

Crystal
By Fred Rohan Vargas

SCENE 1

TIME: Early afternoon in the late fall of 1981.

PLACE: A woodshed in a bedroom community of Eastern Pennsylvania. The walls and portions of the floor, inside, are covered with old tools, lumber, a few crates and barrels and some useless junk. Upstage right, a loft stands six feet from the floor. A ladder leans against it. Two windows are located on both sides of the shed. The door is upstage off center. Downstage left is a door trap covered by a dusty Persian rug. Downstage right sits a potbelly stove.

AT RISE: The sound of a car pulls up from a distance. It is raining. Three boys are heard getting out of the car conversing.

Is this it? RALPH

Cool, huh? ANDY

This is your big secret? RALPH

Quit being so anxious. It's inside. ANDY

Well, what is it? JOEY

(clowning) I don't know. Let's take a look. ANDY

It better be good. RALPH

You wanna go back?!

Just move your ass! RALPH

Andy opens the door of the woodshed and walks in. Ralph and Joey enter and stand in place for awhile before looking around.

ANDY
Don't all speak at once.

RALPH
Watcha want us to say?

ANDY
What do you think?

RALPH
It's a piece of shit.

ANDY
Who asked you?! How `bout you, Joey?

JOEY
There's not much to say.

RALPH
(chuckles) Ha, ha...Be honest, Joey! What does this place have in common with Andy's bedroom?

JOEY
(smiles) It's filthy.

ANDY
So is your ass!...What do you expect the Taj Mahal?

RALPH
It wouldn't be bad for starters. (looking out window) How far out are we?

ANDY
Far enough.

JOEY
(teasing) Christ, Andy. You call this place a secret? It's more like an embarrassment.

ANDY

(to Joey) For your info, Tadoo, it's not why I brought you guys out here.

RALPH

Then what's the big deal?

Andy sees the team letter Joey has in his pocket and snatches it.

ANDY

Oh shit! Don't tell me they gave you a letter?

JOEY

Hey, give it back!

ANDY

How'd you get this? Wrestlin' a midget?

JOEY

No, tackling an elephant!

ANDY

Yeah? Well, how'd you reached his neck? Someone picked you up?

JOEY

Will you give me my letter?!

ANDY

(holding letter above his head) Can you reach it?

JOEY

Damn you, Andy! Stop fuckin' around!

ANDY

No need to catch an attitude. Just try reachin' it. I wanna see if you're five seven.

JOEY

I'm not playin'. Now, give it back!

RALPH

Andy, give him back his letter!

ANDY
Not until he confesses.

JOEY
I got nothin' to confess.

RALPH
Come on, Andy. Quit bein' a horse's ass!

ANDY
Here! Don't say I never gave you anything.

Joey snatches his letter back.

JOEY
One of these days someone's gonna --

ANDY
(jokingly) You think you're tall enough to--?

RALPH
Alright, enough already! What is it you wanna show us?

ANDY
In a second. How 'bout a couple of hits?

RALPH
Quit stallin'!

ANDY
(takes out a reefer and lights it) I'm tryin' to get you in the right state of mind. Believe me. You're gonna thank me.

RALPH
Where d'ya cop?

ANDY
My old man carries the best.

RALPH
You're old man'll carry your head if he finds out.

ANDY

That's not how it works, man. He's alright.

RALPH

You're tellin' me he gave it to you?

ANDY

I'm tellin' you he's alright. (sees Joey cracking the door open) What the hell are you doin'?!

JOEY

It's stuffy in here.

RALPH

When d'ya find this place?

ANDY

Why? You're interested in buyin' it?

RALPH

Stop dreamin'. Since when you been keepin' this a hideout?

ANDY

I found it a couple of months ago.

RALPH

Now is when you tell us, you creep?!

ANDY

I tried tellin' ya. But you've been pretty busy with Donna. What's goin' on? You're in love?

RALPH

Nah, she's just a friend.

ANDY

Some friend. Every time I call your house, you're never home.

RALPH

What can I tell ya? She's prettier than you.

ANDY

You hear him, Joey? What are we? Somebody to kill time with?

RALPH

I can talk to her. You I gotta smell your nasty breath.

ANDY

(to Joey) What the hell are you smilin' for?

JOEY

Ralph's right. I can't tell which is worst - the stench in your mouth or in your ass.
(Ralph and Joey laughs)

ANDY

Alright, yous all wanna gang up on me, hey? Well, I got one thing to say to you.

Andy sits on a whoopee cushion on top of a box crate and gives off a flatulent sound.

RALPH

(to Andy) You didn't? (Andy smiles) You fuckin' slob!

JOEY

(fanning the air) Christ, Andy!

ANDY

(throws cushion at Joey) It's only a whoopee cushion, dooch bags! (to Ralph) Don't hog up the smoke!

JOEY

(referring to the whoopee cushion) Finally, you found something you can relate to.

ANDY

Chill or else I won't let you kiss me. Now, get over here and take a hit!

JOEY

You know I don't take that junk.

ANDY

What's a couple of hits? It ain't gonna kill ya.

JOEY

I said no!

ANDY

Pussy! You don't smoke. You don't drink. You don't fuck. I'm worried about you, Joey. You're gonna end up blind.

RALPH

(smoking the reefer) Nobody told me you called.

ANDY

Yeah, well I left a couple of messages with your old man.

RALPH

No wonder. What mood was he in? Bein' his usual bastard-self or bein' his usual bastard-self?

ANDY

Neither. He was more concerned about me hookin' up with you. He didn't wanna see me hangin' with the wrong crowd. Ha, ha...

RALPH

(referring to his father) Stupid fuck!

JOEY

Enough with the talk! What's this big secret?

Andy stands into a combat position and raises his left leg and both arms.

JOEY

(to Andy) What's with you?

ANDY

I'm ready for you, Joey. Give me your best shot!

RALPH

(looking at Andy) What are you suppose to be? Some Ninja fuck up?

Andy lets out with a scream and charges at Joey. Both boys struggle until Joey gets Andy down on the ground.

RALPH

(to Andy) Now, whadaya gotta say, chicken chow mein?

ANDY

(as if in pain) Oh, shit! I got a nail snuck in my leg.

JOEY

(skeptical) Yeah, right.

ANDY

GET UP, GODDAMMIT! Whatcha wanna do? Make me bleed to death?

RALPH

It ain't Joey's blood.

ANDY

GET UP! IT HURTS!

Joey loosens his grip and is about to get up until Andy grabs his arm and gives him a headlock. Joey tries to buck him off.

JOEY

You bastard. Get off me!

RALPH

(to Andy) You cheatin' fuck, you!

ANDY

(to Joey) Say uncle!

RALPH

Andy let go of him!

Joey continues to try and buck Andy off.

ANDY

(to Joey) Oh shit! I feel a hard on comin'.

Ralph tries to pull Andy off by grabbing his neck. Andy twists Joey's arm.

JOEY
(screams) AAAAAH! You're breaking my arm!

ANDY
Tell Ralph let go of my neck!

RALPH
Let go of his arm!

ANDY
Let go of my neck!

JOEY
Ralph, let go of his neck!

Ralph lets go of Andy's neck. Andy lets go of Joey's arm. All boys, playfully, stand up watching each other cautiously and begin to walk in a circle. Joey and Ralph plunge for Andy. Landing on the floor, they hear a loud crack. Ralph immediately gets up and stands back.

RALPH
(to Andy) Yo, man! When's the last time this place was inspected?

ANDY
(inspects the sunken rug) Look whatcha did!

RALPH
Look what I did?!

ANDY
(acting angry) I should make you fix it.

RALPH
Be glad I don't sue your ass!

ANDY
(still feigning anger) Ah, just pull off the rug so I can fix it!

Andy climbs up the loft. Joey clears the area for Ralph to pull up the rug. Joey notices the door trap on the floor and opens it. To his horror, he lets the door slam shut and backs off.

(to Joey) What's the matter? RALPH

Somethin's in there. JOEY

What? RALPH

Take a look! JOEY

Seeing Joey's frightened look, Ralph walks over to the trap door and opens it.

(smiles at Ralph) What's wrong? ANDY

Is this what you brought us out here for? RALPH

(finding it amusing) Big secret. ANDY

(to Andy) Who is she? JOEY

You're the Honor Roll Kid. Figure it out. ANDY

Cut the crap! Who is she? RALPH

(smiles) Take a guess. ANDY

JOEY

Christ, Andy. You've done some weird shit before but this...

ANDY

Aw, man. You're spoiling the fun. Go on, take a guess!

JOEY

Her jacket's covering her face.

ANDY

Well, pull it off for, Christ sake!

RALPH

How'd she get here?

ANDY

I brought her up.

JOEY

For what?

ANDY

(in a condescending tone) What do you think? To play doctor.

JOEY

(anxious) Cut the crap! What really happened?

ANDY

You really wanna know?...Okay...I killed her.

JOEY

You what?!

ANDY

What's wrong? You deaf?

JOEY

You know what you're saying?

ANDY

No. Maybe you can explain it to me.

RALPH

(to Andy) Who is she?

ANDY

Man, you dudes are unreal. You ain't even tryin'.

Ralph looks around and picks up a stick and is ready to poke the body until Andy quickly holds it to prevent him from touching her.

ANDY

(upset) What are you doin'?! I said pull her jacket off not poke her.

RALPH

(showing some doubt) I just wanna see if she's real.

ANDY

(pulls her jacket out and throws it at Ralph) See?

JOEY

(looks in hole) No. No it can't be!

