

lost/found

a play
by jason pizzarello

inspired by true events

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characters

karen and eugene

late 30s/early 40s.

they wear sweater vests.

sue and dan

late 30s/early 40s.

they wear leather vests.

place

a living room in
a house in
pensacola, florida.

time

evening.

“A cat has absolute emotional honesty: human beings, for one reason or another, may hide their feelings, but a cat does not.”

—Ernest Hemingway

*karen is straightening up their living room.
eugene bursts in from the swinging kitchen door.*

eugene

what is that?

karen

what is what?

eugene

i saw lights.

karen freezes.

karen

what kind of lights?

eugene

car lights.

karen

from where?

eugene

from outside.

karen

really?

eugene

yes!

karen

when?

eugene

just now.

karen

is it them?

eugene

i don't know.

karen

look out the window.

eugene

i am.

karen

what do you see?

eugene

a car.

karen

is it them?

eugene

i don't know.

karen

who else would it be?

eugene

i don't know.

karen

it must be them.

eugene

i'm going to look closer.

karen

don't be obvious.

eugene

don't worry.

eugene hides behind the window curtains.

karen

i'm worried.

eugene

it's them!

karen

how do you know?

eugene

i don't. really. but it must be. who else would it be.

karen

okay. okay. okay. okay.

karen runs to a door off the living room. shouting to the upstairs:

karen

kids! kids! are you there?

...are you okay?

...is your sister okay?

...do you have your pizza?

...are you eating it?

(to eugene) they're eating their pizza.

eugene

okay. that's good.

karen

(shouting up)

okay. that's good.

eugene

they're coming up the walkway.

karen

get out from behind the curtain.

eugene

i will.

what's dahlia doing?

karen

(shouting up)

what's dahlia doing?

...okay. that's good.

karen

(to eugene)

she's sleeping.

eugene

okay. that's good.

karen

(shouting up)

...close your door.

...close your door now. and don't come down.

eugene

(to karen, still peeking around the curtain)

they're almost here.

karen

(shouting up)

go into your bedroom and don't come down! don't let her out of your room. close your fucking door and don't come down!

a door slamming from off.

eugene

don't wake dahlia.

karen

(shouting up)

don't wake dahlia!

karen closes the door to the upstairs.

(to eugene)

i thought you said they were walking up the walkway.

eugene

they were.

karen

they should be at the door by now.

eugene

they are.

the front doorbell rings.

eugene and karen freeze.

eugene

they rang the doorbell.

karen

(whispering)

fine. we expected that.

eugene

because they're at the door.

karen

come out from behind the curtain.

eugene

fine.

he does.

pause.

eugene

should we answer the door or wait for a second bell?

karen

i don't know, what do people normally do?

eugene

sometimes they wait. sometimes they answer it, i think. without waiting for a second bell.

karen

which is best?

eugene

i don't know.

the doorbell rings again.

karen

they rang it again.

eugene

so that's that.

karen

what's what?

eugene

we go to the door. it's our only choice left.

karen

right.

they go to the door and open it.

karen

hello you must be the jacobs.

sue

i'm sue.

karen

karen.

dan

dan.

he sticks out his hand to eugene.

eugene

eugene. gene. eugene.

karen

someone's having identity issues. haha come on in.

they do. but not far.

karen

so are you?

sue

are we?

karen

the jacobs? you must be. i'm just kidding. can eugene take your coats?

sue

actually it's pretty warm out—

karen

is it?

sue

—so we didn't wear coats.

eugene

no coats.

dan

hope that's alright.

eugene

it's fine. less for me to do.

dan

that's never a bad thing.

eugene

no it's not. although i like keeping busy haha.

dan

sure.

karen

how was the drive?

sue

we came off the highway on route forty-seven, like you said. followed the signs. it was easy enough, right dan.

dan

quick enough.

karen

easy and quick enough. sounds like our wedding night.

sue

ha. that's funny.

eugene

that was a dirty thing to say, karen.

karen

was it? we don't have people over much.

dan

oh no?

sue

i thought it was funny. didn't you think it was funny, dan?

dan

sure. it was funny.

karen

okay good. sometimes you don't know how people are going to take things and you just don't know what you can say or what kind of humor people are going to have so sometimes you just have to go out on a limb.

eugene

karen.

sue

go out on a limb. i like the way you put that.

karen

you do? thanks.

sue

it's true. never can tell about people.

dan

nope.

*they stand there, still very near the front door, and look around, smiling politely.
dan holds out a case of bud.*

dan

here ya go. i don't know how cold they are.

eugene

you don't?

dan

doesn't matter to me, though. beer is beer, personally.

eugene takes the case and looks at the case.

eugene

bud-veizer.

dan

don't drink it?

eugene

i, uh, don't know it.

dan

don't know it?

eugene

i'm afraid not.

dan

don't know budweiser?

eugene

(over-pronouncing, to himself) bud-veizer.

karen

we aren't really beer people.

eugene

is it german?

dan

it's american. budweiser. bud.

eugene

huh.

dan

really?

karen

we're not beer people. so we wouldn't know the specialty kinds.

dan

there's nothing special about it. it's just beer.

sue

it's a famous beer.

dan

it's a common beer. that's why i like it.

sue

dan doesn't have sophisticated tastes.

dan

i just don't see the reason to fancy-up a good solid product that's perfectly fine as is.
in general i don't go for overcomplicating simple things.

sue

dan's a simple kinda guy.

dan

it's true.

eugene

that's interesting. *how* simple?

dan

i—

karen

(*to eugene*) oh!

we could put the beer in the refrigerator.

eugene

we could.

dan?

dan

sure.

eugene

to get it a little colder. should we?

dan

like i said, i don't care, personally.

karen

let's put it in the refrigerator.

eugene

i could do it.

karen

good. eugene, you do that.

eugene

okay, i'll do that.

eugene leaves for kitchen.

he stops at the door and turns back.

thank you, dan.

for the bud-weiser.

he disappears through the door.

sue
there's also this.

sue holds out a bowl covered with plastic wrap.

karen
what is this?

sue
it's tapioca.

karen
well well well. tapioca.

sue
do y'all go for that sorta thing?

karen
i, uh, do not know.
eugene! do we go for the tapioca?

eugene
what?

karen
tap-i-oca!

eugene returns. he's holding several beers.

eugene
what?

karen
they brought us tapioca.
do we go for it?

eugene
go for it?

karen
do we like it?

eugene
well. i don't know. i was putting the beer in the fridge.

karen

oh that's right. the beer.

sue

it's like rice pudding.

karen

okay, rice pudding. sure, rice pudding. tapioca. it's so nice to have people over because when you meet new people you always learn new things. from them. it's almost inevitable because everyone has such different interests. hidden interests. you wouldn't know that just walking along the street. everyone seems the same but then when you have new people over, there's always something you learn that you didn't know. what is that phrase? you don't know what you don't know? or you don't know what you don't know what you don't know.

