

SCARS

A Play in Two Acts

Written by:

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SCARS showcased at the Complex Theatre in Los Angeles, Sept, 2011.

The Original Cast

Lisa Howard	as Angela/Luna
John Kapelos	as Sonny
Adam Briggs	as Silkworm



SCARS

Two damaged souls emotionally collide one evening in a strip club.

Luna is a dancer who seeks respect and validation through the power she has over men.

Sonny, her customer, is overwhelmed by an unnatural need for intimacy in a world where it doesn't exist.

They are diametric opposites that somehow dovetail into each other's needs and afflictions. Each possesses a festering wound that the other picks at.

Eventually both their secrets will erupt to the surface and in a world of sexual illusion and make believe a secret shared could be deadly.

SCARS is an erotic psychological thriller that explores the deepest sexual divides between men and women.

Settings and Times

PREQUEL: Front of House -- Evening
ACT I Scene I: Strip Club ----- Evening
Scene II: Strip Club ----- Later that Evening
ACT II: Parking Lot ----- Later that Evening

Characters

LUNA/ANGIE: A beautiful woman in her late 30's. She is smart, seductive, and in many ways fearless. She can seamlessly slide from being a seasoned stripper to being a loving and protective single mother.

SONNY: Late 30's and physically forgettable. His ability to blend into his environment is a skill he has honed over many years of pursuit.

SILK WORM: The D.J. of the club with a deep dreamy dulcet voice. He is only heard and never seen.

Production Notes:

The "sexual attainment" of the exotic dancer is an illusion; a myth no different than Helena or Medusa. It is a mental mirage that flits about the horizon of man's primal craving. She sways and gyrates, naked before him. . . just for him, but always just out of reach.

The myth overwhelms the 'naked' truth. Even smart men turn stupid in a strip club and the strong and powerful submit (eventually) to the real authority in the room.

Using a stage play, itself an illusion, to peek behind the curtain of the make-believe world of the strip club, it is vital to gut and transform the conventional theatre experience and create an environment where only the strip club remains; where the line between the theatre patron and the club patron is blurred if not completely obliterated.

By creating this "faux" reality, there is a demystification of this world and hidden truths are more easily revealed.

The Front-of-House (Lobby)

The Front-of-House lighting is subdued in muted shades of red and blue. Next to the ticket booth is the club name, 'LUCKY LIPS', and the logo; an imprint of a pair of lips. Both are in hot pink.

The remainder of the lobby is swallowed up by neon lights, tacky cutouts of silhouettes of nude dancers and sensual day glow posters.

The Sound Scape

The "sound scape" is the typical "bump and grind" music that the dancers use on stage; mostly R & B, Hard Rock, some Techno.

The music can be heard in the lobby 30 minutes before curtain.

After every four songs SILK WORM, the club D.J., cajoles patrons into expressing financial appreciation to the dancer on stage. With a deep dreamy dulcet voice SILK WORM can talk a 'C' note out of your wallet without you even reaching for it.

He introduces dancers to the stage with names like; Raven, Poison, Passion, Phoenix, Scarlet and Angel. Though SILK WORM'S intros are sexually suggestive they are never vulgar.

Occasionally SILK WORM also pitches the other amenities available at 'Lucky Lips' such as lap dances, table dances, wall dances, and the specialty of the club, the VIP bed dances.

The Stage

Down Stage Right there is a large vanity counter discolored by age and scarred by years of careless smokers. Several bulbs around the make-up mirror are burned out.

Running down the center of the stage is the dancer's runway. It rises above the stage to about table height. Stools are positioned around it. The runway is trimmed with mini red footlights. There is a dance pole at either end. The upstage pole is partly obscured behind a scrim.

Scattered about the stage are several tables and chairs. The table that is located Up Stage Left is the one used by SONNY.

Audience Seating

The seating in the theater blends seamlessly into the seating of the dance club. The theater audience can, if they wish, sit at the club tables and the "gyno stools" that circle the stage. From here they can tip the dancer if they want. There is no clear distinction between the imaginary strip club audience and the actual theater audience.

THE PREQUEL

The Actress Arrives

Twenty minutes before show time, the actress arrives. She enters through the lobby. Her name is ANGIE. Her stage name is LUNA.

She wears bulky sweats, t-shirt, floppies and a baseball cap. No make-up.

A child's baby doll peeks out from a large duffel bag slung over her shoulder. The doll is swaddled in a red silk scarf.

ANGIE opens the doors to the theatre and makes her way to the stage. The doors now remain open and the theatre audience can enter as they wish.

ANGIE steps onto the stage and into the dressing room. She places the duffel bag on the vanity and pulls from it a case of vodka coolers. She opens one and takes a long swig.

There is something strangely voyeuristic about watching ANGIE go about her private business.

She removes her dance costumes from the duffel bag and hangs them on the vanity mirror. One has a rip in it. (Shit). Her make-up kit, wig, curling iron, a carton of baby whips, a bottle of Vitamin C and a bottle of body splash are placed on the vanity.

She props the baby doll up next to the mirror.

ANGIE drapes the red scarf over her shoulders then takes another swig from the cooler.

She looks at her reflection in the mirror; mesmerized, lost in thought she gently strokes the scarf.

She begins to undress.

The sweat pants come off revealing a support bandage wrapped around her right knee. She removes the bandage and massages her leg. (It already hurts.)

ANGIE changes into her stage costume.

She sits before the mirror, psychs herself up, takes another shot from the cooler and begins her transformation into LUNA.

ANGIE starts with the wig and make-up.

After completing her make-up she steps into her 6" heels and takes the red scarf and ties it around her waist.

She stands before the mirror. The transition is complete. ANGIE has become LUNA.

She takes out her cell phone and makes a call.

ANGIE/LUNA

Hi! It's me. How is she?

(She chuckles at something said)

She does have a mind of her own. Can you put her on?

(A beat then. . .)

Hey sweetie, did you have your bath? Brush your teeth? Good girl. Say goodnight to Kelly and scoot off to bed. I'll stay on the phone to tuck you in.

(While waiting, ANGIE/LUNA flips through her CD caddy, picking her music for the night.)

ANGIE/LUNA

Are you in bed? Is Dolly with you? Good. Now what do you want to hear tonight? Horsies? You mean 'All the Pretty Horses?' Alright but first, we have to pull your covers up real tight and tuck them under your chin. . . There. Now close your eyes. Are they closed? Okay.

(ANGIE/LUNA begins to sing a lullaby.)

ANGIE/LUNA

Hush-a-bye don't you cry,
Go to sleep-y, little baby.
When you wake you shall have
all the pretty little horses.
Blacks and bays, dapple grays,
Coach and six white horses.
Hush-a-bye don't you cry,
Go to sleep-y, little baby.

Here's a big love kiss for you. Goodnight Poppet.

(ANGIE/LUNA kisses the phone and puts it in her clutch purse. Then as if she were creeping quietly out of her daughter's bedroom she quietly exits the dressing room.)

*The Stage goes **BLACK**.*

End of Prequel

ACT I

Scene I

*(Out of the **BLACKNESS** comes the voice of the **SILK WORM**.)*

SILK WORM

In case any of you gentleman didn't notice it's a full moon tonight? . . . Second one this month. They call that a blue moon and a blue moon can make you a little crazy, a little freaky, a little loony...

(SILK WORM lets out a deep and slightly crazy laugh. He loves word play.)

(THE MUSIC begins.)

SILK WORM

Well it's always a little crazy, freaky and whole lot loony at Lucky Lips when this lady is in the house.

(The SPOT LIGHT COMES UP and reveals the silhouette of LUNA behind a SCRIM. She is suspended in contra pose at the top of the UP STAGE dance pole.)

SILK WORM

Yeah, you know who I mean. Here she is gentleman. Look up... Look way up at our very own full moon... The vivacious. . ., salacious. . ., bodacious. . . Luuunnnnaaaaa!

(With acrobatic brilliance LUNA maneuvers her way around the pole slowly descending until she glides into the splits on the dance floor.)

(LUNA rises slowly and as she dances her way downstage, she steps out of silhouette and into the light. Her movements are suggestive, her smile playful and her eyes seductive. She stares at each man around the stage just long enough for him to feel that he is the "chosen one".)

(She breaks up her floor show by occasionally going to the Down Stage pole; grinding and swinging her way up and down its entire length.)

(Then... the clothes begin to fall away... In the end all she has on is the red sash which she now holds in her hands. She drapes the sash around a patron (the rich looking one) and pulls him close: teasing him then letting him go.)

(THE SONG ENDS.)

SILK WORM

Alright gentleman put your hands up where I can see them and let's hear it for the illuminating Luuunnaaaa!..

(LUNA gathers up her clothes and tip money from the stage.)

SILK WORM

I've heard tell five minutes alone with this celestial beauty can change a man's life. Why not take a private dance with her in our VIP room and find out for yourself?

(LUNA steps down off the dance floor and exits backstage.)

(FADE TO BLACKNESS)

SILK WORM

Next up gentleman, all the way from Barcelona, Spain is the dark haired, dark eyed angel of sin. Bad! Bad! Bad has never looked so good. Be prepared to fall under the spell of Diablo's favorite daughter, the Enchantress Raaaavvvveennnn!

LIGHTS UP on SONNY, sitting in a booth at the back of the club. He has a red scarf draped around his neck and is writing in a battered note book.)

(MUSIC: Something hot and Spanish, perhaps "Roxanne")

(NOTE: *MUSIC plays in the B.G. throughout the ENTIRE ACT.)*

(CROSS FADE to the dressing room. LUNA, is seated rubbing her right knee. (Damn, it's already starting to hurt).)

(She opens a second vodka cooler, takes a deep swig then uses a baby wipe to towel away her body sweat. She shimmies into her 'cruising' dress and ties the red sash around her waist.)

(LUNA sprays on body splash, takes another drink of her cooler, grabs her clutch purse and leaves.)