ANDY

(still looking at Ralph to see his reaction) It is.

JOEY

Crystal?

ANDY

Bingo!

RALPH

Crystal, my ass!

ANDY

Well, who is it Mr. Know-it-all? Touch it! See if I'm lyin'.

RALPH

I can see good enough.

ANDY

You're afraid, ain't ya?

JOEY

(still staring) It looks like Crystal.

ANDY

It is Crystal. Ralph's afraid to see it because it reminds him of --

RALPH

(annoyed but not really irritated) Shut up!

Joey closes the trap door.

ANDY

What are you closin' it for?

JOEY

I don't wanna see it.

RALPH

(doubtful) How'd you kill her?

ANDY

It was simple. I used Quaaludes.

RALPH

Huh! You expect me to believe that? Whatcha do? Make her swallow a whole bottle?

ANDY

Bingo!

RALPH

Will, you cut the Bingo crap?! Nobody ever got over on Crystal. And I doubt if you did.

ANDY

Oh, yeah? Then what's she doin' here?

RALPH

If you really wanna know, I frankly don't give a shit.

JOEY

Why Andy? Why d'ya make her swallow all those pills?

RALPH

He ain't made her swallowed nothin'. (to Andy) What really happened?

ANDY

What the hell you want me to say?

RALPH

How `bout startin' off with the truth?

Andy, playfully, grabs Joey's neck.

ANDY

(acting insane) Well, ya see I grabbed her. Yeah! I grabbed her neck. (Joey pulls away) And then I...I made her open her mouth. Yeah! Yeah, that's what I did. (tries to grab Joey's crotch)

JOEY

(smacking his hand away) Get off!

ANDY

Then I shoved a handful of pills down her throat.

RALPH

(showing skepticism) Since when has Crystal ever hung out with you?

ANDY

Many times.

RALPH

Really? I thought she went with men, not turds.

ANDY

Kiss my ass! I haven't seen you havin' any luck with her.

RALPH

Never tried to. Besides, I heard the only guys she went out with are the ones she can use. You're tellin' me you were one of `em?

ANDY

Cute, Ralph. Real cute.

RALPH

Okay. So she OD'd on Quaaludes.

ANDY

(overacting his surprise) You believe me?!

RALPH

Just about every one knows she's a suicidal freak.

JOEY

She is?

ANDY

(chuckles) Joey, which side of your head your mother dropped you on?

RALPH

I'm bored. Let's go.

ANDY

(to Ralph) Not until you admit you're pissed off because I got to her and you didn't.

RALPH

Dead bodies don't turn me on.

JOEY

(to Andy) You screwed her?!

ANDY

(to Joey) What did I just say?

RALPH

(skeptically) Nothin'. Did ya?

ANDY

(acting silly) Of course, I did. You can have the leftovers, if you want, Joey.

JOEY

You're sick!

RALPH

Nah. What is really sick is if Andy's tellin' the truth. (to Andy) What the hell possessed her to have sex with you?

ANDY

(faking a laugh as he's becoming annoyed) Ha, ha, ha...You're hilarious, Ralph.

Watcha gonna do with her? JOEY

You got a suggestion? ANDY

Yeah, notify the police. JOEY

ANDY
Joey. Who sucked up your brain? If the cops got wind of this, what do you think'll happen?

JOEY
What if someone saw the two of you riding together?

ANDY
No one did. She was all alone by the bus station, runnin' off to New York.

RALPH
Runnin' off? Why?

ANDY
Ask Ralph. He can relate to it.

RALPH
So let me get this straight, now. The reason why she rode with you was because you promised her you'd take her to New York?

ANDY
(mocking him) Hey, you're good! But first, she wanted to get high. So I brought her out here.

RALPH
Let me guess! It was the only condition you'd take her.

ANDY
Hey! What kinda guy you think I am?

RALPH
You wanna answer that, Joey?

JOEY

(holding his stomach) I don't feel so good.

ANDY

(to Joey) Act like a man, if you can't be one!

RALPH

You call bein' a man getting' a chick stoned, so you can get your nut off?

ANDY

She came on to me. Alright?! All I did was--

JOEY

SHHH! (pauses) You hear anything?

Andy and Ralph stop to listen.

RALPH

No.

JOEY

I swore I heard somethin'. (goes to look out the window)

ANDY

Don't freak out on me, Joey!

JOEY

I heard somethin', I tell ya! (catching an attitude) Let's go! I gotta get back. I got things to do at home.

ANDY

Relax! If you start gettin' a heart attack that'll mean I'll have two bodies to deal with.

RALPH

You're sure nobody's been out here?

ANDY

Look around you! You think anybody's been out here in the 40 years the mines have been shut? I don't think so. We're practically far from civilization.

JOEY

(to Andy) I wanna leave.

RALPH

(to Andy) It's gettin' late. How `bout it?

ANDY

Hey, man. This is the first time we've gotten together in a long while.

RALPH

I got plans, Andy.

ANDY

Let her wait! (referring to Joey) I may never see you until this little piss-head grows.

RALPH

Some other time. Let's cut out.

ANDY

You fuckin' guys let girls become masters of your dick.

RALPH

Yeah, yeah, yeah...Now, drive us back.

ANDY

Not so fast. I need you to help me, first.

JOEY

(suspicious) Doing what?!

RALPH

What did I tell you, Joey. I knew he had somethin' else up his sleeve.

ANDY

(catching an attitude) Alright, then go!

RALPH

What do you want, Andy?

ANDY

I don't need you. I'm just sorry I thought I could depend on you. But if that's the way--

RALPH

Stop it! You're makin' me sick with your sulking. What do you want us to do? Make it quick.

Andy gets two shovels and hands them to the boys.

ANDY
Crystal needs to be buried.

JOEY
(to Andy) You're crazy!

RALPH
(to Joey) You got that right. That'll take us half the day. (to Andy) She's already buried.

ANDY
Where's your heart, man? Everybody deserves a decent burial. Even you.

RALPH
I'm touched.

ANDY
Alright, I'll do it myself. (takes shovel from one of the boys)

JOEY
Let's go, Ralph. I don't wanna be a part of this.

ANDY
Stupid! You already are. We're the only three who knows about this.

JOEY
Yeah, but we didn't do anything!

ANDY
So whatcha sayin', Joey? You're gonna narc on me?

JOEY
That's a dumb question!

ANDY
That all depends on what your answer is.

JOEY
(a little uncertain) No! But I don't want to be an accomplice to a crime either. We help you bury her and we'll be just as guilty accordin' to the law.

ANDY

Who's gonna know unless--

JOEY

I said I ain't gonna narc on you! You should know me by now. If you doubted me, you wouldn't have brought me here. But I ain't lookin' to spend the rest of my life in jail, if they find Crystal.

RALPH

Look, Joey. Andy may be all the things people say he is, but he ain't no killer.

ANDY

(faking insanity) You really think so, Ralph?

JOEY

(to Andy) You really forced the pills down her throat?

ANDY

Would it make you feel better if I said no?

JOEY

All I'm askin' is to be up front with us. Did ya?

Andy pauses as he looks Joey in the eyes, then smiles.

ANDY

You got me, Joey. What really happened was I choked her with my bare hands.

Joey slaps Andy's hands away as soon as Andy tries to touch his neck.

JOEY

When are you ever gonna take things serious?!

ANDY

I ain't shittin' you! I used my hands.

RALPH

Which is it? The pills or your fuckin' hands?

ANDY

My hands.

JOEY
Why, Andy? Why'd you kill her?

RALPH
(making light of it) Yeah. What was your motive?

ANDY
(a little hesitant) Would you believe she gave me the clap?

RALPH
Get the fuck outta--

ANDY
She did!

RALPH
With what? Her finger up your ass?

ANDY
That's your fantasy!

JOEY
You killed her just for that?!

ANDY
(defensive) Yeah, you got a problem with it?

JOEY
Yeah, it's stupid! How'd you know it was her who gave it to you?

ANDY
(looks at Ralph) Is he the one who flunked outta hygiene?

JOEY
You're really dumb, Andy! That's no reason to kill her.

ANDY
Oh yeah? Well, you tell me what is.

JOEY
My God, Andy! What kind of person are you, man?!

ANDY

(insulted) What do you mean what kinda person? I'm a human being.

RALPH

Next to a caveman. Come on, man. The only reason why she's dead is because of an accident or she intended to kill herself.

ANDY

You know, Ralph? I'm getting' tired of you doubting me all the time. You weren't here, so how would you know?

RALPH

'Cause I know you, Mister Tough Guy.

ANDY

I know you too! And I know that when your brother died, you didn't have the nerve to go back and identify his body.

Ralph stares at Andy for a few seconds then grabs him by his collar and throws him against the wall. He gets a grip on Andy's throat.

RALPH

(to Andy) Keep bringing up my brother, you hear?! It doesn't concern you. You got that?! (shoves Andy harder) You got that?!

ANDY

Alright, alright!

Ralph lets Andy go. Andy adjusts his shirt and takes the pitchfork and slams the door behind him after he exits. Ralph and Joey pause.

JOEY

You think he's lying?

RALPH

What difference would it make? I doubt if any one would miss her.

JOEY

This don't seem right, though.

RALPH

Knowin' Andy, he'll only stick his foot with that shovel.

Ralph picks a shovel and is about to leave.

JOEY

You're not goin' out there and help him?

RALPH

I'm only diggin' a hole, Joey. That's all I'm doin' (turns around before he exits) You feel like walkin' all the way back? (exits)

Joey stares at the open door for a moment, then walks out. Blackout.