eugene

honey.

karen

like tapioca.

eugene

karen.

karen

yes? is that right? did i mess it up?

eugene

you're doing the thing.

karen

i am? oh gosh i am.

sue

what's that?

karen

talking too much. rambling. i do that. without noticing.

sue

i didn't notice.

karen

that's nice of you to say. but i'm sure you did. i don't notice, that's for sure. but eugene just says "karen, you're doing the thing." and then i know.

eugene

i'm going to finish putting the beer in the fridge.

eugene is gone.

karen

oh! yes. the beer.

sue

and the tapioca.

karen

oh yes! gosh i don't feel like i know where i am. it's like i go to another planet or something. mars or pluto. or, no, pluto's the cold one. don't want to go there haha. i'm a beach person. anyway, i'm back.

sue

i just thought, since you invited us for a drink, i'd bring it for dessert. if we wanted to have something.

karen

what?

sue

the tapioca.

karen

oh yes.

dan

it's good. she makes it a lot.

karen

mmm...

sue

you should put it in the fridge though. if you have room.

karen

we have plenty of room.

sue

i mean with the beer and all.

karen

the beer! that's right. but i think it should be fine i'm trying to think about what else is in there. we had leftovers but we ate them, no, it should be fine. i'll put the tapioca in the fridge. i'll be right back.

karen exits to the kitchen.

dan and sue are making a face at each other when karen pops her head back in.

karen

actually i'm going to put it in tupperware and i'm going to wash your bowl and give it back to you.

sue

that's alright.

karen

no that's what we should do. this way you'll have your bowl and i won't forget to give it to you later when you leave. trust me i'll forget. and then what i'll do is i'll put the tupperware in the fridge.

sue

great.

karen

great. make yourselves at home. have a seat. dan, you must be tired.

she disappears through the doors.

dan

what was that?

sue

i know. who doesn't know what tapioca is?

dan

why would i be tired?

sue

what?

dan

she said i must be tired.

sue

aren't you?

dan
yeah.

sue
so...

dan
but why single me out? why wouldn't *you* be tired?

sue
i *am* tired.

dan
but why wouldn't she say: sue, you must be tired.

sue
who knows. they're weird people.

dan
and who's never heard of bud?

sue
they're weird people. weird. weird. weird.

dan
asking, is it german?

sue
it's not like we'd hang out with them by choice.
we wouldn't be here if it wasn't for dahlia.

dan and sue look around the living room.

sue
i don't like this house either.

dan
it looks nice but it's not. poor foundation. see the crack up there?

sue
uh huh.

dan
sloppy. looks nice at first. but you can't paint over cracks. you gotta fix em.

sue

how do you fix em?

dan

in this case, it's not worth it.

sue

i'd tear the whole house down. that's what i'd do.
ugly heap.

karen comes out from the kitchen.

sue

beautiful home.

karen

oh thank you. we designed it ourselves.

dan

the house or the decorations?

karen

both actually.

dan

together?

karen

do you mean at the same time?

dan

did you design everything together?

karen

eugene did the interior.

sue

the interior design?

karen

yes.

sue

very nice.

karen

thank you. well you can thank him. haha. eugene!

dan

and you designed the—?

karen

well i designed the house. except for the interiors.

dan

so you're an architect?

karen

me? gosh no. it's just a hobby. i know there aren't many architectural hobbyists out there but i used to make baskets, weave baskets, and i started making designs for them, see, and then designs for other things. like the bird house, out back, you can't see it from here, it's dark out now anyway, but i designed it and then i wanted to do something bigger, not just for birds but big enough for people. and animals. people and animals in harmony.

sue

dan's a builder.

dan

used to be.

sue

still are. still are.

karen

what do you do now? that you're not building. are you gainfully employed, haha.

dan

i, uh—

sue

you still have the tapioca.

karen looks down and sees it in her arms.

karen

ah! so i do. so i do.

sue

you were going to put it in the fridge.

karen

so i was. i'm telling you: pluto.

sue

that's alright.

dan

is eugene—?

karen

i'll be right back.

karen runs back to the kitchen.

dan

what the hell was that?

sue

what're they doing in there?

dan

i don't trust them.

sue

either do i.

dan

let's just get dahlia and get out of here.

sue

what if.

dan

what.

sue

what if we can't do that.

dan

why can't we?

sue

what if they won't let us.

dan

what do you mean?

sue

i'm all for bein friendly. but we don't know these people. and what we *do* know does not give me the warm and fuzzies. these people are... they're different than us.

dan

they're different all right.

sue

you don't trust em.

dan

no.

sue

and neither do i. so if they give us problems.
i just think we should be prepared for that, is all.
did you bring anything?

dan

bring anything?

sue

bring anything?

dan

of course.

sue

what did you bring?

dan

i always have something. never know.

sue

you have it with you?

dan

it's in the car.

sue

why is it in the car?

dan

i'm not going to bring it in the house.

sue

why the hell not? what good is it in the car?

dan

i'm not going to bring it in the house.

sue

but here is where you might need it.

dan

if i need it, i'll go get it.

sue

what if you need it right away?

dan

if i need it right away, i'll go get it right away.

sue

there's something off about these people.

dan

i know.

sue

i don't like them.

dan

either do i.

sue

i'd feel better if you had something.

dan

i do.

sue

in the car.

dan

yes.

sue

where it's of absolutely no use.

dan

do you want me to go get it?

sue

not now.

dan

why not, it's right out there.

sue

it'll seem suspicious.

dan

it won't seem like anything. i could go for a smoke.

sue

you don't smoke.

dan

they don't know that.

sue

what if they look out the window. like before.

dan

yeah why was he looking out the window like that.

sue

and they'll see you smoking.

dan

so what.

sue

without a cigarette.

dan

i'll get a cigarette.

sue

you don't have cigarettes.

dan

i might.

sue

why *might* you?

dan

i think eddie left his pack in there.

sue

you said you weren't having any.

dan

i'm not. they're eddies.

sue

why didn't you give em back to him?

dan

i tried.

sue

how do you *try*? you either give em back or you don't.

dan

i called and told him. hey eddie you left your cigarettes in my car. just wanted you to know in case you were looking for them. and he said, actually just leave em in there so next time i'm in your car, i have a pack. i already have some and it'll be a nice surprise. and i'm gonna see him on tuesday, so he can take em then. this is really not important.

sue

you just said you weren't smoking anymore. that's all.

dan

i'm not. do you want me to do the phone call again?

sue

that was a stupid phone call.

dan

yes it was.
we're not gonna shoot anybody, sue.

sue

why not?

dan

you brought tapioca.

sue
so.

dan
you don't bring tapioca to people you're gonna shoot.

sue
maybe that's my trademark.

dan
you think i like comin here? you think i like buyin a case of beer for some commie fruit cake? let's just play our cards, get our dahlia, and walk outta here in one piece.