(CROSS FADE to the floor area of the club. LUNA enters from backstage and proceeds to work the room. She sashays from table to table smiling and flirting with the customers. She notices SONNY at the back of the room.)

(He has folded five twenty dollar bills into little tents and placed them in a line on the table. The bait has been set and LUNA approaches.)

(She gestures at her red sash and Sonny's red scarf.)

LUNA

Look at that. We're color coordinated.

SONNY

Yes, I guess we are.

LUNA

So Mr. Lonely, what are you doing way back here?

SONNY

I prefer it back here.

LUNA

Really? I think you just hurt my feelings.

SONNY

I doubt that. . . I don't do well in a crowd.

LUNA

Demophobia?

SONNY

What?

LUNA

Demophobia. Fear of crowds.

SONNY

That's not it.

LUNA

I see; just anti-social.

SONNY

I'm just not as showy as the boys in the gyno seats.

(LUNA slides into the chair next to him and gestures at the little money tents on the table.)

LUNA

Is this your way of being less showy?

SONNY

Demophobia? You must be pretty smart to pull that out of thin air.

LUNA

I'm addicted to Scrabble. . . and I am very smart.

SONNY

Smart, beautiful and a great pole dancer.

(SONNY flicks one of bills toward LUNA. She picks it up and places it in her cleavage.)

LUNA

Thank you.

SONNY

No, I mean it. There are a lot of girls that can wrap their legs around a pole, but they have no idea what to do next.

LUNA

It's not as easy as it looks.

SONNY

Did you go to 'pole dance' school? Is there such a thing?

LUNA

(Laughs)

No. I'm self taught. I learned in a playground near my home

SONNY

I'll bet you were a hit with all the little boys in the neighborhood.

LUNA

They just thought I was some old lady goofing around.

SONNY

Well if there is a 'pole dance' school you would have graduated Summa Cum Laude.

LUNA

More likely, 'Some Cum A Lot', but thank you. That's very sweet of you.

SONNY

(Laughing)

Smart and witty!

LUNA

And a cracker jack pole dancer.

(Sonny raises a glass to toast.)

SONNY

To a smart, sexy cracker jack pole dancer. What more could any sane man ask for.

(SONNY takes a swig of his beer)

SONNY

So they call you Luna.

LUNA

That they do.

SONNY

What's your real name?

LUNA

Miss Cum Alot.

SONNY

Again with the wit. Seriously, what's your real name?

LUNA

Why? Do you think we're related? Luna will have to do for now hon. What's your name?

SONNY

Alex, but everyone calls me Sonny.

LUNA

So Sonny, You should move up front for my next set?

SONNY

Then I'd be just another face in the crowd.

LUNA

Not at all sweet heart. . .

(A beat)

You know what I think?

SONNY

Tell me.

LUNA

I think sitting back here is not about having your space.

SONNY

No? What do you think it is?

LUNA

If you moved up front you would have to share me with all the other little boys and you don't like to share do you?

SONNY

Not with them. From back here they look and sound like a bunch of grunting pigs.

LUNA

That's a bit harsh isn't it?

SONNY

You're the pearl amongst the swine, you tell me.

LUNA

It's a strip club. Even smart men can turn stupid in a place like this.

SONNY

That's what I mean. Why would I want to be a part of that?

(A Beat)

I'm curious about something. When you're on stage and you're dancing in front of these bozos what keeps you sane? What are you thinking?

(SONNY prepares to flick another twenty across the table.)

SONNY

The truth!

LUNA

The truth! That's a real turn on for you isn't it?

SONNY

It's a simple question, not a particularly probing or personal question.

LUNA

You want to know what I'm thinking while I'm gyrating my naked pussy in front of a bunch of strangers. And that's not personal?

(SONNY flicks the twenty across the table and prepares to flick the next one.)

SONNY

It's not like I was asking you for your real name.

LUNA

(Considers for a moment)

I think about what's going to give out first, my mood or my knees.

SONNY

What else?

LUNA

I check out the crowd; see if there are any regulars. I can always count on them for a few privates.

SONNY

And if you don't see any regulars?

LUNA

Then I look for the money; Armani suits, Testoni shoes. Wrist watches are the best tell.

SONNY

Big money equals big spender?

LUNA

No, but they are the easiest to spot. The real money is in the 'Dream Lovers', but they're not as easy to spot.

SONNY

What's a 'Dream Lover'?

LUNA

They're the ones that confuse lust for love. They usually go home with their pockets empty.

*(SONNY flicks LUNA another
twenty.)*

SONNY

You mean love addicts?

LUNA

That works.

SONNY

Do you think I'm a love addict?

LUNA

No. I don't have a name for someone like you

SONNY

Which is?

LUNA

Someone who looks for intimacy in a place where it doesn't exist.

SONNY

And you say that because I want to know more about you?

LUNA

No, it's because of 'what' you want to know about me.

SONNY

Do you ever feel guilty?

LUNA

About what?

SONNY

The Love Addicts; bleeding them dry?

LUNA

I used to, but not so much anymore. They may walk out of here busted, but they usually walk out with their dream still intact.

SONNY

Every guy sitting up front thinks this will be their lucky night. But you and I both know they're all going home alone just like they did the last time and the time before that.

LUNA

Hope springs eternal and who knows, maybe one of them will be my Mr. Right.

SONNY

You're like a lottery ticket that never pays off. They're all fuckin' Morons!

LUNA:

And you get to judge them because you're different?

SONNY

That's right!

LUNA

And how's that?

SONNY

(Leans in to make the point)

I don't expect to get fucked.

LUNA

And you think everyone else does?

*(LUNA looks about the audience in
fake distress.)*

God, that's an exhausting thought. . . I've seen you in here before.

SONNY

Occasionally.

LUNA

Usually on Mondays or Tuesdays when it's slow.

SONNY

I prefer it when it's quiet. It feels more comfortable.

LUNA

More intimate?

SONNY

That's right.

*(LUNA slides a little closer to
SONNY)*

LUNA

Take a private with me. It doesn't get any more intimate than that.

SONNY

That depends on what you mean by intimate.

LUNA

What does it mean to you?

SONNY

Secrets shared.

LUNA

You're not likely to find that here.

SONNY

Perhaps, perhaps not... but I get some satisfaction out of the challenge.

Do you ever get excited when you give a lap dance?

(SONNY prepares to flick the last twenty across the table.)

LUNA

Boy, you just keep on keeping on don't you?

SONNY

Do you?

LUNA

Sometimes, but I would never act on it.

(SONNY flicks the last twenty to LUNA.)

SONNY

So it's not just the money. You actually do get horny.

(LUNA picks up the bill and studies it.)

LUNA

No, I do it for the money.

(She puts the bill in her purse)

It's the money that makes me horny.

SONNY

It can't be just the money. There is something that comes over you. You move like silk and water. You move like you're in heat.

LUNA

I am. I'm never more aware of my body than when I am on the dance floor. I can sculpt the air around me with my body and my sex. No limits, no restrictions.

SONNY

How young were you when you started?

LUNA

Stripping?

SONNY

Dancing.

LUNA

Since I could walk. Ballet and modern jazz mostly. My mother had big plans for me.

SONNY

Were you with a company?

LUNA

Several, but choreography kills the dancer in me. I need to feel and move to the music on my own terms. I guess I'm like you Sonny, I don't play well with others.

SONNY

I can understand that.

LUNA

I thought you might. I did a few rock videos and commercials, but that's about as much as I could stand.

(For a moment Luna becomes lost in her memories.)

God, that seems like a life time ago.

(SONNY sees an opening, the beginning perhaps of secret shared.)

SONNY

A life time?

(LUNA returns to the present. She smiles at SONNY then. . .)

LUNA

Luna's life time. Back then she was simply either in the universe.

SONNY

Where did Luna come from?

LUNA

She was there when I needed her. Luna is my goddess of circumstance.

I'm up next, but if you make a bunch more little money tents I'll be back to tell you all about Luna.

(LUNA gets up and turns to leave.)

SONNY

I want to buy you for the night!

LUNA

You want to buy me?

SONNY

Yes.

LUNA

I'm not for sale.

*(LUNA exits **BACK STAGE**. SONNY opens his notebook and begins to write. He hunches over the journal, his nose inches from the page. The pen digs deep into the paper.)*

*(The **LIGHTS** of the floor area **FADE** except for a **DIM SPOT** that remains on **SONNY**.)*

*(**SILKWORM'S** voice rises out of the **BLACKNESS**. It is as if he was always there, but we were simply unaware of it.)*

SILKWORM

. . . unlike that other Magic Kingdom where little Tinker Bell with the body of Monroe teases and tempts, but never gives it up. At 'Lucky Lips' when you wish upon a star your dreams really can come true.

(SILKWORM laughs)

And here to prove it is our own celestial body, the Venus of our Galaxy, The stunning, alluring, luminous and very real Luuuunnnnaaa!

(The SPOT LIGHT COMES UP on LUNA. As before, she begins as a silhouette behind the SCRIM, suspended high on the pole.)

(LUNA gracefully descends the pole, then steps out of the shadows into the light. Slowly she dances her way DOWNSTAGE.)

(SONNY closes his Journal and watches her. He pulls on the ends of the RED SCARF still draped around his neck.)

(ON STAGE LUNA's clothes begin to fall away. She plays seductively with her RED SASH, draping it onto the shoulders of the various men, teasing them and then pulling it away.)

(From across the room Sonny speaks to her. He does so as if she were still sitting next to him.)

SONNY

Do you look at them as hard as they look at you?

LUNA continues to dance and tease as she and SONNY converse.)

LUNA

Depends on if they're tipping.

SONNY

And what do you see?

(LUNA looks deeply into the eyes of one of the men.)

LUNA

Rent.

SONNY

What else?

