might be another reporter. I'll take care of them.

[OFFSTAGE we hear NORM opening the front door, then:]

PETER, POSING AS REPORTER: May we speak to Ruth Stoops? — Where is she?

NORM: No... No —

FEMINISTS: You can't speak for her — Where is she? — You can't keep her locked up! — Ruth! — Ruth!

NORM: No — Because I'm telling you you can't — I'm asking you to get off my property!

MATTHEW: It's them!

PETER: Ruth Stoops? Can you hear me? Are you in there?

RACHEL: Ruth, don't let these people brainwash you!

[We hear a door slam; NORM returns.]

RUTH: Who was that?

MATTHEW: The enemy!

NORM: Just a coupla loonies crawling out of the woodwork. I mean, we're having dinner here!

GAIL: Why can't these people just mind their own business?

[The FEMINISTS appear at a "window" near the table.]

FEMINISTS: Ruth! — Ruth! —

NORM: Get off my property, now! All right, that does it.

[NORM runs off.]

GAIL: Go away! Get out of here! Matthew, go to your room!

BRIANA: We need to speak to Ruth —

FEMINISTS: Ruth! — Ruth!

[NORM brings on a shotgun. The FEMINISTS scatter.]

NORM: I said, *GET OFF MY PROPERTY!*

GAIL: Yeah! That got 'em!

NORM: They won't be bothering us again.

[GAIL and NORM, triumphant, form an NRA-style "American Gothic" tableau.]

RUTH: Are they crazy or something?

IT'S A CRAZY WORLD

GAIL: That's right, Ruth. They are crazy.

NORM: *Every day it's getting worse —
A girl gets mugged, they snatch her purse.*

GAIL: Oh yeah — tell her about Linda, Norm.

NORM: Linda, cute girl down at Wal-2-Wal.

*She tells the cops — but what's the use?
Some kids, little black kids, on the loose —
I'm not racist — I like blacks —
But honestly, once they start smoking cracks —!
We pay our taxes — but all in vain.
I start to wonder if I've gone insane!*

GAIL: Oh — it is definitely not you, Norm.

*On TV we saw that guys
Can get engaged and dress like brides —*

NORM: Oh! Yes! This makes me sick to my stomach!

GAIL: *They buy a child from Pakistan
Call it a wedding, hire a band.
They disco-dance the night away —
Which guy throws the gay bouquet?
That's not normal — it's just a shame!
I tell you, the whole world's gone insane.*

NORM AND GAIL: *It's a crazy world,*

GAIL: *With crazy faeries floating down the aisle.*

NORM: *Crazy — and we're s'posed to stand there,
Throw the rice and smile?!*

GAIL: *It's crazy: They want the whole world rearranged —
Next they will marry their dogs — it's deranged!*

NORM AND GAIL: *It's crazy!*

[NORM begins unfolding the bed.]

GAIL: Well. We should get ready for bed!

RUTH: It's not even dark out —

GAIL: We have a big day tomorrow!

RUTH: What happens tomorrow?

NORM: It's a surprise, Ruth...

I.8 ANOTHER CLINIC, THE NEXT MORNING

IT'S A CRAZY WORLD (CONTINUED)

[Lights shift. HARLAN rolls out some chainlink fence and plants himself at one end of it. BABY SAVERS enter, led by KIRK, a deranged vet in fatigues.]

KIRK: The Lord sayeth, “suffer the little children to come unto me.”

HARLAN: And suffer the raving nutbags to come unto *me*. Get behind the line, Kirk.

*Cuckoo Christians — Nazi nuts —
 Their heads are thicker than their butts.
 Got their guns to make 'em free —
 But they can't spell democracy!
 Why go fight the Taliban —
 And not the fucking born again?
 Goddamn morons on a God campaign —
 I tell you, the whole world's gone insane.
 It's a crazy world,
 With crazy Christians screamin' 'Jesus saves!'
 Crazy — save me your 'Jesus!',
 Brainwashed Bible slaves...
 It's crazy — go hang on a cross if you must,
 Don't tell me some mighty God I must trust! It's crazy!*

NORM: *CAR!*

[We hear a car. The BABY SAVERS follow it along the edge of the stage, screaming.]

GAIL: *[Overlapping]* **BABY KILLERS!** — **KATHLEEN:** *LET ME RAISE YOUR BABY!* —
NURSE PAT: *JESUS LOVES THE LITTLE CHILDREN!* — **KIRK:** *BABY KILLERS!* —
DIANE: *MURDERERS! MURDERERS!*

HARLAN: You want me to call the police again? Get behind the line!

COMPANY: *It's a crazy world
With crazy wackos losing their loose screws.
Crazy — hell — might as well join 'em —
Let's all blow a fuse!
It's crazy — there's quacks selling crazy at malls!
Better buy padding for all of your walls!
It's crazy! Crazy! It's crazy!*

HARLAN: Okay, now. Back up. You've done your job...

KIRK: It's a business. Contract killing at \$400 a head...

[NORM pats KIRK on the back; HE continues mumbling under his breath as he leaves.]

RUTH: Is he all right?

NORM: Kirk? Sure. He's just very... passionate. Now. Who wants a donut?

[NORM opens a box of donuts.]

GAIL: Hope you saved me a jelly-filled.

NORM: Here you go. Diane?

DIANE: Thanks, Norm. *[Taking a donut]* Ruth, I think it's so wonderful! Gail has been going on and on about how you're going to give up drugs and have your baby.

RUTH: She has?

DIANE: Is it true?

NORM: We're very proud of her. She has really turned her life around. And we are going to take care of that legal — *CAR!*

[The scene unfolds as before along the edge of the stage.]

BABY SAVERS: *We can help you! — Why should the size of a baby be the only criterion for loving it?! — Let us talk to you! — If you think you'll be haunted by your child's being alive, imagine how you'll feel after you kill it! — Please don't kill our baby!*

HARLAN: Okay, everybody. You did your job! Back up! *BACK UP!* Get behind the injunction lines. I'm talking federal law, bud, you know the routine.

KATHLEEN: I know exactly how these girls feel. Years ago I had an abortion in this place, too, and it destroyed me. I think about my dead baby all the time...

DIANE: If only these women knew what they were doing, they wouldn't do it.

[CINDY LYNDSTROM approaches RUTH and taps her shoulder.]

CINDY: Ruth Stoops?

RUTH: Yeah.

CINDY: Hi, I'm Cindy Lyndstrom, Action News Four. You're a hard woman to get a hold of! Can I ask you a few questions about your case?

RUTH: No — I don't want anybody knowing my business. Get away from me!

NORM: *[Stepping in between RUTH and CINDY]* Op, op, op — whoa. Hold on a minute. Miss Stoops does not want to speak to the press. This is a very private, very personal matter for Ruth and us.

CINDY: I think she can speak for herself.

RUTH: I said I don't want people knowing my business!

[RUTH stomps away.]

NORM: *[Quietly handing CINDY a card]* If you have any questions, you can contact me.

[CINDY exits.]

RUTH: Can we go now? I don't feel so good. I got a bad headache.

DIANE: Why don't you go sit down somewhere and have something to drink?

RUTH: I wish I could take a dump — I'm so constipated.

GAIL: You poor thing. You sit down — would that feel better?

RUTH: Okay. Yeah.