sue
fine.

dan
sue.

sue
i said fine.
fine.

dan
in the meantime i'm gonna drink my damn beers.

sue
but if we're—

karen reenters with sue's empty bowl.

karen
i'm holding your bowl.

sue
hostage?

karen
i didn't want to forget i was holding it, so i said as soon as you go into the living room just say that you're holding it, this way there's no chance you can forget.

sue
okay. thank you.

dan

you forget you're holding things?

karen

yes. well. forget things in general.

sue

like the bowl.

karen

ah! i did it again. here.

karen gives sue the bowl.

karen

i cleaned it.

sue

thank you.

karen

twice.

sue

oh.

karen

not that it was dirty—

sue

was it dirty?

karen

—i just clean things twice sometimes. out of habit. and cleanliness.

sue

that's fine.

eugene returns.

eugene

success!

the beers are in the refrigerator.

dan

great.

eugene

i had to move the coleslaw.

karen

you did?

eugene

there's so much of it.

karen

we like coleslaw.

eugene

i know.

karen

i wasn't telling you.

eugene

oh.

karen

i was telling our guests.

sue

oh. coleslaw. yes, we like coleslaw. don't we, dan.

dan

coleslaw's good. most things with mayo are good.

sue

see that? nothing to be ashamed about.

karen

oh our recipe doesn't call for mayo. it's not, uh, well, you know, the healthiest choice.

sue

well if it doesn't have mayo it's not really coleslaw, now is it? it's something else entirely. something inferior. wouldn't you say, dan?

dan

i say... how about those beers.

eugene

i fit them all. just took some maneuvering.

dan

that's good. wanna crack a couple open?

eugene

crack them? open?

dan

to drink, gene.

eugene

should we?

dan

i'm a little parched.

karen

get the beers, eugene.

eugene

i just fit them in the refrigerator.

karen

yes but they're meant to be cracked open for drinking.

eugene

i moved the coleslaw.

sue

one for me too.

eugene

oh.

sue

karen? you gonna throw one back?

karen

oh. i thought we were cracking them open. do you throw them back as well? i'm not a drinker of beers.

dan

have one, karen.

karen

well. okay. yes. i will have a beer as well.

eugene
you will?

karen
yes. why not. something different. we don't usually have guests, people over and have beers. not that we don't want to but we have kids and it's just, the days just seem so busy and by the end you're just tired, too tired to entertain.

eugene
karen.

karen
am i doing it?

eugene
so. everyone. okay, everyone will have a beer. and i will, too.

dan
terrific.

eugene
so one two three four. four beers from the fridge. that i didn't need to fit in. i probably could have even left the coleslaw.

karen
eugene. get the beers.

eugene
okay. i will get them. okay.

karen
thank you dear.

eugene exits to the kitchen.

sue
how many children do you have?

karen
children?

sue
don't you?

karen

yes, yes children. two. they're upstairs eating pizza. not the fancy kind.
dan, you'll appreciate that.

dan

what?

karen

we don't go for that fancy pizza.

dan

pizza?

karen

the kids. they don't go for it either.

sue

'cause you like things simple, i think she means. is that what you mean, karen?

karen

yes, that's right. isn't that what he said?

sue

more or less.

you have a good memory.

karen

for certain things i suppose.

dan

i don't usually eat pizza.

karen

we don't either. but the kids like it. do your kids like it? i mean if you have kids, that is.

sue

we do but they're older.

karen

never too old for pizza. unless you're very very old then you don't eat much of anything.
that's how my mother was. before she died. she liked jello right up until her death. that's it.
red jello. red jello, is that cherry? i don't know. how old are your kids?

dan

kid. just one kid. from a previous uh. my previous.

sue

she's older. she's moved out. not that she ever lived with us. with dan or me. she lived with her mother, that bitch. anyway, she's moved out altogether. from every house. so. no more pizza nights.

karen

they like the thin crust. i don't know why. it's too thin.

sue

how old are your children?

karen

seven and nine.

sue

that's nice.

karen

they're not twins even though they're so close in age they act like it. just like twins.

dan

seven and nine?

karen

close enough to be twins.

sue

that's not true exactly.

karen

no that'd be a long labor, haha.

dan

what other pets do you have?

karen

we don't have any other pets.

sue

neither do we.

karen

i don't count the squirrels.

dan

neither do we.

karen

even though they act like pets i mean. 'cause we feed them and they're so friendly and they live in our yard, so they're just like pets. but we don't count them.

dan

you shouldn't.

eugene renters with four beers.

eugene

coming right up.

karen

thank you dear.

dan

what's coming right up.

eugene

the beers.

dan

the beers are here.

eugene

that's what i mean.

karen

you were supposed to say 'coming right up' before you left.

eugene

was i?

karen

that's how it works.

eugene

does it?

karen

usually.

sue

otherwise it doesn't make any sense.

eugene

oh. i'm sorry. we don't usually have people over.

dan

yeah.

karen

the twins, they just love the dahlia.

dan

i thought they weren't twins?

karen

oh that's just what we call them.

eugene

because they're so close. thunder and lightning.

karen

they just love her to death.

dan

what does that mean?

karen

just that they love her immensely. it's not literal. don't worry.

dan

no. thunder and lightning.

karen

that's what we call them. the twins. that's also what we call them. the children. that's also what we call them.

eugene

molly and travis.

karen

those are their names.

dan

why?

karen

my mother. eugene's father.

eugene

they're family names.

sue

he means, why thunder and lightning.

eugene

oh. those are not family names.

karen

'cause they always stay close together. and you can always hear travis first. before molly strikes. she's the one you have to watch out for. they're good kids though.

eugene

travis struggles. with his weight. a bit. that's why you can hear him.

karen

did you struggle as a child, dan?

dan

in general?

karen

with your weight?

dan

no.

eugene

i've always been underweight. a feather weight, is that what they say?

dan

you box?

eugene

box? the sport, boxing?

dan

yeah. boxing.

eugene

no. why?

dan

you said you were a feather weight. i used to box.

eugene

yes, light as a feather but with the sting of a bee.

dan

i used to box all the time. when i was a kid.

karen

yes, well we aren't kids, any more, are we?

sue

so you've only struggled recently, karen?

karen

me?

sue

with your weight?

she scratches her head.

the lights shift. karen turns out.

she scratches behind her ear.

karen

it wasn't my intention to run away.

really it wasn't.

i'm very loyal.

that damn speedway was just so loud.

it was deafening. literally deafening.

and i couldn't take it anymore so i ran off.

my intention was to come back.

to just leave for a little bit, a little way always and then come back.

but i just wandered too far

and it got dark and i don't mind the dark, i don't, cat's have incredible night vision.

but it was dark and i couldn't hear the speedway anymore,

and that's how i knew a considerable amount of time had passed.

so i,

but by the time i came back everyone was long gone.

i was on my own.

and it was up to me to get home.

as soon as the light came up i set out to find the park where we live.

the one with the trees and the stream?

anyway i thought it was a lot closer that it is, apparently.

i don't know how many days passed but i was getting torn to shreds.

there are some nasty bushes out there, let me tell you.

plus i gotta in a coupla fights. had to scratch a bitch.
there are roaming gangs out there.
not every cat is as loyal as me.
these cats are ridiculous two-timers.
sleeping in one house, eating chow, then leaving and doing it with some other house.
these owners have no clue!
actually our species isn't known for its loyalty.
we'd prefer to be left alone most of the time.
we're not dogs.
never said we were.
i'm glad we don't do stupid tricks. it's demeaning.
have a little bit of respect for yourself.
i know i do.