End of Scene 1

SCENE 2

TIME: An hour later.

AT RISE: The boys enter from outside. By the looks of them, we can see they're pretty fatigued. Ralph throws the shovel to the corner, while Joey places his shovel against the wall. As Andy's about to fetch the body, he notices the door trap open. Surprised to see an empty hole, he turns to the boys.

ANDY

What the fuck?! (turns to the boys) She's gone! Crystal's gone!

JOEY

What?! Cut the bullshit, man! (approaches the hole and looks in) Holy shit! (to Ralph) Crystal is gone. Where the hell did she go?!

RALPH

Maybe she got bored with death and left. (approaches the hole)

JOEY

This ain't no time to joke around, man! Where the hell could she be? Who--? (to Andy) Where are you going?

ANDY

(runs back out to look for her) Where do you think asshole?! I'm gonna look for her.

RALPH

(looking in the hole) Goddamn! Yous weren't shittin'.

JOEY

Let's get the hell outta here!

RALPH

For what?

JOEY

What do you mean for what?! Somebody was here. Somebody had to be, while we were in the woods.

RALPH

Yeah, so now they're gone.

JOEY

(in disbelief to Ralph's response) Wha--? This don't smell right! What if they come back? Oh, shit if it's the cops we're dead.

RALPH

Woe, man! Chill out for a second, alright? Calm down.

JOEY

(anxious) Don't tell me to calm down! You don't get it. Who the hell would snatch a body, unless...unless it were the cops or, or what if it's some psycho killer on the loose? Oh shit, Ralph! I don't like this.

RALPH

Believe me. If the cops were here, we'd know about it. And if it's a psycho killer, you'd wish the cops were here.

Andy reenters.

JOEY
What happened, you found her?!

ANDY
(upset) No.

JOEY
Whatcha think could've happened?

ANDY
How should I know?!

JOEY
You think somebody else--?

ANDY
Will you shut your trap for a second?! (to Ralph) I don't understand.

JOEY
Then where could she be?

ANDY
Joey. Don't ask no more stupid questions! Come on guys, I need your help. Help me look outside.

JOEY
Hell no! Are you crazy?! What if somebody's laying for us in the bushes?

RALPH
You lettin' your paranoia get the best of you, Joey. Listen to yourself?

JOEY
I don't care what you guys say! I'm not going in the woods to look for a dead body. I don't like this, man. Let's cut out!

ANDY
Listen, shit head! We are not goin' nowhere!

JOEY
Why man, why?

ANDY

HEY! HEY! I'm tired of hearing your scary ass. Get this through your head! We ain't movin' from here until we find out where her body is.

RALPH

Well, she couldn't have gotten up and walked.

Suddenly, the door slams open. It's Crystal.

JOEY

(staring at Crystal) Oh shit! She did. She's alive.

ANDY

(smiles as if he's happy to see she's alive) Huh! She is.

Crystal walks up to Andy and shoves him a couple of times, then begins to punch him until he covers himself and feigns a scream.

CRYSTAL

You Bastard! You left me in that hole to die! I was scared shitless, when I opened my eyes. Why didn't you pull me out?! Huh?! (gets more angry when Andy just smiles) Prick face! You think it's funny?! You think it's a joke?! You fuckin' gorilla! You goddamned moron! I could've died in there!

ANDY

(teasingly) GET HER OFF ME, RALPH! SHE'S ABUSING ME! GET HER OFF!

CRYSTAL

(continuing hitting him) You motherfucker!

ANDY

GET HER OFF! HELP!

Ralph pulls Crystal away.

RALPH

(to Crystal) Chill out! It was an accident.

CRYSTAL

(to Ralph) Don't touch me! (approaches Andy) You slimeball! I should rip your heart out. What the hell you think you were gettin' away with?! (to Ralph) Let go of me! Will you let go?! Let go of me, I said!

Ralph struggles to get her out the door and finally succeeds.

RALPH

(to Crystal) Don't worry, I will. (turns to Andy after he locks the door) What the hell is she wired up with?

CRYSTAL

(outside banging and kicking the door) OPEN THIS DOOR!...OPEN THIS GODDAMN DOOR!...I'M FREEZING!

JOEY

Let her in, man. It's cold out there.

RALPH

Go ahead. (Crystal's still banging)

ANDY

(noticing Joey's not moving) Well, ain't you gonna let her in?

JOEY

(addressing her through the door) Crystal?

She bangs one more time then stops. There's a short pause. Joey stares at the door.

ANDY

You want me to hold your hand?

JOEY

(to Crystal) We'll let you in. But you gotta promise to stay calm...Well? (pause) ... Crystal?...Are you there?

Joey cautiously opens the door. Crystal stands there saying nothing. She enters shivering slightly. Joey takes off his jacket and puts it over her

shoulders.
She shrugs it off. Boys remain cautious.

CRYSTAL
(to Andy) Where's my jacket and suitcase?

ANDY
(plays dumb) Beats me.

Crystal looks around and spots her things in the loft. She climbs up and puts on her jacket, then comes down with her suitcase.

JOEY
(to Crystal) Glad to see you're alive.

CRYSTAL
(referring to Andy) No thanks to that bum.(turns to Andy) Why'd you leave me?!

ANDY
I thought you were dead.

CRYSTAL
Couldn't you see I blacked out?!

ANDY
At least I covered you.

RALPH
(chuckles) Ha, ha!

CRYSTAL
(to Ralph) You think it's funny?

RALPH
No. Just hilarious.

CRYSTAL
(to Joey as she digs in her pockets)...You got a cigarette?

JOEY
I don't smoke. (looks at Ralph)

RALPH

Don't look at me.

CRYSTAL

(to Andy) Underneath the floor in a hole?! I can't believe you did that.

ANDY

You looked dead. How was I suppose to know. I'm no doctor.

CRYSTAL

(pauses and stares at Andy) You could've tried feeling my pulse!

ANDY

Whatcha think I was doin'?

CRYSTAL

(being sarcastic) I don't know. I was dead.

ANDY

You didn't have a pulse or a heartbeat. You were stiff as a board.

RALPH

(teasing) Some killing, huh, Andy?

CRYSTAL

Killing?! Who he killed?!

JOEY

(to Andy) You fuckin' liar!

RALPH

(to Crystal) How's your neck?

CRYSYAL

(confused) Neck?

JOEY

He never choked you?

CRYSTAL

Choked me?! (turns to Andy) You choked me?!

ANDY

(trying to save face) Yeah, but you were too stone to notice.

CRYSTAL

Why'd you choke me?!

ANDY

You were takin' too many pills, so it was the only way I could stop you.

CRYSTAL

(in disbelief) So you choked me? (shaking her head)...Humph!...What am I missing here?

ANDY

(defensively) You're lucky to still be alive.

CRYSTAL

No thanks to you! I was depressed! When people are depressed you don't go around trying to get them out of it by choking them! (holds her stomach) How long was I out?

ANDY

Not long enough.

JOEY

(to Crystal) Almost a day.

CRYSTAL

You're serious?...Christ! No wonder I'm starving.

JOEY

Care for a bag of chips?

CRYSTAL

What do you got?

JOEY

Bon Tons.

CRYSTAL

I hate Bon Tons! (changes her mind after searching and pulling out an empty wrapper) I'll take it. Where is it?

JOEY

I left it in the car. (Joey exits)

CRYSTAL

(to Andy) You made me miss my bus.

ANDY

There were no buses that time of night.

CRYSTAL

I could've been in New York, by now.

ANDY

No one's stoppin' you.

RALPH

Didn't you promise to take her?

CRYSTAL

(to Andy) Oh, yeah! You said you'd take me. (becoming fidgety) I need a cigarette.

RALPH

What's up in New York?

CRYSTAL

Everything. I just wanna get out of this stupid town. I'm tired of looking at a bunch of sad, ass hicks.

RALPH

(taking it a little personal) Who you callin' a hick?

CRYSTAL

(referring to Andy) Is he still in back of me?

ANDY

(to Crystal) Drop dead!

Joey reenters with a bag of chips and hands it to Crystal.

CRYSTAL

(looking at bag) It's opened.

JOEY

I ate some awhile back.

CRYSTAL

You didn't scratch your balls today, did you?

JOEY

(half smiles in disbelief) No! My hands are clean.

CRYSTAL

Let's see!

Joey shows her his hands. After looking at them, she digs into the chips. She stops eating then she begins to look at Ralph.

CRYSTAL

You're the guy who's seeing Donna?

RALPH

No. We're just friends.

CRYSTAL

That's not what I hear...You really like her?

RALPH

You shouldn't go by what you hear. Besides, what's it to you?

CRYSTAL

Nothing, 'cept she told me she's seeing someone else. (Andy cracks up)

RALPH

Yeah, so what?

CRYSTAL

You think I'm lyin'? Ask her. She'll tell you.

RALPH

It doesn't much matter. I'm not seein' her.

CRYSTAL

(doubtfully) Right. (sees potbelly stove and goes to it) Does this thing work?

ANDY

Does your legs close?

CRYSTAL

Stop begging. (Beat) Why don't you get this thing to work? I'm freezing in this dump.

ANDY

We're leavin'.

CRYSTAL

What about New York?

ANDY

You expect me to take you?

CRYSTAL

Not really. But if you don't, I'll go to the police and tell them you left me here to die.

ANDY

(feigns a laugh) And who's gonna believe you?

CRYSTAL

You think they'll believe you? Tell me! How many times you and your father had a brush with the law? The last time your old man held a job was when he was sober. How long was that? A month?

