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894

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894

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts
in
Creative Writing
Playwriting

by

Kathleen Bailey

B.A. Louisiana State University, 2006

December, 2015

894

CHARACTERS

CAMILLE	32, female, recently back in Louisiana
BRITTANY	Mid 30's to 40, Caucasian female
EILEEN	60's, female
MOM	60's, female
SOPHIE	Late 20's, female
DAD (voice only).....	60's, male
ANNIE	20's/30's, female
THERAPIST	60's, female
DEBBIE	20's/30's, female

TIME

Any time before the smoking ban in bars went into effect in Orleans Parish, April 23, 2015.

SETTING

New Orleans. The set consists of three acting areas. An older bar, CAMILLE's parents' living room, and a non-specific area where settings such as Lake Pontchartrain and more abstract locations can be suggested.

NOTES

EILEEN and THERAPIST are intended to be played by the same female actor, as are ANNIE and DEBBIE.

As CAMILLE walks from setting to setting, the pacing and awareness of such transitions should correlate with the escalation of her drinking problem and the condition of her emotional state, at the discretion of the director. For example, some transitions can be abrupt, like getting to the bar, while others can fade in a confusing manner, like trying to find her way back home.

Oignon is pronounced: uh nyo(n), or with a Southern accent: un yawn.

ACT I

(The bar. BRITTANY sits at the bar hunched over her phone, drinking a beer. She has a baseball hat on and chews on a straw. She laughs at something on her phone.)

BRITTANY

Yeah you right.

(CAMILLE enters quickly and looks around.)

CAMILLE

Does anybody work here?

BRITTANY

She's over there, smoking. Yo, Eileen.

CAMILLE

Hi. Excuse me. Can I get a soda please?

BRITTANY

(To herself.)

So-da.

(EILEEN enters.)

EILEEN

Get ya' something, baby?

CAMILLE

7up. Please.

EILEEN

Just 7? You know a lil crown would be good in that. Yes, indeed. That used to be mah drink. I'd have ten or so of those and only then be ready to move my ass to the dance floor.

CAMILLE

Uh-huh—

BRITTANY

Yeah!

EILEEN

That was when people knew how to get down without getting all crazy and shooting each other. Blacks, whites, yellows—we all just drinking wit one another. Though, you know mah girl I worked with down in the 5th ward did get shot. Or maybe she got run over by a car—anyway, her funeral was the saddest thing I ever did go to. We was the ones drank Rendon Inn into the ground that day.

BRITTANY

Rendon Inn's still open, mama.

EILEEN

I must've been nineteen or so. No shit? Know what I really wish was still open—Topaz. Wait, was that the name of it?

CAMILLE

I'm in a bit of a hurry.

EILEEN

Sorry, baby. Crown and 7, right?

CAMILLE

Sure, fine. That's fine.

(EILEEN walks off, leaving CAMILLE and BRITTANY alone.)

BRITTANY

Don't worry chick, nobody cares if you show up smelling like liquor. Most people do—ya' heard me.

CAMILLE

Excuse me, I don't know what you're referring to.

BRITTANY

Ah'right. Me neither. Nobody here know what I'm *referrin'* to either.

CAMILLE

Jesus, can she pour that any slower?

BRITTANY

Sure can.

CAMILLE

I wasn't really asking someone.

BRITTANY

Then why you talking out loud.

CAMILLE

I'm just—

BRITTANY

What?!

CAMILLE

Nothing.

BRITTANY

Say, don't trip. We all here for the same reason you are. We have to.

CAMILLE

You're going, too? To the thing...

BRITTANY

The meeting, yeah, girl.

(Beat, looking around.)

And that guy. That guy.

CAMILLE

You can't know that.

BRITTANY

The bar right down the street from the meeting?? Girl, I know, belie-dat. You here, too. You ain't smart or different than any other mother fucker in here. 'Cept you *think* you are.

CAMILLE

I just wanted a soda.

BRITTANY

Yeah.

(EILEEN arrives with the drink.)

EILEEN

Know what was a good time bar—The Bounty? You ‘member that place?

BRITTANY

How old you think I am?! Yo, let me get a Gramo.

EILEEN

Ice, darlin’?

(BRITTANY responds with a gesture that must mean “yes”.)

EILEEN (cont.)

Yes, indeed. Topcats on Sundays was the thing. Can’t do none of that no more—

(She exits. BRITTANY pulls out an e-cigarette, exchanges the chewed-up straw for that, and turns back to her phone. CAMILLE drinks.)

CAMILLE

I really wasn’t going to drink today.

BRITTANY

You sucking it down now though.

CAMILLE

It’s really good actually.

BRITTANY

You smoke?

CAMILLE

I don’t have any marijuana.

BRITTANY

Cigarettes, child. Damn.

CAMILLE

When I lived here I did.

BRITTANY

Say, bai-bay! You from here?

CAMILLE

Mandeville originally. My parents live in Lakeview now.

BRITTANY

Ah'right, ah'right. That's close to me. Kissing cousins. Chalmette, myself. Bywatah now. I didn't know 'cause you don't sound like you from here.

CAMILLE

I'm living in Brooklyn.

BRITTANY

And what you just ditch your Southern accent?

CAMILLE

People there don't respond well to Southern accents.

BRITTANY

Those people don't know shit!

CAMILLE

It is the cultural heart of the twenty-first century.

(BRITTANY makes a fart noise.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

I'm going straight back as soon as I...

BRITTANY

Get off probation? You can say it.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

Nobody smokes there anymore.

BRITTANY

I was smoking a pack a day before this thing here.

CAMILLE

You're still smoking.

BRITTANY

Nah, see, now I *vape*.

(BRITTANY picks up the ashtray on the bar.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

The fuckers want to get rid of smoking to make us all healthy and shit, but really we need to get rid of it for every person who's gone through hell to quit. Every single time I see someone light up and take that first puff... Dude. I could so easy just reach in my back pocket, feel my Camel Blues. Hard pack. Little crumpled.

(Beat.)

I started smoking because I thought that's what you do when you grown. No one tells you that it's actually what kids do. What grown folks do is fight to quit it. But why the fuck we gotta learn how to do something that we gotta learn how to give up a couple decades later?

(Beat.)

I miss it hard. I'd just roll it in my fingers for a minute, before sucking dat fire up into it with a sizzle. This motha-fucka doesn't sizzle.

CAMILLE

I really want a cigarette now.

BRITTANY

Right? Nothing goes with drinking better than cigs. I started smoking the same year I started drinking. '91. Great year.

(EILEEN comes back with a cocktail.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

Thanks playa'.

EILEEN

Yes, darlin'. I'll just be smoking down here—ya'll holla if ya' need anything—

(She exits.)

BRITTANY

You want a Gramo? On me?

CAMILLE

Pardon?

BRITTANY

Grand Marnier.

CAMILLE

(Laughing.)

Isn't that liquor you cook with?

BRITTANY

No.

(Beat.)

What?! Lots o' folks like it.

CAMILLE

I've never heard of anyone drinking it by itself.

BRITTANY

Where you been, girl? Lemme guess—drinking those bourg-ey cocktails with tree oils from the Alaskan mountains harvested under the full moon?

CAMILLE

I like cheap stuff, too.

BRITTANY

You ever had Boon's Farm Fuzzy Navel?

CAMILLE

Maybe!

BRITTANY

No, you have one glass of rose' and call it a night. You probably going to this meeting, because you were going sixty-five down I-10 on a quota night.

CAMILLE

I had my first vodka when I was thirteen.

BRITTANY

Not bad, for *Mandeville*. By that time I could make a better martini than half the bartenders in this city.

CAMILLE

My dad totally gave me beer in my juice cups.

BRITTANY

Light beer proolly. I was stealing sips from my mom's margaritas as soon I could reach them.

CAMILLE

You don't know my dad—

BRITTANY

There's no way you were drinking earlier than me!

CAMILLE

He wanted me to drink with him!

BRITTANY

My mom did legit heroin while she was pregnant with me.

(Beat. CAMILLE is taken aback.)

CAMILLE

Oh.

BRITTANY

Don't step to me—cause you gonna lose every time.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

No, I... Ah, it's starting in a minute.

*(CAMILLE chugs more of her drink and starts to gather her things.
BRITTANY goes back to her phone, puffing on her e-cigarette.)*

CAMILLE

You're coming right?

BRITTANY

Nah.

(Waves up two fingers.)

Deuces.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

The proctor has to sign my sheet from court.

BRITTANY

Yeah, me too.

CAMILLE

Hey, if I offended you...

BRITTANY

The meeting leader—the “proctor”. He’s my boy. We used to get up in it way back in the day. He’s sober now. Duh. I’m gonna bring him the sheet after it’s over and he’s just going to sign all my slots for me like I went to all twelve of ‘em.

CAMILLE

Why don't you just go?

BRITTANY

Cause fuck AA that's why! And fuck anyone who thinks it does shit!

(CAMILLE doesn't move.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

(Without looking up.)

He can sign all yours, too. If you want.

CAMILLE

He wouldn't do that. He doesn't even know me.

BRITTANY

But now you know me, and I'm the bitch to know 'round here.

(CAMILLE sits down again.)

CAMILLE

Buy you another Grand Marnier?

BRITTANY

Say girl, what you think?

CAMILLE

I'm Camille, by the way.

BRITTANY

Brittany.

(They shake hands. BRITTANY grins at her like the cat who ate the canary.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

So. What'd'you blow?

(CAMILLE laughs. BRITTANY waits. She's not joking. She wants to know.)

CAMILLE

Oh, not high at all. You were right about me. Just like right over the limit.

BRITTANY

Lucky bitch.

(CAMILLE rises.)

CAMILLE

Yep.

(CAMILLE walks over to the living room as lights fade over the bar. Her posture changes slightly. MOM and SOPHIE are on the sofa. Junk food on

the coffee table. They stare out at the television, which stares back at them and spurts out a laugh track every few minutes.)

(CAMILLE enters. Is she drunk?)

CAMILLE

Hello.

(Neither MOM or SOPHIE look up.)

MOM

There she is!

CAMILLE

Is there any dinner?

SOPHIE

What up, Betty Ford?

MOM

You didn't call.

SOPHIE

We had Burger King.

CAMILLE

I got a ride home from someone at the meeting.

SOPHIE

Well, that's safe.

CAMILLE

It's AA, not prison.

MOM

Who was it?

CAMILLE

Mom, it's supposed to be anonymous.

MOM

In the car, too?

(CAMILLE looks around.)

CAMILLE

How is there never anything to eat in this house?

MOM

There's some cookies over here.

CAMILLE

That's nothing but sugar, Mom.

SOPHIE

Here goes Norma Rae.

CAMILLE

And we had donuts for breakfast!

MOM

You know, chocolate was special when I was a kid, so eat it or hush.

CAMILLE

And Norma Rae did something with unions, genius.

SOPHIE

Oh, are there any more of those lemon custard ones?

CAMILLE

I'm'a order pizza.

MOM

You're father's going to bed soon and you're not going to wake him with a doorbell.

(A male yell comes from offstage.)

DAD (o.s.)

Hey, Oign!

SOPHIE

Oh, Sausage and peppers!

CAMILLE

(Yelling offstage.)

What?

MOM

You can just make do.

DAD (o.s.)

Bring me the cookies!

SOPHIE

I'm hungry though.

CAMILLE

Oreos, Mom? For real? Diabetics are not supposed to have cookies.

MOM

Oh, just bring them to him. He wants a treat.

DAD (o.s.)

Oign?

SOPHIE

Wait, don't take them all.

DAD (o.s.)

Oignon?!

CAMILLE

One second!

(CAMILLE picks up the package of Oreos. She turns the package over to read the nutritional information.)

SOPHIE

What are you doing?

CAMILLE

Giving him one serving.

SOPHIE

Oh my God, you are so annoying!

MOM

Scoot—he's waiting on you.

CAMILLE

I'm the only one in this family that cares about our father's health problems.

(SOPHIE and MOM exchange an eye roll.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

There's 14 grams of sugar in three Oreos. He will be happy with three.

(CAMILLE exits.)

SOPHIE

Dad's just going to ignore her until she brings him what he wants.