*karen snaps back to the others.
lights back to normal.*

karen

why don't we try the tapioca?

dan lifts his beer can to eugene.

dan

what do you say?

eugene

i say it's tapioca time.

dan

what do you say to another beer.

eugene

i say it's another beer time too. is this how it goes? nights of drinking and excess.

sue chugs the rest of hers.

sue

sure why not.

eugene

no reason.

sue

me too.

eugene

me three said the flea.

karen

can you carry the beers and tapioca?

eugene

at the same time?

karen

i'll get bowls. separate bowls for everyone. that's better than eating it all out of the tupperware bowl don't you think?

eugene

i don't know. either way, i suppose would be fine. as long as everyone had their own spoon or fork. i don't know anything about tapioca. sue, you're the tapioca expert, how are we suppose to serve it. we don't want to offend you. karen, just ask sue.

karen

sue, how do you—

sue

—bowls. separate bowls.

karen

okay. see there is a way, eugene. it's not either or.

eugene

okay. glad we asked.

karen

me too.

dan

me three said the flea.

eugene laughs uncontrollably.

karen laughs politely, but doesn't really know why.

dan and sue watch them.

dan crushes his can.

eugene

the beers!

he runs out.

karen follows him into the kitchen.

sue

i wanna shoot 'em let me shoot 'em. if you're too pussy to shoot 'em i'll shoot 'em.

dan

fine.

sue

fine?

dan

sure.

sue

give me the keys.

dan

when i'm done with my beers.

sue

i'll buy you more beers.

dan

you're gonna shoot 'em and then what?

sue

we get dahlia.

dan

and where's she.

sue

somewhere. sleeping.

dan

upstairs. right? so they say. with the kids? thunder and lightning eating pizza. you gonna shoot them too? with their fat mouths full of thin crust? we'll get dahlia. we're leaving here with our dahlia. okay?

sue

i just don't see it happening. they want to keep her. i can tell. they took care of her and they see how special she is and they want to keep her. we don't even know if she's okay. she's probably terrified with these weirdos. not knowing where we are or if she's ever gonna be home again. we haven't seen her and if they harmed a hair on her i will personally shoot the twins in front of them i don't care what the fuck they're eating.

dan

she looked fine in the pictures.

sue

that doesn't mean shit.

dan

didn't she. she looked fine, she looked good in the pictures, right?

sue

sure.

dan

okay, she did. and she's fine. you have to calm down.

sue

don't tell me to calm down.

dan

i will tell you to calm down if you need to calm down and right now you need to calm down.

sue

i am calmed down. i would be very calmed down if wasn't for these, these. you left the door open. of course she's gonna. she's gonna sneak out.

dan

we're not getting into this again. it was an accident.

sue

i shoulda been watching her.

dan

all day?

sue

yes! we shoulda at least looked for her longer.

dan

c'mon. it nobody's fault.

dan holds sue.

sue

they want to keep her. they're think they're better than us. pensacola assholes.

dan

they don't think that. they just want to make sure she's going to a good home cause they care about her. that's a good thing. yeah, they're weird. so we're all weird. they don't have people over. they don't know beers, okay, so what. they took care of dahlia. and we should at least, let's just at least eat our tapioca and drink my beer.

sue laughs. dan kisses her.

dan

okay?

sue nods.

dan

and if things get out of control—

eugene and karen reenter from the kitchen. they are holding the four beers and the bowls of tapioca. karen directly stands behind eugene and makes locomotive noises.

karen

chuga chuga, chuga chuga.

eugene laughs while he makes the movements.

eugene

woot whoot.

they act as a train pulling into the station.

eugene

all aboard!

karen

no eugene.

eugene

oops no i mean — last stop!

they stop.

karen

thank you, sir.

eugene

you're very welcome.

eugene passes out the beers.

karen

that's just a little thing.

eugene

we do.

dan

ah.

karen passes out the tapioca bowls.

they drink and eat.

eugene

well cheers.

karen

too late.

eugene

too late?

karen

we're already drinking.

dan

how do you like the tapioca?

eugene

i like it. it's very... tropical.

karen

yes. exotic. it reminds me of these parrots from a trip we took to costa rica. remember that eugene? with the time share thingy and we were on that beach near what must have been a rainforrest, a real rainforest and there were hundreds of parrots. hundreds. and they were speaking their own language. an alien parrot language.

dan

glad you like it. right, sue.

sue

that's right.

eugene

and it's a good beer, too.

dan

thanks.

karen

maybe you can recommend it to some of your buddies, down at the swap. maybe they'll like it too.

eugene

sure. they might.

karen

see that, sue? old dogs can learn new tricks.

sue

uh huh.

eugene

where'd you say you were?

sue

when?

eugene

vacationing?

sue

did we?

dan

vacation?

sue

did we say?

eugene

didn't you? say.

sue

i don't think so.

eugene

huh.

karen

i thought they said, too.

sue

don't know when we would have.

karen

maybe on the phone then? when i was giving you directions.

sue

i don't think so.

dan

daytona beach.

eugene

daytona beach.

karen

daytona beach.

eugene

is that on the water?

karen

of course it's on the water.

eugene

the water? the atlantic? or is it one of those inland beaches?

sue

it's on the atlantic.

eugene

we don't know the beaches on that side.

karen

and that's a vacationing spot. for you?

sue

a vacation of sorts. for us. not for everyone.

dan

there was an rv rally.

karen

oh that sounds like fun. what is that?

sue

it is fun.

karen

oh. we should go to one. do you need an rv?

sue

yes.

eugene

we don't have one.

karen

we could get one. when's the next rv rally. if it's nearby we could just walk, that's if it's real close. we don't really walk much. or we could drive our car but not if everyone else has an rv. i wonder how much one is? you can't be at a rv rally without an rv, everyone would just be looking at you. it'd be like being naked! like that dream where you're naked but with rv's. how frightening.

eugene

karen. we're not getting an rv.

karen

you're right.

eugene

we don't even know what an rv is. or a rally.

karen

i know what an rv is.

sue

an rv rally is a gathering. of rv's. around an event.

dan

datona has the speedway.

karen

how about that. a speedway. i bet they're fast.

