

ACT ONE
PROLOGUE

PRESHOW MUSIC

DS INTO PROLOGUE

LILY

Thank you all for coming tonight.

I am so glad to see you. There's always the chance that you might not show up and without you, there'd be little point in me being here.

I think most actors worry about playing to an empty house. I also worry about playing to a full house and leaving the audience empty.

I think you should know that I worry a lot.

LILY (cont'd)

Like the Nobel sperm bank. Something bothers me about the world's greatest geniuses sitting around in a room reading pornography and jerking off.

I worry that humanity has been advanced to its present level of incompetency because evolution works on the Peter Principle.

I worry that so many things cause cancer in lab rats because their lab lifestyle is so stressful.

I worry that drugs have forced some of us to be more creative than we really are.

I worry that yesterday's culture shock is today's reality check. No matter how cynical you become it's never enough to keep up.

DS OUT OF PROLOGUE
-- HORN HONKS #1

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

} TRAFFIC
SHOPPING CART

TRUDY

Hey! Watch the light, you mammalian-brained jaywalker.

Ah, you turn away, try not to catch my eye. I know what you're thinking, you're thinking I'm crazy. You people look at my shopping cart, call me crazy 'cause I save this junk. What should we call the ones who buy it?

It's my belief we all secretly ask ourselves at one time or another, "Am I crazy?" In my case, the answer came back a resounding "Yes".

For instance, here I am standing at the corner of Walk/Don't Walk, waiting for these aliens from outer space to show up. I call that crazy, don't you? And they're late as usual.

TRUDY (cont'd)

You'd think that as much as they know about time travel that they'd be on time once in a while. They asked me once my thoughts on infinity. I said for all I know, infinity could just be time on an ego trip. You think too long about infinity you could go stark raving mad.

`Course I don't ever want to sound negative about going crazy. I don't want to over-romanticize it, either, but frankly, going crazy was the best thing ever happened to me. I don't say it's for everybody; some people couldn't cope. But for me, it came at a time when nothing else seemed to be working. I've got the kind of madness Socrates talked about: "A divine release of the soul from the yoke of custom and convention." I've got what Yeats called...

(Irish accent)

..."A fire in the head."

I refuse to be intimidated by reality anymore. After all, what is reality anyway: nothing but a collective hunch.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

I made some studies: Reality is the leading cause of stress amongst those in touch with it. I could take it in minute doses, but as a life style I find it just too confining.

SHOPPING CART
TRAFFIC

Now, since I put reality on a back burner, my days are jam-packed and fun-filled. Like some days, I go hang out around Seventh Avenue. I love to do this old joke. I wait for some music-loving tourist to go up and ask someone, "How do I get to Carnegie Hall?" And then I run up and I yell, "Practice!"

If they don't phrase the question just right, the joke falls flat. "Where's Carnegie Hall?" "Which way is Carnegie Hall?" "Practice!" It's rare that it happens, but when it works perfectly, the expression on people's faces is priceless. Of course, it almost never happens. Most people seem to know where Carnegie Hall is, so sometimes I just stand out front and yell "Practice" anyway. People still laugh.

TRUDY (cont'd)

I never could've done stuff like that when I was in my right mind. I'd be worried people would think I was crazy. When I think of the fun I missed, I try not to be bitter.

See, the human mind is kind of like...

(Thinks)

PRECUE

... a piñata; when it breaks open, there's a lot of surprises inside.

DS INTO LAUGHTER

LILY

OK, I worry about reflective flea collars. Oh sure drivers can see them glow in the dark but so can the fleas.

I worry if olive oil comes from olives and peanut oil comes from peanuts, where does baby oil come from?

In 1976 the Supreme Court ruled that geneticists could patent new life forms, I worry that some of those life forms are old enough now to leave the lab to strike out on their own.

LILY (cont'd)

Someone once asked Daniel Boone if he had ever been lost, and he said, "No, I can't say I was ever lost, but I was bewildered once for three whole days."

Times were simpler then. I feel as though I've been lost and bewildered most of my life. Like the time I bought a wastepaper basket and I carried it home in a paper bag. And when I got home, I put the paper bag in the wastepaper basket.

DS TO TRUDY CREATIVE

TRUDY

I was not always a street person. I used to be a designer and creative consultant. For big companies! Who do you think thought up the color scheme for Howard Johnson's?

PANTYHOSE DIG

Laugh tracks...my idea.

(Taking pantyhose out of bag)

I gave TV sit-coms the idea for canned laughter. I got the idea one day I heard voices and no one was there.

Pantyhose in a plastic goose egg...

(Pointing to herself. Pulling on pantyhose.)

One thing I personally don't like about pantyhose; when you roll 'em down to the ankles the way I like 'em, you can't walk too good.

(Rolling down pantyhose)

You got to admit, though, it's a look!

UMBRELLA HAT

The only idea I'm genuinely proud of- my umbrella hat. Protects against sunstroke, rain and muggers. For some reason, muggers steer clear of people wearing umbrella hats.

(Walks in pantyhose)

TRUDY (cont'd)

I am now creative consultant to these aliens from outer space...or maybe they're from another dimension. I don't even think they know how they got here. They're a kind of cosmic fact-finding committee. Amongst other projects, they've been searching all over, for signs of intelligent life. It's a lot trickier than it sounds.