ANDY

(a little upset) You don't know nothin' about my family!

CRYSTAL

Tell me you almost weren't taken away from him because of it.

ANDY

Bullshit! (to Ralph) Can you believe this bitch?

CRYSTAL

Then you should've kept your mouth shut telling me all about you.

ANDY

I told you nothin'!

CRYSTAL

Sure you did! You can't remember 'cause you were too high smoking.

ANDY

How would you know? The state you were in, you couldn't even spell your own name less alone remember it.

CRYSTAL

Oh, I remembered. And I also remembered how hard you were trying to get me to feel sorry for you, so you can get in my pants.

ANDY

(to Ralph) She's lyin'.

JOEY

Is she?

CRYSTAL

(to Andy) Try me, then! We'll see who the cops'll believe.

RALPH

Just take her, man. It'll be less of a hassle.

ANDY

(short pause) Okay...But I gotta go home first.

CRYSTAL

What's wrong with now?! (derisively) Oh, I see. You have to ask daddy's permission.

ANDY

At least I got a daddy! You'll have to wait until I get back.

CRYSTAL

And how long will that be?

ANDY

Maybe, nine...tomorrow.

CRYSTAL

Tomorrow?! I can freeze my ass in here.

ANDY

Take it or leave it.

CRYSTAL

You better be here no later than that! And I don't mean at night either. I need something, like blankets, if I'm sleeping here.

ANDY

Look in the loft.

CRYSTAL

What about the stove?

ANDY

What about it?

CRYSTAL

(rolls up her eyes) Does it work?

ANDY

I don't know.

CRYSTAL

(goes over to the stove) It looks like it takes coal. But wood should do.

ANDY

What else would you like? A color t.v.?

CRYSTAL

You got one?

ANDY

Later.

Andy gestures Ralph and Joey to leave.
Meanwhile, Crystal gathers up whatever she can collect to throw in the stove.

ANDY

(as he's about to leave) What do you think you're doin'?! Hey! Hey! Did I give you permission?

CRYSTAL

I'm cold!

RALPH

Andy! She has to sleep here. You don't.

JOEY

Yeah.

ANDY

(to Crystal) Try not to burn the place down.

CRYSTAL

(as the boys leave the shed) Don't forget to bring me something to eat. I'm still hungry.

ANDY

There's a pitchfork in the corner. Go look for a bear.

CRYSTAL

Why should I when I'm talking to one?

After the boys have left, Crystal stuffs more things into the stove until she remembers that she needs matches. She rushes to the door.

CRYSTAL

I NEED MATCHES! HEY! HEY!

Car takes off. Crystal comes back in and looks around before going into her suitcase and pulling out a screwdriver. She keeps it in her hand while pulling out a worn out envelope from her pocket and unfolds a letter to read.

CRYSTAL

Hey Pumpkin!...I know it's been awhile since we've been in touch. Sometimes things happen in life that changes our plans. I ran into a few obstacles which won't be holding me up too much longer. But as soon as I get everything straighten, we'll make it happen. Promise.

She continues to read in silence then puts the letter away. She cuddles herself as the lights gradually fade to black.

End of Scene 2

SCENE 3

TIME: Next morning.

AT RISE: Crystal is bundled up in an old army blanket. Although she's sound asleep, she tosses and turns from time to time. Suddenly, she mumbles then makes a fist. She pounds on the floor several times causing her to immediately sit up.

CRYSTAL

Get away from me! Not, now. No! No! NOOO!

She realizes that she's been dreaming and eventually gets up. She walks to the door and opens it. She looks out for a few seconds then comes back in, warming herself from the cold. Joey knocks on the door. Crystal closes her suitcase and puts it by the loft.

CRYSTAL

The doors open.

Joey enters with a knapsack filled with food.

JOEY

I figured you'd be real hungry, so I brought you a sandwich, a quart of soda, a bag of Wise potato chips, since you don't like Bon Ton, and a box of donuts. I hope you like chocolate.

While Joey's talking, Crystal desperately attacks the food. He suddenly remembers the cigarettes at the bottom of his knapsack.

JOEY

Oh yeah! I got you a carton of cigarettes, but I didn't know which kind you like. So I mixed it up with one of each brand. (notices the army blanket)...How did you sleep?

CRYSTAL

(with a food in her mouth) Like hell.

JOEY

Yeah, I can imagine. (sees the stove and walks over to it) Were you able to get the stove to work?

CRYSTAL

My nipples were hard all night.

JOEY

(a little embarrassed) Yeah, well. Andy should've helped you.

CRYSTAL

You didn't.

JOEY

I wasn't thinkin'...Sorry.

CRYSTAL

You have a car?

JOEY

No. I rode up here by bike. Look, if you don't mind ridin' on my handle bars, I'll take you to the --

CRYSTAL

I'll wait for the asshole.

JOEY

Yeah. (short pause) Well, I guess I'll cut out and leave you --

CRYSTAL

No, stay! Keep me company.

(pauses) Okay.

JOEY

stops

Joey says nothing and watches Crystal eat. Seeing him looking at her, she and turns to him.

CRYSTAL
What? You never seen someone eat?

JOEY
No. No, that's not it...I was thinking how close we came to burying you.

CRYSTAL
And I would've seen you all in jail too.

JOEY
(amusingly) Well, that would be pretty good, seeing how you'd be six feet under.

CRYSTAL
What are you? Another Andy?

JOEY
(turns serious) No.

CRYSTAL
I would've felt the dirt as soon as it hit my face. (to herself) I knew this would've been trouble. Had I stayed at the bus stop, I'd be looking at more exciting things right now instead looking at someone like...(stops short of insulting Joey) Shit! Damn him!

JOEY
It wasn't exactly Andy's fault. We all thought you were dead.

CRYSTAL
What time is it?

JOEY
It's nine o'clock.

CRYSTAL
You brought matches?

JOEY

They're in the carton.

Crystal looks and takes a match and goes over to the stove to light it.

JOEY

Do you know how to do it?

CRYSTAL

Doesn't it look like I do?

Joey goes over and looks inside the stove.

CRYSTAL

You know how to start it?

JOEY

Think so. But we need more wood, if we want the fire to last.

CRYSTAL

(being sarcastic) Brilliant!

JOEY

I'll go outside and get some.

CRYSTAL

No! Don't bother. Andy should be here any minute.

She takes a pack of cigarettes out of the carton and lights up.

CRYSTAL

Christ! What I would give to be in New York showered clean and in a nice warm place.

JOEY

You have somewhere to stay?

CRYSTAL

I'll find a shelter.

JOEY

I heard they're not too save.

I can handle myself.

CRYSTAL

You know much about New York?

JOEY

Enough to get me by. (short pause)

CRYSTAL

Are you always this hard?

JOEY

What do you mean?

CRYSTAL

JOEY

Listen to yourself. You seem like you don't care to be nice to anyone. I can't blame you for being mad at Andy, or maybe me and Ralph for that matter. But I'm not your enemy.

CRYSTAL

It's the way I am.

JOEY

I don't think so.

CRYSTAL

How would you know?! (pause)

JOEY

I know you're beautiful. I ain't trying to hit on you or nothing, but...you are. (pause)

CRYSTAL

(suspicious) What do you want?!

JOEY

What do I--? Huh!...Hey, look! I said enough already. Andy should--

CRYSTAL

You wanna come to New York with me?

JOEY

(with a shy smile) Huh!...If I could, maybe I would. But--

CRYSTAL

Don't you want to see what's outside this town?

JOEY

Sure!...I plan to see the world before I settle down.

CRYSTAL

And when will that happen?

JOEY

When I finish college.

CRYSTAL

College? (short pause as she looks at him)...Good luck.

JOEY

Thanks (beat) I know how you feel about going places. Seeing things. It's always been my passion to live in Oslo.

CRYSTAL

Where's that?

JOEY

It's the capital of Norway.

CRYSTAL

Norway? Ain't that where polar bears live?

JOEY

It's possible.

CRYSTAL

You're crazy!

JOEY

(defensively) And going to New York isn't? I can think of better places.

CRYSTAL

Yeah, if you're looking to be an Eskimo.

JOEY

I just like the freedom of being involved with nature. Sounds corny. I know, but--

CRYSTAL

No, it ain't! I feel the same way you do, except it's in a big city.

JOEY

You've ever been to New York?

CRYSTAL

When my dad was alive, I use to go visit him up there. (begins to glow) He'd take me to places like Yankee Stadium, Radio City, Coney Island. I felt really alive just being there. I felt I could do anything I wanted to. Talk about freedom? Humph! No one would care who you were or what you were into. People would just be in their world, mining their own business and no one else's, unless that is, if you want them to. (short pause)

JOEY

How old were you then?

CRYSTAL

About 10...almost 11. That's the last time I was with my dad before he died. (reflects) When I'm dead, I wanna be buried far away from everyone. I wouldn't want any visitors. Not that any one would come. But I'm more like my dad. He believed when you're dead, you're dead. It's stupid to bring flowers and sob over brittle bones.

JOEY

(pause, then changes subject) I've never been to New York. I hear there's a lot of weird people, especially in the subways.

CRYSTAL

(smiles as she reminisces) I use to think New York was a big ant farm. It had as many people moving underground as it did on the streets. The first time my dad took me in the subway, I thought it looked spooky. The trains looked like mechanical, caterpillar, dragons coming out of their black tunnels of hell; clinking and clanking their heels, real loud, to get your attention. Boy, did I have a wild imagination back then.