dan

they are.

eugene

a gathering of rv's. a rallying. i get it now.

karen

so you have an rv. for the rallies?

eugene

where do you keep an rv? is there an rv garage of sorts or do you have an extra long driveway at home.

sue

the rv is our home.

dan

it's a mobile home.

karen

i see.

eugene

that's what we need!

karen

why is that what we need? we have a home.

eugene

but it's such a pain to pack on trips.

karen

you'd still have to pack. i imagine. wouldn't you?

sue

not if we take our mobile home.

eugene

now that's convenience. right, dan?

dan

uh huh.

eugene

i didn't notice it when you pulled in.

sue

we took our car. to get here.

eugene

you have a car as well.

dan

we do. it's in your driveway.

eugene

okay. interesting. so you have a car and a mobile home. isn't that redundant?

dan

no.

eugene

it's not.

dan

no.

eugene

but it must be unusual.

dan

not really.

karen

so it's normal.

sue

yes.

karen

you aren't the privileged few haha.

sue

no ha ha.

eugene

normal for people like—

dan

us?

eugene

—for people who have mobile homes. what i mean is, isn't that the benefit to not need a car. the whole thing. a matter of convenience.

dan

we take the car when we don't want to drive our home. when it's a matter of *inconvenience*.

karen

a lifestyle on the move!

sue

not really. we live in gainesville.

eugene

you don't live on the road?

sue

we live in gainesville.

dan

in a community.

eugene

i get it. that's where you park your house.

dan

our mobile home.

karen

and you park it.

eugene

so it's like a parking lot community.

karen

in gainesville.

sue

more or less.

dan

except it's not a parking lot.

eugene

you have a lot.

dan

yes.

eugene
where you park.

dan
yes.

eugene
but it's not a parking lot.

dan
no.

eugene
i think i understand.

dan
do you?

eugene
i don't know.

sue
it's a nice community.

karen
i'm sure it is.

sue
we like it. don't we, dan.

dan
yes.

sue
it's a safe little village. and it's private. and it's not filled with a bunch of assholes. so that's refreshing.

dan
that's what we like about it.

the lights shift again and

dan turns out.

he stretches.

dan

i was born inside a window air-conditioner unit.
in a house not far from here.
it was springtime when i was born and that's where i lived.
until it got warm out.
until it too hot and the air conditioner needed to be turned on.

my ma didn't know any better.
you see she was wild.
that's where she lived.
in the wild.
and that's *how* she lived.
and when you live in the wild you do what you have to do to make it.
to stay alive.
to see the sun again.
you don't get petted.
you don't purr.
or snuggle in a bed.
you don't eat catfood out of catfood cans.
you catch your food.
you rely on your instincts.
you drink sewer water.
and bathe in puddles.
you sleep under woodpiles, in old cars, and dumpsters.
you give birth...
you give birth...
in air conditioner units.
cause it's dry.
and clean.
cause it's what you got.
you are born a survivor.

i am a survivor.
and that's how i ended up here.
with these assholes.

he turns back to the group.

karen

we like it here in this house. it's a good environment. it's stable.

dan

it's not that stable.

eugene

it's very stable!

karen

(to dan)

why would you say that?

dan

it's got foundation problems.

sue

dan's a builder.

karen

used to be a builder. i thought you said.

dan

you got cracks.

sue

see?

dan

it's not safe.

sue

you might want to consider moving.

karen

some people like staying in one place.

sue

what's that supposed to mean?

karen

some people not all people. some people being us and not all people being you.

dan

or you could just knock the whole place down. that's what i would do.

eugene

if you were us?

dan

if i had an amateur architect design it.

karen

what did you say you do now?

sue
we didn't.

karen
oh good. one less thing i forgot!

eugene
but you're out of the building business.

dan
yes.

sue
we're python hunters.

eugene
you hunt them?

dan
we hunt pythons.

karen
snakes?

sue
no.

karen
i thought they were.

sue
they're not snakes. they're burmese pythons.

eugene
what's the difference?

dan
if you'd met one, you'd know.

eugene
i don't have any plans for that. do you, karen?

karen
heavens no.

eugene

where do you hunt them, in the wild?

dan

no, in zoos.

eugene

really?

sue

yes, in the wild.

eugene

why do you hunt them?

sue

because they're invasive.

dan

and dangerous.

sue

the state pays for it. like deer in new jersey. or goose in the airports.

dan

or like bison in montana. you shoot those monsters on sight, now. just like the good ol days.

karen

how frightening.

dan

you can't let these animals run wild. you have to manage them. you don't realize how close we are to losing total control. as a society.

karen

i never thought about it like that. i never thought about it at all.

sue

so we do our part.

eugene

how long have you been hunting pythons?

dan

i don't know. for awhile.

sue
ever since our son.

karen
since your son?

sue
ever since our son.

karen
since your son was born?

dan
our son isn't with us anymore.

karen
oh dear. he's missing?

sue
no.

karen
did you lose him to the state?

sue
did we lose him? why would we lose our son to the state?

karen
i don't know. one of those silly social services. they're always enforcing the most ridiculous laws.

sue
social services?

karen
i don't know how those programs work.

eugene
she really doesn't. do you?

karen
i have no idea.

sue
it wasn't any social services. our son is dead.

karen

oh. oh no.

eugene

i'm very sorry. that he is. that you. that that happened to you.

karen

i thought you. i'm so sorry. but wait. i thought the older one moved. i'm sorry i thought you said you had an older daughter from dan's previous that moved out cause she's older.

sue

we did.

dan

we don't usually talk about this. about him.

sue

no we don't.

karen

i'm sorry i don't mean to pry.

dan

i have an older daughter from my previous. and we also had a son.

karen

okay, i see.

eugene

so your son died and you started hunting pythons.

dan

that's right.

eugene

i guess that's a normal reaction. you must have been devastated.

dan

we were angry. we're still angry.

sue

dan's still.

eugene

angry. yes.

karen

that's terrible. yes. i guess that makes sense. you have to take your anger out, so better the pythons than i don't know, something that's not a snake. not a python.

dan

a python took our son.

eugene

took him?

karen

maybe this is rude or ignorant i don't know much about snakes or pythons but where did he take him?

sue

a python swallowed our son.