PEN OUT #1

We're collecting all kinds of data about life here on earth. I write the data on these Post-Its and then we study it. We're determined to figure out once and for all just what the hell it all means. For instance, did you know in the entire universe, we are the only intelligent life forms thought to have a Miss Universe contest.

(Writes note on post it, then retracts pen)

PEN AWAY #1

I don't know what I'd do without these Post-Its. I'm a mound of information. This data is from the future, this is from the present. Round the hem is the past. In here...miscellaneous. Disinformation, I keep it all up here.

TRUDY (cont'd)

(Reading from post-it)

Did you know, "The RNA/DNA molecule could be found throughout space in many galaxies...

(Flaps arms in exasperation)

...only everybody spells it different."

When a person dies of thirst, their eyes tear up.

When a man gets hanged, he gets an erection but when a woman gets hanged, sex is the last thing on her mind.

Did you know that Martin Buber once said, "If you truly understood a grain of wheat, you would simply die of wonder."

Did you know that ninety-eight point four percent of our genes are exactly like those of the chimpanzee? And the good news -- we know it and they don't.

(Reads again)

"What goes up must come down. But don't expect it to come down where you can find it." Newton's Law applied to Murphy's.

TRUDY (cont'd)

Not to worry, not to worry! Before I took the consulting job, I gave 'em my whole psychohistory. I told them what drove me crazy was my last creative consultant job with the Ritz Cracker mogul, Mr. Nabisco. It was my job to come up with snack inspirations to increase sales. I was an idea person. I had this idea to give Cracker Consciousness to the entire planet.

(Selling it)

I said, "Mr. Nabisco, sir, you could be the first to sell the concept of munching to the Third World. We got an untapped market here! Why, these countries they got millions and millions of people don't even know where their next meal is coming from so the idea of eating between meals is something just never occurred to them."

ECHO CUE

I heard myself saying this! I woke up in the loony bin. Sometimes not going mad would be a form of madness itself.

(Suddenly peeved)

One thing they don't tell you about shock treatments, for years afterwards you got flyaway hair. Now, I have to wear this wig.

(Calls out)

I wear it wrong side out to keep it clean.

TRUDY (cont'd)

ALIEN TEXTURE

But I shouldn't complain. Those shock treatments seemed to give me new electrical circuitry. I started having these time-space continuum shifts. I suddenly got this hook-up with humanity. My umbrella hat works like a satellite dish.

UMBRELLA TEXTURE

I pick up signals that transmit snatches of people's lives – I think what I do is quantum teleportation, but don't hold me to it. I can travel into the future, back in time, sometimes both at once. I don't like being at the mercy of quantum physics but when you are dancing the mystical dance of the molecules you're not the one who is leading.

UMBRELLA TEXTURE

That's how I met my space chums. I was watching a scene from somebody's life. I suddenly sensed others were there watching with me. Like now.

STATIC

(Touches her umbrella hat)

I'm downloading this scrawny teenage kid. She's on stage somewhere. She's got hair the color of Fruit Loops, she's decked out in zippers and chains, her T-shirt says...

DS TO AGNUS
--"KRAFTWERK" #1
CHAINS

AGNUS V.O.

I'm Agnus Angst. I don't kiss ass. I don't say thanks.

I'm getting my act together and I'm throwing it in your face.

I want to insult every member of the human race. The universe contains at least one hundred billion galaxies. Each galaxy contains at least one hundred billion stars

ECHO: "SPECK"

And we are micro-SPECKS on speckship earth. And, tonight, a group of assorted SPECKS, each with his own individual SPECK hairdo, arranged themselves into the shape of a SPECK audience and came here to watch a SPECK on stage who wants to be a star SPECK.

DS OUT OF K #1

TRUDY

(Referring to trance)

See what I mean? Entertaining but distracting... especially since somebody else has the remote control. If the wrong button should somehow get punched, I could have a neurotransmitter mental meltdown. Causes "lapses of the synapses." I forget things. Never underestimate the power of the human mind to forget. The other day, I forgot where I put my house keys. I looked everywhere and then I remembered, I don't have a house.

I forget more important things, too. Like the meaning of life. It'll come to me. Let's just hope when it does, I'll be in...

CHURCHBELL

I must dash soon. I've got a top-level meeting.

PEN OUT #1.1

My space chums say they are learning so much about us since they began to time-share my trances. They said to me, "Trudy, the human mind is sooo strange." I told them, "That's nothing compared to the human genitals."

PEN AWAY #1.1

TRUDY (cont'd)

Ah, we think so differently. They find it hard to grasp stuff comes easy to us. I show 'em this can of Campbell's tomato soup. "This is soup." Then I show 'em a picture of Andy Warhol's painting of a can of Campbell's tomato soup.

SOUP OUT

ART OUT

"This is art." This is soup and this is art. Art! Soup! Soup! Art!

AEROBICS / RHYTHM

(Switches them behind her back)
Now, what is this? No, this is soup.
Once more...

(Switches them behind her back again)

DS TO CHRISSY

ACT ONE

SCENE TWO

CHRISSY

(Ties shoes and pull tights. To friend.)

