

SWEETIE: You win the game! You want him to yell as loud as he can! You push and push...

PUNKIN: This is completely different.

SWEETIE: A scream is this far away from a slap. You've been egging him on.

PUNKIN: How dare you say that? How dare you! Like you are any better than I am. You came up with this stupid game in the first place! You're the one who suggested we listen in. You're the one who's been egging them on.

SWEETIE: You're the one who gets excited. Give it to her! Give it to her!

PUNKIN: Shut up.

SWEETIE: Come on... go after her!

PUNKIN: Shut up!

SWEETIE: Come on... stand up to her!

PUNKIN: You're just as bad! Just as bad!

SWEETIE: IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!

PUNKIN slaps SWEETIE across the face. SWEETIE slaps PUNKIN across the face. PUNKIN drops the phone. The two of them pounce on it. They each get an end and it looks to be a fight to the death.

A door opens and slams. Their neighbour is back. SWEETIE and PUNKIN are frozen, each still holding onto the phone. They hear the murmured conversation coming from next door. It sounds like reconciliation, but the dialogue is muffled.

SWEETIE and PUNKIN move closer to the wall, straining to hear what's being said. They both plant their ears to the wall.

MALE: I'm sorry, I'm so sorry, it won't happen again. I love you.

FEMALE: I love you too. I love you too. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

MALE and FEMALE repeat this indefinitely as the lights fade to black.

— THE END —

LIVER FOR BREAKFAST

Characters

JANICE — oldest sibling

DAN — middle sibling

FIONA — youngest sibling

JANICE and DAN sit on a park bench. DAN slurps greedily at his coffee. His knees are bouncing wildly. He is staring intently at something in front of him. JANICE has a juice beside her on the bench. She is doing a crossword. They are both wearing suits.

JANICE: *(musing over her crossword)* 5 letter word for emotional....

DAN: I don't believe it.

JANICE: *(talking to Dan without looking up)* Settle.

DAN: I do not believe it!

JANICE: Dan...

DAN: Well, look at him! He's got no sense of...It's quarter to eight in the morning. *(He looks at his watch)* 7:47:23. Where the hell is Fiona?

JANICE: Late. Or lost.

DAN: Uh Uh. I gave very explicit directions. I drew diagrams, aerial photography....

JANICE: So she's late.

DAN: I don't believe it!

JANICE: *(looking up)* What is he doing?

DAN: He's just sitting there.

JANICE: Ah.

DAN: He should be in school. *(yelling out)* Hey kid! Why aren't you in school?

JANICE: You're going to make a fine parent.

DAN: Am I wrong? Am I wrong? He's sitting there missing out on all the finer points of a well-balanced education...

JANICE: It's early Dan...he's probably on his way.

DAN: ...sitting on his butt in the park *(calling out)* when he should be in school!

JANICE: If Fonni doesn't come in the next five minutes we'll have to go in without her.

DAN: And if that wasn't enough...

JANICE: Thanks Janice that'll be great.

DAN: He's eating Smarties. In the morning. 7:47:56. Would it kill her to be on time?

JANICE: Maybe he likes Smarties.

DAN: Mom would have skinned us alive if we ever ate candy before noon. What is his mother thinking? *(Yelling out)* What is your mother thinking!

JANICE: Maybe he has a fine mother. Maybe he is a punk kid who doesn't clean his room and throws out the fruit in his lunch the second he gets to school and sneaks out before breakfast so he can fine-tune his sugar high.

DAN: *(taking a huge sip of coffee)* My kid is never going to eat candy before noon. I'm going to walk him to school too. Every day.

JANICE: How is Sharon?

DAN: Pregnant.

JANICE: No kidding, I never would have guessed.

FIONA enters wearing sunglasses. At any other time of the day, she would be gorgeous, but anything before noon is extremely too early. She stumbles on stage with a coffee in one hand and a HUGE makeup case in the other.

FIONA: Sorry. Sorry.

DAN: What time is it? What time is it?

JANICE: Hi Fonni. Late night?

FIONA: Sorry.

DAN: Some of us have to work for a living. Some of us have better things to do with our lives than to wait around for you.

FIONA: You're lucky I'm here at all. How do you guys do this every day?

JANICE: *(picking up her juice and toasting with it)* Welcome to 8 o'clock in the morning.