*dan quickly finishes his beer.
so karen quickly finishes her tapioca.*

sue

you really like the tapioca huh.

karen

(mouth full) mmm.

mmmmmmm.mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm...mmmm. mmmm.

sue

good.

eugene

and you're killing them then? the pythons.

dan

we are.

eugene

how do you kill a python, is there a right way and a wrong way?

karen

do you have to wrap yourself around them and squeeze until they're suffocated?

sue

no that's what they do to their prey.

karen

and you don't have to do it back to them, to kill them?

dan

no you chop off their heads.

eugene

like karate?

dan

with a machete.

eugene

oh.

karen

ohhh.

eugene

that will do it then.

karen

oh dear.

dan

not right away actually. that's one of the problems with the machete method. their brains stay alive for a while. inside their head.

karen

even though they're dead?

sue

even though they appear dead.

eugene

i wonder what they must be thinking. their brains.

karen

who knows.

dan

they're thinking oh shit, where'd my body go.

eugene

maybe they're thinking, what now? what's next?

sue

they're probably not thinking anything.

eugene

how invasive are they?

dan

how invasive do you think they are if our son was killed?

eugene

i don't know. was he inside your mobile home or did he run away?

light shift.

eugene turns out.

eugene

there was a bluejay that i had been tracking from a field. and then through the woods and finally here. to the backyard of this house.

i don't consider myself a hunter anymore but

i had become obsessed with killing this bluejay because i despise bluejays.

they're mean.

for no reason.

and i'm creepin through the grass, doin my thing, ready to pounce, ready to end the hunt. when this fat monster of a boy picks me up.

of course the jay flies off and

i swear to god i was about to lose my shit on this tubby kid. i mean i don't know if he wanted to eat me or what. and i'm about to scratch his goddamn eyes out

when i smell tuna fish.

hey

we all have our weaknesses. tuna is mine. i love it, i just—nothing else matters when there's tuna. and this kid had a can of it.

he sets me down and i start eating and at that point i don't care if it's a trap or a ploy or anything.

so this fat boy watches me eat and calls me kitty and then some other people from the house come later and give me other food and milk and pet me and bring me inside where it's warm.

and i'm not gonna lie, it was pretty nice.

it was real nice actually. and i'm thinking, i could get used to this. for sure.

i could tell they wanted me to stay too.

but as nice as it was. you know what?

it wasn't home.

not that my home is great or nothing.

actually it's kinda shitty. it's not always warm, the food is dry, and there are maybe like two decent napping spots.

i slept in the microwave once. i'm not kidding.

but hey, i was born in an air conditioner unit, who am i to complain?
it's alright though. i like mommy and the big guy.
they don't have much, but they're mine.
and the mobile home is my castle on wheels.

i miss my shitty family.
i want to go home.

eugene
i mean very invasive. they must be very invasive.

dan
we want to see dahlia now.

karen
oh. she's upstairs. she's sleeping.

dan
that's alright.

sue
we can wake her up.

eugene
we'd hate to do that.

dan
she's slept long enough.

sue
we want to see her. we need to see her.

eugene
why?

sue
cause she's ours!

karen
well.

dan
well what?

karen
she's been here so long.

dan

so what?

sue

we've had her for seven years, you've had her for three weeks!

eugene

she's very happy here.

sue

(to dan)

see i told you. i told you.

karen

even happier even.

eugene

than where she was.

karen

she's happiest in a home. a stable home. permanent and non-moving. who can live a life like that? i certainly couldn't and i'm a person!

eugene

yes you are.

karen

she loves the children. the twins. thunder and lightning. and they love her right back. and we love her and we love the children and everybody's very happy here.

sue

she's not yours!

dan

okay. sue.

sue

they don't understand.

dan

i think they do understand. don't you, gene?

eugene

we do understand. we just.

sue
she's ours.

karen
yes sue i understand that you think that.

eugene
we just don't feel the same way.

dan
let's have another round and talk about this sensibly.

eugene
yes. like. sensible people. adults, even.

karen
like sensible adult cat-lovers.

sue
cat lovers.

karen
yes.

sue
if you love cats why don't you have one.

karen
we do.

sue
no you don't.

karen
we do. she's sleeping. her name is dahlia.

sue
that's her name—

karen
yes it is.

sue
—that we gave her.

karen

that you gave her. before you lost her.

sue

we didn't lose her. she ran away.

karen

i'd say that's worse. only unhappy pets runaway.

sue

she wasn't unhappy.

dan.

karen

eugene.

dan

she wasn't unhappy.

eugene

we don't know her level of unhappiness.

dan

she was a happy cat with us.

eugene

how do you know.

dan

'cause she purrs.

eugene

cats purr.

dan

when they're happy. that's how we know.

sue

she was very happy.

karen

that's not what she told me.

a moment for this to sink in.

eugene

i'll get that round. of beers. from the fridge. they should be cold now. how does that sound, dan?

dan

get 'em no matter what temperature they are.

eugene

i'll be back after i get them.

eugene leaves to the kitchen.

karen

this tapioca is making me nauseous. what did you put in it?

sue

tapioca.

karen

it must be that, then.

dan

you talk to dahlia?

karen

dahlia talks to me.

sue

what does she say?

karen

that she was unhappy in her trailer home.

sue

is that right.

karen

yes that she hated moving around so much that she desired a place to settle down that she was feeling very restless and now she is so happy to have a home, a real place she can call home with a loving, complete family. also she's mad you had her declawed because it proved to be a real disadvantage to her when she was in the wild.

sue

dan.

dan

i don't know what to say. she talks to cats.

karen

i talk to dahlia and dahlia talks to me.

sue

dan.

eugene returns with the beers, a little out of breath.

eugene

i'm back with the beers. yes.

eugene passes them out.

sue

i'm not thirsty.

eugene

one for return.

dan

give it here.

dan takes a second beer from eugene, opens them both and starts drinking.

eugene

good man.

eugene gives a beer to karen and she sets it down on the table.

karen

i feel sick.

eugene

what's wrong.

karen

it was the tapioca. she says there's only tapioca in it so it must be that.

eugene

ah well i don't know the recipe. i've never made it.

sue

dan.

dan is drinking.

sue
dan.

dan finishes his beer and belches.

dan
excuse me.

sue
dan.

dan finally looks at sue.

dan
and excuse me for a cigarette.

karen
what's that? do you need one?

dan
i don't need one. i have my own.

karen
oh i see. well we don't have a supply of the cigarettes anyway, do we eugene.

eugene
don't believe we do. never thought to pick some up.

sue
he's a smoker. dan.

karen
huh.

sue
so he needs to have a cigarette when he needs to. can't stop him.

eugene
going for a smoke?

dan
that's right.

eugene

i'd join you but i don't smoke so it'd just be me watching you smoke.

karen

you could go for some fresh air.

eugene

but it won't be fresh air if he's smoking.

karen

that's true.

dan

that's alright.

sue

dan likes to smoke alone. don't you dan.

dan

that's right.

dan takes his remaining beer and heads out the front door.

karen

how long has he been a smoker?

sue

years.

karen

have you ever heard of second-hand smoke?

sue

yes.

karen

so you know how bad it is.

sue

yes that's why he goes outside.

karen

i only heard about it recently.

eugene

i read an article.

karen

yes eugene sent me an article and i read it and i couldn't believe how bad it is. second-hand smoke is almost as bad as first-hand smoke but there's also something called third-hand smoke. did you know that?

sue

it sounds made up.

karen

it's not. it's real.

eugene

it's from the article.