MOM

I don't know why I thought she'd be calm coming back from meeting with a bunch of addicts.

SOPHIE

They probably told horrible stories about crapping themselves and abandoning their children.

MOM

You watch too much television.

SOPHIE

How long is she going to stay here?

MOM

Why don't you worry about your own self.

SOPHIE

Just saying—a thirty something living with her parents is not the most normal...

(CAMILLE enters again. She walks back to the Oreos, takes out six. SOPHIE smirks at her. CAMILLE exits again.)

SOPHIE

She smells like liquor.

MOM

No she does not.

SOPHIE

Well, somebody smells like liquor—is it you?!

MOM

You don't know. I could be boozing every day and you'd never suspect a thing.

SOPHIE

I have thought that you've been too happy lately. I just assumed it was pills.

(They laugh. CAMILLE enters again and brings a bottle of wine over to the sofa.)

CAMILLE

What's so funny?

SOPHIE

Get a job—that's funny.

CAMILLE

Go back to your apartment.

MOM

Girls.

CAMILLE

Tell me the joke, really.

MOM

I did talk to Jane today about getting you a job.

CAMILLE

At the urgent care? No, thank you.

MOM

And you have some other plan?

CAMILLE

I have an interview Wednesday.

SOPHIE

Yeah, to be a babysitter!

CAMILLE

Sophia Grace!

MOM

Like a nanny?

SOPHIE

Like an it's-date-night-call-the-local-preteen babysitter!

(CAMILLE hits SOPHIE. Too hard, she squeals.)

MOM

I think you're qualified for more than that.

SOPHIE

Quit! I'm delicate!

CAMILLE

Mind your business then.

MOM

Those types of jobs are for teenagers.

SOPHIE

You never said it was a secret.

CAMILLE

Just butt-out!

MOM

I thought you'd maybe want to take some art classes while you're here.

CAMILLE

In Louisiana?!

MOM

We have art here.

CAMILLE

Pssh. I live in *New York*.

SOPHIE

Ugh.

MOM

Art is art. They paint differently in Manhattan?

CAMILLE

Look I just want to work something low-key where I can leave easily and I don't have to think too hard.

SOPHIE

That is her art.

(CAMILLE reaches for SOPHIE, who ducks away from her.)

MOM

But how much does that pay?

(CAMILLE uses the wine key to screw into the wine bottle.)

CAMILLE

Does it matter? I'm just here to finish my DWI punishment. That's it. I don't live here. For the first time in a while, I don't have to pay bills or rent, and hell if I'm not going to enjoy myself before I have to go back to working three jobs just to live. It's only for a few months, thank God—or rather, thank you 894.

(The cork pops out of the wine bottle.)

MOM

You think it's wise to drink after your AA meeting?

CAMILLE

It's not *my* meeting, Mom, Jesus. I'm not a fuckin—sorry, Mom. I'm not an alcoholic. I didn't share or anything. I'm only going to those meetings because the judge deemed it punishment.

SOPHIE

You could be one and you don't even know it.

CAMILLE

You drink as much as I do—are you an alcoholic?

SOPHIE

I don't drink every day.

CAMILLE

Neither do I!

SOPHIE

As least I didn't get arrested for a DWI and go to jail in *Gretna*.

CAMILLE

Excuse me, who was the person who got kicked out of bar for throwing a Corona bottle at the bartender?

SOPHIE

He turned the game off—

MOM

Ya'll both drink too much! Now quit.

CAMILLE

Oh, and who was the person who incited some kind of mini-riot at the Latino bar for salsa-ing on the turntables back in the day, probably all 70's-drugged-out?

MOM

That was a fun night. Though I think your father puked in our car that night... We never got "wasted" all the time like some of ya'll do.

CAMILLE

Oh c'mon, Mom.

SOPHIE

Yeah, Mom.

MOM

We stopped drinking right after you were born, Sophie, so don't act like you remember anything.

SOPHIE

I've heard the rumors.

CAMILLE

You guys want some wine?

MOM

It's one thing to have a too much fun when you're younger, but you girls are getting older now. It's called moderation.

CAMILLE

Oh my God, Mom, don't be such a hypocrite.

MOM

Excuse me?

CAMILLE

All of Louisiana thinks they've figured out the secret of how to drink.

MOM

You know, this I where you came up, not New York.

CAMILLE

No way. I've been reborn a Northerner. And I will return to my home land soon enough. Just eleven more AA meetings. Community service. And the driving classes. And, oh right, five grand, too.

MOM

You always did just have to learn lessons the hard way.

CAMILLE

The lesson here being that if you are home for Christmas and out seeing old friends, having a good time and enjoying holiday merriment, quickly remember that you are in stupid Louisiana and turn around and get your butt out of here!

SOPHIE

Can ya'll zip it? I'm trying to watch this.

MOM

This is not Louisiana's fault.

CAMILLE

Debatable. However Louisiana *is* going to fix this for me. The same source and solution of all my problems.

MOM

Louisiana didn't force the liquor down your throat. I know you were getting just as drunk up in New York!

CAMILLE

You don't actually know that.

MOM

I know you!

CAMILLE

It was Christmas!

MOM

Whatever. It's too late to argue with you, Oign.

CAMILLE

Whatever. I will say that if I have to be citizen of this state for a little while in order to plea 894 and get this shizz off my record, I'll do it with a smile on my face—

SOPHIE

Quiet, puh-lease!

CAMILLE

And don't assume I'm some baby who can't hold her liquor. I know how to be responsible. It's Louisiana who doesn't.

MOM

Alright, Oign. Enough now.

(Beat. All three watch TV.)

CAMILLE

Ya'll sure you don't want wine?

(SOPHIE and MOM ignore her. Lights up on the bar. BRITTANY is there.)

BRITTANY

It's twenty-four hours!

(CAMILLE gets up and grabs an Oreo.)

CAMILLE

No it isn't!

(CAMILLE munches on the Oreo as she walks over to the bar. Lights dim on living room.)

(BRITTANY and CAMILLE are drinking beer and playing "Ring and Hook," which consists of a metal ring at the end of a piece of rope, where the player swings the ring and tries to get it on the hook. BRITTANY is in the middle of a story. If one of them makes the hook during the next, they celebrate. BRITTANY sips on a Styrofoam cup, as well as her beer.)

BRITTANY

It's supposed to be! That's what it said online. Check it. I roll up to the window at 3:30. It ain't even late. And nobody's coming to help me. So, I lean in and push the button. Nothing. I wait. Nothing. Dammit, I wanted some nuggets. So, I go around all the way to the front window. There's the spunk-sucking chick, fuckin' playing with her phone, not doing shit. Like, straight up ignoring me. This is the *serve-ice* industry. Fucking serve me.

CAMILLE

Are we calling McDonald's the service industry?

BRITTANY

Fuck yeah! I want a McRib—she’s to *serve* it to me, ya’ heard me? So, I say: “Hel-LO?” And she’s like: “What you want?” And I’m like: “Bitch, you did not just roll your eyes at me.”

(CAMILLE giggles and swigs on her beer.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

Am I right? I just want to get a snack so I can go the fuck home. So, I order a twenty-piece. She’s moving like molasses in winter. And I’m like, come *own*, girl. She gives me my food—texting on her phone the whole time—and I pay her. Fine, cool, whatever. No, listen, I pull away from the window and think: “I better count these nuggets and make sure there’s twenty.” Guess what? Home girl gave me sixteen nuggets. I counted twice. So, here I go again. Put the car in reverse—urk!—back to the window. Get her attention. Tell her my problem. And she doesn’t fucking believe me! She thinks I ate four of them. In forty-five seconds? No, Boo. And now I’m really starting to get pissed. I tell her to give me my fucking nuggets. It’s not fair. I paid for them. Instead she ignores me and goes back to talking on the phone to some little faggot I can hear—

(CAMILLE winces when BRITTANY says “faggot”.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

I can say it—I’m gay.

CAMILLE

(Feigning surprise.)

You are?

BRITTANY

Shet-up, dick!

CAMILLE

I really do hate slang like that.

BRITTANY

Too bad. Anyway, I’m pissed off. And, dude, she would not listen to me. I tell her to eat shit and scuuurtch, get out fuck of there. And as soon as I’m out into the street, ree-oo, ree-oo, ree-oo. He said I was being belligerent and displaying signs of intoxication. I really wasn’t that bad. He said he heard me screaming and throwing a fit at the window. But that wasn’t even my fault. And the shitty thing was that he was watching me the whole time. They can’t arrest you in the parking lot of a business, so he just sat there and waited for me to drive out. Bullshit.

CAMILLE

Sucks.

BRITTANY

It just got worse from there. He told me to blow, so I did. Point two five. Balls. Hand cuffs. Fuck. Back of the car. Down to booking.

CAMILLE

Isn't jail confusing? Corridor after corridor. I got lost.

BRITTANY

Baby, you said you got popped in JP. This is Orleans Parish. There ain't nothing confusing about OP jail. You go in, you never come out.

CAMILLE

It's not the same?

BRITTANY

Shiiiiiiiit. Jefferson is the yacht club compared to Orleans. And, get this, my girl came down and posted bail for me at like noon. At one, they came in and told us to put on orange jump suits. My bail had already been paid and they put me and two other chicks in general pop. *General population*. With all the other folks who are there for legit prison. One girl with five counts of felony drug possession, one girl who had an outstanding warrant from Georgia, and me, with a fucking nothing DWI. Scariest two hours of my life.

CAMILLE

They can't do that.

BRITTANY

They can do whatever they want, baby.

(Beat. BRITTANY takes her time to line up her shot.)

It was horrible.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

At least the whole ordeal is almost over.

BRITTANY

Right... How long did they hold you?

CAMILLE

Oh, I don't know, a... regular amount of time.

(BRITTANY looks at her weird.)

BRITTANY

What's that's s'posed to mean? You never even told me what you blew.

CAMILLE

I didn't?

BRITTANY

Tell me.

CAMILLE

Hang on, let's get a couple more.

BRITTANY

You wanna shot?

CAMILLE

Yup.

BRITTANY

I'm a lil fucked already. Soberest person drives ah'ight?

(BRITTANY high-fives CAMILLE. Beat. CAMILLE stops.)

CAMILLE

You don't want me to drive your car.

BRITTANY

I do if I can't, ya' heard?

CAMILLE

Um... I can't... I haven't got my license back yet.

BRITTANY

So? I haven't even been able to get mine either. Still doing my probation.

CAMILLE

But you've been driving.

BRITTANY

Ya' think?

CAMILLE

You've been driving me.

BRITTANY

Are you for real complaining?

CAMILLE

This whole time they've had your license, you've been driving?

BRITTANY

What did I just say?! I don't have a choice. I have to get to work. I have to do shit.

CAMILLE

But if they pull you over for any little bitty thing...

BRITTANY

Jail. I know.

(CAMILLE stops playing for a moment.)

CAMILLE

You're going to risk another shot on your record—

BRITTANY

At this point, I don't fucking care. Back off my ass.

(Beat. CAMILLE is quiet.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

I have to work another job just to help pay for all the fines. How the fuck am I supposed to get there?

CAMILLE

You could take the bus.

(BRITTANY starts laughing.)

BRITTANY

Cute, Yank.

CAMILLE

Seriously. I think you gotta work within the system here.

BRITTANY

You know everything about the system, huh? The system's supposed to re-ha-balitate us? The system fucking is doing this to us.

CAMILLE

There's the Diversion program. Did you look into that? You can drive on that program.

BRITTANY

You can't drink on Diversion! For a year!

CAMILLE

(Gasping.)

No.

BRITTANY

No alcohol for a year! You wanna live like that?

CAMILLE

That can't be right.

BRITTANY

No drinking, no drugs, breathalyzer blowing every single fucking day. Twice a day.

CAMILLE

Who would do that?

BRITTANY

No one I know.

CAMILLE

Fuck that.

BRITTANY

Right?!

(CAMILLE's phone rings. She looks at it and silences it without answering.)

CAMILLE

Okay, let's get two more of those, um, what'd'ya' call 'em?

BRITTANY

Well, I don't know what you call them up in fancy New York, but down here we call those motha fuckas "beers".

CAMILLE

You're an asshole.