(LUNA moves from one man to the next, always sharing with them in some way her RED SASH. Her smile offers to each their own special need, shifting from seduction to intimacy, playfulness or compassion; whatever will coax the money out of their hands.)

LUNA

I excite them; they're aroused. They appreciate me. Some even worship me and I love that in a man. Even those that resent me are in awe.

SONNY

Why would they resent you?

LUNA

They've surrendered to me and they hate themselves for that.

(Luna plays with her red sash. She drapes it over the shoulders of various men, teasing them and then pulling away.)

Even those of power; judges, politicians and preachers know who holds the real power in this room and they resent me for that.

SONNY

Seeking self esteem in a strip club seems a bit ironic?

LUNA

No more ironic than seeking intimacy.

SONNY

But how can you feel good about yourself when you're face to face with someone who hates you and the power you have over them?

LUNA

Are you saying that I should I feel dirty because a man looks at me in a certain way? If I allow him to define me then I allow him to possess me. I think you already know my feelings about that.

SONNY

You think I want to possess you?

LUNA

That's what it sounded like.

SONNY

Fucking is the ultimate possession. That's not what I want from you.

LUNA

They want to fuck my pussy. You want to fuck my mind. Tell me what the difference is?

SONNY

That's not true and it's not the same thing.

LUNA

You want to possess parts of me that I don't share with others. You want my truths. You want my name in your mouth.

SONNY

Why is the truth so hard for you to share?

LUNA

Because you haven't earned it. You're not a part of my life and you never will be.

SONNY

It's not what I want.

LUNA

It is exactly what you want. You're stalking my real world and I'll never share that with you.

SONNY

How different is it really from this?

(Gestures around him.)

I'll bet that even in your real world you still lead with your sexuality; use it to avoid that speeding ticket; to get that backstage pass or get to the front of the line.

LUNA

No I use my brain and sometimes it tells me to use my looks". My looks are simply a tool.

SONNY

In your hands it's a weapon.

THE MUSIC ENDS

LUNA

If it's a weapon then it's double edged.

(LUNA gathers up her clothes and tip money from the stage.)

SONNY

What the fuck does that mean?

LUNA

Why is it women are always blamed for how men react to us? Why is it me and not the cop, or the bouncer or the doorman? Why do we blame the beauty of Helena and not Menelaus' need to possess her? After all it was him not her that launched the thousand ships.

SONNY

Because this club is filled with men who want you and you will do whatever it takes to make them think they might have a chance.

(LUNA walks to the edge of the stage. With hands on her hips she directly confronts SONNY for the first time.)

LUNA

How many times do I have to tell you Sonny, this, all of this, is just make-believe. They can't have Luna because Luna doesn't exist. No one can possess her. Not them. Not you.

SONNY

I'm not interested in Luna.

LUNA

So you keep saying. You want the real me. She's not here Sonny; you'll never find her here. This need of yours to possess is odious; like an open wound that runs long, mean and deep.

SONNY

We're all scarred in some way or another.

LUNA

Yes, yes we are.

(LUNA steps off the dance floor and exits BACKSTAGE.)

FADE TO BLACKNESS

End of ACT I, Scene I

SCARS

ACT I, Scene II

(MUSIC: The very faint sound of an R & B tune is heard through the BLACKNESS. It grows louder as. . .

(A SPOT LIGHT faintly rises on SONNY. He writes in his journal. On the table are several brand new money tents.)

(A SECOND SPOT LIGHT rises on LUNA as she arrives on the floor. She stops and flirts with one of the customers. She may even sit on his lap.)

(The LIGHTS FADE away. The MUSIC does the same.)

(SILENCE and DARKNESS, then. . .)

(SILK WORMS VOICE dilates through the BLACKNESS. The SPOT LIGHTS follow; casting just enough light to reveal the action.)

SILKWORM

. . . Every time she rises from the ashes she always gets a rise out of you. She is Lucky Lip's very own blazing bird of paradise, the scorching hot Phoooooeeeeenixxxxxx.

(SONNY waits . . . several more money tents are now on the table.)

(LUNA takes the hand of a customer and leads him off stage to the VIP room. Before she exits she glances in the direction of SONNY.)

(SILKWORM'S VOICE DIES AWAY in concert with the LIGHTS.)

BLACKNESS again

(A couple of beats later..

(MUSIC: A different song this time; smoky, haunting, dreamlike quality. It sets a mood of illusion and distortion though nothing has really changed. (i.e.: David Lynch).

(LIGHTS UP AGAIN as Luna returns her customer to his seat. As she begins to cruise the floor she ties her red sash tightly around her waist. She sways and flows to the music as she moves about the room.)

(SONNY sits back in his chair stroking his red scarf; his table is now completely filled with money tents.)

(LUNA slowly drifts in the direction of SONNY'S table.)

(SONNY sits quietly as she grows ever closer. Finally Luna arrives. She sits and gestures at the money tents.)

LUNA

Going to war?

SONNY

Launching my own fleet. Nowhere near a thousand but it's the best I could do.

I wasn't sure you would come back.

LUNA

This club isn't big enough to cruise and avoid you at the same time.

SONNY

I see.

LUNA

No one gets to own me Sonny, especially not here.

SONNY

That wasn't what I meant.

LUNA

Oh I think it was.

SONNY

I should have been clearer in what I meant.

LUNA

Well just to be clear, not you, not my ex, not my bank, no one has a claim on me.

SONNY

Why did you come back?

(Luna helps herself to one of the twenties.)

LUNA

Guess?

SONNY

It really is all about the money isn't it?

LUNA

Grow up Sonny. Of course it is.

(Luna reconsiders for a moment, seized by an unexpected truth. Her voice is barely a whisper. .)

LUNA

But. . .

SONNY

But what?

LUNA

Damn it!

SONNY

What?

LUNA

I'm not sure how I want to put this.

SONNY

There is something else!

LUNA

I don't want you to go all goofy on me, . . . but there is one thing about you that I find different from the others.

SONNY

Well that's a start.

LUNA

NO! It's not a start! Grrrrrrrr. That's exactly why I didn't want to say anything. You're going to turn this into something more than it is; turn it into 'our' thing.

SONNY

Well isn't it?

LUNA

You're really beginning to piss me off

SONNY

Yeah, I get that. Come on tell me.

(Luna considers for a moment, then a reflective response, like a secret shared - the first.)

LUNA

You challenge me. . . You make me think about who I am and what I do. That doesn't happen very often in here.

SONNY

I make you think?

LUNA

My usual snappy come backs aren't enough when I'm talking with you. What I mean is they're not enough for me when I'm talking to you.

SONNY

That's it?

LUNA

What were you hoping for, that I get all hot and moist when I'm talking to you?

SONNY

No, It's *what* I make you think *about*, that interests me.

LUNA

With the others I always tell them pretty much what they want to here. I have a standard sluff answer for just about every situation.

SONNY

But with me you feel the need to be honest, to speak the truth?

LUNA

You're stepping into that '*our thing*' territory again. It's not. I owe it to myself to stand up to you. Usually I don't give a damn. I just roll with the punches to make a buck. You're different.

SONNY

So you admit that I'm different?

LUNA

GAWD! You're like a set of twins? The smart one is talking and then from out of nowhere the dumb one pipes up.

SONNY

You just said. . .

LUNA

I just said it isn't about you.

SONNY

I see.

(SONNY begins to pile the money tents one on top of the other as if he were about to put them away.)

SONNY

I saw you go into the back room with someone.

LUNA

Something came up.

SONNY

You were gone for quite a while

LUNA

It came up a number of times.

SONNY

How much do you make a night?

LUNA

I do alright.

SONNY

A thousand? Give or take?

LUNA

Give or take.

(SONNY takes his wad of bills and counts off five hundred. He offers them to LUNA.)

SONNY

I'll give you five hundred now and another five at the end of the evening if you spend the rest of the night here with me.

LUNA

Does 'smart' Sonny know about this?

SONNY

This is 'smart, Sonny speaking. What do you say?

LUNA

And what do you expect for your money?

SONNY

Answers.

LUNA

To what?

SONNY

I don't know yet. How about it? Your knees will thank you in the morning.

LUNA

My name will still be Luna at the end of the night.

SONNY

Fair enough.

(For the longest time neither speaks. The silence grows louder until finally. . .)

LUNA

So this is this working for you?

SONNY

For now, yes.

LUNA

Sitting in the dark staring at a half naked stripper, that's what turns you on?

SONNY

And talking.

LUNA

Not much talking going on.

SONNY

It'll come. Shared silence holds its own form of intimacy.

LUNA

You find this intimate?

SONNY

Don't you?

LUNA

In a dull moronic first date sort of way.

(More silence. SONNY stares, LUNA fidgets. As the moments pass, her restlessness turns to uneasiness. Finally she can't take it anymore. She leans forward and puts her hand on SONNY's knee.)

LUNA

Is this too intimate?

SONNY

Not really. It's your way to seize control, but it's not intimate.

(LUNA leans over and begins to stroke SONNY's thigh.)

LUNA

We could go to the VIP room. Then it would be just the two of us.

SONNY

Then you would be in control. This is fine right here. Back there it's all about delusion and deceit; a fool's paradise.

(LUNA continues to coax him.)

LUNA

Are you sure?

(SONNY removes LUNA's hand from his thigh.)

SONNY

Then I would be just like the rest of them. I'm not. I'm not looking for teats to suck and a cunt to fuck.

LUNA

Oh that's right! You're the stripper's Messiah.

SONNY

I see the bruised body parts and want to know how and why.

LUNA

All you want is to know my secrets.

SONNY

That's right.

LUNA

My real name?

SONNY

Yes.

LUNA

Things that I would never share with other men.

SONNY

Yes.

LUNA

And that would make you special?

SONNY

I'm already special.

LUNA

So you keep telling me.

SONNY

I'm the only man in here that doesn't want to fuck you.

LUNA

(Sarcasm)

Sonny, you say the nicest things... and I don't believe you.