karen

right. third-hand smoke is almost as bad as second-hand smoke which is almost as bad as first-hand smoke.

sue

so what is third-hand smoke?

karen

i didn't know either, that's alright. it's just so bad. third-hand smoke is smoke that lingers around a person so even if they're not smoking in your presence, like they're smoking outside for instance, like dan, the smoke stays with them and the other people are exposed to the harmful smoke. the smaller the lungs the harder it is for them to process all of the chemicals and poisons. so it's very harmful. especially harmful to children especially, or pets, especially smaller pets. it creates a very toxic environment.

eugene

it was an interesting article. so informative. did we print it out?

karen

no the printer's out of ink.

eugene

it's always running out.

karen

i know.

eugene

too bad.

karen

i would have liked to give you a copy. and dan.

sue

like i said, that's why he goes outside.

karen

i don't think you understand about third-hand smoke.

sue

i think i do.

karen

i hate our printer.

eugene

we can get a new one.

karen

we don't need a new printer. we need new ink.

eugene

but you hate the printer.

karen

there's nothing wrong with it.

eugene

then why do you hate it?

karen

because it uses so much ink.

eugene

that's why we should get a new one.

karen

gene, they all use a lot of ink. that's just how printers are.

eugene

okay.

karen

if you don't believe me go buy another printer, one that you think uses less ink and we'll line them up side by side and print from both and we'll see which one uses more.

eugene
fine.

karen
but we don't need to because they both will use the same amount. sue do you have a printer?

sue
no.

karen
that's too bad. they're really useful.

sue
we try not to get sucked in to all the technology. by the time you buy something, it's outdated. we'd rather save our money. for things we really need. or for things that really matter.

karen
like what?

sue
like each other.

karen
we're just lucky i guess.

sue
for what?

karen
that our purse strings don't have to be pulled so tightly.

eugene
we're blessed in that way.

karen
truly blessed.

dan enters and stands near the front door.

sue
how was your smoke dan? was it what you needed?

karen

(waving in front of her face)

whoo-ee. i can smell it from here. what a chimney!

eugene

i'd say! how many chimneys did you smoke, dan!

dan

it's time to go now.

sue

i agree.

eugene

well that's a shame. but let me get your coats.

dan

we don't have coats.

eugene

that makes sense. i guess it's kind of warm out, eh?

dan

let me tell you uppity weirdos what's going to happen now.
you're going to go upstairs get our cat and we're gonna leave.
got it?

karen

you're not taking her with you.

dan

oh no?

sue

we'll get her ourselves.

sue marches to the door upstairs.

karen rushes to block her way.

karen

that's not going to happen.
that's not ever ever going to happen.

dan

i had a feeling you were going to say that.

from behind his back, dan reveals a machete.

sue

what is that?

karen

it's a large knife.

dan

it's a machete.

sue

i can see that.

karen

why do you have that large knife?

sue

it's a machete.

eugene

we can see that.

dan

why do you *think* i have a machete, karen.

karen

i don't know. i thought you were going for a cigarette and you come back with a sword.

eugene

it's a machete.

karen

shut up, eugene.

sue

why do you have a machete, dan?

dan

it's all i had.

sue

it's all you had?

dan

it's all i had.

sue
what about—?

dan
couldn't find it.

sue
you lost it?

dan
i don't know. it's not there.

karen
what's not there? your cigarettes?

dan
i don't smoke.

karen
i'm confused. you went for a cigarette but you don't smoke.

dan
nope.

karen
so you lied. so you weren't going for a cigarette you were going for something else but that something else wasn't there so you came back with a machete knife.

dan
it's not a machete knife. it's just a machete.

eugene
machetes are for killing snakes.

dan
that's right.

sue
pythons.

karen
why do you have a machete sword in here? there aren't any snakes in here.

dan
i disagree.

karen

i don't understand.

dan

what part don't you understand?

karen

what were you looking for that wasn't there?

eugene

i think i know.

karen

you do? do you know, eugene?

eugene

is it this?

eugene pulls out a revolver.

sue

dan, is that yours?

dan

yes.

sue

i thought it was in the car.

dan

it was.

sue

you stole that gun out of our car.

eugene

yes i did.

dan

you shouldn't have done that.

karen

why did you bring a gun?

dan

i always bring protection.

sue

'cause you never know who you're dealing with.

eugene

no you don't.

karen

but now we do.

sue

we sure do.

eugene

you were going to shoot us.

dan

no. we weren't.

we just came to get our cat. that's all.

karen

we were going to let you take her too.

sue

you were going to *let us*.

karen

yes.

sue

we don't need you to let us do anything.

dan

why'd you even respond to our posting. that's what i don't get. why'd you send those pictures. if you. why'd you have us over. why'd you waste my beer.

karen

we were gonna let you take dahlia. we didn't want to but we had intentions to but we didn't want to because she became part of our family, but we had intentions to. but then we met you and got to know you—

sue

—you don't know us

karen

we know enough.

and decided we can't let this precious kitty go back to them. that wouldn't be right. not to these people, with their cheap beer and poisonous puddings. these nomads. these gypsies who let snakes eat their children. what kind of life is that. no no no no. she's best with us. is meant to be with us.

eugene

that's what we decided in the kitchen.

dan

when'd you steal the gun?

eugene

how long do you really think it takes to put beer in the fridge, dan.

dan

not as long as it took you. but you're kinda funny.

eugene

we're funny.

dan

yeah you're funny. you're both funny. i bet your kids are funny too.

eugene

you leave the twins out of this.

dan

so you broke into my car.

eugene

right after i moved the coleslaw. and i didn't have to break into anything. your side door doesn't even lock. i wasn't going to. i kinda liked you at first with your beer and your gut and your whole ex-wife ex-hippie thing. i used to have a motorcycle, you know. i used to be cool. i used to have a dog. a *dog*.

but like rover, karen says i'm too friendly. and maybe she's right because she sent me to your car and well

karen

you two were talking so loud, we were right in the kitchen you know.

sue

you conniving, sniveling, scheming. i should rip your condescending cunt out.

eugene

i'd like you both to leave now please.

sue

we'll leave with dahlia.

karen

no you'll leave without her.

dan

we're gonna leave with our cat. with my pistol. with our bowl. and with our beers.

eugene

i have your pistol.

dan

i see that.

eugene

why should i give it to you.

dan

cause it's mine.

karen

you already have the bowl.

eugene

and we already drank all the beers.
but that's all your gettin.

dan takes a step closer to eugene with his machete.

dan

you're gonna give me my pistol.

karen

no he's not. gene, no you're not.

eugene

i know i'm not.

dan

sue you get dahlia.

sue opens the door leading upstairs.

dan

now hand it over.

eugene lifts the revolver.

eugene

stop you!

sue stops.

eugene

i don't have to do what you say. i'm not the one who brought a knife to a gun fight.

dan

it's not a knife. it's a machete.