BRITTANY

I know.

CAMILLE

Well, I'm getting drunk tonight. Is it okay if I can't handle the car?

BRITTANY

Line 'em up. I'll call my brother—he'll pick us up.

CAMILLE

It's pretty late—it's past two.

BRITTANY

Oh, he's up.

(BRITTANY sidles up to the bar.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

He's gonna like you.

CAMILLE

Me?

BRITTANY

Oh child! Don't play that little game wit me. I know you already.

(CAMILLE flushes.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

Hey, bring me that cup outta mah bag.

CAMILLE

Huh?

BRITTANY

My cup! Quick.

*(CAMILLE pulls out the Styrofoam cup and gives it to BRITTANY.
BRITTANY takes a large pull on the straw and hands it to CAMILLE.)*

BRITTANY (cont.)

Here, drink this.

CAMILLE

What is it?

BRITTANY

Jus' do it. Lawd, c'mon.

(CAMILLE takes a sip.)

CAMILLE

Ugh, oh my God, what in the name of—

BRITTANY

C'mon you twat—I thought you were Southern.

(CAMILLE sucks down the beverage until the straw slurps that the cup is empty.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

Atta girl.

(BRITTANY reaches behind the bar and pulls out a whiskey bottle.)

CAMILLE

Brittany, no.

BRITTANY

They don't care.

(BRITTANY pours the whole bottle into the cup.)

CAMILLE

Not the whole thing!

BRITTANY

Fuck this place.

(BRITTANY puts the bottle back.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

C'mon lets roll!

CAMILLE

We're going to get in trouble.

BRITTANY

Fuck, you don't have to hang. Stay—what do I give a shit.

(BRITTANY grabs her stuff to leave.)

CAMILLE

Shouldn't we leave a tip or something?

BRITTANY

(Yelling.)

Here's your tip!

(BRITTANY moons the bar and turns to leave. CAMILLE giggles and begins to follow.)

(BRITTANY exits. Lights dim on the bar.)

(CAMILLE starts to follow BRITTANY, but crosses to the living room instead. She hurriedly begins to clean up junk food and trash. SOPHIE enters eating out of a bag of potato chips and sits on the sofa right where CAMILLE is trying to clean up.)

CAMILLE

Soph, go somewhere else.

SOPHIE

(Mouth full.)

Nerp!

CAMILLE

That woman is coming over for that interview and I'm running late and she's going to be here any second.

SOPHIE

It's not my fault you are irresponsible and got home so late.

(SOPHIE turns on the television.)

CAMILLE

You have a TV I'm sure—go watch yours.

SOPHIE

Nope.

CAMILLE

Goddammit! Just help me out here for a second. I'll buy you a coffee after it's over.

SOPHIE

Yeah, and who has to drive us to get that coffee?

CAMILLE

Just... !

SOPHIE

“Just”... “Just”... The television is not going to bother her.

(Doorbell.)

CAMILLE

C'mon Soph, scoot! Please. And take some of this junk with you.

SOPHIE

Ask nicer.

CAMILLE

Sophia Grace, git oawt!

(CAMILLE's full accent shocks her and she slaps her hand over her mouth. SOPHIE starts laughing.)

SOPHIE

Oh my God, Oign! Alrightie there Papa Hillbilly, sir. You tell Big Mama the butter's a'churning on the stove—

(Doorbell. CAMILLE starts shoving SOPHIE towards the exit.)

CAMILLE

That's not how you churn butter—

SOPHIE

'Scuse me—

CAMILLE

Go!

(SOPHIE exits.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

Spoiled bitch.

(CAMILLE prepares herself the best she can.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

Come in!

(ANNIE enters.)

ANNIE

Isn't this just the most beautiful house.

CAMILLE

Thanks.

ANNIE

It's nice to meet you. I'm Annie... Hold the phone. Candace—?

CAMILLE

Camille—

ANNIE

Candace Legleu?

CAMILLE

Annie Anselmo?

ANNIE

It's Annie Jennings now. Married. My husband's the founder of "Oh Mah, O'Kra" New Orleans food tours—you may have heard of it—it pops up third on the Google search for city tours. So I've been down here, goodness, eight years now. What are doing living down here?

CAMILLE

Um... There's not really anything to do in Mandeville is there.

ANNIE

That, I do know. My kids just love it though. We pretty much just hop them high up on sugar and let them run all over those woods—just wears them right out.

CAMILLE

Would you like some iced tea or, wait, I think we're out of that. Um, a glass of water?

ANNIE

No thank you. Is your sister here?

CAMILLE

Uh, yes.

ANNIE

She's still interested in the job, right?

CAMILLE

Oh, Sophie? No, she's actually a junior associate at a law firm. Divorces mostly. Really fits in with her personality.

ANNIE

Oh.

CAMILLE

Yeah, I'm the, uh, one who wants the job.

(Beat.)

ANNIE

Great. That is great. We typically do a standard application and run it through a third party system that does a background check and that kind of thing, but since I know you—

CAMILLE

No. Give it over. No, no problem.

ANNIE

Great.

(ANNIE produces the application. CAMILLE begins to fill out the application.)

ANNIE (cont.)

I have three children—did I mention that? They are, well, hellions, to be honest. All boys. They just need loads of attention I'm afraid... Are you in school?

CAMILLE

No, I have a degree.

ANNIE

This an extra job for you.

CAMILLE

Not really.

ANNIE

We can only pay ten dollars an hour.

CAMILLE

That's fine.

(Beat.)

ANNIE

What have you been doing since SSA?

CAMILLE

Trying to block out all memory of SSA.

ANNIE

Thank God I had boys. I couldn't have done it with all the moodiness and weight obsessions... Didn't I used to tape *Dawson's Creek* episodes for you when we were freshmen?

CAMILLE

That is correct, yes.

ANNIE

You let me cheat off you in exchange right?

CAMILLE

I don't think so.

ANNIE

Well, I did it anyway. You were so smart.

CAMILLE

We were kids. A's were the essence of my self-worth.

ANNIE

I remember the last time I saw you! The graduation party out in that barn and you were grinding up on Brad Sibley right in front of his girlfriend from Mount Carmel.

(Singing.)

It's getting hot in here. So take off all your clothes. I am getting so hot. I wanna take my clothes off.

(Beat. CAMILLE stares at her.)

ANNIE (cont.)

You have a boyfriend now, sweeties, or a special person in your life?

CAMILLE

I... do. Yes, actually. A really nice guy. With a big job in finance. I mean, a career in finance. I'm just nannying for our vacation fund. And for the rewarding... ness.

ANNIE

How great! I knew there was a reason a smartipants like you would pick a little ole babysitting gig. So relieved—I mean, I didn't want to feel like I wasn't paying you enough.

CAMILLE

Phillip loathes talking about money.

ANNIE

Mm-hm, my husband feels the same way. Tacky. Well, this Phillip sounds wonderful. When do you think you're going to get married?

CAMILLE

You see, we're probably not. Phillip just hates traditional relationship stereotypes.

ANNIE

Progressive. Love it!

CAMILLE

Here, I'm finished with this.

ANNIE

Great. I'll just take it, and give it to our guy. Uh-huh, okay, everything looks—oh dear, what is... Well...

CAMILLE

Hm?

ANNIE

Sweets, you marked... Did you mean to mark that? You probably didn't mean to, right? That you've plead guilty to a crime before?

(Beat.)

You didn't explain in the little area... I'm sure it's completely a small thing, but, well, what happened?

CAMILLE

Nothing. It was just a bit of a misunderstanding.

(ANNIE waits patiently.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

It was just a speeding trap.

ANNIE

Oh. But how was there a crime?

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

I was driving... And so... I got in trouble...

(CAMILLE stops. She is unable to finish the story.)

ANNIE

Here, just write it down... I'm sure it's nothing.

(ANNIE offers the paper to CAMILLE. CAMILLE doesn't take it. CAMILLE is unable to talk. It's very awkward. After a few beats, it becomes clear to ANNIE that CAMILLE is not going to finish. CAMILLE doesn't meet her eyes.)

ANNIE (cont.)

Well, the rest of this looks just perfect. I'm still looking at a couple of girls this week, so I will give you a call—this number is correct? Good. I will give you a call later this week. Deary, so fun seeing you!

(ANNIE hugs CAMILLE.)

ANNIE (cont.)

Let's get a cocktail sometime! Double date with the boys?

(CAMILLE nods and tries to smile.)

(ANNIE shows herself out. CAMILLE bends at the waist and gags. SOPHIE enters, oblivious.)

SOPHIE

Man, you really nailed that one.

CAMILLE

You were listening?

SOPHIE

What is the big deal—I told everyone I knew about what happened.

CAMILLE

Who wants to entertain little brats every day anyway.

SOPHIE

Uh, yeah, sure.

CAMILLE

You're the only brat I'll ever need.

SOPHIE

How droll.

CAMILLE

C'mon, let's go do something. A movie? Shopping?

SOPHIE

Um, no. I'm going to go get my nails done.

CAMILLE

Will you bring me somewhere before?

SOPHIE

No! God. Get a life.

(SOPHIE exits. The lights fade on the living room very slowly.)

(BRITTANY enters the void area in white slacks, a white button down, and a white hat.)

CAMILLE

(From the living room.)

Look! Told you.

BRITTANY

It's a sunset.

(CAMILLE walks to the void area. She looks out. Water rustling. A hidden place along the lake.)

CAMILLE

Look how beautiful though!

BRITTANY

Chick. It's fucking hot out here.

CAMILLE

You didn't want to go see the art.

BRITTANY

Damn straight.

CAMILLE

This is one of the things Louisiana's got on New York. Can't see sunsets like this.

(Beat.)

Although it's only because of all your pollution.

BRITTANY

Our pollution.

CAMILLE

Shit, I better text my mom, tell her we're going out. Listen to me, I'm such a teenager.

BRITTANY

(Valley-girl.)

See if you can get your curfew pushed back.

(BRITTANY pulls a couple of beers and two koozies out of her pants pockets.)

(CAMILLE takes out her phone and stares at it for a moment.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

‘Sup?

CAMILLE

Nothing.

BRITTANY

Your moms?

(CAMILLE doesn’t say anything.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

She’ll get it. We just chillin’.

CAMILLE

It’s not her. It’s my boyfriend—no, he’s just a guy now. It doesn’t matter. Give me one of those.

(BRITTANY opens a beer and hands it to her.)

(CAMILLE swigs on a beer. She twirls for BRITTANY.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

I look okay? I found this in the back of my old closet.

BRITTANY

You look like you going to Sunday school.

CAMILLE

I’m so excited to go out tonight! I’m never been to this before.

BRITTANY

Never?? Lawd, chick.

CAMILLE

I don't remember it being a thing when I lived here. I don't really remember much of anything about living in this state.

BRITTANY

What's ya' boy want? You?

CAMILLE

Ha! No. If that was the case, I probably wouldn't be standing here. He's just drunk.

(Beat.)

It's funny, you can scream at someone in the middle of the street, threaten to kill yourself, get a restraining order, physically assault each other, and after a couple of years... text like nothing.

BRITTANY

Been thur.

(CAMILLE swigs on her beer and spills down her dress.)

CAMILLE

Oh crap.

(BRITTANY laughs at her.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

(Giggling.)

Stop! Stupid white. Who's idea was this anyway?

BRITTANY

I don't know. Old Cajuns proolly. Here.

(BRITTANY pulls out a red bandana from her pocket and wipes CAMILLE up a bit.)

CAMILLE

Thanks. That's it, only white wine for the rest of the night! I'll channel a true Southern lady.

BRITTANY

Oh! Almost forgot. Guess what else I got?

(BRITTANY reaches into her pants and pulls out some cigarettes.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

Bam!

CAMILLE

Oooooo, nice.

BRITTANY

Some bro left his pack at the restaurant.

CAMILLE

Wait, are these fucking Kools?

BRITTANY

Look bitch, you want one or not?

*(CAMILLE swipes a cigarette out of BRITTANY's hand, smiling.
BRITTANY produces a lighter and lights both of their cigarettes.)*

BRITTANY (cont.)

(Inhaling happily.)

Sweet baby Jesus.

CAMILLE

Oh man.