JOEY

How was the sandwich?

CRYSTAL

Too much mayonnaise. (Beat) I hope Andy doesn't take his damn time getting here.

JOEY

I hope so too.

CRYSTAL

What? You think he's not coming?

JOEY

I didn't say that! Andy's just known for making a lot of promises.

CRYSTAL

That he can't keep?

JOEY

I didn't say that.

CRYSTAL

You don't have to. He'll keep this one.

JOEY

You'd really go to the police?

CRYSTAL

I wouldn't have to. The worst thing that can happen to you guys is to lose your wallet.
(pulls out Andy's wallet out of her jacket)

JOEY

Oh, shit! He's gonna be pissed.

CRYSTAL

He can piss all over himself if he wants. But he ain't getting this until he drops me in New York.

JOEY

What if he takes it from you?

CRYSTAL

Let him try and he'll find himself talking in a high voice.

JOEY

(smiles) His mother use to say the same thing every time he'd piss her off.

CRYSTAL

I didn't think he had a mother.

JOEY

He might as well not have.

CRYSTAL

(half smiles) Why?

JOEY

She hates him. At least, that's what I heard. She hates him because she didn't want him in the first place. Andy doesn't know I know, but the only reason she stayed with his father was because she was knocked up by him. Andy tells us his mother passed away. But the truth is she left him and never bothered to get in touch. You could say his father had to be his mother as well...sober or not.

CRYSTAL

She really did that?

JOEY

The last time I remember seeing her was at Andy's birthday, when he was...(reflecting)
Just about the same age you were, when you last saw your father in New York.

Crystal pulls out Andy's wallet and
tosses it to Joey.

CRYSTAL

Here! Give it to him when he gets back from New York.

JOEY

You're sure you wanna do this?

CRYSTAL

Take it before I change my mind!

JOEY

(puts wallet in his pocket) How do you feel?

CRYSTAL

How am I suppose to feel?

JOEY

You've must've taken a lot of Quaaludes to make you that lifeless. Man, were you out.
God must've been on your side that night.

CRYSTAL
Do I look like a junkie to you?

JOEY
I never said you were!

CRYSTAL
Then what are you saying?

JOEY
I was just curious if you got high a lot.

CRYSTAL
Don't you?

JOEY
(lying) Sometimes.

CRYSTAL
So do I.

JOEY
I didn't mean anything by it! I just wanted to hear it from you, instead of getting my head filled with Andy's bullshit.

CRYSTAL
How well do you know him?

JOEY
Well enough to know he likes to feel important.

CRYSTAL
Don't we all.

JOEY
But he's not so bad...once you get to know him.

CRYSTAL
(staring at Joey) What is he? Your best friend?

JOEY
Hell, no! (Crystal half smiles)

CRYSTAL

(still staring) You know, if you were only a few inches taller, I'd probably go out with you.

JOEY

(snapping back) What does height have to do with it?! Maybe it's you who's too tall.

CRYSTAL

Maybe...You got a girlfriend?

JOEY

No.

CRYSTAL

Why not?

JOEY

I'm working toward a scholarship. Right now, I wouldn't have time to get serious with anyone.

CRYSTAL

You're a virgin?

JOEY

(defensively) Are you?

CRYSTAL

(smiles) You never made it with anyone, have you?... Would you like to see me naked?

JOEY

What guy, in his right mind, wouldn't?

CRYSTAL

Is that a yes or a no?

JOEY

(pauses) You're bluffin'.

CRYSTAL

Take off your pants and find out.

Joey hesitates at first but quickly pulls down his pants when Crystal unbuttons her top. She then seductively takes his pants and goes to the door and throws them outside.

JOEY

Hey!

He runs out and fetches them and quickly puts them back on inside.

JOEY

(angry) Why'dcha do that for?!

CRYSTAL

Why'dcha believe me? You think I'm easy?

JOEY

I never said that.

CRYSTAL

You never say anything, do you?! But that's what you were thinking. I choose who I wanna be with. And it's not just to be in bed with, either.

JOEY

You gave it up to Andy.

CRYSTAL

He told you that?!

JOEY

Yeah...(trying to retract) But I never believed it --

CRYSTAL

What else did he tell you?!...Tell me!

JOEY

(hesitantly) He said you gave him the clap? That's why he killed you in the first place.

CRYSTAL

Why that two time son-of-a-

You're sayin' it never happened?

JOEY

Fuck you!

CRYSTAL

(teasingly) No. No that's okay.

JOEY

Why you piece of shit, you!

CRYSTAL

Crystal chases Joey up to the loft but doesn't climb up to get him.

(amusingly) I'm just kidding! I'm just kidding!

JOEY

The only way he'd fuck anyone is if he snuck up behind the ass of a blind hippo. I would have to be stoned outta my mind to let him come near--! (realizes that she was stoned)...Oh, shit! Turn around!

CRYSTAL

What--?

JOEY

Just turn around!

CRYSTAL

Joey turns around, while Crystal turns back to the audience and lifts up her skirt to see if Andy touched her.

(after a few seconds) Can I come down? I promise I won't turn around.

JOEY

You're history if you do!

CRYSTAL

Joey moves back and jumps down landing on Crystal's suitcase.

CRYSTAL

Look what you --! Get off, you idiot!

Joey steps off her suitcase while she opens it to see if there are any damages inside. Joey sees her screwdriver and pulls it out. She sees him with it and snatches it from his hand. She puts the screwdriver back in her suitcase.

CRYSTAL

Keep your hands off!

We hear Andy's car making a screeching halt. Andy walks in with a brown, sandwich bag.

ANDY

(to Joey) What are you doin' here?

CRYSTAL

Never mind what he's doing here! Where the hell do you come off saying we screwed around?

ANDY

I never said that.

JOEY

Sure you did.

CRYSTAL

And I gave you the clap?!

ANDY

(to Joey) You told her I said that?

CRYSTAL

(to Andy) You're a real asshole! If I didn't need a ride to New York, I would tell you to go on home and play with yourself.

ANDY

What makes you think I'm takin' you to New York?

JOEY

If that's what you promised, man, you shouldn't go back on your word.

ANDY

(pointing his finger at Joey) You're fucked!

CRYSTAL

(to Andy) Never mind him! You're just an all around sleaze bag. (closing her suitcase) Boy, did I make a mistake catching you at the station! Something told me, "you go with this clown, you'll regret it for the rest of your life."

ANDY

Well, hell, I'll just go back. (throws her the sandwich bag)

CRYSTAL

What's this?

ANDY

You said you were hungry. (about to go out the door)

CRYSTAL

(rushes with her suitcase over to Andy) Oh, no you don't! You're not leavin' here without me!

ANDY

(referring to Joey) You got your flunky over there. Let him take you.

JOEY

(defiantly) It's okay with me!

CRYSTAL

(to Andy) You're taking me!

She steps out the door. Andy stays.

CRYSTAL cont'd

Come on, let's go! (returns inside) Come on, I ain't got all day!

ANDY

She's callin' you, Joey.

Angry, Crystal slams the door and walks away.

JOEY

You shouldn't have done that, Andy. She waited for you.

ANDY

(holding his crotch) She can wait on this. And you. Why'd you go tell her I --? What the --?

Suddenly, Andy hears his car starting.
He looks out the window.

ANDY

Bitch! What the hell is she doing?!

Andy bolts out. Meanwhile, Crystal
drives off and slams the car into a tree.

ANDY

(outside) YOU GODDAMN BITCH! LOOK WHAT DID!

Joey goes to the door and sees Crystal
scurrying in. She locks the door and
desperately looks for a place to escape,
while Andy's banging on the door trying
to get in.

ANDY

OPEN THE FUCKIN' DOOR! OPEN IT, I SAID! (continues to rant and rave)

JOEY

What happened?

CRYSTAL

What do you think? A tree got in my way.

JOEY

How?

CRYSTAL

(moving around) How?! How do I know? It just jumped out in front of me.

JOEY

How bad is the car?

CRYSTAL

I don't know. I didn't have time to look.

JOEY

Don't you know how to drive?

CRYSTAL

Once. (looking around) Ain't there any other way outta here?

JOEY

I don't think so.

ANDY

(outside by the door) FUCKIN' BITCH!

Andy kicks the door open. Crystal picks up the pitchfork. As he's about to approach her, she quickly points the pitchfork to his belly.

ANDY

(to Crystal) YOU SAW WHAT YOU DID TO MY CAR?!

CRYSTAL

You should've come when I asked you to.

Andy tries to grab the pitchfork but Crystal's too fast. She points it at his throat.

CRYSTAL cont'd

Think again! .. Now, back off!

Crystal backs her way out the door but Ralph enters and grabs her from behind. She starts to kick and scream. Ralph lightly swings her off to the side.

RALPH

(to Crystal) Your mother and the cops are looking for you.

ANDY

(holding his neck) She just tried to kill me.

JOEY

Andy, you asked for it!

ANDY

The hell I did! Why don't you mind your goddamn business?!

JOEY

It is my business!

ANDY

You wanna make it your business?!
Come here and I'll show you, you little
fuck.

JOEY

You don't scare me! Quit acting
tough! You're all mouth, that's
it.

RALPH

(interrupts) IT'S NOT IMPORTANT! (to Crystal) What is, is you're stepfather's dead.
They found his body in the basement. Cops are callin' it homicide.

CRYSTAL

You told them where I am?

RALPH

No. The only reason how I know is your mother asked Donna, who then told me. Now,
I'm tellin' you.

ANDY

(to Crystal) Holy, shit! You killed him.