karen

who cares what it is. shoot em, eugene. shoot him in his big dumb redneck heart.

sue

dan i'm gonna get dahlia.

dan

yeah you get her.

karen

you will not get dahlia.

sue

yes i will.

eugene

i've switched off the safety. i am prepared to shoot.

karen

do it.

dan

yeah do it.

eugene

you are a home-invader.

sue

dan.

dan
sue.

karen
gene.

eugene
karen.

dan
gene.

eugene
sue.

sue
dan.

eugene
karen.

karen
eugene.

dan
sue.

dan rushes eugene with his machete.

eugene topples over and the gun goes off.

the shot goes through the ceiling.

a cat screams from upstairs.

dan and sue and karen and eugene look at the bullet hole.

a kid cries from upstairs.

karen
thunder!

eugene
lightning!

dan

dahlia!

sue is frozen.

karen and eugene and dan run upstairs.

light shift.

sue turns out.

sue

after these new people nursed me back to health they kept saying they saved me.
they insuated that i would have died without them.
which i don't think is true.
i'm a survivor, remember.

these people said that even though they quote unquote saved me,
i had used one of my lives.
that's how i knew they were assholes.
they kept laughing and saying you only have eight lives left, kitty.
and i was like what are you talking about, eight lives? it's supposed to be nine lives. and
then i realized that they were saying i used up a life. so i was like nine minus one is eight,
i get it now, but it's not that funny. not as funny as they thought it was.
besides i've been nearly killed plenty of times more than this.
actually i can name like six other times i shoulda died. the fire, the poison, the coyote, the
car, the boiler, the fall from the roof of that building. my fall from grace.
so yeah, six. plus one is eight.
so really i still have another life after this.
they're so ignorant. if they only knew the lives i've lived.

the first time i heard about having nine lives i was like what? really? i mean i couldn't
believe it. like it wasn't even part of my universe to have more than one life.
my whole perspective just shifted, y'know?
if i knew i only had one life maybe i would have been more careful with it.
but maybe not because screw it, right, this is our only one. so max it out.
leave your house.
wander off the property.
that's right you heard me. wander. off. the. property.
leave the neighborhood.
wander into the unknown.
explore.
get lost.
maybe you'll find your way home.
maybe you won't.
maybe you'll end up in a place you never expected to call home.

maybe you'll meet a bunch of assholes.
maybe you'll learn what it feels like to be found.
to be really found.
maybe you won't.
maybe.
maybe isn't for indoor cats.
indoor cats are bullshit.
they're everything that's wrong with cats.
being an indoor cat is the opposite of being alive.
what do indoor cats need nine lives for?
indoor cats are dead already.
nine lives.
nine lives is a crock, man.
this is all we got.
this is all we'll ever get.
and when it's gone that's it.
one chance.
one life.
make it count.

*dan comes back downstairs with the limp cat in his arms.
dan is crying.*

the lights shift back as

*dan gives her to sue.
sue cradles her.*

eugene comes downstairs. he's got blood on his sweater.

eugene
you shot thunder.

dan
you shot thunder.

eugene
thunder is shot.

dan
is he alright?

eugene
the bullet. it just nicked him in his fat. he barely noticed until he saw the blood. they were more concerned about dahlia. is she?

dan shakes his head.

eugene

no?

dan shakes his head.

eugene

karen is upstairs.

dan

okay.

eugene

what should we do.

what should we do.

what do you normally do when this happens?

dan

this doesn't normally happen.

eugene

then what do we do?

karen bursts through the door from upstairs.

karen

call nine one one.

eugene

call them?

karen

call nine one one, eugene.

eugene

and tell them what?

karen

just call them.

eugene

and not say anything?

karen

just call nine one one, eugene!

karen runs back upstairs.

eugene

i'll call them.

eugene picks up the phone. he's shaking.

eugene

what's gonna happen when i call?

dan

they're gonna send an ambulance.

eugene

no i mean after that. what will happen.

dan

you shot your son. what do you think is gonna happen.

sue

and you shot my baby.

dan

you shot your son.
don't let him die.

eugene

it was just a nick.

dan

and you killed our cat.

eugene

your cat?

sue

yes our cat. my baby.

eugene

fine. i changed my mind. you can have your cat back.

sue

dan. shoot him.

eugene

you charged at me with a machete. you were gonna chop my head off. i was acting in self-defense. that's what i'm going to tell them. you're maniac python killers.

dan

you stole my gun and shot at me.

eugene

i didn't shoot at you. it just went off. i don't shoot guns. i've never shot a gun. what do i know about guns. do i look like the kind of person that shoots guns.

karen

(from upstairs)

what did they say?

eugene

(shouting back)

i didn't call them yet.

karen bursts back downstairs.

karen

what do you mean you haven't called them? thunder is bleeding.

eugene

we're trying to figure out what to do.

karen

i already told you what to do. i already told you what to do, eugene. i told you to call nine one one because you shot our son.

eugene

it was an accidental discharge.

dan

and you killed our cat.

eugene

how bad is it?

sue

she's dead!

eugene

no how bad is the nick, karen. why aren't you with thunder.

karen

lightning is putting pressure on it. luckily he has a lot of fat.

eugene

he charged at me with a machete. you saw him.

karen

i saw him.

eugene

i was acting in self-defense.

karen

our son is still shot.

dan

our cat is still dead.

eugene

it wasn't my fault.

dan

you stole my gun.

eugene

you went to your car to get your gun to come back and shoot us.

dan

i was going to have a cigarette.

sue and karen and eugene

you don't even smoke.

dan

that's not entirely true.

sue

i knew it!

dan

so i sneak a cigarette or two every now and then. he shot our cat. let's focus.

eugene

yeah but first-hand second-hand third-hand smoke was killing all of you anyway.

karen

eugene call nine one one.

eugene

stop telling me what to do! i'll call.

karen

i'm not leaving until you do.

*sue starts crying and petting dahlia.
dan holds sue.*

eugene

go back upstairs! go into the room with the twins and close the door.

karen

i'm not—

eugene

—close the fucking door and don't come down!

*karen stares at eugene.
eugene stares back.*

*karen slowly retreats upstairs.
a moment and then the sound of a door.*

eugene picks up the phone and dials.

eugene

nine. one. one.

...it's ringing.

dan and sue hold dahlia.

eugene

is this nine one one? yes? i'm calling for an emergency situation.

...the emergency is that a gun went off during a machete and gun fight in my home and the bullet went through the ceiling accidentally and it nicked the fat on one of the twins.

...yes, just nicked the fat.

...i don't know which fat part.

...no one else was hurt.

dan

no that's not true. dahlia was also shot.

sue

my baby's dead!

eugene

no, the baby is dead.

...that's right.

...where is she now?

...the baby is...

...she's with her parents.

a strained meow from dahlia.

sue and dan and and eugene look at her.

black out.

the end.