(Beat.)

This right here. This is so me and my high school boyfriend getting buzzed at the levee on a pint of Jack Daniel's and Marlboro Menthol one hundreds we stole from his mom.

BRITTANY

They don't let people drink at the levee no more.

CAMILLE

I don't think we were supposed to do it back then either. But that's the only place we could go before we got our fakes.

(Beat.)

You should've seen me in my Goth phase where I only wore baggy pants and black lipstick. By the time we got up to dash for the car trying to make curfew, the ground was littered with black lipstick rimmed buds. It was like my calling card. I feel bad for whoever had to clean all that mess up. Think all those one hundreds did permanent damage?

BRITTANY

Says the broad smoking a Kool.

CAMILLE

What happened to that guy... Oh, right, I found out he had sex with one of the girls from the dance team.

BRITTANY

Aw, shit.

CAMILLE

I didn't know then that that's just what guys do. I remember I drank an entire pitcher of margaritas after I found out about that at some trashy bar that didn't card.

BRITTANY

My first boyfriend... What?! Yes, I had boyfriends. Kid was actually already twenty-one when we started going out.

CAMILLE

You had your first boyfriend that late?

BRITTANY

Girl, I was sixteen.

CAMILLE

Damn. Your parents must've been pissed off.

BRITTANY

One, I don't know my dad, so clearly he didn't give a good ball sack. And two, my mom was strung out with her own dude. I was at my maw maw's and she didn't know shit.

CAMILLE

Did he let you go out to bars with him?

BRITTANY

All day, Boo. I went to the bars, festivals, raves—everywhere he could get up into, I got in with him. Then he broke up with me because I was fucking around with our volleyball team coach, which he thought was hot at first, because she was really smoking hot, but then I told him he couldn't participate, so that was the end of him.

CAMILLE

Finding booze used to be the only problem I was ever set on solving. Where were we going to get it. It was all about the chase, the need to find it in any way possible. Someone had to have a connection, a plan. And then once we had it, I could always immediately relax. I knew what was about to happen with the first sip. Everything would dull a little, and I would smile a lot, and not have a care in the world.

(Beat.)

I'm more fun. Everybody's more fun.

(Beat.)

You should come to New York when I go back. For a visit. It's amazing there.

BRITTANY

Naw, girl, that's prolly not going to happen.

CAMILLE

Why not? You'll love it!

BRITTANY

New Orleans is the only city I'll ever need.

(Yelling out over the water.)

NOLA! Ya' heard!

CAMILLE

Yeah right! New Orleans is amusing, but it's not New York.

BRITTANY

Don't go insulting my baby na'.

CAMILLE

Nah, nothing like that, no. But, I mean, the restaurants and museums and the art scene—Brittany, it's unlike anything you know here.

BRITTANY

You can keep it.

CAMILLE

And the people. There's all kinds of different people—

BRITTANY

Snooty people.

CAMILLE

No, not everybody—

BRITTANY

Chick, let it die. You're not going to win this one.

CAMILLE

But—

BRITTANY

I said shut-up, goddammit.

(BRITTANY does some sort of motion that lets CAMILLE know the discussion is over.)

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

I was just trying to explain how awesome it is.

(BRITTANY sits silently and smokes.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

Brittany... Well, don't ignore me.

(BRITTANY gets up to leave.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

Wait, where are you going?

(CAMILLE gets in front of her, more panicked than she should be.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

I won't bash NOLA. Don't leave. Give me another try.

(CAMILLE tries to get BRITTANY to smile. It doesn't really work.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

Come on!

(BRITTANY turns away from her. CAMILLE tries something else: she kisses her. BRITTANY pulls back, surprised.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

What?

(Beat.)

It's okay... Look, it's fun.

(CAMILLE kisses BRITTANY again. The girls kiss, gentle at first and then more desperate. They separate. BRITTANY's smiling now.)

BRITTANY

C'mon, Boo. Let's go party.

CAMILLE

(Full accent.)

Fuck yeah!

(They chug their beers.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

There's more of this in the car?

(BRITTANY teases her playfully and disappears.)

(CAMILLE twirls with her beer can as the lights come up low on the living room. Dawn. CAMILLE twirls as MOM enters in pajamas with a cup of coffee. CAMILLE stops, caught. They stare at each other for a moment.)

CAMILLE

You're awake?

MOM

So are you.

CAMILLE

Can't sleep?

MOM

I have to go to work.

CAMILLE

Mom, you're not going to work in the middle of the night.

MOM

But I am going to work at 5:30. In about thirty minutes.

CAMILLE

Holy shit, it's five.

MOM

Oign.

CAMILLE

Sorry.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

You're not mad I'm home so late?

MOM

Oign, you can do what you want.

CAMILLE

You don't even want to know where I've been?

(MOM sits down and turns on the TV.)

MOM

I can only guess.

(Thunder claps.)

CAMILLE

Well, okay then.

(Beat.)

Oh, it's going to rain. Does the rest of the world love the rain as much as we do or is that just a Louisiana thing?

MOM

I wish it would stop. Traffic's going to be a nightmare.

(CAMILLE walks offstage and reenters with the coffee pot and a mug.)

MOM (cont.)

Can't you pour that in the kitchen?

CAMILLE

Got another interview lined up tomorrow.

MOM

For what?

CAMILLE

Bar back in the Quarter.

MOM

I thought you wanted something easy.

CAMILLE

This will be easy.

MOM

Last night I took out your old painting supplies from that room.

CAMILLE

Why?

MOM

So, you can paint.

CAMILLE

I don't need to paint.

MOM

I thought you were an *artist*.

CAMILLE

Don't say it like that.

MOM

That's how you say it.

CAMILLE

It's so rude.

MOM

I think you should do some work. It'll make you...

CAMILLE

What?

MOM

Inspired again.

CAMILLE

I'm fine. You're being juch'mental.

MOM

Oh, Oign, don't start this early.

CAMILLE

It's late, not early.

(CAMILLE picks up the pot and pours coffee. The lid comes off and spills coffee all over CAMILLE. She screams.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

Mother of Gah!

MOM

Keep your voice down—your dad's still sleeping.

CAMILLE

I just burned myself!

MOM

Go run some water over it.

CAMILLE

Mom, that freaking pot has been broken since like 6th grade.

MOM

So, you knew it was broken.

CAMILLE

Fix it. Jesus Christ.

MOM

You don't need coffee anyway. Aren't you going to bed? Or are you going to go back out to some bar.

CAMILLE

I can't sleep in this house.

MOM

Here we go.

CAMILLE

You *are* pissed.

MOM

No, I'm not.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

Damn, look, I'll make you some breakfast before you leave. Let me clean up first.

MOM

And use the oven like this—you'll burn the house down.

CAMILLE

I could do some scrambled eggs with cheddar cheese.

MOM

I'm fine with my coffee.

CAMILLE

Let me do something nice for you.

(Beat. MOM ignores her. CAMILLE comes to sit in front of the TV. She grabs the remote.)

MOM

I'm watching that.

CAMILLE

Let's watch a movie.

MOM

Work.

CAMILLE

Right.

MOM

Just watch this. I used to put on the news or the Weather Channel to put you girls right to sleep when you were trying to stay up late.

CAMILLE

I'm not sleepy.

MOM

You sound just like you did when you were a kid.

CAMILLE

Is there any more beer in the fridge?

(MOM gives her a disapproving look.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

Okay. At least I didn't say that as a kid. Or maybe I did, eh?

MOM

The news, Oign.

(Beat. CAMILLE yawns.)

MOM (cont.)

Go to bed.

CAMILLE

I'm fine.

MOM

You have community service tomorrow.

CAMILLE

Which I won't miss.

MOM

Better not.

CAMILLE

Okay, I'm going to bed then. See you tomorrow. I mean, today.

MOM

Forgot to tell you—you won't. After work your dad and I are going down to the casino. We're going to spend a couple of nights in the hotel.

CAMILLE

That sounds like fun. Where's my invite?

MOM

Didn't know you liked to gamble.

CAMILLE

I don't.

MOM

Then why would you want to come?

CAMILLE

'Cause.

MOM

You have drunk driving things to do anyway.

CAMILLE

I can reschedule it.

MOM

No, go get it done, so it can be over, and we can all move on with our lives.

CAMILLE

Par-done, I didn't realize it was interfering with your life so much.

MOM

Oh, Oignon—

CAMILLE

No, if I'm embarrassing you too much...

MOM

Don't get all worked up—

CAMILLE

If you hate having me here, I can leave.

MOM

Oh really and go where?

CAMILLE

Any place that's better than here.

MOM

I don't have time for your whining.

CAMILLE

When do I ever whine—I never even whine—we never even see each other.

MOM

You're whining right now.

CAMILLE

You've never come to see me in New York.

MOM

Oignon. Please.

CAMILLE

Please?

MOM

You're not my teenager anymore. I shouldn't be up half the night worrying about you getting home okay.

CAMILLE

Aha, I knew you were mad—

MOM

But now you are and I'm trying to enjoy a quiet cup of coffee before I have to go work a ten-hour day.

CAMILLE

And I'm trying to talk about something with you.

MOM

I don't want to talk to you right now.

CAMILLE

So I should just shut up—

MOM

And you know you barely came back here either, so don't you blame me.

CAMILLE

(Laughing.)

That is just perfect—

MOM

I said you can do what you want, but don't fuss at me in my own house.

CAMILLE

Okay, but just admit you don't want me in your house. You won't even spend time with me!

MOM

Grow up. How about that.

CAMILLE

Grow up—?

MOM

Staying out all night—

CAMILLE

If this is being an adult—

MOM

Not working a regular job—

CAMILLE

If this is being an adult—watching TV and gambling and eating junk food all the time—if you are the epitome of being an adult—well, fuck that!

(MOM reaches over and slaps CAMILLE curtly in the mouth.)

(Beat.)

MOM

You're drunk. Go to bed.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

That didn't hurt.

(CAMILLE leaves MOM behind as the lights dim over the living room.)

(CAMILLE walks straight to the bar as BRITTANY enters along side of her. BRITTANY is dressed up. CAMILLE is looking at something on her phone.)

CAMILLE

How lovely!

BRITTANY

I heard there ain't no air there.

CAMILLE

I'm sure the windows are letting in a nice breeze.

BRITTANY

I can't eat with no air conditioning.

CAMILLE

"Farmhouse fare evocative of the rustic French countryside." Oh my God, Brit!

BRITTANY

I'm sweating already.

CAMILLE

I'm glad you dressed up. I look nice too?

BRITTANY

Just no weird food.

CAMILLE

Never fear, you're going to love everything.

(They sit at the bar.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

This is going to be such fun. It's such a treat. Wanna see the menu?

(She shows her.)

BRITTANY

What the fuck is squid ink?

CAMILLE

You know what, nevermind—give me it back—give it to me!

BRITTANY

It's not too late to get tacos.

CAMILLE

You're wearing a tie—it's too late.

(Beat.)

I'm going to order. You don't need to know what's in anything. I will order and not tell you what's in anything.

BRITTANY

Nothing from a dirty animal, ah'ight?

CAMILLE

You just think about the *cocktails*. Uh-huh. This place has fruity, refreshing, delicious mixed drinks that will wet your whistle before you can say bourbon milk punch.

BRITTANY

I'm listening.

CAMILLE

Fresh mint. Crushed melon. Lime. Rose petals?

BRITTANY

Rose petals? Show off, that's what that is.

CAMILLE

Just trust me. C'mon, be cheerful.

(CAMILLE smiles and puts her arm around BRITTANY.)

BRITTANY

Then I'm picking the movie.

CAMILLE

I can't see anything with revenge-seeking dead people haunting new homeowners.

BRITTANY

Fuck *yas*.

CAMILLE

Please, no. Anything else.

BRITTANY

Aw, girl, you're going to wish you'd worn some Depends!

CAMILLE

Can we just go to the restaurant—I didn't want to stop here.

BRITTANY

Chill, brah.

(EILEEN enters.)

CAMILLE

We are definitely going to see a movie tonight and not just getting wrecked, 'kay?

(To EILEEN.)

Hello!

EILEEN

How ya'll doin'?

BRITTANY

How you doin'?