JOEY

You don't know that! So quit accusing!

ANDY

(to Crystal) Well, did you?

CRYSTAL

You'd like that, wouldn't you?!

ANDY

Forget it! I ain't riskin' my ass for you.

CRYSTAL

Who needs you?!

She gets up and is about to leave until Ralph steps in her way.

RALPH

Cops are probably all over the place.

ANDY

Why are you protectin' her for?

RALPH

Joey and I were about to protect you.

JOEY

Wait a minute! Why are you all assuming she killed him? She just told you she didn't.

ANDY

(sarcastically) She did?! Well, maybe I must've missed something in the translation. Maybe, she'll tell you if she did. Ask her! Go on! Ask her!

JOEY

I'm not gonna play your stupid game.

ANDY

Who's playin' a game? You just don't wanna know she killed her old man.

CRYSTAL

HE'S NOT MY OLD MAN! HE AIN'T NOTHIN' TO ME!

ANDY

What'd they say, Ralph? Was he poisoned, shot or what?

RALPH

Donna said he was stabbed to death.

ANDY

Ooooh, that's gutsy, Crystal...with a knife no doubt.

RALPH

She said it was more like an ice pick. The stabs were round.

Joey, surprised, quickly makes eye contact with Crystal.

ANDY

(to Crystal) Was it an ice pick? Or was it something else? (amusingly) Maybe --

RALPH

Who cares?! (to Crystal) The best thing for you to do, right now, is to stay here until it gets dark.

CRYSTAL

(annoyed) Oh, that's just great!

ANDY

The hell she is! I'm not havin' the cops sniffin' their noses around here.

JOEY

I thought you said this place is far from civilization?

CRYSTAL

He can have this dump!

RALPH

(to Andy) It's only till tonight, man.

ANDY

After what she's done to my car, I should let her --?

CRYSTAL

It was an accident! You just got me ticked off.

ANDY

Well, it's gonna cost you. Either you pay for the damage or else...

CRYSTAL

What?!

ANDY

(smirks) I think you know. I'm goin' to a body shop and check out how much it'll cost you.

CRYSTAL

And what if I ain't here?

ANDY

(still smirks) You'll be here. (exits)

RALPH

I'll come back tonight and take you as far as route 80. You can hitch a ride from there
In the mean time, just stay low. No lights, no sound. (exits)

Joey doesn't move but stares at her.

CRYSTAL

What are you looking at?!

JOEY

You really killed him? (pause)

CRYSTAL

What difference would it make if I did or didn't?

JOEY

I guess you had your reasons.

CRYSTAL

I'd like to be alone, alright?!

Joey says nothing and exits. We hear
Andy's car take off as Crystal holds her
stomach in pain and looks out the
window. Blackout.

End of Scene 3

SCENE 4

TIME: Evening

AT RISE: The moon's light fills the woodshed. Crystal is sitting on a box crate with her father's letter in one hand. She is in deep thought, staring into nowhere, until she hears someone coming. She quickly finds a place to hide. Seconds later, Ralph enters with a lit lantern and an arm full of wood.

RALPH

(sees candle) Crystal?...Crystal?

CRYSTAL

(cautiously appears) Are you alone?

RALPH

Yeah. Didn't Andy come up?

CRYSTAL

I didn't wait to find out. I just got tired of walking and not knowing where I was going. So I came back.

RALPH

I wouldn't worry about Andy. The most damage you did was to put a little dent in his fender. He's probably over it by now. (cupping his hands) Ain't you cold in here?

CRYSTAL

I didn't want to draw attention.

RALPH

No one's gonna see smoke from the chimney at night. (puts wood in stove) I saw Donna again. She said your mother is a bundle of nerves.

CRYSTAL

More likely because of him than me.

RALPH

She said your mother just wants you home, that's all.

CRYSTAL

You didn't tell Donna anything?

RALPH

Had no reason to.

Crystal says nothing as Ralph lights the stove. After he's done, he looks for some boards to cover the windows.

CRYSTAL

What I said about Donna seeing someone else? I was just messing with your head.

RALPH

I know...(Beat) Things are gettin' pretty quiet, now. I'd say wait a few more minutes

and we'll cut out.

CRYSTAL

Aren't you worried you'll get caught with me?

RALPH

To tell you the truth, I haven't given it much thought.

CRYSTAL

I don't get it. Why are you helping me?

RALPH

Because, right now, you got nobody.

CRYSTAL

(suspicious) On second thought forget it! I don't want your help.

RALPH

(perplexed) Come again?

CRYSTAL

I can see where this is going.

RALPH

Oh, yeah? Where?

CRYSTAL

Should I spell it out for you? (pause as Ralph catches on)

RALPH

(with a wry smile) Don't flatter yourself. You're not my type.

CRYSTAL

Neither are you.

RALPH

Cool. Now, we know where we stand with each other.

CRYSTAL

If it's drugs you want, I'm not carrying any.

RALPH

Have I asked for any?

CRYSTAL

What do you want?

RALPH

(busy with windows and stove) Nothin'. I'm just helpin' you get a new start on life. There's nothin' more to it than that. (short pause)

CRYSTAL

(vexed) Aren't you even curious?

RALPH

What's to be curious? You ran away from home and everybody thinks you committed murder.

CRYSTAL

And what do you think?

RALPH

What does it matter? All you should be carin' about is you. And how to get outta here.

CRYSTAL

You like the excitement of living on the edge, don't you? You think I killed my mother's husband, so after I leave for New York, you can brag about it to all your friends.

RALPH

You got a twisted mind.

CRYSTAL

Just point me in the direction to Route 80.

RALPH

You don't wanna do that. Deep down inside, I think you're glad you got me to help you.

CRYSTAL

(feigns a laugh) Boy, do you have an ego!

RALPH

Isn't that what they teach you in school? To develop a positive self-image? Look! I know what it's like to run away. I tried it myself. It ain't easy. It's lonely. It's scary. You don't know what can happen to you... You wish you could talk to somebody, who could understand and give you some insight. But you don't know who to talk to, or how they'd take it. You just –

CRYSTAL

Spare me the lecture.

RALPH

(stares at her for a moment) Cool. (pause)

CRYSTAL

What was your reason for running away?

RALPH

It's a long story.

CRYSTAL

So that's it? You can get into my business as long as I keep out of yours.

RALPH

You heard me askin' about your business?

CRYSTAL

Why are you trying to act so cool? You're no different.

RALPH

I never said I was. Are you about ready to go?

CRYSTAL

Don't you wanna know why? Why I killed him?

RALPH

Not really.

CRYSTAL

What are you afraid of? That you might know too much? That you might get too involved?

RALPH

(sarcastically) Yeah...I might get too involved.

CRYSTAL

You ever tried sleeping in a house where someone you detest can't keep his hands off you?! And your mother ignores it because she's afraid of losing him? You know how that makes me feel?! Do you know how bad it hurts to see him in my father's place?

RALPH

Why didn't you go for help?

CRYSTAL

Because my mother think she's in love with him...and would be crushed if anything should happen to him. But what do you care?!

RALPH

You're the one who brought it up.

CRYSTAL

I just had to talk to somebody about it. Why not you? (pause)

RALPH

I felt the same way you did...Only, I didn't have as much guts as you to kill my old man. What was important to him was himself. I was just a nobody. The only time he'd pay me any mind was when he wanted somethin' or found some fault in me.

CRYSTAL

So that's the reason you ran away?

RALPH

Not exactly...I found my kid brother with a bullet through his head. (short pause) My old man sent him to chop some wood. He was about 12 at the time. When my old man saw how late it was, he went out lookin' for him...I came home from baseball practice and saw my mother cryin'...When she told me what happened, I went out to see if I could find him. (short pause) From a distance I saw this body across the railroad track. It was him...Kenny...dead with his pants pulled off. (pause)

CRYSTAL

(a little hesitant) Sorry.

RALPH

(turns to her and pause) I wasn't...We were never close. He always kissed up to my old man, where I didn't.

CRYSTAL

So what?

RALPH

You don't understand. The only son my father ever loved was Kenny. In his eyes my brother could do no wrong. I was his rejection, his embarrassment, his freak. You see, my old man prided himself on discipline. He had rules and they were to be followed

and not questioned. Well, I couldn't go along with that program. My brother could. As the weeks went by, before his death, I saw him becoming, more and more, like my old man. We hardly spoke to each other. It became obvious we were drifting apart. (short pause) Part of me felt good he was dead, only because it made me feel good that my old man felt like shit.

CRYSTAL

How do you feel about your brother, now?

RALPH

I don't know...That's what bothers me. But I ran away and lost myself in Philadelphia. When they put a search out on me, I decided to come home. Not because I was afraid of him. I could care less what he'd do to me. I was just tired of livin' in the streets, not knowin' when or where I'd get my next meal.

CRYSTAL

Why would he put a search out on you if he didn't care?

RALPH

Pressure from my mom, most likely.

CRYSTAL

Did she go out looking for you?

RALPH

No. She mostly stayed home, waiting to hear from the police.

CRYSTAL

Then who actually went out to do all the looking?

RALPH

(realizing his father did) Are you ready to go?

Suddenly, a light spills through the woodshed's cracks. Andy calls out to Crystal with a megaphone.

ANDY

(outside) Crystal we know you're in there. Come out with your hands up and nothing will happen. You have 30 seconds to decide. After that we're coming in.

Ralph turns off the lantern, while Crystal tries to take a peek out the window.

Unexpectedly, the door slams open. A flashlight blinds Crystal and Ralph.