GAIL: Holler if you need anything, okay, honey?

[RUTH nods. The BABY SAVERS exit. RUTH pulls out her Walkman and hits PLAY.]

PROSPERITY (THE JARVIK HOMEOWNERSHIP SYSTEM)

A VOICE: The Larry Jarvik Homeownership System, Disc One.

[LARRY JARVIK enters.]

LARRY JARVIK: Want to own your own home? Good. Get a pen handy.

[RUTH looks around for a pen but sees none.]

RUTH: Shit.

LARRY JARVIK: *The Jarvik homeownership system is here to make your day.
The Jarvik homeownership system will take your cares away!*

You are prosperous.

You spend wisely; you always have enough.

You're successful in every endeavor,

Reaping riches from everything you touch.

You are productive; you're bold, and you're clever.

You're saying no to charity —

You accept prosperity!

Now — what's your earning potential?

RUTH: I don't know.

JARVIK: It's limitless.

*Believe in You and you'll feel better.
Don't need that glue to keep it together.
You're letting go of poverty —
You accept prosperity!*

So! — How much income can you set aside each month?

[RUTH looks at him, dumbfounded.]

RUTH: Fuck off.

[SHE pushes STOP; the music crashes to a halt and JARVIK exits. RUTH produces the model glue, opens the cap and starts to huff. After a beat, MATTHEW enters, eating a candy bar.]

MATTHEW: Ruth? Hey — you wanna bite?

RUTH: Go away, kid!

MATTHEW: What are you doing? Is that my model glue? You're not sposed to smell it like that.

RUTH: Leave me alone.

MATTHEW: Mom! Dad!

[RUTH lunges for MATTHEW.]

RUTH: I said shut up, you little motherfucker!

MATTHEW: Owwwwwww!

[GAIL comes running, NORM right on her heels.]

NORM: What's going on here?

RUTH: Nothing.

MATTHEW: I found her smelling my model glue and she hit me!

YOU HIT MY CHILD?

GAIL: *You. Hit. My. Child?*

You hit my child!

You hit my miracle, my Matthew meek and mild!

You hit my child...

Can you explain? Are you insane?

Did some cocaine explode a vein inside your brain?

[To MATTHEW] *Are you in pain?*

[To NORMAN] *That Woman hit my child!*

RUTH: I hate cocaine —

NORM: *Give me that glue! Just give it to me!*

I want you off drugs right now!

[To GAIL] *What can we do? Huh? What'll it be?*

Can we lock her away somehow?

[To RUTH] *We took you in, not a “thank you” or a “please” —*

You lied to us, lied to us, lied!

You're full of sin, of sin and disease —

You've got the devil inside.

[DIANE and KATHLEEN arrive.]

GAIL: **[To DIANE and KATHLEEN]**

She hit my child! She hit my child!

She just went wild

My little boy has been defiled!

My precious child...

What could be worse? The way you curse — it's so perverse —

[To NORM] *Where is my purse?*

[To RUTH] *You hit my child! MY CHILD!*

NORM: *You've got the devil inside!*

[KATHLEEN hustles MATTHEW away.]

RUTH: I'm a bad person. I know I'm a bad person.

GAIL: We're all sinners, Ruth. But that doesn't mean you can smell drugs, especially when an innocent baby suffers for it!

RUTH: I'm sorry! Don't hit me...please don't hit me. I'm sorry. I won't do it again. I'm sorry...

GAIL: *[To NORM]* That woman is not coming back into my house. We have to think of Matthew.

NORM: What are we supposed to do? Put her back on the street? You know what she'll do without us.

DIANE: Listen, you two. All this burden doesn't have to rest on your shoulders. Let me take Ruth for a while. *[Pause]* No, really.

GAIL: Gosh, Diane, that's a lot to ask. You don't know what you're getting into —

DIANE: You know I used to work with substance abusers back in Wyoming. Maybe I can control her.

NORM: You're sure about this, Diane?

DIANE: Oh yeah. We'll be fine. Come on, Ruth. You're coming with me today.

GAIL: Don't forget, she has another counseling session tomorrow.

DIANE: All righty!

[The BABY SAVERS exit.]

DIANE: I live a little ways in the country, Ruth. You'll really like it...

I.9 DIANE'S FARM/WASHINGTON, D.C., LATER THAT AFTERNOON

[No time has passed, yet DIANE and RUTH have arrived.]

DIANE: Well! Here we are.

[DIANE hands RUTH a glass of orange juice.]

RUTH: Gosh, this is nice. Do *you* have a TV?

DIANE: Sure, Ruth... *[RACHEL enters.]* Ruth, this is Rachel. She lives with me here.

RACHEL: Hi, Ruth!

RUTH: Hi...

RACHEL: Can I get you some juice?

RUTH: Um, okay?

[RACHEL exits.]

DIANE: Sit down, Ruth. Now, this might be a little confusing at first...

THERE'S A WAR ON (CONTINUED)

I am not who I appear to be —

[DIANE takes off her glasses.]

I am a soldier at war, you see.

I'm not a Baby Saver at all.

[SHE whips off a wig.]

I'm a pro-Choice sister — standing tall!

There's a war on, a holy war on —

Versus assholes with Bibles for brains.

They malign us, and our vaginas —

Their God wants our bodies in chains!

We are fighting, women uniting

On a bloody battlefield!

War is hell, but time will tell —

This uterus won't yield! It's War!

[RACHEL has returned, and hands RUTH the juice. The focus shifts to Washington, D.C., and SENATOR BLAINE GIBBONS, talking on the phone.]

BLAINE: This is Senator Gibbons ... Karl! My goodness ... Glad you called ... Yes, I know, but ... Well, no, Karl, I'm not worried. People aren't interested in some Don't-Ask-Don't-Tell Rockefeller Republican. *[ERIC, a congressional page, brings BLAINE a cocktail.]* Anyway, you won't believe what just happened back home ... Oh, you read my note? ... Yeah, a local Baby Saver called — Norm Somebody... Uh, huh. The judge told her to get an abortion! ... Mhmm. We couldn't be happier... All right then. *[BLAINE hangs up.]* Eric, what we need is a targeted piece of legislation...

ERIC: Targeted?

BLAINE: You know, Defense of Marriage, Defense of Children, Defense of Churches —

*There's a war on, a holy war on —
For America's heart and its soul.
And the tribe'll defend the Bible —
From the whole liberal rigmarole.
Here's the picture: A wave of scripture
We can ride to win again —
They want a man, Republican,
To keep them safe from sin! It's War!*

RACHEL AND DIANE:

The story's old...

But truth be told...

It's the end...

Of rule by men! It's War!

Get me a news feed.

[Our focus returns to the farm. RUTH is sprawled out; DIANE rubs RUTH's feet.]

RACHEL: So we just want you to be able to do what you want.

RUTH: Uh huh.

DIANE: Feel that?

RUTH: Ahh-unnn.

DIANE: That's your liver.

RACHEL: Pro-Life always victimizes women like you: Indigent women, third world women, women of color —

RUTH: I'm not a color woman!

RACHEL: *Don't you see? If they had their way,
Though it's your body, you'd have no say!*

Hey — assholes! — ever heard of civil liberties?