CAMILLE

Very well.

BRITTANY

Hangin' and bangin'.

EILEEN

Good, ya'll. I'm tired. Seven days in a row. And me and girlfriend got a little carried away last night with the liq'er. She up tryon' to get in this asshole's grill, sayin' she gon' git his face smashed in for burning her with a cigarette, even tho' she was smoking, not him, but I ain't say nothin' because when she has that look, it's better not to mess with her, you know?

(BRITTANY makes a noise or gesture that indicates she knows.)

CAMILLE

Let me ask you, do you have any champagne?

EILEEN

I got something back there with bubbles.

CAMILLE

Let's do that!

EILEEN

You, baby?

BRITTANY

Grand Marnier, bai-bai.

CAMILLE

No!

EILEEN

Get it, girl.

CAMILLE

C'mon! Have champagne with me!

BRITTANY

On the rocks.

CAMILLE

Try something new.

BRITTANY

And a Heineken. Suck it.

CAMILLE

Heineken?!

EILEEN

Heineken's imported.

(CAMILLE stares at EILEEN as if she's not helping.)

CAMILLE

(Back to BRITTANY.)

But I was thinking about really blowing it out tonight.

BRITTANY

So? Do it.

CAMILLE

I think she probably only has a bottle.

BRITTANY

Wha's the problem?

CAMILLE

Split it with me.

BRITTANY

Bitch, you don't need me. For real.

CAMILLE

(To EILEEN.)

I guess just one glass.

(EILEEN exits.)

BRITTANY

I'll drink wine. Fuck.

CAMILLE

Thank you.

BRITTANY

You'll prolly drink that thing all by yourself anyway.

CAMILLE

That's not true. What is that supposed to mean? You imbibe way more than I do.

BRITTANY

"Im"-bibe. Okay, show-off.

CAMILLE

You do.

BRITTANY

Is that ya' business?

CAMILLE

Just sayin'.

(Beat.)

BRITTANY

My crew's rolling down bah Republic ta'night for dat bounce, you know!

CAMILLE

Huh?

BRITTANY

Bounce?

(CAMILLE shurges.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

It's like—

(She acts out dancing to bounce music in her stool.)

CAMILLE

Oh dancing!

BRITTANY

That's what I said.

CAMILLE

I don't want to go to some club. Do you?

(Beat. Awkward.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

I'm home alone tonight.

BRITTANY

Aw shit, at your parents' crib?

CAMILLE

You should come over after dinner. We have a pool. We can raid their alcohol stash from the 80's.

BRITTANY

Could be cool. I do gotta meet up with my brother.

CAMILLE

Invite him. We can pick up some cigars and drink brandy. It'll be very Playboy Mansion bunny party-esque.

BRITTANY

Um, I dunno...

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

Today was my first community service day.

BRITTANY

On mine they worked me like a field nigga'.

(CAMILLE winces.)

CAMILLE

Stop saying that.

BRITTANY

Forget that PC horse shit. Are you black? You can't be offended—it's just us.

CAMILLE

Don't you think it's wrong?

BRITTANY

It's a saying. I'm not calling someone that. What if I say "ninja"? Is that better?

CAMILLE

It's really not. We're going to a nice place.

BRITTANY

Hey chode splooge, it's just food. You put it in your mouth and you chew. It's not a big deal. Or I can go do something else tonight, no problem at all.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

Where are those drinks?

(Cork pop. EILEEN enters with the drinks. The drinking starts.)

BRITTANY

Thanks, mama.

CAMILLE

Thank you.

EILEEN

Say, lemme ask you a question? You cousins with a kid named Vick?

BRITTANY

Shit, what he do now?

(CAMILLE sips her champagne. It doesn't taste very good, but she's going to drink it anyway.)

EILEEN

Getting married to a girl that live over in Kennah.

BRITTANY

Ugh, dawg! He's really cousins with mah girl though. She's gonna flip about dis when I get home.

(This attracts CAMILLE's attention.)

EILEEN

She's young, too.

BRITTANY

Think she's knocked up?

EILEEN

That's what my girlfriend was sayin—

BRITTANY

For sure—

CAMILLE

(Interrupting, to EILEEN.)

We were just right in the middle of a conversation.

(Beat.)

And two shots to start off with! Let's! Wanna?

(BRITTANY responds with a gesture either meaning "yes" or "I don't care".)

CAMILLE (cont.)

Tequila. Top shelf. Reposado. Room temperature.

(Shooing her away.)

Thank you.

(Beat.)

I'm really excited about our fancy dinner.

BRITTANY

How much is this going to cost?

CAMILLE

It's worth it.

BRITTANY

I can't spend a shit ton of money. I got to give what I got to my brother.

CAMILLE

Why?

BRITTANY

Because he's a kid who lives in the hood and needs shit and can't ask my mom.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

I'll pay. Don't worry.

BRITTANY

You can't do that.

CAMILLE

I want to!

(They drink their drinks.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

(Laughing.)

So I'm so stupid, I totally skipped community service today. I didn't even go.

BRITTANY

Girl.

CAMILLE

I rescheduled. No biggie. I just couldn't deal with it now, ya' know?

(They drink.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

(Cheerful.)

Also, I didn't even know you still had a girlfriend.

BRITTANY

Aw, broad. You don't have the tact God gave an armadillo.

CAMILLE

It's just an observation.

BRITTANY

And what about it?

CAMILLE

Does she know you're hanging out with me?

BRITTANY

What I do when I'm not around you doesn't concern you—just like what I do without her doesn't concern her either.

(They drink.)

CAMILLE

I just thought you would've mentioned it.

BRITTANY

Is this a date, then?

CAMILLE

No. Gosh.

BRITTANY

You're going to pull out my chair and buy me flowers?

CAMILLE

No! ... You're supposed to do that for me.

BRITTANY

Oh I get it now!

CAMILLE

Yeah, and I want chocolate in a little gold paper box.

BRITTANY

Baby, you don't need any more sugah.

CAMILLE

Are you calling me fat??

BRITTANY

If the belt doesn't fit, ya' heard?

(CAMILLE throws her coaster at her.)

CAMILLE

It's all this Southern food!

(BRITTANY gets very serious.)

BRITTANY

Yank, there is something I need to ask you. And it's really important. And very serious.

CAMILLE

What?

(Beat.)

BRITTANY

What the fuck are we about to eat tonight? Because I'm really hungry.

CAMILLE

(Giggling.)

You'll just have to wait to find out!

(EILEEN comes back with the shots. She places them on the bar and raises her eyebrows at BRITTANY. There's a quick moment between EILEEN and BRITTANY about CAMILLE. CAMILLE notices.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

You know what? Let's go get fucking tacos.

BRITTANY

Really??

CAMILLE

Yeah. You were gonna hate bone marrow anyway. Let's just finish these. Man, I'm actually not even that hungry anymore.

(In a flash, CAMILLE grabs wine bottle and pounds her shot.)

BRITTANY

That's mah gurl! Move your behind.

(BRITTANY takes her shot.)

CAMILLE

Can we get some go-cups?

(Blackout.)

(Dim lights slowly come up on the void area, empty.)

(CAMILLE enters. She is so drunk, she can barely stand up. She doesn't have a purse or keys or anything in her hand. She is led in by her nose and stomps her feet as she continually tries to find her balance. Her eyes roll in their sockets and her head follows her eyes. She is alone and either speaks to the audience or to no one. Nothing that she says is intelligible.)

CAMILLE

Hey. Hey. Have you seen a girl named Brittany?

(Beat.)

I can't find my phone.

(CAMILLE turns her head too quickly and falls down.)

(CAMILLE tries to focus enough so she can stand up.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

I just need a minute.

(Beat.)

Here we go.

(CAMILLE tries to heft herself up.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

I'm done. I'm done.

(CAMILLE struggles to her feet for a second and trips. CAMILLE face-plants.)

(CAMILLE lies still for a moment and then sits up. She has a bloody gash right above her eyebrows on her forehead. She's confused about what happened and shakes her head slightly to regain full consciousness. She reaches up and pulls away a bloody smear from her head.)

(CAMILLE's eyes start to close and she leans down towards the ground.)

(CAMILLE is alone, bleeding and sleeping.)

(As the lights begin to dim, CAMILLE wakes up, gets up, and stumbles into the bar.)

END ACT I

ACT II

(Lights up on CAMILLE'S parents' living room. Afternoon. It's still and empty. CAMILLE enters slowly. She's wearing a hospital gown. Her hair is a mess and she has a bandage on her forehead and a black eye. She looks around confused.)

CAMILLE

Hello? Mom? Soph?

(Silence.)

(CAMILLE squints her face and grabs her forehead in pain. She feels the bandage and gasps, unaware until this moment that it was there. She exits quickly.)

(MOM and SOPHIE enter with groceries. Vegetables are seen in the bags.)

MOM

(Looking around.)

Nope.

SOPHIE

I told you she wouldn't be up.

MOM

Guess it's better that way. She needs sleep.

SOPHIE

To sleep it off you mean.

MOM

Take these to the kitchen and unpack them.

SOPHIE

Urp, excuse? I'm your good daughter and I'm on chore duty?

MOM

Move your behind.

(SOPHIE exits.)

(MOM looks around the living room. She decides something and gets a vacuum cleaner out. She begins to vacuum the living room.)

(CAMILLE enters. She's changed out of the hospital gown into sweat pants and a t-shirt.)

CAMILLE

Mom?

(Nothing from MOM.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

Mom!

(Nothing. CAMILLE walks over and grabs MOM.)

MOM

Good Lord!

(The vacuum is silenced.)

MOM (cont.)

You scared me half to death.

CAMILLE

Sorry.

MOM

It's okay.

(The vacuum goes back on.)

CAMILLE

Mom! Stop!

(MOM silences the vacuum.)

MOM

One of ya'll is just going to have to do it later then, because I have a very busy schedule—

CAMILLE

Hey, why do I—

MOM

Me and your sister went grocery shopping this morning. We got some real food, so you can stop complaining about there being nothing to eat around here.

CAMILLE

Okay, but what happen—

MOM

I wasn't sure if you still didn't like broccoli.

CAMILLE

I don't remember—

MOM

Broccoli. You hated broccoli and I never heard back from you as to whether or not you'd changed your opinion on that. I got it anyway. And some of the cheese you have to go to the counter to get. That should be good on crackers. I just got Ritz, because I couldn't figure out what melba was and I wasn't going to buy it just because it was on sale. Are you hungry? You must be. Oign?

CAMILLE

Um, okay. Cheese sounds good.

MOM

You can watch TV while I fix a plate for you. Coke?

CAMILLE

Sure.

(Beat.)

Mom, what is—?

MOM

Just be still for a minute—I'll be right back.

(MOM exits. CAMILLE sits and turns on the TV.)

(SOPHIE enters, eating out of a bag of cookies.)

SOPHIE

It's alive. It's alive!

CAMILLE

Soph, what happened to my forehead?

SOPHIE

You're joking, right?

CAMILLE

Are those stitches?

SOPHIE

Seriously, you don't remember? Ohmygod.

CAMILLE

This isn't funny.

SOPHIE

Yeah, I know.

CAMILLE

Someone must've attacked me yesterday.

SOPHIE

You slept all day yesterday.

CAMILLE

Wait—

SOPHIE

It's Sunday, doh.

CAMILLE

Sophie, stop confusing me—my head hurts so bad—

SOPHIE

I'm not tricking you—

CAMILLE

Just *stop!*

(Beat.)

SOPHIE

You fucked up, dude.

(CAMILLE doesn't say anything.)

SOPHIE (cont.)

You got really smashed the other night.

CAMILLE

Impossible. I feel fine.

SOPHIE

Yeah, well, you got a pretty sweet IV. We just let you sleep because they told us you didn't have a concussion. You were belligerent, but it was just a scratch and you were coherent enough to tell the nurse to "get that fucking flashlight out of your eyes."

CAMILLE

(A whisper.)

So it was the hospital? The gown. I saw...

SOPHIE

Mom got a call yesterday morning from the hospital saying you were there, the police were there—

CAMILLE

Oh God...

(MOM enters carrying a plate and glass.)

MOM

We have Sprite, too. Maybe Sprite would be better.