ANDY

(drunk) Okay, up against the wall! Both of you. That's it! Ah-ah-ah-ah! Don't move! You stupid people. Ha, ha, ha...

Andy, overwhelmed with laughter, lower the flashlight to shine on the floor. Ralph lights up the lantern and discovers it's him.

RALPH

You fuck! You almost had us jumpin' out of our skins.

ANDY

(to Crystal) Tried to cut out on me, huh?

CRYSTAL

Look at you!

ANDY

I figured you'd come back. Unless you know your way around these hills, you can't escape. Ha, ha, ha... You owe me 100 bucks for bustin' my headlights, bendin' my fender and puttin' me through emotional stress.

RALPH

Cut out the crap, Andy! All she did was put a little dent in your fender.

ANDY

(stares at Ralph) You!...are insignificant. (to Crystal) And you!...owe me 100 bucks.

CRYSTAL

Get a life!

RALPH

(to Andy) What have you been drinkin'?

ANDY

Orange juice.

RALPH

Yeah, with vodka.

ANDY

Bingo! (to Crystal) So where's my money?

CRYSTAL

All I got is 50.

ANDY

(exaggerates nodding his head) Ain't good enough.

RALPH

Why not? All you need is to bang the fender and smooth it out.

ANDY

What do you know about cars?

RALPH

Enough to smell a rip off when I see one.

ANDY

(with a wry smile) You never know who your friends are until there's a chick involved.

CRYSTAL

Look! I'll give you your hundred. Just take me to New York, right now.

ANDY

Well, then show me the money!

Crystal pulls it out. Andy is about to
Grab the money until she pulls back.

CRYSTAL

Not until you get me to New York.

ANDY

(sings New York, New York) Start spreadin' the news. Crystal's comin' today. Stop all your naughty shit. She's on her way. She's pretty big news. Got this town all confused. Who knows what happened to her dad...who she played a fool. She's ...

Andy begins to yawn and goes to the
corner to take a nap.

CRYSTAL

What do you think you're doing?!

ANDY

(jokingly as he falls asleep) I'm about to dream about you. I love you, man.

CRYSTAL

I'm paying you, so let's go!

ANDY

Ten minutes, That's all I need. (with a sincere look) I love you, man. Did I tell you?

Crystal, for the first time, looks into Andy's eyes and notices how serious he is after making his last statement. Catching her stare, Andy tries to fluff it off by acting silly again so as to not let her see his true feelings.

ANDY

(feigning a laugh) Ha, ha. ha...Look at you! You think I'm serious. Ha, ha, ha...Oh well. What can I say? I guess I'm too irresistible. Imagine that? Me. (yawns then lies down and goes to sleep) Yeah, right. (short pause)

CRYSTAL

Wake up!...Wake up! (Andy snores) Oh, that's just great! (pause, then turns to Ralph) Why don't you take me? I'd rather give you the money.

RALPH

It's not my car to offer.

CRYSTAL

So what?! He'll never know. By the time you get back, he'll still be out.

RALPH

I can't do that to Andy.

CRYSTAL

Okay, then we'll throw him in the back seat.

RALPH

Throw him?

Crystal says nothing and struggles to pull Andy out the door.

RALPH

You keep on doin' that and the only thing you'll throw is your back.

Crystal ignores him and continues to

pull. Ralph eventually helps her. After a few seconds, both of them are too exhausted to do any more.

CRYSTAL

(to Andy) Wake up, you goddamn blob! (to Ralph) You said you wanna help me get a new life. Then help me...please!

RALPH

I can't. If I knew of a --

Suddenly, Crystal becomes nauseous. She covers her mouth and runs out the door and throws up.

RALPH

(concerned as she returns inside) What's wrong?

CRYSTAL

(holding her stomach) Goddamn him! Goddamn him!

She goes into her suitcase and desperately looks for a white container of pills. When she finds it, she has a hard time opening it. Ralph tries to help and takes it from her.

RALPH

Let me try. (reading the label) "Humphrey's Eleven?"

CRYSTAL

Give it to me!

RALPH

What is it?

CRYSTAL

I need it for my stomach. Now, give it to me!

RALPH

(suspicious) No!

CRYSTAL

YOU FUCKIN' BASTARD! It's for my stomach. Now, give it to me! Give it to me!

Crystal lashes at Ralph. Able to put her arms behind her, he keeps them there until she can no longer strike back. Crystal begins to weep. Ralph embraces her tightly.

CRYSTAL

Oh Christ! Oh please God! Let it be over with. Let me just die! I wanna die! I wanna die!
(continues to weep)

RALPH

It's not your fault. No one's gonna blame you for what you did. It was your stepfather who abused you. You had no choice.

Crystal continues to weep a few seconds then pushes Ralph away.

CRYSTAL

It's not that...I'm having his baby!

RALPH

(surprised, pauses) You're sure?

CRYSTAL

Of course, I'm sure! He was the only guy who ever screwed me! Any time I was with somebody and he found out, he'd beat me and threatened to hurt my mother...I hated him so much that for every time I stabbed him, each one was for the times he forced himself in me.

There is a pause until Joey arrives and knocks. Ralph looks out the window first and answers the door.

RALPH

It's Joey.

JOEY

(to Ralph as he enters) They know! The police know Crystal's here.

RALPH

How?

JOEY

Ask Andy. His car was parked in front of the station.

Ralph goes over to Andy and shakes him until he's fully awake.

RALPH

Wake up, Andy! Come on, get up!

ANDY

(wakes up) Easy! You're givin' me a headache!

RALPH

You'll get worst than that if it's true! Did you narc on Crystal?

ANDY

What?!

RALPH

What were you doin' at the police station?

ANDY

I wasn't at no police station.

JOEY

Your car was right in front. I saw it.

ANDY

And what else did you see? Did you see me in it? Did I get out of it? How do you know it was my car? Tony Espinosa has the same set of wheels. So does Kevin Johnson, who makes pizza deliveries there all the time. What actually did you see, huh? Tell me! (pause) Humph! I figured as much. (to Crystal) You're ready?

CRYSTAL

I want Ralph to come with us. (looks at Ralph)

RALPH

(pauses as he stares at her for a second) Yeah, okay.

ANDY

How about Joey? In that way you got two bodyguards.

JOEY

I don't trust you, Andy.

ANDY

Do you think I give a fuck?!

JOEY

(to Crystal) Don't go with him! I think all Andy's gonna do is turn you in.

ANDY

(throwing a wry smile) Whose been pissin' in your ear? Me and her made a deal.

JOEY

So what?...I know you, Andy. (to Crystal) Whatever deal he made, it's not gonna happen.

ANDY

Why you little shit head! What do you want from her? Some--?

JOEY

(lashes out) I'm tired to see you get off on other people's misery! You got no heart, man! You got nothin'!

ANDY

Oh, Christ! Don't tell me you got the hots for her?

JOEY

I got compassion! I know that's a new concept for you.

CRYSTAL

(suspicious) I change my mind.

ANDY

Suit yourself. But you owe me a hundred bucks.

RALPH

(calm voice) Give me the keys! I'll drive.

ANDY

Oh, that's terrific, Ralph. What is it with you guys?! I've known you most of my life. Can't you see she's tryin' to use you? She's trouble, man. Trouble with a capital T! And both of yous are too damn blind to see it.

RALPH

Just give me the keys, man. In that way, there'll be no doubts.

ANDY

(pauses in disbelief, then throws Ralph the keys) Now, I know who my friends really are. I'm really disappointed in you, man. I should've known not to bring you and Joey up here. But sometimes that's the risk you take when you put your trust in someone.

JOEY

(unmoved, turns to Ralph) We should leave now, while it's still dark.

ANDY

We ain't goin' nowhere till I get gas.

CRYSTAL

Why didn't you stop on your--? (grabs her stomach in pain)

JOEY

Are you okay? (Crystal breaks down and cries) Crystal? What's wrong? (to Ralph) Maybe we should take her to the hospital.

ANDY

That would be good, seein' how she's pregnant. (to Crystal) Didn't know I knew? Well, let me tell you somethin' else I know --

RALPH

Shut up, Andy!

ANDY

Why? There's nothin' to be ashamed of. So what if her --?

RALPH

I said shut up!

ANDY

All I wanna say is what I heard! (to Crystal) I just wanna let you know your mother was arrested a few hours ago for killin' her husband. See?! I got compassion, Joey. I'm bringin' good news.

CRYSTAL

She didn't kill him, I did!

ANDY

You're admitting you killed him? Why? According to the police report, her motive was because you seduced him. She blames you for stealin' him away from her.

JOEY

How would you know?

ANDY

I keep my ears open. Look at her! She knows what I'm talkin' about. (to Crystal) You didn't kill him. All the evidence points to your mother. You know as well as I do the number of times they've been at each other's throats over you. But when he told her he knocked you up, that's when the shit hit the fan. She broke...then finally told the cops everything...Takin' the heat for her, ain't gonna make her love you. Wise up!

JOEY

No, why don't you?! (to Crystal) Look, he's just talkin' out of his ass.

ANDY

Yeah, Joey. I'm talkin' outta my ass...just like everyone in town is.

Crystal says nothing and storms out the door with her suitcase.

RALPH

Where you're goin'?

JOEY

Crystal?!

Joey starts to follow her until Ralph stops him and gives him a sign to leave her alone.

JOEY

(to Andy) What's with you?! Why are you making all this up?

ANDY

Don't you listen to the news, college boy? It's been on the radio and t.v. since this evening.