Whooo! Eileen, I have been on four job interviews today. Talk about being bushed. No matter what kind of job you have, it's got to be easier work than looking for one. Whooo!!

Oh, they fired me at that telemarketing place. No, they gave me no notice at all, just warnings.

Eileen, This may sound like a cop out but some of my job probs are not my fault. I have to lay most of the blame on the people who hire me. I'm just not good at lying to people. Oh, sure, maybe I lie to myself, but that's where I draw the line.

CHRISSY (cont'd)

These jobs don't work because I'd do better at something creative, and I feel I am somewhat creative, but, somehow, I lack the talent to go with it. And being creative without talent is a bit like being a perfectionist and not being able to do anything right.

All my life I've wanted to be somebody, but I see now I should have been more specific. Not that I lack ambition. I want to be so much more than I am now. But if I were truly ambitious, I think I'd already be more than I am right now. Don't you?

AEROBICS PUSH #3

(Drops to floor)

A sobering thought, what if right at this very moment, I am living up to my full potential?

SHOWER

(Crosses to shower)

Eileen, this last seminar I went to has opened me up like some kind of bronchial spray.

CHRISSY (cont'd)

I got clear that my expectations about life are simply way too high. Because we are all being force-fed a lot of false hopes, Eileen, about romance, success, sex, life - you name it.

SHOWER OFF
SHOWER DRAIN
SHOWER CURTAIN

My seminar leader, said to me, he said, "Chrissy, you are a classic 'false hope' case." Because not only do I not have a very firm grasp on reality but I have sort of a loose grip on my fantasies, too.

(Cross to locker.)

LOCKER OPEN, BAG

Oh, Eileen, he was just pushing me to be aware. That's his big thing -- 'Self Awareness'. But self-awareness can be tricky, Eileen. It's been my experience that too much self-awareness can make you just too aware of what it is you don't like about yourself in the first place.

See, I'm getting all these new insights. If they don't make suddenly make me understand everything. It's a step, if they leave you confused in a deeper way. Next week, I'm working on overcoming my fears. Oh, but it's not easy. Eileen, you name it, I have feared it.

CHRISSY (cont'd)

Like, I have this constant fear of being out of work; and yet whenever I'm working I have this constant fear of being fired. I guess the worst fear I have is that this feeling I once had may come back. Once I...I guess I've been wanting to tell this to someone for so long... once I came this close to committing suicide. I even wrote a note. That's how down and low I felt. I would have done it, too. Just one thing stopped me: fear. Eileen, I was just plain too afraid. So if I ever did commit suicide, I'd have to be so desperate I wouldn't even let fear of suicide stand in my way.

LOCKER CLOSE

(Cross toward center)

BAG SET DOWN

And yet, Eileen, see, if I could overcome a fear like that, I could overcome all my fears, I bet. And then, of course, and here's the irony, probably if I weren't afraid I'd really want to live. Only by then, if I'd really conquered my fear of suicide, it might be too late; I might have already, you know, done it. Life can be so ironic. Sometimes to make any move at all seems totally pointless. I hope I never feel that low again.

HAIR SPRAY X 3

Eileen, I have been feeling so up about the work I've been doing on myself... at these seminars.

CHRISSY (cont'd)

HAIR SPRAY X 4

'Course I don't want to become a seminar hopper, like this ex friend I used to know. Eileen, she had no time for anything but self-improvement. She felt that she'd outgrown everyone in our crowd, especially me.

MASCARA

MASCARA

Behind my back, she told this person that I was an upwardly immobile asshole. And then, to add insult to injury, she said it to my face. Well, that did it. I don't have to take that from a friend? I get enough insults on job interviews.

Speaking of which, I've got another one this afternoon. Wish me luck, this job requires no skills. I could get lucky. I'll just be hooking people up to biofeedback machines. At least I won't be lying to them.

CHRISSY (cont'd)

So, will I be seeing you here tomorrow? Oh, how they lied about this health club. Talk about false hopes: The place to get thin and meet good-looking men, ha?

But I keep coming. I tell myself that I'm really keeping fit. The truth is I pig out one week and starve the next. I have gained and lost the same ten pounds so many times over and over again that my cellulite must have *deja vu*.

AEROBICS TAG

And this hairspray. They said it would hold up. Once more, false hopes.

BAG TO SHOULDER

Hey, but if it weren't for 'false hopes' the economy would just collapse, I bet. Well, slinky-dinks, I'm outta here.

AEROBICS FAST FADE UP

(Exits.)

AEBOBICS OUT
-- SALON MUSIC

ACT ONE
SCENE THREE

KATE

(To receptionist)

How much longer must I wait? I have read all the magazines.

(Touches hair)

Tell Bucci I will have to be shampooed again.

(Sits, recognizes friend)

Lonnie? Lonnie, it's Kate. No, no, I was not sure that that was you, either.

(Looks in direction of stylist, angry)

That's what comes of letting Bucci the Arrogant do our hair, I suppose. I am here hoping that something can be done to undo the harm he's done. I mean, what is this?

(Looks in mirror)

This side ends well above the left ear and this side ends, as you can see, at the collarbone.

(Thumbing through magazine)

I am sick of being the victim of trends I reflect but don't even understand.

KATE (cont'd)

I tell you, coming here today was so humiliating. There were people in the streets, actually staring at my haircut. People who normally would be intimidated.