FIONA: It's hideous.

DAN: Can we speed things along here? I've got client meetings lined up all day and if I get even a second behind....

JANICE: *(standing)* Let's go.

DAN: Let's get this over with.

FIONA: Wait. I have a question. *(She takes a sip of coffee)* How old is she?

DAN: What?

FIONA: I want to know how old she is.

JANICE: Fonni, I to be in court at 10 o'clock.

FIONA: I'm here aren't I? No matter how demented I think this is?

DAN: So let's go.

FIONA: I know she's young and I want to know how young.

JANICE: Why?

FIONA: Because.

DAN: That's a stupid answer.

FIONA: I didn't realize I was being graded.

JANICE: Why do you need to know?

DAN: I cannot be late for work.

FIONA: What is she? 35? 30? 29?

JANICE: Fanni....

DAN: This is not up for discussion.

FIONA: Lines have to be drawn here.

JANICE: What does it matter?

DAN: I have allotted a certain amount of time for this and when that time is up....

FIONA: Boundaries have to be set into place.

DAN: I am gone, gonzo, bye-bye.

FIONA: So if the Cherry Bimbo is younger than I am, I'm not walking in there without any makeup on.

DAN: What are you talking about?

FIONA: I'm not being shallow; I just want to be prepared. Mentally and facially.

JANICE: Oh dear.

FIONA: My God. She's jailbait, isn't she?

JANICE: No...

DAN: Listen beauty queen...

FIONA: Don't call me that.

DAN: We don't time for this.

FIONA: How old is she?

JANICE: In the long run does it really make a difference?

DAN: Janice and I are very, very busy.

FIONA: Come on Jan, I can take it.

DAN: Every second I'm here and not at my desk is another year that....

JANICE: Twenty-two.

DAN: ...my kid won't be... ah, how old?

JANICE: (*reluctantly*) She's twenty-two.

FIONA & DAN: Twenty-two.

FIONA drops her makeup case, opens it and starts applying makeup in a flying fury. DAN is in a state of shock.

DAN: Twenty-two? Dad is dating a twenty-two-year-old girl?

FIONA: This is going to take longer than I thought. I don't have the right equipment.

JANICE: Fiona. You are a beautiful woman. What are you worried about?

FIONA: I'm twenty-six.

JANICE: So.

DAN: Twenty-two.

FIONA: Twenty-six is not twenty-two. Especially when you're on the bad side of twenty-six and she most likely is on the good side of twenty-two. This is not how one draws lines. She is crushing my line.

JANICE: Take a deep breath. It'll be ok.

FIONA: Why are we doing this?

DAN: Twenty-two.

FIONA: (*looking up*) Can they see us?

JANICE: No. His apartment is on the other side of the building.

DAN: The perfect age.

FIONA: I can't believe we're doing this. Can't we be cold and disapproving from a distance? Do we have to be in the same room under florescent light and eat with her? (*she gets a look of horror on her face*) This is Dad's idea of a family breakfast. He's going to make bacon isn't he? I'm going to have to eat bacon. I can't even look at bacon anymore, let alone eat it. What does she look like?

JANICE: If it's only going to upset you....

FIONA: Just tell me!

JANICE: She's tall. Blonde. She's Russian.

FIONA: She can probably eat all the bacon she wants!

DAN: Twenty. Two.

FIONA: Would you shut up!

DAN: Hey! I know about bacon! I know what this means! I'm three months away from fatherhood; you don't have to tell me what bacon means.

JANICE: Guys, she's a vegetarian. There won't be any bacon.

FIONA: Great. She's healthy. (*Hopefully*) Does she smoke?

JANICE: No.

FIONA: Is she stupid? Please let her be stupid.

JANICE: She's studying to become a doctor.

FIONA: Isn't she the perfect jewel. No wonder Dad dumped Mom for her.
She's a treasure!

DAN: How come you know so much?

JANICE: Hmm?

DAN: How come you know so much about her. Her. Miki, Mikey, what's her name?

JANICE: Mikela.

DAN: How come you know her name?

JANICE: (to FIONA) Are you almost ready?

FIONA: I'm still blending.

DAN: How come you know her name and you can say it without foaming at the mouth?

JANICE: It's just a name.