SONNY

It doesn't really matter if you believe me or not. It's true.

LUNA

What goes on in here is all make-believe, nothing more.

SONNY

No! It's deception.

LUNA

If there's any deception it's in them deceiving themselves.

SONNY

That's true, but you're the pulse behind it... the myth... the succubus. They're like the worm on the hook thinking it can swallow the fish.

LUNA

It's still all make-believe.

SONNY

To you it's make-believe. To them it's a primal wet dream. And you will do everything you can to exploit it.

LUNA

I know the rules and so do they.

SONNY

And with every wink, smile and grind you're saying that the rules don't apply; maybe for all the other guys... but not him.

LUNA

Perhaps.

SONNY

How often do they ask you out?

LUNA

You mean on a date?

SONNY

Yeah.

LUNA

It happens.

SONNY

I bet it happens a lot. How often do you say yes?

LUNA

Again, none of your business.

SONNY

I'll take that as just south of never.

LUNA

And your point is?

SONNY

What would it take to get you to leave with me right now?

LUNA

Leave the club with you? Right now?

SONNY

That's right. What would it take?

LUNA

A dozen roofies and a four alarm fire... maybe.

SONNY

And the difference is I know it. They don't.

(LUNA glances at SONNY's Journal.)

LUNA

Is that where you keep your secrets?

(She reaches for the book, but SONNY pulls it away.)

LUNA

What? You don't want to share?

SONNY

Why do you work here?

LUNA

Do you mean here like 'this' club or here like a 'stripper'?

SONNY

Both.

LUNA

I see...

*(LUNA consider for a moment.
Then...)*

LUNA

Well there is always the money..., and the freedom... and I'll admit it, I like the power... the adoration,... and of course there is always the money... and the girls. Gotta love the girls.

SONNY

I didn't think strippers got along.

LUNA

Why would you think that?

SONNY

You're always competing for the same buck.

LUNA

We're territorial. You don't go after another girl's regular but other than that we're pretty tight. Strippers connect in ways no one else understands. Like soldiers who fought together on the front line.

SONNY

Do you hang out when you're not working?

LUNA

Some do; the single ones and those who don't have kids.

SONNY

But not you?

LUNA

Your subtext being am I in a relationship or do I have a kid.

SONNY

Are you? Do you?

LUNA

(Smiles)

Nice try.

SONNY

Just curious. I just never thought strippers were that close.

LUNA

You're up to something. What is it?

SONNY

I'm just saying it's a cutthroat business. There's got to be something that keeps you from turning on each other; something you have in common.

LUNA

I already told you; we're a sisterhood; soldiers in thongs.

SONNY

Something in common like being sexually abused as kids.

LUNA

(Being evasive)

If that were true there would be a hell of a lot more strippers.

SONNY

Maybe it's just a certain itch that needs to be scratched; a chance to get even.

LUNA

I'm not going to lower myself to their level just to get even? What's the advantage in that?

SONNY

(Gestures to the crowd)

So you do despise them?

LUNA

I only despise the ones who try to figure me out.

SONNY

I don't believe that! You detest them as much as I do.

LUNA

You think so?

SONNY

I know so! They're sitting there drooling at your feet and starring into your pussy for some meaning to their miserable lives. How can you not be disgusted by that?

LUNA

It's a strip club dummy! God! When men stare at me it's with desire and adoration and I like that... It's the guys that gaze into my eyes while I'm dancing that I don't trust.

SONNY

Really?

LUNA

They're pretending to be nobler than the others. If they were really above it all they wouldn't even be here.

SONNY

So they're pretty much damned if they do and damned if they don't!

LUNA

Pretty much.

SONNY

What about the mean ones; the wise ass that calls you a bitch or a cock tease or grabs at you.

LUNA

Or pinches. Some even bite.

SONNY

That's not adoration.

LUNA

No, but it is *desire*.

SONNY

Yeah, in a twisted fucked up sort of way.

LUNA

Sometimes it is pretty twisted. A guy once told me that I had an ugly pussy. His way of starting a conversation.

SONNY

Doesn't that make you feel cheap. . . Dirty?

LUNA

That's exactly how he wants me to feel. How he chooses to act is about his short comings, not mine. I don't lose power or value or my dignity because I excite men.

SONNY

Because you excite them you have power over them. That's what brings out the meanness.

LUNA

He's just as much a victim to sexism as any of us.

SONNY

You are kidding right?

LUNA

Men have been told since their first hard-on that there are good girls and bad girls and where ever their penis points, those are the wicked ones.

SONNY

And every night they're pointing at you.

LUNA

That's right. So I'm a bad girl because I can excite a man when society tells them it's wrong to get excited.

LUNA takes a casual look at SONNY'S crotch and smiles. SONNY seems embarrassed.

LUNA

How frustrating is that? They hate the power this natural urge has over them and they detest those who draw it out of them. It's the perfect storm. How can it not turn ugly?

SONNY

And it does.

LUNA

Absolutely! It turns to resentment, jealousy, a need to dominate, even blood lust. There are women who battered and beaten for no other reason than their husband had a bad day at the office.

SONNY

So men abuse women because of the power they have over them?

LUNA

Why else does a young girl get stoned to death because a man raped her. The burka isn't about protecting the chastity of a woman. It's about protecting men from themselves.

SONNY

Not all of those stones are thrown by men.

LUNA

And not all misogynists are men. When an African midwife cuts off the clitoris of a 13 year old girl so she won't feel her own sexual urges, she is as much a women hater as any man could ever be.

SONNY

Karl Jung said that rage comes from the female side of our nature. Maybe that's why women have an especially vicious rage reserved only for other women.

LUNA

It is our greatest weakness; this tendency to turn on each other and deny our own female specialness.

SONNY

Don't have to deal with much of that in a strip club.

LUNA

That's true.

SONNY

In here, surrounded mostly by men you hold all the power?

LUNA

I have to. If I didn't the consequences could be deadly?

SONNY

What do you mean?

LUNA

In the past two months two dancers have been murdered.

SONNY

Christ, I didn't know that.

LUNA

One was a close friend of mine.

SONNY

Christ! That is so fucked up. Did they catch the guy?

LUNA shakes her head.

LUNA

She was strangled outside her apartment; the other girl in the club parking lot.

SONNY

I'm sorry to hear that. What was your friend's name?

LUNA

Shelly.

SONNY

Were you close to her?

LUNA

Our kids had a play date every Sunday.

SONNY

How do you tell a kid something like that?

LUNA

It wasn't easy but I couldn't just ignore it. She's too smart for that.

SONNY

How old?

LUNA

Six.

SONNY

Does she know what you do?

LUNA

She knows that I love her and that I am trying to make a better life for us. I'll never lie to her. If and when the time comes I'll tell her.

SONNY

What's her name?

LUNA

You don't need to know that?

SONNY

I'm just asking. What's the harm?

LUNA

The harm isn't in you knowing. It's in you asking.

SONNY

You're very protective.

LUNA

You have no idea.

SONNY

It's a good thing. You can never be too careful when it comes to kids. Sorry for asking.

LUNA

You don't have any kids do you?

SONNY

Never been married. Probably a good thing. The kid could end up looking like me.

LUNA

Or worse, your sense of humor.

SONNY

True. I'll bet she's a very pretty little girl.

LUNA

Why do you say that?

SONNY

You're her mother. The odds are. . .

LUNA

You also said I was smart. Why not say that she's probably a smart little girl?

SONNY

I don't know. Why is that problem?

LUNA

I'm not going to share any part of my daughter with someone I don't know. End of discussion.

SONNY

And I'm betting that's not because of how smart she is.

LUNA

Leave it alone Sonny.

SONNY

Alright, I'm done.

SONNY is far from done. A long silence as he searches for a new way back. Finally...

SONNY

Life is whole lot easier when you're pleasing to the eye; men and women alike.

LUNA

SONNY!

SONNY

I'm just saying it sets you apart. It gets you noticed.

LUNA

Noticed by whom? At her age beauty can be a curse. Children are far too trusting to understand the consequences.

SONNY

Not everyone is a pedophile. You don't want her growing up afraid because of what she looks like. Beauty is a gift not a curse.

LUNA

What it isn't is an accomplishment. I don't want her to grow up feeling like all she has to offer is her looks. That is the surest way to squash her self-worth.

SONNY

So now we're talking about you.

LUNA

I know what it's like.

SONNY

Everyone is attracted to pretty things Luna, even you. Looks might be the first thing we notice but it's not everything. You're a beautiful woman but not until we started talking did I realize how smart you are or that you have a take-no-prisoners sense of humor or your level of tolerance in an environment that doesn't deserve it. Those things don't go unnoticed for long.

LUNA

You're still trying to get into my pants aren't you?

SONNY

Well there is that. In here no one is much interested in your brain.

LUNA:

I know that, but it's not just here; not just them.

(Silence. . . Sonny waiting; Luna considering. Then. . .)

LUNA

She used to dress me up like I was her little doll.

SONNY

Your mother?

LUNA

Whenever we had guests or were going to town, she would spend hours getting me ready. Hair in curls, a little rouge on the cheeks, a hint of lipstick, my long lashes curled and always in the prettiest dresses. I was five years old and I was wearing lipstick and having my lashes curled.

SONNY

That's a little weird, verging on psycho.

LUNA

Actually I liked it. For that hour I felt loved. Her touch was cold but it was still a touch. The rest of the time I was pretty much ignored.

SONNY

What about your father?

LUNA

My father?... He was a good man, he used to call me his special girl, but I could never keep his attention for very long. I know he loved me but as I got older he became more distant. It felt like he was afraid of me.

SONNY

Maybe he was afraid of himself.

LUNA

What do you mean?

SONNY

By keeping his distance was his way of protecting you.

LUNA

From himself?

(Sonny doesn't answer. It is obvious to both what he means)

SONNY

It sounds like he was a good man.