Well, of course, I said to him, "Please, Bucci, nothing too radical." But, by that time, this side was already gone. That's why this side looks less radical.

(Sighs)

Well, yes, I have gotten scads of compliments. Especially when they see just this side and not this side.

(Looks around impatiently, twirls foot, real arrogance.)

I have been waiting so long that soon this side will look like this side.

(Examines hands, loudly for receptionist's benefit.)

Since I've been sitting here, two new age spots have appeared.

(Looking into mirror)

I must say, I do like what it does for my cheekbones. Well, one of my cheekbones. But, you see, my left ear juts out

KATE (cont'd)

Oh, I'd like to say to him as long as you insist on calling yourself an artist then go to Palm Beach and do oil portraits. Well, no, no. I've never actually talked to him that way. Could you imagine what I'd look like if I ever talked to him that way? Lonnie, is it warm in here, or am I having a flash?

(Handing her magazine)

Lonnie, here, I want you so see this article? It's all about how you can actually die from boredom. A slow, agonizing death.

Well, they've done studies. Have you ever used the expression, "I am dying of boredom?" Well, so have I. I have used it all my life. It says if you use it that often, that may be exactly what you're doing.

(Fascinated)

Even as I was reading the article, in the back of my mind, I caught myself thinking, "How boring!"

(Changing subject, reaches for new magazine.)

And guess who was at Rafael's last night...with someone who was not her husband? No, no, I will not tell you. I will only say that she is someone that you know, rather well. Now, can you guess?

KATE (cont'd)

(Exasperated)

Lonnie, her left ear juts out! Yes, I am having...

(Mouths)

...an affair. But not for long. It's one thing to tolerate a boring marriage, but a boring affair does not make sense.

(Examining finger)

Oh, I want Freddie to hear and get upset. Of course, it has occurred to me he might hear and not get upset.

(Showing fingertip to Lonnie)

Last year, I lost the tip off my little finger...

(Pause)

...in a cooking class accident. To this day, he has yet to notice.

(Holding sides of hair)

And this haircut, Lonnie, hard to miss this haircut. Not a word.

Funny, as a little girl I dreamed of being a concert violinist. What a tragedy if my dream had come true.

When I'm in L.A, I'm seeing a plastic surgeon about a new fingertip. Maybe he can do something about this haircut while he's at it.

(Sighs, pulls at hair)

KATE (cont'd)

And I have got to go to the theatre tonight. Lonnie, they say it's uplifting, but still I dread it. The last time they said something was uplifting, I must have dozed off during the uplifting part. Am I so jaded I cannot be uplifted anymore, or do I find being uplifted ultimately boring? That is really jaded.

(Reaches for magazine)

Don't put that magazine back. I'm want to rip out this article.

(Tears out article)

I am having this faxed to all my friends. It says here, "Having everything can sometimes make you stop wanting anything."

(Looks up)

It's called "Rich People's Burn-Out." They've even coined a word for it, "Affluenza."

(Puts article in purse)

And if TOWN & COUNTRY is writing about it, a magazine not known for its psychological insight, it must be of epidemic proportions.

(Sighs deeply)

PAGE RIP

MUSIC SWELL

DS TO PAUL
--SPEED BAG
--AEROBICS

ACT ONE

SCENE FOUR

PAUL

(To friend)

SINGLE BAG
--WEIGHT MACHINE BKGD

I must be getting body building burn out, Ted. Lately, I've been thinking, "What's the point?" Even with sports. I still watch the games, but I don't root so much anymore.

WEIGHTS DOWN

It's the same with sex. Rest assured, my sex urge is still industrial strength. But, Ted, where's the desire?

What's the point being a hedonist if you're not having a good time?

WEIGHTS DOWN

(Sets down weights.)

I blame a lot of what I'm going through on my ex wife, Penny. The divorce thing threw me for a loop.

(Wipes face, towel around neck.)

My life fell apart.

PAUL (cont'd)

WEIGHTS DOWN

This one day, Ted, I'm in the den waiting for the game to start---I see this magazine quiz Penny had been filling out-- "On a scale of one to ten, how do you rate your man? As a dresser, a dancer, a lover, a conversationalist?"

SHOWER BKGRND

Ted, she had rated me so low. After that, making love to her was never the same. Hell, who knows what's considered a good lover these days anyway? Every time you turn around, there's a new erogenous zone you gotta go and explore. Hell, a guy needs his dick hooked up to a laptop computer.

LOCKER OPEN

I miss the disco days, man. I bet I feel about disco the way hippies must feel about Woodstock.

Did I ever show you my kid?

(Gets wallet, flip thru pictures.)

Polaroid. Nurse took it the moment of my son's birth. That's me and Penny in the delivery room. I was right there with my little wet, squirming son. Paul, Jr.

PAUL (cont'd)

Ah, Penny wanted the bonding thing that's supposed to happen. The bonding thing did happen. Then she divorced me.

Penny's remarried. Moved to Georgia. I've got visitation, but-- last time-- he acted like he didn't even know me.

(Puts polaroid in shirt pocket.)

ZIPPER

Lately, Ted, I've been thinking about this time I donated my sperm to friends of this girl I met at this dance club. I'd seen her a few times there. We'd talked. I thought she was hot.

