

# Christmas Eve at the Julibee Motel

John Bandler

Christmas Eve finds Cassie about to close her Julibee Motel when a storm sweeps in the well-heeled Mick. She insists her motel is closed. He wants a room at any price. His name is familiar, but she doesn't let on. Instead, she kicks their hard-core banter into a rollercoaster of confessions, threats, and unfulfilled desires. As they struggle, Mick must decide whether he wants to die, Cassie must decide whether she wants him to live.



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# Christmas Eve at the Julibee Motel

A stage play in one act, 53 pages

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CHRISTMAS EVE AT THE JULIBEE MOTEL - A STAGE PLAY IN ONE ACT

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PLOT SUMMARY

A stormy Christmas Eve finds a well-heeled young man on the run from some calamity. He seeks shelter in a remote, bare-bones motel and discovers he has an indelible connection with the young woman at the check-in counter.

CHARACTERS

CASSIE, early 30's  
MICK, early 30's  
GIRL (recorded voice), 5  
GIRL'S FATHER (recorded voice), 35+

TIME

The present

SETTING

A bare-bones motel

PLACE

The lobby

SCENE: MOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Same set throughout. A bare-bones yet organized space, with a token suggestion of Christmas. A door to the parking lot. An interior door to an apartment. Pictures or memorabilia of BIKES or BIKERS. A sign says "No Checks," another says "Credit +10%." Check-in COUNTER, STOOL, threadbare SOFA, PHONE, coffee maker, TV, remote control, garbage can, bottle of PILLS, paper CUPS, SANDWICH, ROOM KEYS, portable LAMP, FLASHLIGHT. A portable VOICE RECORDER used only in playback mode. A HAND-GUN in a drawer under the counter.

MICK, thirties, clean-cut but unshaven, haggard, wears dress pants, silk shirt, leather jacket, designer shoes. Expensive accessories.

CASSIE, thirties, wears a brightly colored sweater over big-box bargain but well-fitting casuals. A former exotic dancer, she's poised and aware of herself.

She's energetic. He's weary, depressed, except when she or his pills perk him up. Their moods swing, often wildly.

Outside, a winter rainstorm RAGES.

The curtain opens on CASSIE, sitting on a stool behind the counter.

She hits "playback" on her recorder. She listens, wistful, and mouths the words of the GIRL'S FATHER.

GIRL

(from the recorder, pleading)

...Another. Another one, Daddy.

GIRL'S FATHER

(from the recorder, soothing)

Shush. Time to sleep now.

GIRL

(from the recorder, pleading)

Another! Another!

GIRL'S FATHER

(from the recorder, soothing)

Tomorrow, dear. You agreed.

GIRL

(from the recorder, pleading)

Now! Now!

GIRL'S FATHER

(from the recorder, soothing)

Tomorrow.

GIRL

(from the recorder, pleading)  
Another one. Please! Please, Daddy!

The phone rings. CASSIE hits "stop" on the recorder, picks up the phone.

CASSIE

(into the phone, bright)  
Julibee Motel... Sorry, sir, not tonight... No, sir, but... I can book you in for an hour, long as you check out by midnight... Yeah, midnight. To-night... Twenty-five bucks.

She hangs up, hits "playback" on the recorder.

GIRL'S FATHER

(from the recorder)  
One day, yes, one fabulously blue-skyed sunny day, GG-Giraffe wakes up with an idea, a fantastic idea. Can you guess what it is?

GIRL

(from the recorder, eager)  
What?

GIRL'S FATHER

(from the recorder)  
Fishing! That's GG's idea. They'd go fishing. So up in his bed GG sits and--

GIRL

(from the recorder, now calm)  
Is BB-Bunny still asleep?

There is a knock on the motel door.

GIRL'S FATHER

(from the recorder)  
Yes, dear. BB's still fast asleep. So, GG yells out--

Another knock. Another.

CASSIE hits "stop" and puts the recorder in a drawer. Uses the remote to turn on the TV sound.

The TV plays Silent Night.

She rises, unlocks the door. MICK enters. He's dripping WET.

MICK

Hi.

CASSIE  
Merry Christmas.

MICK  
You're neon's out.

CASSIE  
It's supposed to be.  
(peering out the door)  
Nice wheels! I mean, wow. Those rims must have set you back plenty... But, those tires! Should've put snows on.

She shuts the door against the storm and turns to MICK. A self-conscious pause as she takes him in. Then -

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
You just called me. Right? That was you on the phone.

MICK  
I need a room.

She touches his jacket approvingly.

CASSIE  
Nice jacket.

She finds a TOWEL, hands it to him. He dries his hair and face.