LUNA

I learned at an early age that there's always someone out there who will tell a pretty girl how special she is. So I went elsewhere and everywhere to be noticed; always searching for an audience. It started with modeling then acting. I tried singing, but that was a bust. Finally I settled on dancing.

SONNY

To be noticed or to be loved?

LUNA

Both.

SONNY

And you ended up here.

LUNA

A slippery slope.

SONNY

You're too smart to take that slide without having been pushed. What happened?

LUNA

If a little girl isn't careful her beauty can be used against her and she may not even know it... Someone I trusted turned out not to be who I thought they were.

SONNY

How old were you?

LUNA absently begins to play with the red sash.

LUNA

Seven.

SONNY

What did he do to you?

LUNA

Everything.

SONNY

Who was he?

LUNA

Every night when I got into bed I would roll up in a ball.

SONNY

Not your father?

LUNA

And every night the monster would crawl out from under the bed and peel me open with his monster hands.

SONNY

But you said he ignored you.

LUNA

He would pick me up and take me to the bathroom for a night time bath.

SONNY

Who would do that to a little girl?

LUNA

He would stick his monster finger inside me and his 'monster thing' in my mouth and tell me how "special" I was.

SONNY

Who was it Luna?

SONNY can sense that LUNA's intimate secret; the one she shares with no one is so close. He starts to wrap his scarf around his fist and pulls it tight; tension building within him. Is it rage or arousal?

LUNA

It hurt and I could hardly breathe, but I was his "special" girl. He even gave me a teddy bear.

SONNY

Luna, who was it?

LUNA

I remember the smell. He and grandma would put their teeth into a glass of listerine at night.

SONNY

Your grandfather!

LUNA

That smell makes me nauseous even today... and I hate teddy bears.

SONNY

There it is!

LUNA

My daughter has never had a teddy bear. That's kind of sad isn't it?

LUNA is silent. She sits motionless picking at her red sash. SONNY affectionately strokes her arm.

LUNA

So Sonny... did you get your money's worth? Secrets shared? Now you know what no one else knows about me. Not even my daughter.

SONNY

I still don't know your name?

LUNA pulls her arm away.

LUNA

And you never will Sugar! I think I've earned the other half of the money. Why not pay up and we can move on?

SONNY

So many customers, so little time?

LUNA

Something like that. You got what you wanted.

SONNY

We'll see? You want a drink?

LUNA

No. Do you want to fuck?

SONNY

What!?

LUNA

Maybe a blow job?

SONNY

No... That isn't why...

LUNA

No... You're right. We might get caught... But I'll bet no one would notice a hand job back here in the dark...

She pretends to reach for his crotch. SONNY covers himself.

SONNY

That's not what I....

LUNA

Oh that's right. You're different than the rest. That's what you keep telling me. You don't want to fuck me. You just want to talk. Let's test that theory shall we.

LUNA slides onto SONNY's lap.

SONNY

What are you doing?

SOUND: The volume of the music that has been playing in the B.G. increases.

LUNA straddles SONNY and begins to give him a lap dance. Her movements are salacious and suggestive as she grinds her hips into his crotch and slides and gyrates up and down SONNY's body. Throughout the dance she whispers sweet nothings in his ear...sort of.

LUNA

You know what I think? I think that you're really no different than any of the others.

SONNY

Tell me your name and I'll go.

LUNA

My name is LUNA.

SONNY

Your real name?

LUNA

Why do you want to know her Sonny? Why do you feel the need to invade her private world?

SONNY

I just need to know.

LUNA

You have nothing in common with her Sonny. She would never gyrate naked on a stranger's lap.

SONNY

Just tell me and I'll go.

LUNA

How about I don't tell you and you come?

SONNY

Don't! Stop it. I don't want this.

LUNA

That's not what your little boat says. Oh what's that! Sonny I think he is about to set sail. What do you think?

LUNA's movements have now become nothing more simulated sex as she thrusts her hips into SONNY's crotch. He is beginning to lose control.

SONNY

Who are you?

LUNA

I'm the bad girl inside every good girl.

SONNY

Tell me a truth. Any truth!

LUNA

The truth is my name is Luna and I'm the bitch branded in your skull for the rest of your life.

SONNY is beginning to lose control.

SONNY

You've got to stop! Stop it! This is dirty!

SONNY tries to get up but LUNA pins him to the chair.

LUNA

Why do men think they're still in control even when their penis is screaming they're not.

SONNY

Oh Jesus, stop. Please stop. This is dirty, dirty, dirty, dirty boy... dirty boy....

With that she picks up her thrusting pace until....

SONNY

Oh Jesus, Jesus....

SONNY comes! LUNA slows down her thrusts and continues to whisper in SONNY's ear.

LUNA

The one thing you must never forget sweetheart. In here, I hold the power.

SONNY is whimpering as he chants...

SONNY

Dirty boy...dirty boy...dirty boy...dirty boy.....

LUNA gets off SONNY'S lap. She stands before him, defiant.

LUNA

Pay up!

SONNY

You fucking bitch! You made me do this. It's not my fault. It's you! You did this! This is so dirty. All I wanted was to know you and you turned it into something dirty. I'm not dirty. You're dirty! You unclean cunt!

SONNY covers his crotch and rushes out of the club. LUNA watches somewhat stunned. This wasn't quite the reaction she expected.

LUNA

Hmmmm!

LUNA notices SONNY's journal on the table. Curiosity wins over. She opens it and begins to read.

LUNA

Oh my god!

An expression of whacked out terror crosses her face. Frantically she flips through the pages. Whatever she is reading it appears to get worse.

LUNA

You bastard. You sick sick bastard. Oh Jesus!.

LUNA stands and stares at the exit in disbelief.

LUNA

Jesus! What the fuck are you?

FADE TO BLACKNESS

End of ACT I, Scene II

SCARS

ACT II

Out of the Blackness a pink neon sign ignites with the words, "Luck Lips". Just beneath the name and flashing on and off is the catch phrase 'Live Nude Girls'.

The neon offers just enough light to reveal that the sign is secured to a brick wall at the rear of the strip club.

Down Stage Left a single subdued street light appears. It leaves much of the stage in shadows and near darkness. Beneath the streetlight is the likeness of the front end of a car, the rear apparently lost in the blackness.

ANGIE enters from Up Stage Right. She's dressed in her sweats, her red sash draped around her neck. The duffel bag is slung over her shoulder. She is talking on her cell phone.

ANGIE

Hi; It's me. . . I left early... No, it was just a really weird night... Right now?... I'm in the parking lot...

ANGIE sets the duffel bag on the hood of the car and rummages for her keys as she continues to talk. The baby doll stares out at the audience from the rear pocket of the duffel bag.

ANGIE

... I'm hunting for my keys

She pulls from the duffel bag SONNY's journal.

ANGIE

I have one stop to make, but I should still be back by 2:00... No, ... I just have to drop something off.

Out of the darkness SONNY appears Upstage Right. ANGIE is unaware of his presence. She finds her keys.

ANGIE

Got'em. So how was she? She did? (*ANGIE laughs*) The little monkey... She thinks if she falls asleep on the couch, she'll see me when I get home. Yeah, totally. No, you did the right thing. I'll look in on her when I get home.

SONNY takes his red scarf from around his neck and smells it. He then turns and disappears back into the Blackness.

ANGIE

Ohhh, can you sit again on Friday? Oh, damn it I forgot about that? What about your sister? I see. No, no I'll figure something out. All right then... Oh were there any messages? Dan didn't call?

ANGIE cell phone rings.

ANGIE

I've got a call on the other line. That might be him. Gotta go. I'll see you in a few minutes. Bye.

ANGIE connects the second call.

ANGIE

Hello.

A voice from the other end speaks.

SONNY

Angie?

ANGIE

Yes. Who is this?

SONNY

I think you have something of mine.

SONNY stands in the shadows talking to her on his cell phone.

ANGIE

I don't know what you're talking....

ANGIE stops in mid sentence. A sense of dread washes over her. Slowly, she turns to discover SONNY standing beneath the neon sign. It casts him in a creepy pinkish glow.

ANGIE

SONNY!?

Though they can see each other, they continue to use their cell phones.

SONNY

Surprised to see me again?

ANGIE

Not really.

ANGIE slowly reaches into a side pocket of her duffel bag.

SONNY

You really did cross the line in there.

ANGIE pulls something from her duffel bag. It's a can of pepper spray. She slips it into the pocket of her hoodie.

ANGIE

Usually I get a tip.

SONNY

It was wrong!!!

ANGIE

Yeah right. You owe me five hundred dollars.

SONNY

Give me back my journal and I'll give you the money.

ANGIE closes her phone and puts it in her pocket. SONNY does the same.

SONNY

You don't seem surprised that I know your phone number.

ANGIE

(Dripping sarcasm)

Yeah, and my name... What's up with that?

SONNY takes a step toward her.

SONNY

You read it.

ANGIE

Cover to cover.

SONNY

More secrets shared!

ANGIE

Oh I think you passed that marker a long ways back. You're beyond insane Sonny. I don't know if there is a word for what you are.

SONNY

A Luna-tic? Loony? We all have our itches. Yours is too be adored,... to be 'special'. Mine is the need for intense intimacy with others.

ANGIE

That's what you call it?

She holds up the journal.

ANGIE

I call it fucked up. Fucked up beyond fucked up. You are a wasted demented piece of human tissue.

SONNY

Shouldn't you be a little more afraid of me?

ANGIE

I'm pretty much booked up with rage right now.

SONNY

But you know what I've done.

ANGIE

I can take care of myself SONNY.

SONNY

I believe you.

ANGIE

I'm going to get into my car now.

ANGIE picks up her duffel bag and moves toward the car.

SONNY

I'm sorry.

ANGIE

What?

SONNY

You know. For making a mess in there. It was a bad thing I did.

ANGIE

It happens.

SONNY

Does it happen often?

ANGIE

It happens.