RALPH

Then why would she run away?

ANDY

Do I look like I got a crystal ball? The broad's a ditz!

JOEY

And what does that make you?!

ANDY

(smirks) Let me tell you somethin', Joey before you pour your heart out on this chick. The night she came up here, she showed me a letter her real father sent her. He tells her how much he misses her, and how he plans to come down and have her live with him. The dude's in a mental ward. He's been there since she was ten.

JOEY

(surprised) He's alive?

ANDY

Hell yeah! How do you think Crystal and her mother managed before her new husband came into the picture? Disability checks, dude. They qualified.

JOEY

What proof do you have he's mental? She told you?

ANDY

Are you kiddin? Open her suitcase and check out the envelope. I don't think she noticed I saw the returned address on it . Then again maybe she did.

RALPH

How do you know he doesn't work there?

ANDY

Funny place for a bank clerk to switch careers, don't you think? Anyway, she's a piece of work, man. (beat) So! What are we gonna do?

JOEY

(pauses in thought) Take her to New York.

ANDY

Didn't you hear what I said? She has no reason to run away.

JOEY

You made a deal. So take her to New York.

ANDY

You gotta be--! What do you think, Ralph?

RALPH

A deal's a deal.

ANDY

You too?...Humph! Well, I guess I'm outnumbered. Okay. Hand me over the keys.
(Ralph tosses the keys) You know this is a waste of time. But bein' the compassionate guy I--

Suddenly, Crystal lets out with a chilling scream. Ralph and Joey rushes out. Andy, a little disconcerted, stays. We see him trying to suppress his concern for her and what he might have caused her to do. Ralph carries Crystal back in, while she's holding her bleeding stomach.

ANDY

(lightheartedly) What the hell happened to her?

RALPH

(anxiously) She stabbed herself.

ANDY

Primitive way for an abortion, don't you think? (Joey looks at Andy with contempt)

JOEY

(to Ralph) We should get her to a hospital, now!

RALPH

Not yet! We gotta stop the bleeding, first. Go outside and get me her suitcase!

Joey rushes out.

ANDY

(pretending to be very cavalier about it) She's not gonna make it.

RALPH

Shut up! Come on, Crystal. Hold tight!

Joey reenters with the suitcase as Andy is disturbed by her condition but doesn't let the boys see how he feels by inconspicuously walking out.

RALPH

(to Joey) Get anything that can absorb this blood! Come on, Crystal. You're gonna make it. Just hold on.

Joey opens the suitcase and sees what he can find. He gives Ralph a few of her blouses.

JOEY

How bad is she?

RALPH

I don't know.

Suddenly, we hear the car starting. Ralph looks around and notices that Andy's gone. Joey scurries out to stop Andy, while Ralph wipes Crystal's sweaty forehead as she moans in pain.

RALPH

(to Crystal) Try to hold on awhile longer. You'll be fine. (places her hand firmly on the blouses) Keep as much pressure right there.

Ralph lays Crystal down in a comfortable position. He balls up a few of her clothes and places them under her head. He then goes to the stove and puts more wood.

RALPH

(trying to suppress his anxiety) It's pretty damp in here. As soon as we hold the bleeding, we'll be on our way. It shouldn't take us long. Traffic is pretty light this time of night.

(burns himself as he gets up to see Crystal) OW! Shit! Huh! You'd think by now I'd know how to burn wood. Christ! My old man made us do it every winter...Hold tight, now! Okay? We'll be--!

Ralph notices that Crystal's not breathing. He walks over to her and feels her pulse. Joey reenters.

JOEY

He said he was warmin' up the car. But I told him if he--!(sees Crystal)...She's dead?

Ralph doesn't answer. He just stares at Crystal. Meanwhile, Andy comes back.

ANDY

Hurry up! I wanna get this over with. (in an unconcerned tone as he sees Crystal) Ah, man! Don't tell me she croaked on us.

JOEY

(goes over to Andy) You insensitive piece of shit!

Joey takes a swing at Andy causing Both boys to scuffle on the ground. Joey ends up with the better hand and hits Andy continuously until he tires himself out.

JOEY

(as he's swinging) Feel the pain, Andy! Feel the goddamn pain for once in your life!

Joey catches his breath and leaves Andy on his back. Standing a short distance away from him, Joey realizes he's holding Andy's wallet. He pulls it out of his pocket and throws it at him.

JOEY

(to Andy) Crystal found your wallet on the floor...She wanted me to make sure you got it.

Andy, still on his back, begins to weep and suddenly yells out.

ANDY

YOU THINK I DON'T CARE! (walks over to her body) YOU THINK CRYSTAL WAS THE ONLY ONE HURT?! (kneels over her body) Well, I hurt just as bad, only her pain is over now. (lifts her body and embraces her) And I'm still here. (continues to weep) I'm still here.

Joey and Ralph say nothing and lets Andy mourn Crystal's death. Lights fade to black.

End of Scene 4

SCENE 5

TIME: A few hours have passed.

AT RISE: Joey and Ralph enter the woodshed. Both boys are covered with dirt holding shovels in their hands.

RALPH

You think we did the right thing?

JOEY

That's what she would've wanted.

RALPH

Maybe we should've used somethin' to mark the spot where she's buried, instead of a tree.

JOEY

I'll remember it. (short pause)

RALPH

You know what's so sad about all of this? I feel no one's gonna give a shit. Not her mother, not her so called friends...no one. (short pause) We all live in boxes, not knowin' or carin' who's around us.

JOEY

I don't think that's true. Some of us did give a shit. Even Andy.

RALPH

Maybe, you're right. (short pause) I miss Kenny

JOEY

(gently putting his arm around Ralph) Not everything's black and white. (pause)

RALPH

It's funny, the more I think about it the more I realize how much my old man and me are alike. My brother Kenny was more like my mom...Perhaps that's why he tried to please him. (pause)

JOEY

So where will you go from here?

RALPH

Somebody has to make the first move...It don't matter who.(short pause)

JOEY

My father's also a very proud man...Sometimes, too proud for his own good. I find when I break the ice, it gives him a chance to open up and say what he really feels...(with a wry smile) The first few times it happened, man was I amazed. I never knew how sensitive he could be.

RALPH

To tell you the truth, I wouldn't know where to begin.

JOEY

Just talk to him. It's not important what it is. (half way joking) Ask him about the birds and the bees.

RALPH

(smiles) You're crazy!

JOEY

So what?! You need to start somewhere. See what happens.

RALPH

He'd probably won't know what to say or better yet, throw me a condom and tell me not to bring any girl home pregnant.

JOEY

(half smiles) Well, it's a start.

(thinks about it) What do I got to lose? RALPH

Nothing. (short pause) JOEY

What do you think of Andy? RALPH

Humph! Man, I don't know what to say. JOEY

It just proves that nothin' is set in stone. RALPH

It's funny. JOEY

What? RALPH

JOEY
Sometimes, I ask myself why do I bother hanging with him? What keeps me taking his bullshit? I think I know what the reason is, though...it's because I've always been trying to figure him out.

He's been workin' nonstop out there. RALPH

Tell me about it. JOEY

pitchfork to
Andy enters and throws the
the side before he plops himself down.

JOEY
(to Andy) It was a good strong box you made.

RALPH

(to Andy) Yeah, especially what little stuff you had to work with. (pause) Yo, man if you're too tired to drive I can take the wheel.

Andy walks over to the trap door.

ANDY

(looking at the trap door) I should fill up this hole before someone falls in.

RALPH

Some other time, man. It's gettin' late.

ANDY

That's what's wrong with people, Ralph. We're always lookin' for excuses not to give up our time. (Beat) Maybe...maybe, we should get goin'. I'll drive back another day.

JOEY

Look, man if you want, I'll come up with you, after school tomorrow, and fill it up.

ANDY

Nah...Nah, you don't have to --

JOEY

I want to! It'll be like old times when we use to help each other out at a moment's notice.

ANDY

(with a desperate smiles) Yeah...like old times.

JOEY

(throwing a comforting smile) Yeah...How 'bout you, Ralph? You're down?

RALPH

(in an eager tone) Sure.

JOEY

Well, then it's settled. We'll all meet in the parking lot by your car.

ANDY

Cool.

RALPH

Hey! Remember the time, I locked myself out the house? And you and Joey helped me get to my bedroom window 'cause it was the only way I could get in?

JOEY

How can I forget? You almost got us killed! We had to climb two floors to get you into your room, when all you had to do was ring the doorbell.

RALPH

How the hell was I to know my mother was home? Hey, man wait a second! What do you mean I almost got you killed? It was Andy's idea to climb that wall.

ANDY

(smiles) I have to admit it was funny.

JOEY

(reflecting) We've done some pretty dumb things.

RALPH

(chuckles) Kids stuff. But we got some great memories, huh?

ANDY

Yeah. (short pause)

JOEY

Alright dudes, let's cut out. I need to get outta these clothes.

RALPH

I'm ready.

ANDY

I'll meet yous in the car in a second.

JOEY

Come on, Ralph.

RALPH

(as he follows Joey out, to Andy) You gonna be alright?

ANDY

Yeah, I'll be right out.

They finally exit. Andy looks at the trap door and opens it. In the meantime, voices of the boys' past dialogue are heard. After, a few seconds, we hear one of the fellows blowing the car horn for Andy to come out. Joey then enters and sees Andy looking into the hole. Joey says nothing and just stands by the door. Ralph later enters. He too gives Andy his time as we see all three boys reflect what has happened the past couple of days. Lights gradually fade to black.

End of play.

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