CAMILLE

Mom, Sophie just told me about—

MOM

Sophia Grace.

SOPHIE

What—she doesn't even remember anything.

CAMILLE

Mom, look I'm sor—

MOM

Let's talk about it later.

CAMILLE

How did I even get to the hospital?

SOPHIE

Ambulance.

CAMILLE

Are you sure—

MOM

Later, Oignon, please.

CAMILLE

Just tell me what I did!

MOM

I said later. Eat your snack.

(CAMILLE looks at the plate in front of her, but can't seem to touch it.)

MOM (cont.)

I thought you were hungry.

CAMILLE

I feel sick.

MOM

I was just trying to get you the stuff you've been asking for.

CAMILLE

I want someone to talk to me.

MOM

But, if you don't want it, I'll just throw it away.

SOPHIE

I'll eat it.

CAMILLE

No, Mom, don't do that.

MOM

Sophie, no, I bought this for your sister.

CAMILLE

Just let me nibble on it.

MOM

That's a good idea. Let me get you a blanket. We can get comfy on the sofa and watch a movie.

(MOM finds a blanket and gives it to CAMILLE. All sit and watch the TV. CAMILLE reaches over to ask for a cookie from SOPHIE. SOPHIE hands her one. CAMILLE keeps eating cookies throughout the next.)

CAMILLE

Shit, does Dad know?

(Beat.)

MOM

Your dad knows.

CAMILLE

(On the verge of tears.)

No.

MOM

(Not looking away from the TV.)

It's okay.

CAMILLE

Where is he? In ya'll's room?

MOM

(Still on the TV.)

He's still at the casino. He wanted to gamble some more.

(Beat.)

SOPHIE

We could go meet up with him.

MOM

No, we're going to watch a movie. *Iron Man 2* is on.

SOPHIE

Blah.

(CAMILLE quickly hides her tears.)

MOM

Breakfast at Tiffany's?

SOPHIE

Something made in the past twenty years please.

MOM

Boo, hiss—it's a classic.

SOPHIE

That just a nice way of saying it's old.

MOM

You can only hope people will say that about you when you're old.

SOPHIE

I will not be doing that, thank you very much.

MOM

You're just going to go out in a blaze of glory?

SOPHIE

Or lots of plastic surgery.

(MOM and SOPHIE laugh.)

MOM

What do you want, Oign? To watch?

CAMILLE

Breakfast At Tiffany's.

(All watch the TV.)

(The lights over the bar slowly come up. CAMILLE notices and can't help herself from walking over. She sits at the bar as the lights dim over the living room. EILEEN enters with a drink for CAMILLE.)

(BRITTANY enters through the door. She has a uniform and apron on.)

BRITTANY

Yo' Eileen.

EILEEN

Hey, baby.

CAMILLE

Hey.

BRITTANY

Damn, Boo.

(BRITTANY picks up CAMILLE's chin to take a look at her.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

You okay?

(CAMILLE doesn't say anything.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

Does it hurt? I was worried about you.

CAMILLE

Oh, I'm just fucking fine.

BRITTANY

Whoa, you're pissed off?

(EILEEN senses the coming fight and exits.)

CAMILLE

I am, actually.

BRITTANY

Not at me.

CAMILLE

Do you see anyone else standing here?

BRITTANY

The fuck did I do?

CAMILLE

Lemme think. You let me wander around Lakeview in the middle of the night drunk off my ass completely alone.

BRITTANY

Let you? Do I look like your moms?

CAMILLE

I could've been robbed. Or raped.

BRITTANY

In Lakeview?

CAMILLE

It could happen.

BRITTANY

They got you three blocks from your crib.

CAMILLE

And where the fuck were you?

BRITTANY

Me. I was driving home all the back roads with one eye open like dis, naked as the day I was born.

CAMILLE

At least you know where you were.

BRITTANY

I had to pull over and nap for a minute jus' to get home. I'm still hungover. How many days later.

CAMILLE

You should've stopped me.

BRITTANY

Fat chance of that happening! Have you ever seen you drink? You're like a mosquito sucking an entire leg dry. There's no one that can tell you anything.

CAMILLE

That's ridiculous. You're fucking crazy.

BRITTANY

I'm fucking crazy??

CAMILLE

Yeah! I don't skinny dip. Or run around the yard naked. I'm not that girl.

BRITTANY

Wake up! You are.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

The police were at the hospital, Brit.

BRITTANY

You didn't break laws.

CAMILLE

But they called my probation officer.

BRITTANY

So? I'm telling ya', if there ain't charges, they can't do shit.

CAMILLE

Then why did she call me and ask to see me?

BRITTANY

Just a lecture proolly. It's not like you're some Ghetto ass broad. You're white and middle class. They can't do shit.

CAMILLE

(Hesitant.)

She told me to bring in my paperwork so far. Any of the court appointed stuff I've done.

(BRITTANY stares blankly at her.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

My AA sheet has signatures for dates that have not happened yet!

BRITTANY

Ooooooh.

CAMILLE

Yeah.

BRITTANY

Goddammit! You just had to fucking keep popping bottles—and it was your idea to skinny dip, by the way! Fuck!

(BRITTANY throws something and it crashes to the floor.)

CAMILLE

Don't!

BRITTANY

You don't understand. I don't get my people in trouble.

CAMILLE

Hey, you were right there next to me doing it, too.

BRITTANY

And I'm not going to any AA meetings.

CAMILLE

Don't you care about me getting in trouble?

BRITTANY

Oh, fuck off.

CAMILLE

Really?!

BRITTANY

You're not bringing that sheet to them.

CAMILLE

What else am I gonna do?

BRITTANY

Tell her you lost it.

CAMILLE

Sure, that sounds believable.

BRITTANY

Suck it up, baby.

CAMILLE

My name is Camille! Everyone in this city calls me everything under the sun except my name.

(Beat.)

BRITTANY

Then get the fuck outta this city. All you do is bitch and bitch—

CAMILLE

I wish I could, believe dat!

BRITTANY

Go back to uptight New York—

CAMILLE

Better than rotting in a city that never does anything important—

BRITTANY

Oh wait, that's right, you can't drive anywhere, because you totaled your car on the West Bank, right in front of a bunch of cops.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

(Quiet.)

Who told you that?

BRITTANY

Man, I looked it up. My maw maw has every newspaper since 1975. When you wouldn't tell me, I found the newspaper and looked your ass up. No wonder you never wanted to talk about it—you a fuckin' mess, man. Now get up out ma' face. I'm done wit ya'.

(BRITTANY turns to leave.)

CAMILLE

(Yelling after.)

Yeah, well at least I know how to speak properly. At least I fucking know the difference between water and “watah.”

(BRITTANY stops and turns back.)

BRITTANY

You better shet your mouth.

CAMILLE

Or else what? I already have a busted face—whataya gonna do? Fuck, what do I care what a nobody from the nothing parish does? You come from nothing, you are nothing!

BRITTANY

Fucking say that to mah face, you little pussy ass bitch.

(BRITTANY charges towards CAMILLE and CAMILLE flinches and covers her face. BRITTANY stops. She shrugs and walks out the bar.)

(CAMILLE watches her go. She screams in frustration. As the lights dim over the bar, CAMILLE, confused and lost, walks to the void area and looks around.)

(SOPHIE enters, casually eating a snowball.)

SOPHIE

I'm going back to the car.

CAMILLE

Wait.

SOPHIE

See ya'!

CAMILLE

Help me find it first.

SOPHIE

God, you're worse than Paw Paw. Look, it's gotta be that one.

CAMILLE

There's no sign.

SOPHIE

Go, you're late.

(CAMILLE takes out a pack of cigarettes and lights one.)

SOPHIE (cont.)

Ugh, you're smoking? That's so gross.

CAMILLE

I know it is. I hate it.

(CAMILLE pulls out a couple of scratch-offs and starts scratching them off with her fingernail.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

What do you think she's going to ask me?

SOPHIE

If you'll accept Jesus Christ as your Savior.

CAMILLE

(Not understanding.)

Is that part of it?

SOPHIE

Ohmygod you are a moron! I'll be in the car.

CAMILLE

What if she yells at me?

SOPHIE

Haven't you ever seen a movie? Shrinks don't yell, they're like all calm, and "tell me about your childhood".

CAMILLE

Those are the ones you pay, not the ones that work for the state.

SOPHIE

At least she'll get you in and get you out.

CAMILLE

Like pulling off a band-aid.

SOPHIE

Not if you don't go in. Now. Git.

(CAMILLE doesn't move.)

SOPHIE (cont.)

Oign, I am getting my nails done before the Landry's tonight. Now, if you don't hurry, I'm'a leave you here and come back in a few hours.

CAMILLE

Right, the Landry's.

SOPHIE

You don't have to come. Seriously. But me and Mom and Dad always go for the last preseason game and make bets on the season. Oh crap, I have to get the stuff for the sangria. Get your butt in gear!

(CAMILLE doesn't budge.)

CAMILLE

I haven't seen them in years.

SOPHIE

They know. Everybody knows. No one cares.

CAMILLE

I'm thinking about stopping drinking for like a month.

SOPHIE

Good luck.

CAMILLE

What's the point of the sangria?

SOPHIE

It's what we have every year.

CAMILLE

I mean, the significance.

SOPHIE

One time someone brought wine and cut it with pineapple juice and it stuck forever—how am I supposed to know?

CAMILLE

Every event has to have its drink.

(Beat.)

On game day, it's always Miller Lite. Cans. Or a keg. Foam and suds spilling over those red cups that end up all over the parade grounds.

SOPHIE

That's 'cause the day's so long.

CAMILLE

At brunch it's bloodyies. Extra spicy beans and give the celery away. The stand-by for day-to-day grind. As necessary as a couple Aspirins and a coffee.

SOPHIE

Screw around if you want, I'm leaving.

CAMILLE

On vacation it's mimosas. They always taste like juice that's gone sour, but the fizzies get in your nose and before you know it you're twittering about like a little chicken.

(Over CAMILLE's next monologue, SOPHIE "disappears" or her stage presence fades to black and the THERAPIST fades in on another part of the stage. CAMILLE is oblivious to this.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

On Mondays during school it's twenty-five cent martinis. We slurp down ice-cold gin, the tiny olives sloshing around in our drowned stomachs. During parades, we nip on a flask of tequila. Tequila works for all types of weather. It's bitter and schlepps its way through my body starting the fire from within. New Years' Eve is of course champs, but the first day of the year has always been about chocolate stouts. First snow is hot toddy's. Outbreak of the flu calls for warm brandy. Every steak dinner escorts heavy red wine. Slushy vodka-lemonades at the beach. Sweet beer at crawfish boils. Citrusy white wine while sailing out on the lake.

(Lights up fully on the THERAPIST.)

THERAPIST

Talk more about that.

*(CAMILLE notices for the first time that the THERAPIST is there.
CAMILLE looks around, confused as to how she got there.)*

CAMILLE

Eileen?

THERAPIST

Who's that?

CAMILLE

Nevermind.

THERAPIST

You were telling me about your art.

CAMILLE

Oh. Um, what'daya' wanna know?

THERAPIST

Anything you want to tell me.

CAMILLE

I thought we were here to talk about my drinking.

THERAPIST

Is that why you think you're here?

CAMILLE

You tell me.

THERAPIST

This isn't a test.

CAMILLE

Pretty sure it is.

THERAPIST

Do you think something will happen if you don't pass?

CAMILLE

My PO will suggest to the judge that I get punished further.

THERAPIST

That is a possibility. But, let's just say that everyone goes off my recommendation, so if you're open and honest with me, I won't recommend that. Deal?

CAMILLE

Your tone of voice sounds like you're politely responding to an email.

THERAPIST

Fair enough.

(Accent.)

Dis sound better to ya', baby?

CAMILLE

No, it doesn't actually.

THERAPIST

I can also do Australian and Canadian.

CAMILLE

Let's just get this over with.

THERAPIST

Dealer's choice then. How many drinks do you have a week?

CAMILLE

Right in the deep end, huh?

THERAPIST

You wanted to get down to business.

CAMILLE

I read one time that two drinks a night for a woman is considered alcoholic behavior. Is that true?