RACHEL AND DIANE: *Keep your goddamn hands off my ovaries!*

There's a war on, and Sotomayor's on —

And Pelosi's got artillery!

Cause we've had it! And we'll keep at it —

DIANE: *Lindsay Graham, you are no Hillary!*

RACHEL AND DIANE:

Little ladies can go to Hades —

We are women and we're through.

That's the truth. We'll help you, Ruth,

Do what you Choose to do. It's War!

BLAINE AND ERIC:

What will it be?

An age of degeneracy?

You know what renews...

American values...? A War!

RUTH: *[Confused]* Can I feel my liver again?

RACHEL: It's six — time for the news.

[RACHEL turns on a TV. CINDY LYNDSTROM appears, at the protest site. Behind her, we see NORM, GAIL, KATHLEEN and KIRK. HARLAN paces the gate...]

CINDY: The Baby Savers were out in force again today, but with a difference. This time they were accompanied at their protest by Ruth Stoops, the indigent pregnant woman whose bail they paid over the weekend. Ms. Stoops declined an interview, but I did catch up with Baby Saver Norm Stoney.

NORM: *See, Ruth wants to send out a message loud*

Something real clear for the pro-Choice crowd:

We are all soldiers at war for God.

And Ruth's one mother in our jihad!

CINDY: Stoney says that Ruth's number-one priority right now is to get off drugs and alcohol.

RUTH: I never said anything like that! And he knew I didn't want people knowing about me.

RACHEL: See what we mean?

BABYSAVERS QUARTET:

DIANE/RACHEL/BLAINE/ERIC:

*There's a war on, a holy war on,
And the battle is hardly begun.
Life is sacred, and we stand naked,
Before the Lord when our days here are done!
Ruth is coping; and we are hoping
That the courts won't get their way.
God has eyes. He sees their lies:
They'll pay on Judgment Day! It's War!*

*War... War... War... War...
HARLAN: Sure is fun!
Wonder which wacko has the gun?
Quite a sick survey...
The retardation on display. It's War!*

[The focus returns to the farmhouse.]

[A phone rings.]

DIANE: Oh God. Gail. ***[Putting on her glasses to get into character]*** Hello? ... Hi, Gail. ... We sure did. Where did you see it? ... Uh huh....I'm sure it will send a great message.... Channel seven, too? Golly! ... Oh, she's fine. Just fine. No problems at all....Well, she just stepped into the shower—

RUTH: No I didn't—

DIANE: Oh, well, here she is after all. Ruth, it's Gail.

RUTH: I know. Give me that.

DIANE: ***[Covering the mouthpiece, as herself]*** You cool with this?

RUTH: Yeah. ***[RUTH takes the phone.]*** Hello ...

[GAIL appears on the other end, standing with NORM.]

GAIL: Ruthie! Did you see Norm on the news!?

RUTH: Yeah, I saw it. And let me tell you something.

*There's a war on! And you're a moron!
And your buddy Diane is a spy!
You confused me, so you could use me —
Well, you fucked up! Fuck all your lies!
Now you get it? Bet you regret it!
Here's a message, and it's blunt —*

GAIL: A spy? What?
Ruth — wait — listen —
Norm!

*Cause I am no telegram —
YOU'RE A FUCKING CUNT!*

[RUTH hangs up. GAIL — like DIANE and RACHEL — is speechless.]

How'd I do?

[The COMPANY assembles for battle.]

COMPANY: *It's War!*

END OF ACT I

ACT II

II.1 DIANE'S FARM, LATER THAT NIGHT

ABORTION IS MURDER!//THERE'S A WAR ON (REPRISE)

[The COMPANY rushes across the stage and through the house.]

COMPANY: *It's War!*

[Car doors slam. The BABYSAVERS rush the farm. HARLAN shines a flashlight at them.]

HARLAN: Evening folks. What's the occasion?

NORM: Cut the horse manure, Harlan, you Nazi! And turn off the light.

GAIL: Where's Diane?

HARLAN: Sleeping. Why?

KATHLEEN: No she's not. Diane! Diane!!!

GAIL: Ruth! Ruthie, honey, we're here! Are you all right?

HARLAN: You're gonna have to leave now. You're trespassing.

NORM: And you're aiding and abetting a kidnapping.

KATHLEEN: And murder!

HARLAN: Don't make me call the police —

NORM: We already did.

[We hear a siren squawk, unleashing a red and blue strobe.]

NORM: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

HARLAN: Matthew, 23:33. Yawn.

[OFFICERS IVERSON and BUNDY enter from another part of the house.]

IVERSON: Evening folks.

GAIL: Officers, they are holding a woman captive inside this house!

HARLAN: She's in there, but she ain't no captive.

OFFICER IVERSON: You want to have her come on out, Harlan?

HARLAN: *[Into the walkie talkie]* Diane, go ahead and bring Ruth out.

[DIANE, RACHEL and RUTH emerge. RUTH is wearing a colorful Guatemalan poncho.]

GAIL: Diane?

DIANE: Surprise.

NORM: I pity you, Diane. God will show you no mercy.

DIANE: Somehow I think she'll forgive me.

GAIL: What kind of person are you? All this time, we've been like sisters.

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A SISTER

DIANE: Sisters?

*You don't know what it means to be a Sister —
All that bogus Betty Crock of crap!
Gail you're sweet, but God — you're not a Sister.
You can't even see outside your trap.
A woman's body is her own to own,
Right down to each fantastic pheromone.
You don't know what it means to be a Sister.
Trust me, honey, you don't have a clue!
You can barely breathe, cause listen, Sister,*

Old Mister Man has got his hooks in you.

GAIL: *YOU don't know what it means to be a Sister!*

You don't know what motherhood is like.

You're just half a woman, not a Sister...

A snotty, sneaking, lying, dirty dyke!

NORM: Gail —

GAIL: *I may be Ms. stupid stay-at-home.*

At least I know I'll never die alone.

No, you don't know what it means to be a Sister.

I thank God in heaven I'm not you —

This is not a home, cause listen, Sister,

A home is for a family, not a zoo.

DIANE: I believe Harlan has asked you to get off my property.

RACHEL: *[Taking DIANE's hand.]* Our property.

[DIANE and RACHEL kiss. The BABY SAVERS, COPS and RUTH react with varying levels of horror, disgust and titillation.]

KATHLEEN: They're lesbianarians!?

DIANE AND RACHEL: *Suck that sanctimonious shit you sell —*

All is not all well when you've swallowed Falwell.

All your pews may spew your views,

You'll never take our right to Choose!

Hands off our twats, our tits and our tushes.

You Reagans and Bushes, stay out of our bushes!

NORM: *Don't you bring Reagan into this!*

Just you try, you can't defeat us —

Believe us, no penis or fetus can beat us!

GAIL: *It isn't fair!*

KATHLEEN: *Your wig was nicer than your hair!*

DIANE: Ouch.

You don't know what it means to be a Sister.

GAIL, KATHLEEN, NORM: *You lied! You lied! You lied!*

In your little world that's run by men.

History is done.

The Man has had his fun.

It's Herstory

From here...on...in!

GAIL, KATHLEEN, NORM: *It's sick and it's a sin!*

KATHLEEN: Herstory? That's not even a word!

IVERSON: Okay, people — let's get to the point, so we can all go home. Ruth, have these people kidnapped you?