DAN: Ok, how come you know her name and her nationality, and what she wants to be when she grows up?

FIONA: Do we have to be nice to her? That's the point of this isn't it. He wants us to be nice to her.

DAN: Do you know her or something?

JANICE: No.

DAN: So what's the deal?

FIONA: I will sit, I may eat, but there is no way I'm being nice.

JANICE: We had lunch last week.

DAN: Who? You and twenty-two?

FIONA: You and Cherry?

DAN: Fraternizing with the enemy?

JANICE: I ran into Dad and Mikela last weekend and they invited me to lunch and I went.

DAN: And that's why we're here.

JANICE: Sure. Are we ready to go?

DAN: No.

JANICE: Why not?

FIONA: I'm still blending.

DAN: Why are you are so calm about this, i.e., why aren't you upset, i.e., why does having breakfast with Dad and his....

FIONA: Cherry Bimbo...

DAN: ...the twenty two year old he dumped Mom for, why does this not bother you and here to hence and hitherto fore, why does this not leave you a seething mass on the floor.

JANICE: Should it?

DAN: We all know you hate Dad the most.

FIONA: Uh-uh, I hate Dad the most.

DAN: I was looking forward to some sarcastic banter, at the very least some witty repartee. But you're so sedate about the whole thing. And you're not upset! Like we do this every day!

JANICE: Do we have to discuss this now? I have to be in....

DAN: Then you better talk fast.

FIONA: (*she looks in the mirror*) There. I definitely look better than any Russian smart assed vegetarian.

JANICE: You'll be late for work.

DAN: Talk, talk, talk.

JANICE: Look, this really isn't the time or place.

DAN: Hey Fanni, want a ride home?

FIONA: We're not doing breakfast? Great!

DAN: Let's go.

JANICE: Ok! Ok. (*She takes in a deep breath and exhales noisily*) Ok. First of all.... I think Mom is actually very happy it ended up this way.

FIONA: Excuse me? Happy?

JANICE: But we can't let Dad know that.

DAN: Why wouldn't she be? It's a top-ten "happy meter" moment.

JANICE: She is happy because, this way, it's not her fault. And everyone is nice to her and mean to Dad. And she gets an easy out, which is something she's been thinking about lately.

FIONA: She has? Since when?

JANICE: Ten years.

FIONA: And you knew?

JANICE *nods*.

FIONA: Nobody tells me anything.

JANICE: If you had asked, she would have told you.

DAN: That would involve talking to Mom.

FIONA: Details, details.

DAN: As happy as Mom may be, it doesn't have anything to do with why we are here, about to eat bacon with a beautiful borscht brainiac.

FIONA: She's a vegetarian.

DAN: Whatever.

FIONA: I need more concealer.

JANICE: I just think...I think that the impulse to.....stray....can happen in any marriage and I'm not in the position to throw stones.

DAN: Barry cheated on you? You're kidding! When did this happen? We played golf a couple of weeks ago and....

JANICE: Not Barry.

FIONA: That means it would have been....

DAN: You? It was you? You cheated on Barry? You? You had an affair?

JANICE: I did.

FIONA: You made a mistake? Jan the first born, the wonder child, made a huge, colossal mistake?

JANICE: Try not to smile so wide Fonni, you'll get wrinkles.

FIONA: I can't believe it. That is so fantasti...cally awful. Really awful. Oh Jan, I feel so bad for you.

DAN: Bad for her?

FIONA: I never liked Barry.

DAN: Barry is the victim here! Jan is the lawless cheater! Barry good. Jan bad.

JANICE: Let's not turn him into a saint just yet, ok?

FIONA: I never find out about anything.

DAN: So when did this dirty deed go down?

JANICE: Two years ago.

DAN: Years?

JANICE: Yep.

FIONA: But you're still together.

JANICE: Yep.

FIONA: Aren't you getting a divorce?

JANICE: No.

FIONA: Isn't that what's supposed to happen?

JANICE: I don't know, it isn't something I usually do.

FIONA: Why aren't you getting a divorce?

JANICE: Because. Why did Dad leave Mom? Because. Why do you need to wear make-up to meet his new girlfriend? Because.

DAN: There goes my sarcastic banter right down the toilet. You're going to support him aren't you.

JANICE: I never said that.