RAZOR

This one night, Ted, she really zaps in on me. At first, I think it's my animal magnetism. She dug my eyes...one blue and one hazel...like David Bowie. Only mine's genetic. You never noticed? Ted, come on. Turns out she's looking for a sperm donor. For these two lesbian chick friends of hers.

STOP RAZOR

NOSE TRIMMER I felt flattered. She knew all about my family background, my talents, my IQ---- which you won't believe, you bastard is rather high. The weird part, Ted, it didn't involve sex. It was more scientific. They just wanted my sperm, see, nothing else. A first for me, I can tell ya'.

PAUL (cont'd)

She takes me to her place, hands me this, like, huge eyedropper. Wants me to...you know...shoot into it.

Hell *I* freaked. Then she explained it. What you do, you have your orgasm in the turkey baster. Anyway, hell, I did it.

The thought occurs, Ted, maybe I got this secret kid. 'Cause, this one time, on PBS, I see this genius, musical prodigy. Like I was meant to see him. Or else, why would I dial switch to PBS, which I never watch?

PAUL (cont'd)

And then, it hits me: the kid looks exactly like me when I was a kid...the spitting image. I wait for a close-up—hoping to catch a glimpse of his eyes but the kid was like he's in a trance. His head's thrown back, he's playing his music. Something about him, the way he moved, I felt in the pit of my heart, there could be my secret kid. I just can't stop thinking about it. I can't stop thinking, "What if?" I ask myself, "What's he like?"

FAUCET ON...STOP

PAPER TOWELS
TOSS TOWEL

"Is he happy?" "Does he have a proper male role model?"

"And did the bonding thing ever happen...I wonder?"

LOCKER CLOSE
--DS TO I-HOP
--KRAFTWERK I-HOP

(He pauses, reaches inside shirt, looks at Polaroid, returns it to pocket, turns, shuts locker.)

ACT ONE

SCENE FIVE

} KRAFTERWEK IHOP

AGNUS

(On phone)

Listen Charlotte, it is absolutely vital that I stay at your house tonight. You have gotta make your mom let me stay over. Charlotte, my parents think that you are a bad influence on me, too. That's why we're friends. Just for that you can't run the tech at my gig tonight, you are herstory, Charlotte... You are 'the crumb de la crumb'. My tapes, Charlotte, I need my tapes!

X-BUMP TO RADIO

(Dials radio)

I need my Debbie Boone tape! I need my "Star Trek" tape. I need them for range. You bring them to the Anti Club tonight or I'll sue you for everything you're worth. It is vital Charlotte!

HANG UP #1

(Hangs up, leans against phone)

DOOR SWING #1

(Listens to radio, picks up

PHONE PICK UP

phone, calls out)

I am using this phone!!

COIN DROP & DIAL

(Dials phone, connects)

AGNUS (cont'd)
520-TALK. 520-TALK. Look, it's vital that I talk
to the radio shrink. My name is Agnus. My
parents locked me out of the out of the house
today. I want to find out if that is legal. Oh I
can't wait long, I'm in the ladies room, House of
Pancakes.
(Calls out)
Don't you eyeball me, you I-hop Specks...with
blueberry syrup moustaches!
SUITCASE OPEN *(Opens suitcase)*
(Puts on jumpsuit)
ZIPPERS *(Zippers)*
LITTLE ZIP#1
CHAIN WRAP *(Agnus wraps chains around her. Chain sounds
now continue through scene.)*
SHAVER *(Shaves head)*
--OUR FIRST CALLER
V.O.
"This is Talk Radio, 79, WABC. I'm Doctor Terry
Brant with our first caller of the day, Agnus."
SHAVER OFF
AGNUS
(She grabs phone, turns off radio)
Oh, Agnus, Doctor, Agnus,
Are we on...are we on?
AGNUS RADIO VO
RADIO OFF

AGNUS (cont'd)

Listen, doctor, for years I have been going home after school, nobody would be there... I take my key from around my neck...

(Holds key, plays with it nervously)

I let myself in. Today I go home, I put my key in the door -

(Desperate)

- they changed the locks on me.

(Looks at phone, rolls eyes)

Yes, yes, I suppose it was something I did. I'm always doing something wrong. Like, last night, my stepmom, she accuses me of leaving dirty fingerprints on the cheese. No, my real mother's not around right now. She is in Europe. She's doing her art piece. She's a performance artist like me. There was this big custody beef, see, 'cause my real mother's a lesbian. So the court gave me to my dad. He's a gene-splicer, a bio-businessman at this research lab of misapplied science, where he works on some new bio-form he thinks he'll be able to patent. He doesn't get that I am a new bio-form.

DOOR SWING #3

Listen...today...

(Screams)

Please, I am using this phone!!!!

(Back to phone)

AGNUS (cont'd)

Today I go by my dad's lab to get some money for some gear for my act and I see this like glob of bio-plasm quivering there in this petri dish. I don't know why I did it - maybe it was sibling rivalry. But I leaned over and I spit into it. And of course my dad had a mad scientist alert!

Oh, he loves that bio-form more than me.

DOOR SWING #4

(frustrated)

Yes, I have other family but we have nothing in common except that we are all carbon-based life forms.