RUTH: No. I like it here.

KATHLEEN: They've brainwashed her! They have her all doped up!

BUNDY: Ma'am, I know this woman. She's about as sober as I've ever seen her.

NORM: But officers, we paid her bail —

GAIL: I bought her those shoes!

IVERSON: Sorry, Norm. Folks, there's nothing going on here.

GAIL: Come home with us, Ruth. I beg you. I forgive you for this afternoon, and what you said on the phone. Your bed is waiting. Matthew misses you.

NORM: For the love of God, don't let these fanatics sway you! Don't believe their lies. Look at Diane. Look how she lied to us. She's lying to you, too.

IVERSON: So what's it going to be, Ruth?

RUTH: I'm staying here. And I'm gonna have the abortion like I wanted. Cause I'm a citizen and...I got the right...to...um...pick. And...and you're just trying to...and I'm a woman and...my body belongs to me. *[Looking to DIANE and RACHEL]* Right?

NORM: Your body belongs to God!

RACHEL: That's it. Off our property — *now!*

[NORM starts to sing, the others join in.]

NORM AND BABY SAVERS:

*We are marching onward,
Marching for our Savior.
Jesus, thou art Lord of all!*

IVERSON: Norm, please don't pull another one of your stunts. Let's just all go home.

BUNDY: Back in your cars — *now!* We're gonna start making arrests!

[THEY lock arms and keep singing.]

NORM: Non co-op!

[THEY drop to the ground, assuming the fetal position. BUNDY clicks on his walkie talkie.]

BUNDY: This is Bundy and Iverson. We're going to need some backup out here.

[NORM gets an idea.]

NORM: All right, officer, you can stop. We'll go.

BUNDY: Correction. Cancel that.

IVERSON: Thanks, Norm. We really appreciate it.

NORM: Come on, people. Let's leave this, this death camp. But mark my words, Diane, Harlan and the rest of you murderers. This isn't over!

HARLAN: Officers, did you make a note of that threat?

IVERSON: Okay Harlan...

[The BABY SAVERS and OFFICERS exit. HARLAN goes inside.]

RACHEL: Well. That wasn't so bad.

DIANE: That poncho looks good on you, Ruth.

RUTH: It's nice.

DIANE: We brought those back from Guatemala.

RUTH: So, when can I get the abortion anyway?

RACHEL: Thursday would be the soonest. We'll make all the arrangements.

RUTH: Does it cost a lot of money? Cause I ain't got any money.

DIANE: Don't worry, Ruth. I'm sure we can find a way to take care of it. How would that be?

RUTH: Whatever.

THE MOON IS MY MIRROR

RUTH: I hate the country.

DIANE: Why, Ruth?

RUTH: Too dark, nobody around. Feels weird.... If I died right now, no one would care.

DIANE: Don't say that.

RUTH: I wouldn't mind, either, being dead.

DIANE: Well, in the first place, you're never alone, Ruth. I mean, just look at that moon! She's right down here with us, saying everything will be all right.

RUTH: Huh?

DIANE: *Moon — Song —*

Let us ring each tiny star,

Right down here — you've found us!

Wrap your lunar legs around us!

Lover, make our voices strong —

The moon is my mirror —

Not my mother, not the girls.

The moon is a woman,

Not a lady wearing pearls.

It may be lunatic to love la bel — la — lune —

She fills me up, like hand in glove, and this is our love tune —

She's full of fire and ice,

*But I don't fear her —
I love her, my mirror — my moon —*

RACHEL: *Moon — Dream —
Gazing up we see your light
Our sister Ruth is askin'
For some lunar love to bask in!
Bathe us in a brilliant beam —*

RACHEL AND DIANE: *The moon is your mirror —
Not some model on TV.
Trust the moon, she's sincerer —
She will steer your destiny.
It may be lunatic to love a far — off — stone —
But wait for night and look above, and you won't be alone —
Can you find the strength to come
A little nearer —
She loves you, your mirror — your moon —*

DIANE: Can you feel her, Ruth?

RUTH: This doesn't mean I'm gonna eat pussy.

RACHEL: This isn't about...pussy, Ruth.

RACHEL AND DIANE: *The moon is your mirror —
Not some selfish, sorry man.
To the moon, you are dearer —
She's your sphere, your biggest fan.
It may be lunatic to love a cold — round — rock...
But when the world is mean and tough, she's always there to talk —*

DIANE: *She'll help you see yourself a little clearer —*

[RUTH joins in, tentatively.]

RUTH: *My mirror —*

ALL THE WOMEN AND RUTH: *My moon —*

[The women embrace tightly.]

DIANE: Everything's going to be just fine.

RUTH: Those lights over there sure are pretty.

DIANE: Yeah....

[RACHEL looks up, gestures to DIANE.]

DIANE: Oh shit. A vigil.

[BRIANA and PETER enter.]

BRIANA: We got here as soon as we could. Guess the Baby Savers beat us.

PETER: Rachel, I put in a call to that lawyer from Prisoners' Aid —

RUTH: Who are you?

DIANE: Sorry, Ruth.

BRIANA: I'm Briana Miller, state chair of Women's Way. It is such an honor to meet you!

PETER: And I'm Peter — I'm interning. I'm a women's studies major.

RUTH: Women's wha — ?

RACHEL: Ruth, this might be hard for you to understand, but you're at the center of something really big now. Something that's not about just you. It's about the Choice of millions of American women.

RUTH: What'd I do now?

DIANE: Nothing's wrong Ruth. Don't worry. We're gonna make sure everything's okay.

PETER: And I spoke to that producer from ABC News — he says he'd *love* to interview Ruth.

RUTH: Interview?

RACHEL: *[Covering]* Ruth is not doing any interviews — this is a private matter.

DIANE: That's right. You don't have to talk to anyone, Ruth. Now, why don't we get you to bed, huh?

RUTH: Gimme a sec?

[Pause. Can SHE be trusted?]

DIANE: Sure thing. We'll be right inside.

[The WOMEN and PETER exit.]

RUTH: *It may be lunatic to love a cold — round — rock — I guess they're right, I sure enough get sick of sucking cock.*

[Beat] *If you're there, why would you care?*

Oh, Mirror, mirror —

My mirror, my moon.

[RUTH goes inside.]

II.2 THE VIGIL/DIANE'S FARM, THE NEXT DAY

[Morning. CINDY is interviewing NORM. GAIL and CHARLIE, wearing badges and holding clipboards, are listening enthusiastically.]

NORM: We were in jail with Ruth Stoops. We developed a strong bond with her and her daughter. Ruth told us she wants a little girl, and she wants to name her Tanya. Does that sound like a woman who wants to kill her baby?

CINDY LYNDSTROM: Mr. Stoney, recent Baby Saver Alerts haven't attracted nearly the numbers they used to. We know Akron was a big disappointment.

FROM OUR HEARTS

NORM: There's been a tremendous outpouring of Christian love for Ruth. We're expecting... well, many people. But this is not about us. It's about two very special souls, Ruth and Tanya. And I have something wonderful to tell them.