THERAPIST

I don't think it serves our purposes to talk about things in term of alcoholism.

CAMILLE

You don't think I can handle the truth.

THERAPIST

I think the terms of alcoholism are either extremely limiting or extremely broad. I just want to hear about you.

CAMILLE

It depends. When I'm hanging out, I can drink a lot. I know that normal is about a drink per hour, which sometimes I do. When I'm just chillin' at home, I have a glass of wine or two. But I don't drink every day—in fact I don't drink when the sun's up. I know that's an alcoholic thing to do.

THERAPIST

What types of alcohol do you like?

CAMILLE

Anything. Everything. Except scotch. That's good, right?

THERAPIST

Do you have a significant other? A boyfriend?

CAMILLE

No.

THERAPIST

When was your last relationship?

CAMILLE

Um, when I was New York.

THERAPIST

Was he/she an artist too?

CAMILLE

No, *he* was a bartender.

THERAPIST

Were ya'll serious?

CAMILLE

Does this really fucking matter—oops. Sorry.

THERAPIST

It's okay. You can curse if you want.

(Beat.)

THERAPIST (cont.)

The time together?

CAMILLE

Either six years or a few months, depending on whose version you're going by.

(Beat. The THERAPIST waits patiently.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

We were on again, off again. He was a nice guy, *is* I guess, but he had big, *big*, commitment issues.

THERAPIST

That's kind of vague.

CAMILLE

Right?

THERAPIST

Be more specific.

CAMILLE

I said commitment issues.

THERAPIST

I mean that commitment issues can cover a range of different problems for your boyfriend.

CAMILLE

It's hard to say that we were always girlfriend and boyfriend.

THERAPIST

Did you ever hear him refer to you as his girlfriend?

CAMILLE

Sometimes. But he was married, so it doesn't really matter what he called me.

(Beat.)

Pretty much, I knew he loved me—he told me all the time. But sometimes he just plain wasn't interested in me.

(Beat.)

I had to move here, because I couldn't afford my place in Brooklyn anymore and I had all this DWI stuff to do down here, and he just stopped talking to me. Unless he was drunk and then he called me a few times. He's kind of a jerk, but jerks need love, too.

THERAPIST

And now it's over?

CAMILLE

Maybe. At least until I get back.

THERAPIST

If I said: "you feel like he's too good for you," would you agree with me?

CAMILLE

No. Don't be therapist-ey with me.

THERAPIST

Your parents like having you home?

CAMILLE

I don't think so.

THERAPIST

Tell me about them.

CAMILLE

This is so silly. Can we please just answer the questions about drinking?

THERAPIST

Sure. What happened with your DWI?

(This shuts CAMILLE up. Beat.)

CAMILLE

Fine, I drank too much that night. I drink too much—that's what you're waiting for me to *discover*, right? I admit it. I drink too much. Happy?

THERAPIST

Why?

CAMILLE

I'm doing your job for you.

THERAPIST

No, my question is why do you think you drink too much?

CAMILLE

That's what you think.

THERAPIST

I'm not here to judge how much you drink.

CAMILLE

Yes you fucking are!

THERAPIST

So, you don't think you drink too much—you were just saying that for my benefit?

CAMILLE

You don't understand. This is what we do. What am I supposed to do if I don't hang with my people? I'll go out of my mind inside a home by myself—like being in a cage.

THERAPIST

You can just stop drinking, you know that right?

CAMILLE

That's so easy for you to say—you're old. Not like that. But, fuck, yeah. Your fun days are behind you. You don't remember what it's like, so it's so easy for you to say, just stop.

THERAPIST

Can we go back to your parents for a moment?

CAMILLE

They're normal.

THERAPIST

Expand on that.

CAMILLE

Not until you tell me why you want to know. They have absolutely nothing to do with me. Period.

(Beat.)

THERAPIST

(Leveling.)

There's typically two main reasons people use substances to alter their mind. Either for pleasure or for relief. For pleasure is like at a party or at dinner or for a special occasion. I like to have a drink. I know many people who like to have a couple of drinks and enjoy a good time. The difference is when you start drinking for relief—

(Accent.)

Now, Topaz was the place back in the day. You could drink der'! We spend a dollar on the jukebox and boogie all night long til the sun came up, chil'—

CAMILLE

Wait, huh?

THERAPIST

I said people who have experienced some sort of trauma or extreme pain and have no way of dealing with it turn to substances to help them live. Reality is too hard without just a little help. This is where abuse comes in. Relying too heavily on alcohol to make the world level out.

CAMILLE

That's not me. I had a totally regular life. Have.

THERAPIST

And yet you keep avoiding talking about any part of it.

CAMILLE

You know what, you had me for a moment. You really did. But I'm absolutely fine. I messed up once, but I'm not like that.

(CAMILLE rises.)

THERAPIST

I haven't dismissed you yet.

CAMILLE

You're not my teacher.

THERAPIST

Sit down. You can leave when I say you can.

CAMILLE

Yeah, and you're wielding a lot of power for a state psychotherapist.

(CAMILLE sits quietly weighing her options. Silence.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

Look, nobody has a completely great relationship with their parents.

(During the next, lights on THERAPIST fade slowly, as MOM begins to appear somewhere else on stage.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

It's just the way families go—you should already know that. You don't get to pick it, but you have to live it. And my parents did everything they were supposed to do. Good school, allowances, vacations, used cars. We're not super close, but I just think we're not those types of people. I always see those girls who talk on the phone with their dads, or hug them, and I think it's like watching a creature from another planet.

THERAPIST

That man, that hunk o'man used to hang by the jukebox, a Marlboro Red falling off his lips and a Natty Light hanging on to his long fingas—oh he was good lookin'—

(Full black on THERAPIST as CAMILLE looks for her, confused.)

MOM

Is that what you want?

(CAMILLE just becomes aware of MOM.)

CAMILLE

Who?

MOM

You're mumbling about Wal-Mart over there.

(CAMILLE looks horrified.)

MOM (cont.)

You must not be feeling well. You're pale.

CAMILLE

I'm fine.

MOM

I'll just pull into the drug store and grab a pack of multi-vitamins.

CAMILLE

Mom—

MOM

Better to be safe than sorry.

CAMILLE

I'm not sick.

MOM

You always say that—

CAMILLE

Just a lil tired.

MOM

Vitamins are good for you.

CAMILLE

I can't swallow them.

MOM

Of course you can.

CAMILLE

Listen to me—

MOM

We'll just pop over and get 'em. You don't have to take anything, but we'll just have it in case.

(Beat.)

MOM (cont.)

And then we'll go to the Wal-Mart if that's what you want.

CAMILLE

Why in the hell would I want to go to the Wal-Mart?

MOM

You said it.

CAMILLE

I...

MOM

Or whatever you want. Anything.

(Beat.)

MOM (cont.)

Okay, Oign?

(Lights rise on the bar again, drawing CAMILLE back. CAMILLE drifts towards it.)

MOM (cont.)

I'll get you whatever you want, Oign.

(CAMILLE hears her, but decides on the bar instead. Lights down on MOM. CAMILLE sits down at the bar and is immediately drunk, laughing at something EILEEN has been saying as she enters with a drink for her.)

EILEEN

Ya' heard me!

CAMILLE

That was when guys knew how to party without getting all nuts and shooting up each other! The guys I knew back in college didn't know anything about hurting other people—we all just drinking wit one another, playing flip cup. Though, you know mah friend I was in sorority with did get raped once. Poor thing. Or maybe she got hit by a car—anyway, she was never really the same again. Shame too, because she was really fun to hang out with.

EILEEN

That flip-cup wudn't a thing when I was coming up.

CAMILLE

It's real fun! And I was the champ. I've always been one of those girls that can take care of myself in drinking games.

EILEEN

Mah daughter loves it.

CAMILLE

You have a daughter?

EILEEN

Twenty-five. She runs around with this little boy that has a motorcycle and season tickets to the dome. They take me sometimes.

CAMILLE

Oh! We should all go!

EILEEN

Yeah, you right about that.

CAMILLE

Who dat! Right?

(BRITTANY enters.)

EILEEN

We dat, baby.

(BRITTANY sees CAMILLE and stops.)

EILEEN (cont.)

Hey girl, where you been’?

(CAMILLE turns and sees BRITTANY.)

CAMILLE

Hey! Wait don’t go! Brit!

EILEEN

What’s up darling?

BRITTANY

I can’t believe you even looking at me right now.

EILEEN

You just leaving like that—

CAMILLE

Puh-lease don’t leave!

EILEEN

Not one drink, al’ight I get it.

BRITTANY

Look broad, you can’t be here.

EILEEN

Come into a bar—

CAMILLE

You wouldn’t call me back.

EILEEN

But don’t even say hey—

BRITTANY

Take a fuckin’ hint.

(To EILEEN.)

‘Sup Eileen?

CAMILLE

Let me buy you a drink. Just one.

EILEEN

Same ole. They finally paving mah street.

BRITTANY

Oh yeah? That's cool.

CAMILLE

Brittany, lemme talk. I jus' need'a talk to you.

EILEEN

It's only been ten years—

BRITTANY

(To EILEEN.)

I gotta go, but I'll come back and see you some other time—

CAMILLE

No!

EILEEN

Okay, baby.

(To herself.)

Why even walk in the bar if you ain't gonna have a drink—

(EILEEN exits.)

CAMILLE

Brittany, you have to listen to me—

BRITTANY

Why'd you call me that many times?

CAMILLE

You wouldn't pick up.

BRITTANY

Uh, yeah, ya' think!

CAMILLE

You can't hate me.

BRITTANY

Whatever.

CAMILLE

You just can't!

BRITTANY

This isn't worth my time.

CAMILLE

You're my friend—please, don't make me be alone.

(Beat.)

I wasn't going to tell you, but my mom is really sick. That's why things have been nuts.

(Beat.)

I was upset, but I'm better now. Look at me. I'm okay.

(Beat.)

BRITTANY

I didn't know that about your mom.

CAMILLE

Our family's not really talking about it much. Hey, let me buy you a drink—

BRITTANY

What's wrong with her?

CAMILLE

Whatever you want, it's on me—

BRITTANY

Your mom—

CAMILLE

Let me get Eileen—

BRITTANY

Is it bad?

CAMILLE

It's in her uterus.

BRITTANY

Cancer?

CAMILLE

Sort of. We don't know just yet.

BRITTANY

How much do you know?

CAMILLE

I don't think we should talk about it. It's just... sad.

BRITTANY

I went to your crib yesterday and your mom looked pretty fine to me.

CAMILLE

Wait, you came over... to my parents' house?

BRITTANY

I don't play and this shit with you is getting out of control.

CAMILLE

Fuuuuuuck.

BRITTANY

Your mom had no idea who I was.

CAMILLE

You didn't tell them about how much we've been drinking?

BRITTANY

It looks like they know and they don't care.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

Look, we don't have to be together, just hang out with me.

BRITTANY

Together?? We kissed and did a little hands stuff in the car *once*.

CAMILLE

Because you wanted to—

BRITTANY

That's not a relationship.

CAMILLE

I know.

BRITTANY

You just some chick I chilled with a few times.

CAMILLE

Brit, I'll be good. I promise. Just don't leave.

BRITTANY

Is your mom really sick?

CAMILLE

Yes.

BRITTANY

Is your mom really sick?

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

No, but I thought—

(BRITTANY starts shaking her head.)

BRITTANY

You know my mom is always sick because of what the drugs did to her. And I fucking told you that.

CAMILLE

I'm coming clean here—

BRITTANY

She's always in the hospital.

CAMILLE

I won't do it again—

BRITTANY

Don't worry 'bout it.

(Beat.)

I think there's something wrong with you. Really, I do.

(BRITTANY turns to leave.)

BRITTANY (cont.)

You should do something to help yourself. You hear me?

(She leaves. CAMILLE is alone at the bar.)

(EILEEN enters.)

EILEEN

What was dat all 'bout?

CAMILLE

Girl, no idea. I think she's having some family problems. Her mom is always in the hospital, ya' know.

EILEEN

Poor thing.

CAMILLE

Poor thing. One more.

(EILEEN exits. CAMILLE drinks.)