(Looks at phone)

Wait! A commercial? I can't believe you're brushing me off. To sell some product that probably killed some poor lab rat.

HANG UP #2

(Slams phone, leans against it.)

(SHE tears off the key around her neck.)

KEY IN TRASH

(SHE throws the key in trash.)

-- DS, DOOR

--L&M MUSIC

ACT ONE

SCENE SIX

SOMEWHERE IN OUTER SUBURBIA, USA, IN A TRACT HOUSE ONCE PHOTOGRAPHED BY BILL OWENS, LUD, A DON KNOTTS LOOKALIKE, SITS IN HIS BERKLINE ROCKER, READING THE PAPER. MARIE, HIS LONG-SUFFERING WIFE, SITS AT SEWING MACHINE.

MARIE

Come on in, Bootsie, Bootsie, Bootsie. Lud, Lud, who was it said...that quote about...

} *L&M MUSIC*

(Sitting down to sewing)

oh, you know, what was that quote? Here, give me your glasses. Do you remember?

LUD

(Handing over glasses)

Did you hear what you just said, Marie?

(Using toothpick)

MARIE

Well, I reckon so. I just said it. What?

LUD

You 'bout to say something somebody said - you couldn't think who said it or what it was they said.

MARIE

Oh, and I suppose that that never happens to you. That never happens to him, does it, Bootsie?

LUD

(superior)

If I couldn't think who said something or what it was they said, I simply would not bring up the subject, Marie.

(chuckles)

I'd simply keep my mouth shut. Somethin' I wish you'd consider more often.

MARIE

(Let's out a masochistic sigh)

I used to tolerate that kind of talk. I told myself it was your hernia made you act so hateful. I have let you walk all over me. I'll bet if I called that radio psychologist she'd tell me to just pack my bags and cut loose. Easy for her to say...she has a degree in psychology.

SEWING MACHINE #1

LUD (cont'd)

Aww, a degree in psychology, I doubt that. You know what your problem is, Toots? You can't concentrate. You got a brain like a hummingbird. Makes you appear dense and at the same time flighty.

Well did you ever see a hummingbird try to make up its mind which flower to land on? Well, picture your brain in place of that bird. And you have a clue as to what I have to put up with.

GARAGE DOOR #1
MUSIC OFF

(Chuckles)

Shh. Shh! Sound like the garage door flapped up! Well, turn out the light! And give me them damn glasses so I can see!

(Wipes glasses, going to see)

(Crosses to window)

(Pulls back curtain)

CHAIN WALK

Something's comin' up the driveway...I never seen anything like it.

AGNUS

(Climbing steps)

Granddaddy Speck...

DOOR POUNDS

(Pounds on door)

Let me in!!!

(She sags against door)

-- DS TO TRUDY

ACT ONE
SCENE SEVEN

TRUDY

This is soup and this is art. Art. Soup. Soup.
Art. Now what is this? No, this is soup.

(Frustrated)

SOUP, ART AWAY

I wish to hell they'd get this.

(Drops soup/art into bag)

My space chums and I just returned from
examining that grain of wheat with Martin
Buber. I try to plan it so we have at least one
peak experience a day. When you've got aliens
in from out of town, you want to do something
special.

It's great traveling with them. They've got such
a powerful electromagnetic field...just hanging
out with them has helped my facial neuralgia.
Only drawback, I've got a severe case of static
cling.

TRUDY (cont'd)

They are just about perfect, except they got no eyelids. That alone would drive me up the wall.

We've been delving deeply into the history of humanity. Yesterday, we stumbled across the first recorded history of when humankind made an ass of itself. And then we discovered when humankind first laughed. Guess what! We first laughed the day we first made an ass of ourselves. Aw, they love that about us!

PEN OUT #2

Right after we laughed, we began to reflect on ourselves. Around this time we discovered evidence of the first "knock-knock" joke.

(To passerby)

"Knock-knock." "Who's there?" "We're not sure, we're new at this." Not very witty but it does give us insight into the size and shape of Cro-Magnon Man's funny bone.

PEN AWAY #2

Did you know "what most distinguishes us humans from lower animals is our desire to take drugs?"

(Calls out)

TRUDY (cont'd)

That was for you, Tina. Cute outfit you barely have on. How's tricks? Pun intended. You look so beautiful, Tina, you smell so good. You mind if I sit close? You mind if I sit real close?

TINA

Awright, now Trudy. Trudy, don't mess with me. I am coasting on my own chemistry and I am volatile, baby. I woke up today I felt like I had had brain surgery done over my entire body. I'm thinking half the damn day what chemicals did I take to make me feel so wrecked. And then I remembered I hadn't taken anything. Here I was trying to blame a drug for what it feels like to be straight.

TRUDY

My space chums are very careful what chemicals they put into their bodies. Or to use their term, 'bio-container'. We were having a cup of coffee, Tina, I see this strange look come over 'em. They pointed to the label on this non-dairy creamer. They said, "Trudy, this is exactly what we are made of."

DS TO L&M
--KRAFTWERK L&M

ACT ONE
SCENE EIGHT

} KRAFTWERK L&M

LUD

(At bedroom door)

Agnus. Agnus! Turn that junk music down!
You better learn some manners young lady, or
else...