*There are several couples ready to share
Their homes with your child, little Tanya.
Some warm loving families have answered our prayer —
Today some angels smiled on poor Tanya.
We know you were scared you couldn't provide —
Well, now, your daughter's needs won't be denied.
They made this offer from their hearts.
So Ruth, we hope you hear it —
No need for you to fear it.
Our love for you is off the charts.
We love you and your baby,
So take it, Ruthie, maybe?
This offer from our hearts.*

And Ruth, if you can hear me —

*An anonymous donor touched by your plight
Was moved to help this brave mother.
He picked up the phone and called me last night,
He said we have to save this poor mother.
“Poor girl has been abused, left out with the trash.
I bet she could use some love, some warmth....
[DR. CHARLIE and GAIL hold up a huge check.]
Some cash!*

*He made this offer from his heart.
We hope she won't refuse it —
We know she sure could use it.
We'd like to help her get a start.
It's just ten thousand dollars,
But it's here, and all hers...
This offer from our hearts.*

[The lights rise on the farm — the WOMEN have been watching this unfold on TV.]

RUTH: Ten thousand dollars!

[DIANE, RACHEL, BRIANA and PETER try to shush her, but RUTH runs down into the house, waving her arms frantically.]

RUTH: I'm rich! I'm rich!

[HARLAN appears and drags her back onstage.]

HARLAN: What the hell do you think you're doing?

RUTH: Didn't you hear? Ten thousand dollars! I'm rich! I gotta talk to Norm.

HARLAN: You're not going anywhere.

RUTH: Let go of me! Where's that check?!

WHAT ABOUT WHAT I WANT?

RACHEL: Ruth, listen to me. You've made your decision. Now be strong and stick to it. Prove to them that you are not going to give in to their pressure!

RUTH: *I'm a woman, it's my body,
And it's still my Choice,
Can't I change my mind?
You said it — 'Choose Choice!'
Can't I Choose to change my Choice?
Ten thousand dollars sounds awful Choice to me!*

DIANE: Of course you can. Just make sure you're doing it for the right reason.

RUTH: *Ten thousand dollars is the rightest reason I've ever had!*

BRIANA: I know it sounds like a lot —

RUTH: *That's more money than I ever seen!
That's more money than I even need!
I'd never have to work again!*

DIANE: There are other things to consider — are you really ready to have another kid?

RUTH: *Hell, I had four other kids and never made a cent!
Besides they have some ladies ready to adopt it.*

DIANE: Then you're prepared to give up another child?

RUTH: *[Beat.] That's my business.*

RACHEL: And can you stay off drugs and alcohol for the next eight months?

BRIANA: You may be forced to spend your whole pregnancy in jail, maybe longer.

RUTH: I can give up drugs if I want! *[Beat. Everyone gives her a look.]* Goddamn it!

What about what I want?

What about what I want?

Someone always has to stop me

When I want somethin'.

Then they turn around and drop me.

Cause I'm just nothin'!

I ain't got nothin'!

DIANE: We know it's hard. We know. There, there.

RUTH: How can I turn down so much money? All my life I never had a chance. No one loves me.

DIANE: We love you, Ruth.

RUTH: That's bullshit, that's what that is. Nobody loves me. If I had money, I could have been a good mother. My life would be different.

PETER: And Ruth, don't forget, if you reject the Baby Savers' offer, you'll be sending a strong message that a woman's Choice can't be bought.

RUTH: Send a message?

[DIANE and RACHEL glare at PETER.]

PETER: What? What'd I say?

RUTH: You want me to send a message?

RACHEL: All Peter meant —

RUTH: I get it. That's why you don't want me to change my mind. It's real important to you.

*You gotta message to share just like they do, the right-to-my-lifers!
And you and your faggot don't care about me —
You want me to kill my baby! Kill it! Kill it! That's what you want.
What about what I want?
Huh? You got your houses and jobs —
Fuck! I got no house, I'm a slob —
And I can't even get my brother to... Twenty bucks!
He wouldn't give me twenty fucking goddamn bucks!
What about what I want?
What about what I need?
No one ever asks me never —
I ain't got nothin!
You all got your lives together —
Can't I get somethin'?
I ain't got nothin!
I ain't got nothin'! Nothin' — !
Are you gonna give me thousand dollars?*

HARLAN: Sure.

RUTH: You will?

DIANE: Whoa, whoa, whoa! Hang on a minute.

HARLAN: *[Ignoring DIANE]* Yep.

RUTH: You're not fucking with me?

HARLAN: I'm not fucking —

RUTH: Cause if you're fucking with me —

HARLAN: I never fuck with anyone. I got some V.A. money — If I can level the field, I'll do it. I won't let their fascist money be a factor. You got the right to get your abortion just like I got the right to carry this gun. *[HE flashes a revolver.]*

RACHEL: Harlan !

RUTH: Does that mean... that...if I have the baby I get twenty thousand dollars?

DIANE: Hold on there.

HARLAN: Let me rephrase it. Ten thousand from them if you have it, ten thousand from me if you don't. Now you can Choose freely again.

DIANE: Harlan — you can't do this —

HARLAN: I just did.

RUTH: *[Leaping into his arms] YESSSSSSSS!*

HARLAN: So just yank your panties down out of your throats, ladies, cause me and Ruth already figured this out. Okay?

RACHEL: If this gets out, it'll do irreparable damage. They'll say we're paying her to have an abortion.

DIANE: The Baby Savers will have a field day.

BRIANA: *[Storming out]* I'm not here! Okay? I'm not hearing this!

[During the next section, HARLAN removes his prosthetic leg and puts it on the table and wipes the sweat off it.]

RUTH: Shit!

RACHEL: Can you promise that Women's Services Clinic and Women's Way have nothing to do with your little arrangement? It is strictly between you and Ruth — because we'll deny any knowledge of it.

HARLAN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Who do you think you're dealing with? I was in Special Forces.

RUTH: Really?

DIANE: Ruth, do you understand —

HARLAN: They don't want you to tell anyone where you got the money, okay?

RUTH: No problem.

RACHEL: You sure? This is very, very important. You can't tell anyone, ever.

[RUTH locks her lips and throws away an imaginary key.]

DIANE: That's great, Ruth.

RACHEL: Yeah, just great.

DIANE: *[sotto voce]* We should get her an appointment tomorrow.

RACHEL: Right — They won't expect us to move so soon.

[RACHEL and DIANE exit.]

RUTH: When you lost your leg, you didn't lose — ?

HARLAN: Not that it's any of your business, but no.

RUTH: You got a girlfriend?

HARLAN: Nope. Couple of exes on the payroll, though. *[Pause]* You coming on to me? If you're coming on to me, you can just forget it.

RUTH: I wasn't coming on to you... I just wanted to thank you.

HARLAN: Well, I don't need any gratitude. I hate gratitude.

RUTH: Whatever. Dick.

HARLAN: So what are you going to do with all that money, Ruth?

[JARVIK appears, as if by magic.]

I GOT PLANS/PROSPERITY (REPRISE)

JARVIK: *You are lovable...*

RUTH: Oh, I got plans.

HARLAN: Plans?

RUTH: *I am lovable.
My happy clients are always satisfied.*

JARVIK: *Lovable...*

HARLAN: I bet.

RUTH: *I realize my dreams; what I want I create.
My vast vitality is bubbling up inside.*

JARVIK: *I'm always able to maintain my
ideal weight.*

*I'm letting go of poverty !
I accept prosperity!*

*You're letting go of poverty!
You accept prosperity!*

RUTH: I delight in my humanity as a duckling does duckness. I embrace the swan that unfolds the swan within me.