SONNY

I see. Do you want to pray?

ANGIE

Do I what?

SONNY

Pray. That's what we use to do when it happened.

ANGIE

I need to go.

SONNY

My journal?

ANGIE

You can pick it up from the Night Sergeant in Silverlake.

SONNY

I really need my journal back.

ANGIE

You can follow me if you want. You seem to be pretty good at that.

SONNY moves toward her. He is turning ugly. He roars...

SONNY

GIVE ME BACK MY FUCKIN' JOURNAL, YOU FUCKIN' CUNT.

Realizing that pepper spray may not be enough, ANGIE pulls a switchblade from her bag. The blade snaps to attention. SONNY withdraws.

SONNY

There is very personal stuff in it.

ANGIE

Personal?! Yeah your right SONNY. MY name, MY address, MY phone numbers, that I've never been married, my daughters name and her birthday.

SONNY

But I didn't know about your grandfather. That was very special. It was riveting. It was true wasn't it?

ANGIE

Go to hell!

SONNY

My journal! It's not finished yet. There are still pages to fill.

ANGIE opens the Journal and prepares to rip out several pages.

ANGIE

You mean these pages.

SONNY

DON'T!

ANGIE

Were these going to be 'my' pages?

SONNY

Please don't.

ANGIE

ANSWER ME! WERE THEY?!

SONNY

Yes.

ANGIE rips out one of the blank pages. SONNY cringes.

SONNY

STOP IT!

ANGIE

SONNY, we're going to play a game. This time you're going to tell me all your secrets. If you refuse to answer or I think you're lying...

She tears out another page from the journal. SONNY makes a move toward her.

SONNY

You fucking bitch! Stop it!

ANGIE threatens him with the knife. SONNY withdraws. ANGIE crumples up the page and stuffs it into her pocket.

ANGIE

Fucking bitch? That's not very nice.

ANGIE rips out another page.

SONNY

Ahhh Jesus!

ANGIE pockets the page.

ANGIE

You're not really getting the hang of this are you? That's okay. I've got lots of pockets.

SONNY

Okay!

ANGIE

Okay what?

SONNY

Ask me what you want to know.

ANGIE

How long have you been stalking me?

SONNY

I haven't!

ANGIE

Oh SONNY, you're off to such a bad start.

She rips out another page.

SONNY

It's the truth!

ANGIE waves the Journal at him.

ANGIE

Then how do you know all this?

SONNY

Fantasy Fashions.

ANGIE

Yeah. What about it?

SONNY

That's where you buy your costumes.

ANGIE

God damnit. How do you know all this?

SONNY

I do their books. You pay by check or credit card.

ANGIE

So?

SONNY

You use your driver's license and Social Security Card as ID. They copy the numbers onto your cheque.

ANGIE

You're kidding me.

SONNY

Once I have that it's not very difficult to put the rest together.

ANGIE stares at him in stunned disbelief.

SONNY

(As if it were some excuse...)

Accounting can be very boring at times.

ANGIE

I'm speechless... Okay, but how did you know about my daughter and that I was never married?

SONNY

That too!

ANGIE

Shit! I don't believe this.

ANGIE leans against the hood of the car taking a moment to take this in.

SONNY

It's really very easy once you know where to go. Kind of fun actually.

ANGIE

SHUT UP! Just Shut up!

Thoughts are rushing through her mind at hyper speed... .. violation... vulnerability... powerlessness. She recomposes then...

ANGIE

Okay, why me?

SONNY

You know everyone asks me that? I don't know. It could have been someone else and they would be asking me the same thing... Why me? It's just fate.

ANGIE absently plays with the tiny hand of her baby doll.

ANGIE

When you kept asking for my name you were just testing me.

SONNY

Intimacy isn't in me knowing a secret. It is in you telling it to me. It's an advantage when I know the truth.

ANGIE gently tucks her doll a little deeper into the pocket.

SONNY

Does the doll have a name?

ANGIE

You tell me. You just don't stop do you?

SONNY

Force of habit.

ANGIE turns the duffel bag so the doll faces away from SONNY.

SONNY

She does have a name though, doesn't she?

ANGIE

God I wish I had gun!

SONNY

The grandfather story was all true wasn't it?

ANGIE

You'll never know for sure.

SONNY

No, it was true.

ANGIE

It was all a lie and you still owe me five hundred dollars.

SONNY

Baby dolls are used in sexual abuse therapy.

ANGIE

I wouldn't know.

SONNY

It's a way for victims to nurture their inner child.

ANGIE

I don't know what you're talking about.

SONNY

The little girl still inside you. The little girl whose grandfather fucked her and told her how special she was.

ANGIE

I think it's time for me to go.

ANGIE stuffs the Journal into the duffel bag.

SONNY

Do you bathe her Angie?

ANGIE

Fuck you!

SONNY

Keep her safe from your grandfather?

ANGIE

I'm leaving.

ANGIE moves toward the car door. She pulls out her car keys. She is about to open the car door when...

ANGIE

How old were you?

SONNY

What do you mean?

ANGIE

You didn't get this fucked up all by yourself. Was it a man or woman?

SONNY appears unwilling to answer. ANGIE prepares to leave.

SONNY

Mrs. Darcy.

ANGIE

A teacher?

SONNY

A neighbor. But it wasn't abuse. Not like you.

ANGIE

How old were you?

SONNY

I just turned eleven.

ANGIE

And her?

SONNY

I don't know for sure; thirty something.

ANGIE

And you were eleven. How can you not see how fucked up that is. She molested you Sonny.

SONNY

She was hurting, hurting a lot. Her son and husband had just been killed in a car accident. She was all alone.

ANGIE

Tragedy is an explanation, not an excuse.

SONNY

The neighbors were concerned about her. She never left the house... stopped answering her phone... Stopped going to church. My mother would send me over to mow her lawn. That's how it began.

ANGIE

The abuse?

SONNY

It wasn't abuse. I loved her and she loved me.

ANGIE

You weren't old enough to understand that kind of love.

SONNY

One day while I mowing her lawn there was a rain storm. I was drenched. She must have been watching because she came to the door and invited me in. It was the first time I had seen her since the accident. She looked worn down... We didn't talk much at first. All we had in common was Lyle, her son, and that wasn't something I wanted to bring up. I remember that it felt really weird inside the house.

ANGIE

Weird?

SONNY

Weird as in normal. Her husband's hat and jacket were still on the coat rack in the porch. His pipe was in the ashtray next to his lazy boy... His shaving kit in the bathroom... Lyle's comic books on his bed... and a half built model airplane on his desk. Everything was where they left it as if...

ANGIE

As if they were coming back.

SONNY

Yeah, as if they were just out for a drive or something.

ANGIE

Denial is a powerful coping tool.

SONNY

After that whenever I mowed her lawn she invited me in for a sandwich. She began calling me her 'little man'. I liked that... When it was time to go she would send me off with a kiss on the cheek and a dollar for the lawn. She would smile and call it my allowance.

ANGIE

As if you were her son.

SONNY

I guess. One day we were sitting on the couch watching a video. She reached over for some popcorn and I saw her breast. I got excited. I tried to hide it, but she noticed. I was crushed. She just smiled and told me not to worry about it... that it was natural for little boys to get excited and as long as I didn't come it wasn't a sin. I rushed home afterwards and did my sinning in the bathroom.

ANGIE

That's it? She got you excited? If she never touched you then it wasn't abuse.

SONNY

I never called it abuse. You did.

ANGIE waves the Journal at him.

ANGIE

Whatever you call it, it doesn't explain this.

SONNY

The next time she kissed me goodbye. I kissed her back... on the lips.

ANGIE

And what did she say?

SONNY

She laughed. She said that I was very sweet, but that I was a little too young for her.

ANGIE

I really don't care to go down puberty lane with you SONNY. It's late, I'm tired and I need to drop this off.

ANGIE again prepares to leave.

SONNY

The next time I tried to kiss her she let me.

ANGIE

And...

SONNY

She said if I was going to go around kissing girls I needed to learn how.

ANGIE

I'm listening.

SONNY

She began to teach me how to kiss.

ANGIE

And that's how it began?

SONNY

We practiced a lot. I must have gotten good at it because it wasn't long before she was kissing me back. We would lay on her bed and kiss... and touch... and move against each other. We never took our clothes off... There was no sex, but it was exciting... and it was our secret.

ANGIE

Your secret shared.

SONNY

Yes... I went from being her little man to being the man of the house. When I looked into her eyes I felt a closeness that I had never known before.

ANGIE

The scent of intimacy.

SONNY

Yes... yes such intimacy. But I fucked it up.

ANGIE

And how is that?

SONNY

All she asked of me was to be careful... if I got too excited it would make what we were doing wrong. Then one day I couldn't help myself. I exploded in my pants. She was furious... and I think, afraid.

ANGIE

She couldn't pretend anymore.

SONNY

She said what I did was dirty... and that I was a dirty boy for getting that excited. She made me kneel with her beside the bed and pray for forgiveness. We ended up on our knees a lot after that.

ANGIE

How long did this... How long did it last?

SONNY

About six months.

ANGIE

Why did it end?

SONNY

My mother figured it out. My soiled underwear was the clue. She and the other mothers turned against Mrs. Darcy. I was told I couldn't see her anymore. That didn't stop me, but it really hurt Mrs. D. She fell back into her depression.

SONNY places his red scarf around his neck and holding both ends in his hands he crosses his arms as if he were wrapping himself in a blanket.

SONNY

I laid down next to her. For a long time we just looked at each other. That was when I noticed for the first time my image in the pupils of her eyes... reflected back at me. It made me feel so connected to her... my image in her eyes. Later she curled up tight against me whispered that I was her little man and closed her eyes taking my twin reflections with her. I laid with her for about an hour and then went home.

ANGIE

That was the last time you were with her?

SONNY

Yes... She had taken an overdose of sleeping pills. She died in my arms and I never even knew it.