DOOR OPEN / "OR ELSE WHAT..."

V.O. AGNUS

(Screams)

...or else, what, Granddaddy Speck?

(Makes spitting gesture)

(The door slams, the music drops.)

MARIE

(Calls out, brightly)

Or else people are not gonna like you, honey.
You want to be liked, don't you? Everybody
wants to be liked.

DOOR OPEN / "NOT ME I'M..."

V.O. AGNUS

(Screams)

Not me! I'm different!

(The door slams, the music drops)

LUD

Well, I can't argue with that.

(Reacting to AGNUS's music.)

Aw, "I program my own computer."

CAT SCREAM

(LUD sits on the cat.)

Oh, Christ-all-mighty, that damn cat.

MARIE

Lud, Lud, do you realize that nothing has turned out the way we planned it? Not our retirement plan. Not those astro-turf neckties, you said were gonna sell like hotcakes at halftime. Not our patio addition out back. Not our daughter and, now, not our granddaughter.

SEWING MACHINE #2

There's not one thing, and I mean one thing, that's panned out right.

LUD

(Takes cigarettes from shirt pocket)

You know what your problem is, Marie.

MATCH #1

(Lights cigarette, exhales, enjoying moment)

Too negative!

(Needling her)

You're negative, Toots, about ninety-two per cent of the time.

MARIE

(Removing pins from mouth)

Yes, and about ninety-two per cent of the time I am dead right.

LUD

Oh hell, if you're so damn right all the time, how come we have a daughter we don't understand too good, and a pink-haired punk granddaughter, leaves dirty fingerprints on the cheese, wears something makes the garage door flap up. Old man Sanders stops me out here, said he saw somethin' odd lookin' in the yard. Worried we might have poltergeists.

I had to say, "No, that wasn't no poltergeist, that was my grand-daughter. She glows in the dark 'cause her necklace is a reflective flea collar." How in the hell do you think that makes me feel?

"I PROGRAM MY OWN..."

MARIE

(Surprised at news, almost in tears)

Well, Lud! Why didn't you just go on and let him think it was poltergeists?

Go in there and just yank the plug clean out of the socket.

LUD

Agnus, Agnus, you open up this door.

}K L&M PUSH #2

(Tries knob)

Locked! Just like her mother.

DOOR THUMP

(LUD tries his shoulder against the door)

Damn! My bursitis.

(Gets idea)

I'll fix that little day-glo fanny. Where's that fuse box?

(LUD opens box, unscrewing fuse. The lights go out, the music continues.)

MARIE

(In dark)

POTS & CAT

Well, she's using her portable, dolthead.

Lud, turn the light back on.

LUD

I can't find the damn fuse in the dark!

DOOR OPEN, SLAM
--CHAIN CROSS

MARIE

(To AGNUS crossing room in dark.)

Agnus, Agnus, I demand to know where you are going at this time of night looking like that?

"YOU WOULDN'T WANT..."

V.O. AGNUS

(Screams)

You wouldn't want to know!

(Door slams, and the music, chains recede)

LUD

(Screwing in fuse, runs to window)

GARAGE DOOR #2

Yeah. Yeah, there it went. Flapped right up!

MARIE

(Notices something)

Lud! Lud, she has taken the candle out of my good centerpiece. I can't keep anything nice.

LUD

(Yawns, starts to stretch, but can't because of his bursitis.)

Well, come on to bed, Toots. You been stooped over that sewing got eyes like cherry tomatoes.

MARIE

You go on to bed. I'm going to sit up here 'til she gets back. Lud... go on, now go on to bed now. Lud, go on now, quit.

(Crushes fist to mouth, fighting tears)

'Member when she was little? She'd stay over. I'd make chocolate milk, and then I'd make me a little milk mustache, pretend I didn't notice.

MARIE (cont'd)

And then you'd make one and there we'd be -
the two of us with little milk mustaches. Used
to just tickle her to death.

She's had a lot to deal with in her short lifetime.

LUD

Oh hell, I've had more to deal with in my long
lifetime - I don't take it out on the world.

MARIE

No, you take it out on me.

(Tearful)

Her daddy says that they've tried everything to
get through to her. They've washed their
hands, it's in our laps now.

LUD

(Begins to cross, turns back)

Hmm! I'll bet they hadn't tried little milk
moustaches. I'll shut that garage door. When
she comes in, we'll hear it flap up. We'll get up,
make us some little milk moustaches, see if she
remembers.

(Exits, singing)

"I program my own computer.

Beam myself into the future."

"STAR TREK"

ACT ONE

SCENE NINE

} "STAR TREK"

V.O.

(In the black)

"To boldly go where no 'speck' has gone before..."

(Spotlight comes up on the wrong side of the stage.)

CHAINS Throughout

AGNUS

I am over here!!! Over here, you techo-SPECK!
As I was leaving to come to the Anti Club
tonight, my grandmother Speck said,
(Mimics MARIE)

"As long as you're going out, take out the
trash." I looked around the room. Should I
take out this early American maple coffee table
in the shape of a wagon wheel? What about
this gilt-sprayed macaroni mosaic? What about
this wrought iron lamp post with the ceramic
drunk leaning against? Take out the trash? I
wanted to say, "I wouldn't know where to
begin."