HARLAN: Yo — Dopefiend! Get away from the windows...

RUTH: *[Seeing HARLAN]* Sorry.

HARLAN: You were telling me how you're gonna spend that \$10,000?

RUTH: I got plans —

*I haven't got it all worked out,
But I got big plans.
A long time now a lack of funds
Has really tied my hands.
But with ten thousand dollars. Ten thousand dollars!
Ten thousand dollars, I got plans!
I know a way to get a house —*

HARLAN: A house?

RUTH: *That's the plan —
And start a business, buy a car —
Maybe get my own guitar.
I will take whatever's left and drive to California —*

*I never seen the beach...
Yeah, everything, always, has been out of reach.
But I got plans...
Have I got plans.*

HARLAN: Ruth, hate to burst your bubble, but we both know that money'll be gone in three days tops.

RUTH: Suck the shit out of my ass, motherfucker!

[HARLAN exits.]

JARVIK: *Believe in You and you'll feel better.*

RUTH: *Go and buy a little glitz in groovy California —*

Don't need that glue to keep it together.

*This fucking town can rot!
Ten thousand ten thousand ten thousand hot!*

You have no need for charity!

I've got plans

You bask in popularity!

And I don't need no guy

You juggle with dexterity!

Yeah, I've got big plans!

Your genius is a rarity —

*And all those mamma-titty-fuckers
Can just go off and die!*

Yeah I got plans...

You're letting go of poverty —

Have I got plans.

You accept prosperity!

II.3 THE FARM, THE NEXT DAY

[Lights down on RUTH. We hear crowd sounds chanting outside the farm. The lights reveal a FARMER carrying a sign: "Parking \$5." Then BUNDY passes through with a megaphone.]

BUNDY: Stay off the highway. Stay *off* the highway.

[BLAINE enters, followed by NORM and ERIC.]

BLAINE: Eric, call Shady Vale — I need a tee time. Probably need to play a round with our

friend from Chemtrex. *[To NORM]* Drummond's a good man. Episcopalian, but solid...

NORM: Senator Gibbons, I can't tell you how excited we all are that you came —

BLAINE: No, I am grateful to you. I thought it was important to be here and make a stand for the children. For Ruth and Tanya and you good people. *[BLAINE rubs his neck.]* Did you pack the Eucalyptus oil, Eric?

ERIC: Yes sir, Senator.

BLAINE: I'm gonna need a rubdown when we get back to the hotel. Good kid. Starts Georgetown next fall. Opportunity of a lifetime for him.

NORM: Wowie!

BLAINE: I met his mamma back in my days in the ministry.

NORM: Is that right?

BLAINE: She was single, afraid, didn't think she could raise a son on her own. She wanted to...

NORM: No!

BLAINE: He's like a son to me. Right, kiddo?

NORM: You're a lucky boy, Eric.

ERIC: Yes, Sir.

BLAINE: Hey — kiddo... *[BLAINE stretches his neck in discomfort. ERIC begins to rub it.]* They think we're a dying breed, we who care about life. But we won't stop fighting, Norm. Not when this country's soul has become a dirty, unflushed toilet.

NORM: Senator, Gail is so excited to meet you —

BLAINE: Yeah, sure... So — what was the idea behind the ten thousand dollars?

NORM: Well, you know how the pro-abortionists accuse us of caring about the baby only while it's in the womb?

BLAINE: Uh huh.

NORM: We wanted to show them we're committed to the child after birth, too. We didn't want money to be a factor in Ruth's decision.

[ERIC's phone rings; HE steps aside.]

BLAINE: Yah-huh. Look — you people are doing good work out here. It's the Lord's work.

NORM: Thank you Sena —

BLAINE: But did it ever occur to you that it might look like an attempt to buy this woman off? Like some kind of a cheap bribe?

NORM: A few of us pledged all we could —

BLAINE: I don't mean to hurt your feelings. But this is national now. We can't afford any embarrassments.

[ERIC returns.]

ERIC: Senator — that was Mr. Drummond's secretary. You are on for golf — and she says he's good for a donation, anything you want up to twenty grand.

BLAINE: Great, that's just great. How old are you again, Eric?

ERIC: Seventeen, Senator.

BLAINE: Put him down for seventeen thousand then. *[HE rubs ERIC's head.]*

[CINDY LYNDSTROM enters with her CAMERAMAN.]

CINDY LYNDSTROM: Senator, hello! Cindy Lyndstrom, Action News Four.

BLAINE: Yes, yes, a pleasure. Um, you are network-affiliated, aren't you?

CINDY LYNDSTROM: Of course.

[GAIL runs on.]

GAIL: Oh my God! Blaine Gibbons! You're really here!

BLAINE: Yes, yes...

NORM: Blaine, this is my wife, Gail —

BLAINE: Of course, of course. Doesn't this feel good? Sleeves rolled up, sluggin' it out with Satan?

GAIL: It sure does.

BLAINE: We are gonna stop these animals right here, Gail.

GAIL: Sure will!

CINDY: Okay, we're all ready Senator. And... go.

TANYA'S LAW (FROM OUR HEARTS REPRISE)

BLAINE: I am standing here outside this farmhouse, where Ruth Stoops is being held captive—and make no mistake, my friends, she is the captive of radical liberals. But I plan to introduce an important bill today that will protect disadvantaged mothers from this viciousness.

*Americans shed their blood to be free —
Refused to fear a foreign power.
But, now, my friends, we face a new tyranny...
Yes my friends, today's our darkest hour,
Our wicked enemies have infected our courts:
A socialist disease — that murders, robs, aborts!
Today, I give you Tanya's law.
We'll save this precious life
Before it gets the knife!
Our system has a fatal flaw:
And lib'rals they abuse it,
While telling us we choose it!
We must pass...Tanya's law.*

Tanya's Law will forbid judges from interfering in the pregnancy of any woman in the court system. My friends, I will have state troopers on hand to rescue her the second it becomes law.

[The lights have gradually risen on DIANE, RACHEL, HARLAN and PETER.]

DIANE: Tanya's Law?

RACHEL: Oh my god.

DIANE: What's the earliest we can get to the clinic?

HARLAN: I'm not gonna have security set up till eight —

RACHEL: Fuck! Fuck! FUCK!

BLAINE: And Ruth, if you can hear me, I want you to know we're here for you. We're praying night and day. And people all over the country have been moved by your plight. We will not let a baby die because her mother is poor!

BLAINE: *Today, I tell you Tanya's fund
Has fattened up with dollars
From anxious Christian callers.
It's reached a quite impressive sum —
So rest, Ruth, in the knowledge
We'll send your girl to college!
Just take it — Tanya's fund.*

COMPANY:
*Fattened up with dollars!
Anxious Christian callers!

Rest now in the knowledge
Tanya's off to college!*

CINDY LYNDSTROM: You mean more people are offering money?

BLAINE: That's right — the pledges are just pouring in. The fund for Ruth and Baby Tanya now stands at nearly twenty-seven thousand dollars!

DIANE: Oh fuck.

RUTH: *[Offstage]* WHOOOOOOOO!