ANGIE

It's strange how the end of something so wrong can still be so tragic.

SONNY

I don't think a day goes by when I don't see my twin reflections in her eyes. That was the most intimate moment of my life.

ANGIE

I'm sorry for what happened to you SONNY, and I'm sorry for what I did to you in the club, but it still doesn't excuse you for what's in this journal.

SONNY

I'm not looking for an excuse. I'm just trying to explain... I find relationships... complicated. I'm not very good at them.

ANGIE

At relationships?

SONNY

At coming together. Connecting with someone.

ANGIE

What are you saying?

SONNY says nothing, but ANGIE interprets his silence.

ANGIE

Christ! Are you kidding me?

SONNY

I think that...

ANGIE

You want to date me?!

SONNY shrugs and begins to stroke the scarf.

SONNY

I just want to get to know you better.

ANGIE

Everything I know about you I detest. We have nothing in common.

SONNY

That's true, but there is something to be said about that.

ANGIE

Ohhhh. I've got a lot of things I could say about that. Not-a-chance-in-hell will have to do for now.

SONNY

Why?

ANGIE

Why? SONNY, you don't.... don't. .. agggghhh.

SONNY

I know I'm not your type.

ANGIE is so frustrated she is beyond words. She nods emphatically.

SONNY

But your type hasn't worked out for you so far has it.

ANGIE

How would you know? Ohhh right!

She pulls from her pocket one of the crumpled pages from the journal and waves it at him then rips out another page. SONNY barely reacts.

SONNY

You seem to have a broken pecker picker.

ANGIE

A broken pecker picker? I see. You are so far out there... You're like the 13th fucking planet. We have nothing in common. I don't know how else to say it. SONNY, you just don't complete me.

SONNY

Our past; that we have in common... We understand each other's wounds.

ANGIE

My wound is healing without you. Now it's just a scab and I don't need you picking at it.

SONNY

That's not what I meant....

ANGIE

My life is not the total fuck up you seem to think it is.

SONNY

Of course it is. You're just not willing to admit it.

ANGIE

You're really not very good with boundaries are you?

SONNY

They get in the way of the truth.... especially the darker truths; the ones that really matter.

ANGIE

Those stay with a person. They're not meant to be shared.

SONNY

As long as they remain in the shadows they will continue to infect you.

ANGIE

(Sarcasm)

But if I share them with you, someone who is far more fucked up than I have ever been I'll be cured?

SONNY

Something like that.

ANGIE

I prefer they stay where they are. This isn't about you helping me. It's about me feeding your addiction... your need to know the secrets of others. You have to earn that kind of intimacy SONNY. It's not just there for the taking.

SONNY

But hasn't it already begun.

ANGIE

What do you mean?

SONNY

I shared with you... and how many have you told about your midnight baths?

ANGIE has no answer. She simply stares at him.

SONNY

Well?

ANGIE

I don't know. I'm not sure why I did that.

SONNY

Because you had nothing to lose in telling me. You want to talk about it. We all do. We all need to. The truth shall set you free. Your secrets would be safe with me.

ANGIE

I have a therapist for that.

SONNY

Therapist? Christ, he doesn't care about you. He only cares about billable hours. He'll listen to you... categorize you, dissect you, prescribe for you... but what he will not do is feel your pain. He will not adore you... or love you. I would. *ANGIE* I would feel your pain. I would love you.

ANGIE

Don't you dare say that! You have no right to say those words to me.

SONNY

Of course not. How could anyone love you...

ANGIE

Stop it!

SONNY

... the pretty little girl that makes grown men think bad thoughts. How could anyone love me, a dirty little boy who can't control his urges. How could anyone love us?

ANGIE

Stay out of my past *SONNY*. I never invited you in.

ANGIE prepares to leave.

SONNY

Your wounds will fester if you continue to ignore it.

ANGIE

I've learned to live with it. I suggest you do the same.

SONNY

It will continue to twist and turn you into a deformed image of who you really are. It's already infected you. Christ, you're working in a fuckin' strip club!

ANGIE

Fuck you, SONNY!

SONNY

You're doing exactly what the pretty little girl was groomed for.

ANGIE

Go to hell.

SONNY

Tell me ANGIE, did you ever get over the smell of listerine?

ANGIE

I'm going to leave now.

ANGIE moves toward the car door.

SONNY

Ever buy your daughter a plush toy? Have you ever given in to an intimate committed relationship?

ANGIE

I don't know SONNY! Why don't you tell me? You seem to know everything there is to know about me.

SONNY

I know you don't trust men. You can't and I understand that.

ANGIE

Of course you do!

SONNY

I know that you must have the power in a relationship. You do that by making sure your feet are always closest to the door. You can't commit to anyone or allow them to know the real you. You're love life is just one prolonged lap dance.

ANGIE

That's not true. I have a daughter and I have to protect her. I am very picky about who I allow into my bed and into her life.

SONNY

What about your life?

ANGIE

My life?

SONNY

You said that you needed to be careful about who you allow into your bed and into Jennifer's life, but you didn't say anything about allowing anyone into your life.

ANGIE

If they're in my bed and are a part of my daughter's life then they are a part of mine.

SONNY

Really? Then where's the father?

ANGIE

That's none of your business?

SONNY

You don't know do you?

ANGIE

It didn't workout. Enough said.

SONNY

It didn't work out because you're afraid to let anyone get too close.

ANGIE

If you say so.

SONNY

You run from intimacy, where as I crave it. You find power in your sexuality. I only find weakness in mine. You seek adoration. I seek forgiveness. You're the realist. I'm the hopeless, albeit, slightly damaged romantic.

ANGIE

Romantics tend to offer their throats in a relationship.

SONNY

And I do.

ANGIE

I don't.

SONNY

I know.

ANGIE

We have nothing in common.

SONNY

We're both casualties of the weaknesses of others. That we have in common.

ANGIE

The only thing we agree on is our mutual contempt for you.

SONNY

True, but neither of us is capable of a normal relationship. We're both flawed creatures. You as much as me.

ANGIE

Which together gives us nothing.

SONNY

Or everything. We might satisfy each other's missing parts.

ANGIE

But I don't like you SONNY.

SONNY

I know.

ANGIE

I'm not attracted to you. You disgust me.

SONNY

I never said it would be easy, but perhaps... Just maybe... we're so wrong for each other that it might be worth pursuing.

ANGIE

Are you really that insane or just that relentless!

SONNY

Most relationships begin as a form of mutual barter... of money... influence... or beauty. Ours would be a strategic alliance of the emotionally maimed.

ANGIE

And you call yourself a romantic?

SONNY

I said I was a damaged romantic.

ANGIE

Wouldn't that make you a cynic?

SONNY

I've had my share of disappointments. But there is no question that I would give all my love, affection, loyalty and devotion to my soul mate.

ANGIE

So would a Golden Retriever.

SONNY

You make fun of me, taunt me and yet here you stand as alone as I am.

ANGIE takes out the journal and begins to thumb through it.

ANGIE

I guess we both have work to do. I choose to do mine with my therapist.

SONNY

What are you doing?

ANGIE

Just checking out your past soul mates.

SONNY

They were all too fleeting for that... What do I need to do to get my journal back?

ANGIE

Sit up and bark might work.

SONNY

Very funny.

ANGIE

So how did this creepy albeit unique approach resonate with...

ANGIE looks up one of the names in the journal

ANGIE

Cynthia?....

SONNY

Give it back to me...

ANGIE

I'm guessing it didn't work any better with..... Jennifer.

SONNY pulls money from his pocket.

SONNY

Here is the five hundred dollars.... for the book.

ANGIE

Don't think so.... What ever happened to sweet little Barbie with the long blonde hair....

SONNY takes a step toward ANGIE. She threatens to rip out the page. He stops.

ANGIE

Was Diane impressed with your approach and why is their an x through her page?

SONNY

That is none of your business.

ANGIE

And here's another x for Alexandria...

ANGIE stops in mid sentence. She looks up at SONNY. There is no hiding the fear in her eyes and the dread in her voice.

ANGIE

I know this address.

SONNY

Of course you do. Play dates with your daughter

ANGIE

What does the x mean?

SONNY

I think you know.

ANGIE

Sandy!... Oh my God! Its you!

ANGIE's knees grow weak. She leans against the hood of the car. Carefully, almost reverently she slides the journal back into her duffel bag.

SONNY

Secrets shared.

ANGIE

There are more than two x's in this book.

SONNY

Secrets yet to be shared.

ANGIE pulls out her knife and with a shaking hand holds it in front of her.

ANGIE

Stay away from me.

Keeping her eyes on SONNY, ANGIE backs up toward the car door and gets in. She attempts to start the car, but nothing happens.

SONNY

It won't start without this.

SONNY is holding something in his hand.

SONNY

The fuse to your fuel pump.

With her eyes lazer-locked on SONNY, ANGIE slips back out of the car, her knife drawn.

SONNY

How about I trade you one fuel pump for one journal?

ANGIE pulls out the duffel bag and places it back on the hood of the car. She pulls out the journal and opens it. She contemplates for a moment and then...

ANGIE

How many of these other girls were dancers?

SONNY

They were all either dancers or escorts. They tend to be the most damaged.

ANGIE

And I was next?

SONNY

Yes.

ANGIE

Why?

SONNY

Why you?

ANGIE is barely able to hold back her tears.

ANGIE

Why do you do this?

SONNY

I collect intimacies the same way others collect fine art. When Mrs. D died in my arms I discovered the most intimate act of all.

SONNY begins to play with his red silk scarf.

SONNY

What is it about the soft cool caress of a silk scarf...

SONNY rubs his scarf against his cheek.

SONNY

... that when I place it around her neck I swear that for just an instant she submits to it and her eyes soften slightly...

SONNY uses the scarf to reenact the scene.