DAN: This was your idea wasn't it. That's why you made such a big deal about the three of us getting together....Janice looks good by being friendly and supportive to all sides.

JANICE: Can we please go?

DAN: This is just like you and the liver.

JANICE: What are you talking about?

DAN: This stinks like liver, it looks like liver, it acts like liver, 100 % Prime-Grade-however-you-classify-it-liver.

FIONA: *(something catches her eye)* Is that kid eating Smarties? In the morning?

JANICE: I'm not following you.

DAN: You eat liver.

JANICE: So what.

DAN: You hate liver. But you always had to be the good one, always had to have something on us and if that meant eating liver then you'd do it. "Janice knows it's good for her and even though she doesn't like it she eats it anyway. You're such a good girl Janice. Why can't you kids be like Janice" Janice the martyr eats her liver no matter how much she hates it.

FIONA: Ah Dan...

JANICE: You have to be dead to be a martyr.

DAN: You are a martyr and Dad is liver.

JANICE: He is not.

DAN: If this is how you want to atone for your sins, fine, but you can't fool me

into thinking this is steak when I know it's not. If you want to be nice to him, fine, but why drag Fanni and I into it.

FIONA: There's something you should know...

JANICE: I don't want to support him! He ran off like a coward in the middle of the night. Support him? God! He wouldn't answer any of Mom's calls, he wouldn't tell her anything, explain anything, and now he wants life to go on as if nothing happened. Support him? I want to ring his freaking neck!

FIONA: *(matching the intensity of JANICE'S last line)* Janice never really ate the liver!

DAN: What?

FIONA: Janice never ate the liver. She chewed it until no one was looking then she coughed it into a napkin.

DAN: She did?

FIONA: Every time.

DAN: You did?

JANICE: I guess my reputation is completely shot now.

DAN: There goes my analogy all to hell. Man, I was on a roll.

FIONA: So are we having breakfast, or not?

JANICE: Yes.

DAN: Why?

JANICE: We have to.

DAN: Why?

JANICE: Because.

DAN: Because why? I don't want to, Fanni doesn't want to, and you want to ring his freaking neck.

FIONA: You were hoping we'd just follow you like sheep, without asking any questions. Just because you always know the right thing to do and we weren't smart enough to pretend to eat liver. Actually if you had been really smart, you would cry and said that you felt sorry for the cows and then Grandma would have bought you an ice-cream when every you wanted. But that's only my opinion.

JANICE: I have to go up there.

FIONA: This isn't some weird voodoo marriage counselling exercise is it?

JANICE: Look. I really wanted to hate her. Honestly. Not even because she's young and gorgeous and smart...

FIONA: That's the way to get us on your side.

JANICE: But I couldn't do it. She's a wonderful person. She makes Dad happy.

She makes Mom happy. Mom is ecstatic that Mikela is around. And I couldn't do it because of Barry and mostly because I... I can't remember why I didn't like Dad in the first place.

DAN: Since when?

JANICE: It's been years now. I've just been doing it because everyone expects it of me. Janice hates Dad. Ok, Janice hates Dad. And now I have a legitimate reason to hate Dad and I just can't do it cause everyone's so happy.

FIONA: No they're not. I'm not happy. It doesn't matter that Mom is ecstatic that Dad got a mistress and broke up their marriage. I'm not supposed to come from a broken home. It's still wrong.

DAN: You see them, what twice a year?

FIONA: That's not the point.

JANICE: So. What do you say?

DAN: I don't know.

FIONA: I see them more than twice a year.

JANICE: Come on Danny, I'll eat you liver, for real, whenever you need me to. I'll eat your kids' liver.

DAN: They can eat their own liver.

JANICE: I need you guys to be there.

DAN: Ok.

JANICE: Fanni?

FIONA: I'm going to need a lot of therapy after this.

JANICE: Ok. So. Why don't we get some breakfast?

FIONA: I guess it would be rude to call her Cherry Bimbo to her face.

JANICE: Extremely.

They start to exit.

FIONA: Why is that kid just sitting there? Shouldn't he be in school?

DAN: *(the kid catches his attention and he calls out)* Hey kid! If you're still sitting there when I get out, I'm dragging you to the nearest public school. And I don't care if it's the one you go to. And eat some vegetables!

— THE END —