BLAINE AND COMPANY: *A home for Tanya, honey!
And for you, a pile of money!
Just take it — Tanya's fund!*

[We hear a loud banging sound — someone falling down the stairs. The lights drop on BLAINE, et al, as RUTH crawls onstage, clutching a bottle.]

PETER: Oh.

RUTH: Twenty-seven-thousand dollars! Twenty-seven-thousand — where's Harlan? I gotta talk to Harlan —

[PETER and RACHEL pick RUTH up.]

RUTH: Hey, let me go.

[DIANE grabs the bottle.]

DIANE: Ruth — where did you get this bottle?

RUTH: Nowhere... I found it.

DIANE: Like maybe in the liquor cabinet in the kitchen? You know you shouldn't be drinking.

RUTH: What — for my baby? You don't give a fuck about my baby. You want me to kill my baby. But they want me to have my baby, and they want to give me twenty-seven thousand dollars! Harlan! Harlan!

DIANE: Shut up. You are not —

RUTH: Harlan!!!!

DIANE: That's enough. I am not going to argue with a drunk.

[The phone rings. RACHEL exits to get it.]

RUTH: Either you let me talk to Harlan, or I'm gonna go have my baby right now!

DIANE: Listen to me, and listen to me good. I spent nine months of my life with people I hated — and I've blown all that work on *you*. On you and defending your right to Choose. I expect at least a little cooperation from you in return. We've been up thirty-six hours straight, making all the arrangements, trying to make everything as easy as possible for you, and *this* is how you repay us.

RUTH: Fuck off! I don't care. My body belongs to me. If I can't talk to Harlan, I'm gonna go have my baby.

RACHEL: *[Running back on]* OMIGODOMIGODOMIGOD!!!! Jesse Dove! She's coming here! She wants to see Ruth!

DIANE: Jesse Dove...here?

PETER: She's coming here?

[The WOMEN and PETER scream.]

RUTH: Shut the fuck up! *[Beat. No one moves.]* What?!

RACHEL: Well — that was Jesse Dove on the phone. She is coming HERE! THE Jesse Dove! She wants to meet you! To help you get your abortion!

RUTH: Jesse Who?

PETER: Jesse Dove! The singer! You know, Lilith Fair?

RACHEL: You never heard “Little Women”?

DIANE: Diana's Dream?

“Water Songs”?

PETER: Clytemnestra?

You never heard “Bad Daughter”?!

BAD DAUGHTER

RACHEL: *[a cappella]* You were daddy's diamond
Daddy was your world...
Better take your time and
Find that little girl...

[JESSE appears with the band — but only RUTH sees her.]

RACHEL AND JESSE: *Bad daughter, bad daughter
Come and drop your heavy load.
Bad daughter, bad daughter,
Misbehave on down the road —*

RUTH: Isn't that from a car commercial?

DIANE: The point is — she’s a very cool, very progressive, very famous woman who is interested in helping you out.

RUTH: She’s a rock star?

JESSE: *Mis — be — have!*

RACHEL: Yes.

RUTH: So she probably has a shit-load of money!

DIANE: Oh Christ, Ruth! No! No more money!

[DIANE and PETER wrestle RUTH to bed.]

RUTH: Gimme my money now!

PETER: She’s heavy —

RUTH: I’m gettin’ my money!

DIANE: Lift with your legs —

RUTH: Put me down!

PETER: Calm down, Ruth —

RUTH: *PUT ME DOWN!*

JESSE: *You’re headin’ down!*

DIANE: *[Dumping her in bed]* Sleep it off.

RUTH: Eat me, dyke.

[RUTH collapses. JESSE continues singing as time passes...]

JESSE:

You were daddy’s diamond

Daddy was your world...

Take a little time and

Find that pretty girl...

Bad daughter, bad daughter,

Come and drop your heavy load.

Bad daughter, bad daughter,

Misbehave on down the road —

Flying down a highway

Wind is in your hair —

D: *Rachel is my lover*

R: *Look up at the moon.*

D: *Women who are colored*

R: *Loony bella lune...*

N/G: *Su casa es mi casa*

You’re a little miracle!

Mi casa es su casa

H: *Girlfriends on the payroll.*

J: *Got a pen? Let’s go!*

H: *Pussy on a may pole*

J: *What is your cash flow?*

J: *What you want you create!*

*No time for good-bye, they —
They don't even care...*

Just a precious miracle!

H: *Hello there world you gotta
meet!*

ALL: *Bad daughter, bad daughter
Make their precious world explode
Bad daughter, bad daughter,
Misbehave — misbehave —
Rip up the road —*

JESSE: *Rip it up
and race the moon.*

D/R: *Lunatic
la bella lune.*

G/N: *Cute and pink,
inside your womb.*

H/J: *Believe in you,
don't need that glue.*

[Blackout]

II.5 THE FARM, THE NEXT MORNING

[The lights bump to full. Morning. The crowd is in full swing. At this point, the protesters morph into a vast projection of documentary footage on the rear wall. Their size and sound keeps swelling as the play gathers speed.]

BABY SAVERS: *Don't give up on baby Tanya — Save your baby — Choose life — Choose love — Tanya!*

[RUTH slowly sits up, then doubles over. Her nightshirt is bloody.]

RUTH: *No —*

[RUTH wraps the blanket around her and starts off when we hear a knock. It is DIANE.]

RUTH: *Just a minute —*

[RUTH covers the bed and pulls herself together. SHE lets DIANE in.]

DIANE: *Hey. You sleep okay?*

RUTH: *Oh. Fine, fine.*

DIANE: *How you doing today?*

RUTH: *I'm not feeling so good. I feel sick.*

DIANE: *I understand. I'm sorry I lost my temper last night. So...what do you think? You still*

considering their offer?

[RUTH shakes her head.]

DIANE: Okay. Let's put all that behind us. As soon as you're ready, come on downstairs, okay?

RUTH: Diane?

DIANE: Yeah?

RUTH: There's something important I gotta tell you. When I woke up just now —

[The walkie talkie on DIANE's belt bleeps.]

HARLAN: *[Offstage]* Diane, do you read me, over?

DIANE: Hang on Ruth — What's up, Harlan?

HARLAN: *[Offstage]* The Goddamn Senate is voting, Diane. They are fucking in the building — we gotta hit it.

DIANE: *[Turning away from RUTH]* Does the clinic...

I GOT PLANS (REPRISE)

RUTH: *I got plans. First thing, get my head on straight. Yeah, I got big plans... I'm gonna get it right this time. Yeah — get it right. Cause no one understands.*

DIANE: *[Back to RUTH]* So. What were you saying?

RUTH: Well —

DIANE: Can we walk and talk?

RUTH: Yeah. I just, want to make sure about the money —

DIANE: That's between you and Harlan. Where did say it would be?

RUTH: In a X and X gym bag on the bottom shelf behind the front desk at the clinic.

DIANE: Then that's where it will be. Now get dressed. Harlan's got an armored limo outside.

RUTH: A limo?

[RUTH hurries offstage.]

II.6 EN ROUTE TO THE CLINIC/AT THE CLINIC, LATER

MAKE A LITTLE ROOM

BLAINE: *Lord, your Madonna is lonely, afraid.
Penned in a prison of choices she made.
Give your Madonna, your daughter, your Ruth,
Eyes to behold a glimpse of the truth.*

HARLAN: Come on, Ruth! We gotta get you to that clinic before those assholes vote.