SONNY

I tighten the grip... just enough for the eyes to question. Slightly tighter and there is realization. She screams,

struggles, kicks and scratches at my face, digging her nails into the back of my hands. I bleed. I assume the pain. Blood must be shed. I owe her at least that. I pull the scarf tighter around her neck and the eyes plead with me... They ask why?

ANGIE is now sobbing. She reaches for the baby doll. She holds onto it tightly protecting her.

SONNY is consumed in the telling of his story. Through the kaleidoscope of his mind he relives each moment in vivid detail.

SONNY

The kicking stops. The nails withdraw from my wounds. She no longer struggles. She knows she can't win. She looks into my eyes and pleads for compassion. She appears so small and so childlike as she gently attempts to coax my hands with hers... to let her go.

SONNY's tears begin to flow. Are they tears of pain or ecstasy? At this point it is hard to tell.

SONNY

I swear that at that moment my heart is filled with love for her. I try to let her know, telling her that it will all be over soon. Just let go. Ohhh my beautiful angel just let go. Some begin to pray. Not out loud of course, but I can see it their eyes. Sometimes I pray with them, so that they don't feel so alone.

At this point it is obvious that this is not a reenactment as much as it is a confession. The prayer that SONNY is about the recite is more for him than for any of the women.

SONNY

Bless me father for I have sinned. It has been years since my last confession and these are my sins.

SONNY is now weeping openly.

SONNY

It is a good thing to believe in something when you are about to die. Eventually she accepts the inevitable, offering herself to me. Not just her body, but her very existence. She is offering it to me. And in her eyes I can see my own likeness, looking down on her. And in those very last moments of life my image fades away as if drawn inward. I enter her through her soul and all is so pure. So perfect. What can be more intimate than to know that it is your image that is the last thing she sees. That it is my image that she takes with her. I gently lay her down on the ground and hold her in my arms for a moment. I am overcome with joy and sadness. We were so close but it is for so short a time. Then I let her go, gently resting her head on the ground and it's over.

This has been SONNY's mea culpa.

SONNY

And for these and all the other sins which I can not now remember, I ask... I ask... No not forgiveness.. I ask for understanding.

Like a suspect who has been broken in an interrogation, SONNY now dabbles in the sense of release that his confession has given him.

SONNY

Did you know strangulation is the only means of dying where the eyes remain open?

ANGIE

You poor pathetic insane little boy.

ANGIE pulls out her cell phone and flips it open.

ANGIE

Look at what this woman has done to you.

SONNY

She loved me!

ANGIE shakes the journal at him.

ANGIE

Love doesn't spawn a monster... What she did to you wasn't just an abuse of the body. She betrayed your soul. She abandoned you. She closed her eyes and shut you out before you could ever ask her...

ANGIE begins to dial 911.

SONNY

Ask her what?

ANGIE

You're still that eleven year old boy condemned to repeat over and over again your last moments with her, that last chance to ask for answers.

SONNY

She loved me. That's all I need to know.

ANGIE

She abused you SONNY and then she abandoned you and you will not admit that to this day. If an eleven year old girl has sex with a 32 year old man, there is no debate. It's rape. It's sexual exploitation. It is sexual abuse.

ANGIE cell phone drops the call.

ANGIE

Shit.

SONNY

Dropped calls can be so annoying.

ANGIE

Please shut up.

SONNY

You might think about switching service providers.

ANGIE

Is this some kind of a joke to you?

SONNY

No... I'm just saying... I use Synergy.

ANGIE

You cloak these murders in some sick concept of intimacy. It has nothing to do with intimacy. It's all about reclaiming your manhood... your sexuality. And who has more sexual power than a dancer? You need to take that away from them just like it was taken away from you.

SONNY

That Psychology degree is really working for you.

ANGIE

Each of these women died in your arms just like Mrs. Darcy, but this time you were aware of it. Mrs. Darcy never shared the truth of that last moment with you. In the end she simply closed her eyes, shut you out and left you forever.

SONNY

She was hurting?

ANGIE prepares to call again.

ANGIE

These women die with their eyes open so that you can share that last moment and still anticipate an answer.

SONNY

What answer?

ANGIE

You need to know why! Why she did what she did under the guise of love?

SONNY

That's not true! She did love me and I loved her.

ANGIE

Because you're a man you can't accept the fact that you were a victim. You can't admit what she did was wrong.

The 911 operator comes on the line.

OPERATOR

911. What is your emergency?

ANGIE

I am standing alone in empty parking lot with a psychotic killer.

OPERATOR

Mame. What is your location?

ANGIE

1330 Fletcher Ave. In the parking lot behind the Lucky Lips.

OPERATOR

Officers are on there way. What is your name mame?

ANGIE

Angela Sandler.

OPERATOR

Are you in eminent danger at this moment?

ANGIE addresses SONNY.

ANGIE

She wants to know if I am in eminent danger at this moment.

SONNY

You have the knife.

ANGIE

(to the Operator)

He appears to be keeping his distance. He knows I have a knife.

OPERATOR

I'll stay on the phone with you until officers arrive.

ANGIE

Thank you.

(To SONNY)

She is going to stay on the line until the officers arrive.

SONNY

That's nice of her. Maybe this would be a good time to report your grandfather.

ANGIE

I can only handle one predator at a time.

SONNY

And you accuse me of denial.

ANGIE

I've never denied that I was abused.

SONNY

Keeping it to your self is denial.

ANGIE

The difference between you and me is that I won't allow my sexual abuse to dictate my life. I'm stronger than that. I'm a survivor.

SONNY

Just because your alive doesn't make you a survivor. And to say that it doesn't dictate your life is the ultimate denial.

ANGIE

Let's just agree to disagree and leave it at that.

SONNY

What about your daughter?

ANGIE

What about her? She doesn't know anything.

SONNY

If she's as smart as you are she knows a lot more than you think.

ANGIE

She's a healthy happy little girl. I'm very careful with her.

SONNY

She's dealing with the consequences of your abuse whether you admit it or not.

ANGIE

You're wrong about that. I won't let anyone get close enough to hurt her.

SONNY

You see your grandfather in every man you meet. That's why you can't ever surrender to a relationship. So men come and go. Even the good ones. Even the ones who really love you.

ANGIE

My love life is no one's business but my own.

SONNY

That's not true because as they come and go in your life, they come and go in her life. Even her father left her.

*ANGIE recognizes the truth in what
SONNY is telling her.*

SONNY

Children are like sponges. They soak up information and impressions. It helps them define who they are. So, who is your daughter when it comes to men?

ANGIE

It's too soon...

SONNY

She's already making those decisions. Your silence affects her as much as it affects you. For her sake you need to replace your silence with your voice.

ANGIE

I can't do that.

SONNY

You need to replace your shame with sharing.

ANGIE

I can't.

SONNY

Why not?

ANGIE

Guilt.

SONNY

It wasn't your fault.

ANGIE

I was as bad as he was.

SONNY

You have no reason to feel that way.

ANGIE finally confronts the truth behind her denial. She blurts it out!

ANGIE

I liked it! It felt good! I like it and I hated it and I didn't do anything about it.

SONNY

You're not responsible for an act you didn't understand. You were forced into it. You had no choice.

ANGIE

I did have a choice. I could have told someone.

SONNY

You really think so?

ANGIE

Yes, I do.

ANGIE is weeping. Police sirens can now be heard in the distance.

SONNY

Let's just see.

SONNY adopts a different persona becoming... ANGIE's Grandfather.

SONNY

Shhh baby girl. It's alright. Grandpa's here. Tell me what's wrong?

ANGIE shakes her head violently as if in response to the question.

SONNY

You know Grandpa loves you don't you?

ANGIE nods.

SONNY

Does Angie love her grandpa?

ANGIE nods. She begins to play with her doll.

SONNY

Tell Grandpa you love him.

ANGIE

I love you grandpa.

SONNY

And I love you too baby girl. So why are you crying?

ANGIE

I don't know.

SONNY

Tell grandpa what's wrong.

ANGIE

I don't want to.

SONNY

Do you know that you're the prettiest little girl in the world?

ANGIE shakes her head in the negative.

SONNY

And the smartest too.

ANGIE

Miss Rubin says I'm smart.

SONNY

Of course she does.

ANGIE

She says I'm the smartest in my class.

SONNY

And you go to church every Sunday. You're a very good little girl.

ANGIE

Mommy says I'm not.

SONNY

I know sweetie and that makes Grandpa very sad because I know how good you are.

SONNY is aware that the sirens are now much louder.

SONNY

Grandpa is going to have to go soon so come and give him a big hug.

ANGIE and SONNY approach each other. ANGIE carries her baby doll in her arms.

SONNY

Can I give your doll a hug too?

ANGIE

No!

She holds the baby doll behind her back with one hand.

SONNY

Why won't you let Grandpa hug your doll.

ANGIE

Because you'll hurt her.

SONNY

I won't hurt her.

ANGIE

Yes you will. JUST LIKE YOU HURT ME!

At that moment ANGIE has finally confronted her grandfather in the image of SONNY. SONNY ends the facade.

The sirens grow louder.

SONNY

And now you need to tell him what you just told me.

ANGIE is lost in the moment. Finally she snaps out of the trance.

ANGIE

And you need to tell her. Tell her that you're no longer her little man...

SONNY inhales deeply then approaches ANGIE.

SONNY

I'm not your little man.

He drapes his scarf over her neck. ANGIE does not resist.

ANGIE

... and that you never were a dirty little boy.

ANGIE raises her knife and SONNY offers his throat to the blade. The sirens are now very loud.

SONNY

And you were always a special little girl.

They remain locked in the moment. Neither backs off, both appear committed to the next inevitable act. Then slowly, very slowly, SONNY raises his hands in the air in surrender.

BLACKOUT.

The sirens continue to scream. SUDDENLY they stop.

SPOT LIGHT UP.

All that remains on the stage are the two scarves and the baby doll.

BLACK OUT.

The End