

ACT THREE -Scene 1 in the study. At rise; the siblings. They share a bottle of whiskey ..

IVY/IKE. The doctor really thinks she needs to go to an institution? Does she need to go?

BARBARA/BEN. Dr. Burke says she may be. "Slightly brain damaged." I told him he was "slightly incompetent" He claims not to know she was taking so much. That's why he's eager to put her away, he's afraid of a malpractice suit. Irresponsible shithead —

IVY/IKE. Why did he write so many prescriptions?

BARBARA/BEN. It's not just him; she's got a doctor in every port —

IVY/IKE. Here's how she does it: She sees a doctor for back spasms and gets a prescription Then next week she pulls a muscle, more pills, then the dosage is wrong, more pills ,and over, until she makes one too many trips and he says I'm not pre-scribing anymore and says, "I'll go to the AMA and have your ass in court for over-prescribing me."

BARBARA/BEN. You knew this was going on again? (IVY/IKE shrugs.) Different tactic today, just at her wounded best, this wilting hothouse flower, which made me look like Bette Davis. I tried to goad her into it, you know, "C'mon, Mom, give him your speech about the Greatest Generation.

IVY/IKE. It wouldn't have done any good, Dr. Burke's part of the same generation.

BARBARA/BEN. "Greatest Generation," my ass. What makes them so great anyway? Because they were poor and hated Nazis? Who doesn't fucking hate Nazis?! You remember when we checked her in the psych ward, that stunt she pulled?

IVY/IKE. Which time? .

BARBARA/BEN. Big speech, she's getting clean, this sacrifice she's making for her family, and -

IVY/IKE. Right, she's let her family down but now she wants to prove she's a good family member.

BARBARA/BEN. She smuggled Darvocet into the psych ward ... in her vagina. There's your Greatest Generation for you. She made this speech to us while she was clenching a bottle of pills in her cooch, for God's sake.

IVY/IKE. God, I've never heard that story. Did you just say "cooch"?

BARBARA/BEN. The phrase "Mom's pussy" seems a bit gauche.

IVY/IKE. You're a little more comfortable with "cooch," are you?

BARBARA/BEN. What word should I use to describe our mother's vagina?

IVY/IKE. I don't know, but —

BARBARA/BEN. "Mom's beaver"? "Mother's box"?

IVY/IKE. Oh God —(pause) BARBARA/BEN! (Laughter, finally dying out.) I'm sorry about you and Bill.

BARBARA/BEN. If I had my way, you never would've known.

IVY/IKE. Do you think it's a temporary thing, or...?

BARBARA/BEN. Who knows? We've been married a long time.

IVY/IKE. That's one thing about Mom and Dad. You have to tip your cap to anyone who can stay married that long.

BARBARA/BEN. He killed himself.

IVY/IKE. Yeah, but still.

BARBARA/BEN. Is there something going on between you and Little Charles?

IVY/IKE. I don't know that I'm comfortable talking about that.

BARBARA/BEN. Because you know he is our first cousin.

IVY/IKE. Give me a break.

BARBARA/BEN. You might have told me.

IVY/IKE. You weren't going to tell me about you and Bill.

BARBARA/BEN. That's different.

IVY/IKE. Why? Because it's you, and not me?

BARBARA/BEN. No, because divorce is an embarrassing public admission of defeat.

IVY/IKE. I just don't feel that connection very keenly.

IVY/IKE. No, and that's my point. I can't perpetuate these myths of family or sisterhood anymore. We're all just people, connected by genetics, a random selection of cells. Nothing more.

BARBARA/BEN. When did you get so cynical?

IVY/IKE. That's funny coming from you.

BARBARA/BEN. Bitter, sure, but "random selection of cells"?

IVY/IKE. Maybe my cynicism flowered with the realization that the obligation of caring for our parents was mine alone.

BARBARA/BEN. Don't give me that. I participated in every goddamn —

IVY/IKE. Until you had enough and got out.

BARBARA/BEN. I had my own family to think about.

IVY/IKE. That's a cheap excuse. As if by having a child you were alleviated of all responsibility.

BARBARA/BEN. So now I'm being criticized for procreating.

IVY/IKE. I'm not criticizing. Do what you want. You did.

BARBARA/BEN. And if you didn't, that's not my fault.

IVY/IKE. That's right, so don't lay this sister thing on me now, all right? I don't buy it. I haven't bought it for a long time. When I leave here and leave for good I won't feel any more guilty than you did.

IVY/IKE. Who says I don't?

BARBARA/BEN. Are you leaving here?

IVY/IKE. Charles and I are going to New York.

BARBARA/BEN. What the hell are you going to do in New York?

IVY/IKE. We have plans.

BARBARA/BEN. Like what?

IVY/IKE. None of your business.

BARBARA/BEN. You can't just go to New York.

IVY/IKE. This isn't whimsy. This isn't fleeting. This is unlike anything I've ever felt, for anybody. Charles and I have something rare, and extraordinary, something very few people ever have.

BARBARA/BEN. Which is what?

IVY/IKE. Understanding.

BARBARA/BEN. What about Mom?

IVY/IKE. What about her?

BARBARA/BEN. You feel comfortable leaving Mom here?

IVY/IKE. Do you? (No response.) You think she was difficult while Dad was alive? Think about what it's going to be like now. You can't imagine the cumulative effect, after a month, after a year, after many years. You can't imagine and even if you could, you can only imagine for yourself, for yourself, the favorite.

BARBARA/BEN. Christ, Mom pulled that on me the other day about Dad, that I was his favorite.

IVY/IKE. Well ... that's not true. You weren't his favorite. I was. You're Mom's favorite.

BARBARA/BEN. What?

IVY/IKE. You don't think so? Good God, Barb, I've lived my life by that standard.

BARBARA/BEN. She said Dad was heartbroken when we moved to Boulder —

IVY/IKE. Mom was heartbroken, not Dad. She was convinced you left to get away from her.

BARBARA/BEN. If you were Dad's favorite, you must take his suicide kind of personally.

IVY/IKE. Daddy killed himself for his own reasons.

BARBARA/BEN. And what were those reasons?

IVY/IKE. I won't presume.

BARBARA/BEN. Aren't you angry with him?

IVY/IKE. No. He's accountable to no one but himself. If he's better off now, and I don't doubt he is, who are we to begrudge him that?

BARBARA/BEN. His children.

IVY/IKE. Yeah —

BARBARA/BEN. And I'm fucking furious. The selfish son-of-a-bitch, his silence, his melancholy ... he could have helped us, included us, talked to us.

IVY/IKE. You might not have liked what you heard. What if the truth of the matter is that Beverly Weston never liked you? That he never liked us, never had any special feeling of any kind for his children?

BARBARA/BEN. You know that's not true.

IVY/IKE. Do I? How? Do you?

Barbara/BEN. You said you were his favorite.

IVY/IKE. Only because he recognized a kindred spirit.

BARBARA/BEN. Mm, sorry, but your little theory, your "accidental genetics," that doesn't fly, not with me. I believe he had a responsibility to something greater than himself; we all do.

IVY/IKE. Good luck with that.

BARBARA/BEN. When are you and Little Charles leaving?

IVY/IKE. Weeks, if not days. And his name is Charles.

BARBARA/BEN. Are you telling Mom?

IVY/IKE. I'm trying to figure that out.

BARBARA/BEN. What about your job, your house?

IVY/IKE. I've been taking care of myself a lot longer than you've been in charge. You want to know what I'm going to do about Mom? I'm leaving. You want to stay and deal with her, that's your decision; if you don't like it, that's your prerogative. But nobody gets to point a finger at me. Nobody.