[The CHOICERS bring RUTH outside; NORM and the BABY SAVERS leap into action.]

NORM: Tanya is premature. Move out people! The merchants of death have alighted!

BABYSAVERS: *Tanya! Tanya!/Abortion is murder!/Don't kill your baby!/Thou shalt not kill!
Save little Tanya!/Onward Christian soldiers!/Etc.!*

BLAINE AND BABYSAVERS: *Won't you make a little room
In your warm mother's womb?
Don't give up on Tanya, your body's not a tomb!
Poor, confused Madonna...
Won't you please make a little room in your womb?*

[Over the sound of traffic and the ever-growing crowd, we hear a helicopter. The CHOICE crew watches in awe as JESSE DOVE, in a great flash of sound and light, strides onstage. The BABY SAVERS scatter.]

JESSE: I thought you gals could use a lift.

RACHEL: OMIGOD!!!!

JESSE: You must be Randi.

RACHEL: Rachel!

JESSE: Right, right. And *you* must be Ruth.

RUTH: Yeah.

JESSE: I'm Jesse Dove. And I am so honored to meet you.

RUTH: Great.

JESSE: What do you think? How's it feel to be an icon?

RUTH: A what?

DIANE: Uh — We try not to use language like that, Jesse. Ruth is doing what she wants to do. That's the whole point. Right, Ruth? This is about what you want.

RACHEL: What you need.

DIANE: What's good for you. Right, honey?

[The WOMEN hurry to the copter. RUTH and JESSE follow behind.]

FLYING

JESSE: So — what is good for you, Ruth?

RUTH: Good for me?

JESSE: Everyone else seems to know.

RUTH: Yeah. Well, actually —

JESSE: You got a lot of pressure on you, huh?

RUTH: Fuck yeah. And Diane —

JESSE: I know what it's like to be cornered. To feel hopeless. After "Bad Daughter" came out I hit bottom.

RUTH: Huh?

JESSE: You know, alcohol, coke.

*I was that girl — you can't ignore.
I had the world — but I still needed more...
Yeah I was "up" all the time — but down in a hole.
I went out of my mind. Now I have a new goal...
Today I'm flying...
Now I am flying...
All on my own —
Flying higher, flying...
Into the unknown —
I'm flying.*

Everyone in the biz wrote me off. But I found help, and I got my shit together. You could, too.

RUTH: Yeah — I gotta stop the paint.

JESSE: Uh huh.

*You're running fast — nothing you won't do.
It doesn't last — the drugs are doing you.
I didn't know who I was, All I know is she's gone.
And I'm happy because I'll be free from now on...
Cause I am flying...
Now I am flying...
All on my own —
Flying higher, flying...
Into the unknown —
I'm flying.*

*You could be a hero, never stop.
Go from being zero to the top.
But you're the last to know...
There's an open window—
Go on and go!*

JESSE: *You could be flying...
Why not try —*

Flying higher —

RUTH: *flying...
Flying!
All on my own —*

JESSE AND RUTH: *Flying into the unknown —
I'm flying.*

[The lights return to normal, the video switches back on in full force. The WOMEN have arrived at the clinic. Again, we hear protesters in every direction losing their shit.]

HARLAN: Here we are, Ladies.

JESSE: So, what's it gonna be Ruth? You ready to start over?

[NURSE OPAL rushes forward.]

NURSE OPAL: Oh my God — you're really here!

[OPAN throws her arms around JESSE DOVE. The WOMEN forget about RUTH for a moment as they fawn over JESSE.]

I NEED A NEW TV

RUTH: *Gotta get in.
Gotta get out.
I gotta get real far...
Get a bus? Buy a car?
I gotta fly, she's right! Buy a ticket!
Go and fly...
Gotta try —*

[Out of sight, possibly the back of the balcony, a WOMAN WITH A BULLHORN shrieks.]

WOMAN W/BULLHORN: Ruth! Ruthie honey!

RUTH: Mom!?

RUTH'S MOM: I saw you on the TV, Ruth, and I had to come. I got on the first bus. Listen to

me, Ruthie — Don't do it! What if I'd aborted you?

RUTH: At least I wouldn't have had to suck your boyfriend's cock!

RUTH'S MOM: Don't you bring that up again! That's ancient history. I've been saved!

RUTH: Come on, let's go.

RUTH'S MOM: *RUTH!!!!*

ALL THE BABYSAVERS: *Don't give up on Tanya, your body's not a tomb!
Poor, confused Madonna...
Won't you please make a little room in your womb?*

[We are now inside the clinic.]

RUTH: *[Whispering to DIANE]* Where's the bag?

NURSE OPAL: Rachel, if you want to start the paperwork

DIANE: *[Whispers back]* I don't know anything about a bag!

RACHEL: Sure thing!

RUTH: *[To OPAL]* Excuse me, Do you have anything back there for me? On the bottom shelf?

NURSE OPAL: Why yes.

DIANE: There's Cindy Lyndstrom with Anderson Cooper!

RACHEL: Fuck Anderson Cooper! Rachel Maddow is out there!

NURSE OPAL: *[SHE hands RUTH a big red gym bag.]* Harlan left this here for you.

RUTH: Great.

[The OTHER WOMEN are entranced before a TV — watching themselves on the news. RUTH watches THEM, and an idea hits her.]

RUTH: I need a new TV.

*I need a new TV! I need a new TV!
Change the channel, get away!
Flip the switch on a shitty day.
Be sure you catch the news —
Cause soon you will need a new loser you can use...*

NURSE OPAL: Ruth, can you come with me?

RUTH: Excuse me —Where's the bathroom?

NURSE OPAL: Oh — right here, Ruth.

[DIANE and the OTHERS step away. OPAL leaves RUTH at a small toilet. We find ourselves again in a quiet moment with RUTH. The video and sound cut out. RUTH opens the bag; light streams up from inside. Hugging twenties, SHE closes her eyes...]

RUTH: Thank you, God.

*Time for a new TV
Time for a brand new me!
Change the channel, here it goes,
Get away from here — then who knows?
It's what I got to do —
So turn on your TV and watch me say fuck you!*

[Collecting herself, RUTH zips up the bag and tiptoes forward. SHE takes a deep breath, peeks around the corner: the WOMEN are busy fawning and fussing over JESSE. RUTH takes a few few steps, then a few more, then a few more... SHE walks right through the clinic and out the door. The second she is outside, the video and sound come back on. RUTH walks shyly into the crowd, head down, but strangely, NO ONE notices her; THEY are too preoccupied.]

II.7 A WAL-2-WAL-MART, THAT EVENING

[As the CROWD slowly disperses, leaving RUTH alone, the video — by now quite overlaid and abstracted — fades to static.]

RUTH: *Ba-dee-da-dee-da-dee...
Get me some QVC —*

*Maybe Showtime — HBO —
Turn it on and I'm good to go!
It's my number-one goal —
Getting my hands on a new remote control!
I'm gonna see —
A little prosperity —
On a brand new TV!*

[A Wal-2-Wal-Mart SALESMAN has entered with a TV, which he hands to RUTH.]

A fucking new TV!

[RUTH faces the audience.]

RUTH: What are you looking at?

[Blackout.]

END OF PLAY