(Lights come up on the living room. Late afternoon. MOM enters in a nice dress, counting money in her wallet.)

MOM

Oign!

(Beat.)

There's bound to be traffic.

CAMILLE

(From the bar.)

Call them and tell them we're running late.

(SOPHIE enters with a large glass of white wine and a chunk of French bread. She is also dressed-up.)

MOM

Sophia Grace.

SOPHIE

God, what?

MOM

We're going to dinner—

(Yelling.)

As soon as your sister is ready!

CAMILLE

(From the bar.)

Two seconds!

SOPHIE

They always take forever with the courses.

MOM

You're going to ruin your appetite.

SOPHIE

With bread?? Gimme a break.

MOM

Go check on your dad—make sure he's ready to go.

SOPHIE

Dad??

MOM

I said go check.

(CAMILLE pounds her beer and walks over to the living room as lights fade on the bar.)

CAMILLE

Did you call them?

(Beat, to SOPHIE.)

You look nice.

MOM

Not yet.

SOPHIE

(Posing.)

This ole thing.

(CAMILLE goes over to SOPHIE and grabs a sip out of her wine glass.)

SOPHIE (cont.)

Hello!

(CAMILLE spits some of it back into the glass. SOPHIE and CAMILLE break out into giggles.)

SOPHIE (cont.)

So gross!

MOM

Sophia—your father.

(SOPHIE exits. CAMILLE still drinks the wine.)

CAMILLE

Hey Mom, about that girl who came over here to talk to you—

MOM

Oign, I don't want to be rude to your friends, but she seemed kinda extreme to me.

CAMILLE

Totally. But, did she say...

MOM

Friends fight. I do not want to get involved.

(CAMILLE nods. She walks to a purse and picks out a string of pearls. She offers her neck to MOM.)

MOM (cont.)

These things? Hate to tell you but they're fake.

CAMILLE

Oh.

MOM

I keep the really good stuff in the fire-proof safe.

(Beat.)

You wanna wear something real?

CAMILLE

No.

MOM

I'll get you something. It's your birthday.

CAMILLE

We're already late. Thanks, though, Mom.

MOM

Remind me later and I'll find something for you to have. To keep. I don't even wear any of that anymore.

(MOM finishes clasping the necklace.)

CAMILLE

It looks okay?

MOM

Yes.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

I'm so excited! I've always wanted to try this place. I know ya'll went a few times while I was gone and I was so jealous.

MOM

It's a big hullabaloo for dinner, but it's what you want.

(Yelling.)

Let's move ya'll!

(SOPHIE enters.)

SOPHIE

You don't have to scream.

(To CAMILLE.)

Here, gimme.

(SOPHIE sips a big gulp of wine.)

SOPHIE (cont.)

Let's go.

(They head for the door.)

MOM

Your dad coming?

SOPHIE

No. He said he doesn't want to go.

(Beat.)

MOM

To dinner?

SOPHIE

He doesn't feel well. He wants to stay home. I was like, good, more for us.

CAMILLE

He's not coming?

SOPHIE

He said ya'll can go out to do something another time.

(As CAMILLE takes this in, for a moment we see her for what she is: a sad, lonely, little girl.)

MOM

Okay, then, we'll bring him something back. Let's go girls. Sophie, here.

(MOM gives SOPHIE her keys.)

SOPHIE

What makes you think I'm driving?!

MOM

Oign?

(CAMILLE hangs back.)

CAMILLE

I'm... my clutch. Just one second. Ya'll go. Turn on the air.

SOPHIE

Oh a clutch! Start the car—let me borrow one of your vintage ones.

MOM

They're gonna kill us.

(SOPHIE throws the keys back at MOM and exits. MOM begins to leave.)

CAMILLE

Mom?

MOM

Hm?

CAMILLE

Do you think...? Nevermind, two seconds.

MOM

I'm just going to call the restaurant real quick.

(MOM exits. CAMILLE is left alone in the living room. She looks back toward the parents' bedroom.)

(SOPHIE enters with a bag.)

SOPHIE

This matches, right?

CAMILLE

Do you think that we have a problem? That we drink too much?

SOPHIE

Oign...

CAMILLE

Do you?

SOPHIE

No, I don't.

CAMILLE

Sometimes I drink a lot.

SOPHIE

I yelled at a bouncer the other night—we all got our crap.

CAMILLE

I've been black-out drunk before.

SOPHIE

Oign—

CAMILLE

Many times actually.

SOPHIE

So stop then.

CAMILLE

I don't think I can stop when I start.

SOPHIE

Oign, just re-the fuck-lax. Take a deep breath. Seriously.

(Beat.)

Hey, by the way, I may have to bail a minute early later on to go meet this guy.

(CAMILLE doesn't answer her.)

SOPHIE (cont.)

He's got a short window and if I don't see him tonight, I won't get to all week. I was going to just invite him along, but when I told him where we were going he said his wife's sister goes there all the time, so he can't and then I thought we could just change the restaurant, but he said it would be better to just catch each other somewhere quiet. Which I agree with of course—

CAMILLE

He's married?

SOPHIE

Oh, they're separating soon. He's been open with me about that since the beginning. She makes him miserable, but these things take time. He's been ignoring my texts all day, because I fucked up and accidentally got angry the other day—long story—but I just heard back from him and we're gonna get some drinks later.

CAMILLE

Soph, don't, don't go see that man.

SOPHIE

I have to.

CAMILLE

No, you don't. He's married.

SOPHIE

Um, what the hell do you care.

CAMILLE

Listen to me, you shouldn't date someone who—

SOPHIE

Oh my God, I'm not going to let you of all people lecture me.

CAMILLE

I mean, I can't really talk much—

SOPHIE

Then shut your mouth up about it.

CAMILLE

Sophia... It's not worth it. Trust me.

SOPHIE

You don't 't have any idea what you're talking about it.

CAMILLE

You're so young—isn't there a nice guy out there—

SOPHIE

You'd rather I just be alone all the time?

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

There have to be better ways.

SOPHIE

Just worry about yourself, I'm fine.

(SOPHIE exits. CAMILLE sits for a few moments. She starts crying and quickly hides it.)

(Beat.)

(We hear movement off stage: cabinets opening and plates clanging.)

CAMILLE

Dad?

DAD (o.s)

What?

(CAMILLE sips on the wine glass.)

CAMILLE

I... You know nobody even wanted to go out. I said we owed it to our younger selves. We were losing touch. Forgetting who we used to be. I made it romantic—I did. I can't be bored. I can't just be.

(Beat.)

Not a single one of them has mentioned it. I know they know. And that they aren't saying anything because they are polite. Leave it to Southerners to always be polite. It wasn't my idea to

order shots, the first time. I should've said no, said we don't need to be drunk to enjoy each other's company, but...

(Beat.)

I meet a close friend early at Arnaud's. We both wear what we think will impress the other the most. We buy a pack of cigarettes, it being a special event. She leans into to me very passionately about something and I give the perfect advice. Everyone is at Molly's, so we zip over there. It's a celebration—it's Christmas—we never see each other—we love each other—I'll tell you over and over. A guy I slept with in college tells me something about art or politics or movies and touches my side more than once. I smile a perfect smile at him. An embarrassing tale that everyone had forgotten regarding everyone resurfaces. I agree with it wholeheartedly. It happened. I finish my first pack of cigarettes, and then we push to the perfect party-move: relocation. We walk to Frenchmen Street and lose a few people. I laugh the most at jokes I can't quite recall. We bully our way past the crowd into the Spotted Cat, the door guy flirts with me, but quickly kicks us out for trying to sing with the band. An ex-boyfriend of mine yells at me in the street outside. I don't know why, but I didn't do anything to him. We realize we never got the thing we get every year. A friend's cousin works at a place on the West Bank and it would be free if we made the trip. We have to make the trip! It doesn't count if we don't get it. The party is small now. Everyone takes their own transportation. It is past five. I kiss some random guy. I bolt in the perfect fashion: no goodbye. The radio is playing something I hate. I smash into a light pole. I don't even brake. I don't even see it until I'm in it. Is this real? This doesn't happen to people like me. They are going to realize that I don't belong in this scene. I just need bed. I'm not going to jail. I got good grades in school. I'm young. I'm innocent.

(Beat, CAMILLE starts crying uncontrollably.)

I'm don't know why I'm like this. I'm so sorry. I'll say I'm sorry a million times and I'll be different. Worth something. Better than I have been ever. When I was little I knew that life would be easier if I could just grow up. If I could just get to the next stage, everything would fall into place. I would make sense. Why I was who I was would finally fit somewhere. ...

(Beat.)

Just trying to be is killing me. I don't mean to. I've been sitting in a corner pounding my head against the wall... And I don't know how to stop. I'm sorry.

(CAMILLE drinks.)

DAD (o.s)

You seen the donuts your mom bought today?

CAMILLE

On top of the refrigerator.

(CAMILLE is alone. She puts the wine down.)

(Lights stay up on the living room as they come up on the bar. CAMILLE sees, but doesn't go towards it. CAMILLE moves instead into the void area, sluggish. She lights a cigarette. It's quiet.)

(DEBBIE enters, also smoking a cigarette.)

DEBBIE

Morning!

CAMILLE

Hi—

DEBBIE

Debbie! You're new, yes? Desire to stop, right? Today at least?

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

Camille.

DEBBIE

No wonder you're here. It's bad luck to be named after a hurricane. And from the look of you, your parents lived through Camille before you were born, not like those poor girls who just happened to be named Katrina. Although that's getting better now I guess.

CAMILLE

My whole family actually calls me "oignon".

DEBBIE

Heard of "mignon" as a nickname, but never heard of that.

CAMILLE

Apparently I smelled like an onion when I was a kid.

DEBBIE

Oh, that's disgusting. My mom had a friend named Betsy who really had a hard time of things back in Boutte. That wasn't so much her fault though. She was a really sweet lady, but nobody could see that because she was a raging bitch to everyone but us. But now that I think of it, I think we just called her Betsy, her real name was something else...

CAMILLE

Elizabeth?

DEBBIE

No, definitely not. Oh who knows. I'm going in, you coming in?

CAMILLE

I don't know, actually—

DEBBIE

Bethany! It must have been Bethany.

CAMILLE

That's a nice name...

(CAMILLE's at a loss for what to say next.)

CAMILLE (cont.)

My driver's license has been suspended, but I got just it back...

DEBBIE

Ah, a DWI'er. This is a closed meeting you know. Only for people who have a desire to quit. Not just to meet some court requirements.

CAMILLE

I got my license back yesterday.

DEBBIE

Feel weird doncha'? After that long.

CAMILLE

It hasn't been that long actually. You must know Louisiana has a loophole. It's the whole reason I'm even in this state.

(Beat.)

A few weeks after you plea 894—you can get your driving privileges right back. Something about the wording on part of the plea deal. It sets the conviction aside. Legally. You can just forget about the whole thing and go back to normal.

(Beat.)

I don't know why I even still have my Louisiana driver's license. It's time to get a New York one. Cut the cord once and for all.

(DEBBIE nods.)

DEBBIE

Forgetting is a choice, not a requirement.

CAMILLE

Ever think you're too young to be an alcoholic?

DEBBIE

All the time.

CAMILLE

Me, too.

DEBBIE

I'm also too pretty to be so ugly to my husband and too nice to be such a bitch when I'm high—you get what I'm getting at here?

CAMILLE

Not really.

DEBBIE

You probably have a drinking problem. But it's not the end of the world. Yet. And I believe you can't get ever cut this cord. Our particular blessing.

(With that, DEBBIE goes inside and doesn't look back.)

(CAMILLE looks after her. Beat.)

(CAMILLE turns out to address the audience. The entire cast appears.)

CAMILLE

Hi. My name is Camille. And I have a desire...

ALL

Hi Camille.

(Lights fade.)

END PLAY

VITA

The author grew up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and obtained her Bachelor's degree in Theatre Performance from Louisiana State University in 2006. She began writing plays while living in Chicago, IL and studied at Chicago Dramatists. She moved back to Louisiana in 2013 to pursue her Masters in Playwriting at the University of New Orleans. She is a founding member of Generate INK, New Orleans first playwright-driven nonprofit.