Memory Mode Playback.

AGNUS (cont'd)

"YOUNG & RESTLESS"

What's coming up for me is something from my own soap opera. I look at my family, I feel like a detached retina.

They always took me to a fast-food place and then said, "Eat slowly."

The last conversation I had with my dad was between our tee shirts. His said, "Science is Truth Found Out." Mine said, "The Truth Can Be Made Up If You Know How."

Even as a fetus, I had womb angst. Inside the amniotic sac, the fetus has this headset that is plugged into this DNA tape loop that plays over and over auto-reverse all the rotten things that have happened throughout human history.

AGNUS (cont'd)

I knew that the world I was coming into was liable to be a 'pins-in-girl-scout-cookies', gun obsessed, porno-strewn, kick-box-culture...

(Kicking the floor)

I don't want to go, please! I don't want to go.

"DAYS OF OUR LIVES"

V.O.

"And these are the days of our lives."

AGNUS

ECHO:

New marketing business venture:

"YOU LIGHT UP MY LIFE"

Start behavior modification type- religion where people can go to learn to stop caring.

THE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
IS ABOUT TO BEGIN
ANYONE WHO WANTS TO
IS WELCOME TO COME IN

I WANT TO SHARE SOMETHING VITAL
I JUST READ IN THIS ANCIENT, DOG-EARED
SELF-HELP BOOK I FOUND

AGNUS (cont'd)

IN THE TRASH CAN
IN THE LADIES ROOM
HOUSE OF PANCAKES
"WILL" BY G. GORDON LIDDY
MASTER OF THE WATERGATE CAPER
MY NEW GURU.
WHO WHEN HOLDING HIS HAND
OVER A LIT CANDLE SAID,
"THE TRICK IS NOT TO MIND IT."

MUSIC SWELL

AND I DON'T MIND IT
WHEN I FIRST CAME INTO
THIS WORLD
ELVIS WAS NOT ONLY FAT
HE WAS DEAD
AND I DIDN'T MIND IT
WHEN I READ
OZZIE OZBOURNE STUCK A BAT IN HIS MOUTH
AND BIT OFF ITS HEAD
BUT I DON'T MIND IT

AGNUS (cont'd)

AND I DON'T MIND
NO MATTER HOW MUCH CONTEMPT
I HAVE FOR SOCIETY
IT'S NOTHING COMPARED
TO THE CONTEMPT THAT
SOCIETY HAS FOR ME

I DIDN'T MIND IT
WHEN I LEARNED
THE PHRASE
'TRUTH IN ADVERTISING'
WAS JUST SOME LIE
THOUGHT UP BY SOME GUY
IN ADVERTISING

LAST YEAR WHEN SCHOOL LET OUT
THERE WAS A BIG SHOOT OUT
I WATCHED MY TEACHER GET BLOWN AWAY
SHE WAS THE ONLY ONE
WHO EVER GAVE ME AN "A"
SHE GOT A BULLET
NOT AN APPLE THAT DAY
BUT I DON'T MIND IT

AGNUS (cont'd)

AND I DON'T MIND
THAT I TOOK MY GOLDFISH
AND I PUT IT IN WATER
FROM THE FAUCET
AND IT DIED OUR DRINKING WATER
CAUSED IT

I TRIED MY MOUTH-TO-MOUTH
RESUSCITATION SKILLS
MY DAD SAID, "YOU ARE THE
DAUGHTER OF A SCIENTIST
IT SHOULD'VE BEEN
MOUTH-TO-GILLS,"
BUT I DON'T MIND IT

I DON'T MIND EACH MORNING I GET UP
I FEEL LIKE I WANT TO THROW UP
I DON'T MIND THAT MY PARENTS
ALL FOUR OF THEM ARE NARCISSISTS
WHO SIMPLY REFUSE TO GROW UP

THE BOY IN SCHOOL
THAT I LOVED MOST
DIED LAST YEAR OF AN OVERDOSE
BUT I DON'T MIND IT

AGNUS (cont'd)

I HAVE SET AS MY GOAL
TO GET SO STRONG
I COULD PEEL ONIONS
ALL DAY LONG
AND NEVER SHED ONE TEAR

I WANT MY SKIN TO THICKEN
SO IF I AM PANIC-STRICKEN
WHEN THE GREENHOUSE EFFECT IS HERE
I WON'T EVEN FEEL THE FEAR
AS I WATCH ME
AND THE HUMAN RACE DISAPPEAR

AGNUS (cont'd)

THE TRICK IS NOT TO MIND IT
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR PEACE
THIS IS WHERE YOU WILL FIND IT

GORDON LIDDY SHOWED ME THE WAY
I HAVE BEEN ON
HEAVY METAPHOR MAINTENANCE
ALL DAY

LITTLE ZIP # 2

FOR LIFE

MATCH #2

IS LIKE THAT CANDLE FLAME
AND WE ARE LIKE GORDON LIDDY'S HAND
HOVERING OVER IT

(Lights candle, holding hand over flame)

MUSIC SWELL

AND IT HURTS LIKE HELL, BUT
THE TRICK IS NOT TO MIND IT.

I MIND IT! I MIND IT!

(Lights fade to black as music swells.)

(END OF ACT I)