MICK  
I need a room.

CASSIE  
Right. And I need you out by midnight. Sorry. It's Christmas Eve.

MICK  
I've been on the road ten hours straight. How much for a room?

He folds the towel, lays it on the counter.

CASSIE  
Don't you have a home-sweet-home somewhere? All decked out with holly and ivy, and a cuddly wife?

MICK  
And two-point-five little buggers on the way? Jeez. I left the freeway to hunker down, not to audition for Dr. Phil.

He reaches into his pocket, brings out a roll of cash. Counts out some bills.

MICK (CONT'D)

A hundred dollars. Will that do?

CASSIE

Where are you headed?

He slaps more bills on the counter.  
Throws in a credit card.

MICK

Two hundred. No...? Three hundred?

CASSIE

(pointing)

There's a Holiday Inn thirty minutes off.

MICK

Thirty?

CASSIE

Yeah...

She peeks at his card and registers recognition, a reaction he doesn't notice.

It is clear to the AUDIENCE she knows who he is.

MICK

In case you've not noticed, lady, there's one hell of a tsunami raging out there. Visibility, nil.

On the TV, Silent Night still plays.

CASSIE listens for a moment, thoughtful, then shuts off the TV.

CASSIE

(pointing to the coffee maker;  
abruptly calm, icy)

Here, have some.

MICK pours himself a coffee in a paper cup, drinks.

MICK

Thanks. Any motels you care to recommend between here and the Holiday Inn?

CASSIE

You on the run?

MICK

(mechanically)

On the run.

CASSIE

Yeah. Like, the cops aren't about to surround us, are they?  
I was looking forward to an evening with my feet up.

MICK

(mimicking a newscaster)

"Tonight, Channel Seven Eyewitness News reports from the  
friendly, twenty-five-buck-an-hour Jubilee Motel, where--"

CASSIE

Julibee.

MICK

What?

CASSIE

Julibee.

MICK

(cynically)

Whatever. Maybe they'll slot you between AccuWeather and a  
late programming note.

CASSIE

I'd prefer it if they cut into American Idol with "late  
breaking news."

MICK

Wrong night.

CASSIE

Better publicity.

MICK

Hey, you could raise your rate to thirty bucks an hour.

CASSIE

Last month we had this guy in Room 7 cut up his wife. Not a  
pretty sight.

He sways, steadies himself and his  
coffee.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

You okay?

MICK

Yeah.

He gives her the cup, takes a small  
medicine bottle out of his pocket,  
shakes out a pill. Takes the cup from  
her and washes down the pill.

CASSIE

So... What's she like?



Who? MICK

Your wife. CASSIE

Shit. MICK

You don't mean that. CASSIE

Shit. MICK

He makes as if to leave. As the scene continues it becomes clearer she doesn't want him to leave, yet her agenda seems unclear, even to her.

CASSIE  
(upbeat)  
We get lots of runaways here. I mean, runaway husbands. So if it's a girl you're looking for -- next time you check in here, 'cause tonight's kinda late -- there's a premium to bringing one out this far.

He turns back to her, frowns.

Girl? Sorry, I-- MICK

Escort service. CASSIE

MICK  
(forcing himself)  
Okay. The Holiday Inn. I'll check it out. With any luck it'll fall into the catchment area...

Catchment? CASSIE

MICK  
...of the escort service. The standard rate.

CASSIE  
Yep, they're within range all right. No premium.

He's tired, sinks into a chair.

MICK  
(without enthusiasm)  
Any particular service you'd care to recommend?

CASSIE

In this weather, not to mention this being Christmas Eve and all, you'd probably have to shell out for the whole night.

MICK

For the room?

CASSIE

For the girl.

MICK

The girl.

CASSIE

Yes.

MICK

But not here.

He's suddenly embarrassed by a thought.

MICK (CONT'D)

Say, are you...?

CASSIE

I'll let you have a room.

MICK

Thanks. Why?

CASSIE

I like you.

MICK

Thanks, but--

CASSIE

Twenty-five bucks. No credit cards. Otherwise...

MICK

(pointing at the sign)

I can read.

CASSIE

Good.

She takes a few bills from the pile, hands him the rest along with his credit card, which he stuffs into his pocket. She puts her cash away into her drawer.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

And, tomorrow, I'd like to find you still breathing. Deal?

MICK  
You know, Miss...

CASSIE  
Cassie.

He makes a half-hearted attempt at getting out of his chair. Sinks back.

MICK  
Miss Cassie. You know, I think I'd better just split, sit out this storm in my car. If you permit me, I'll grab another one of your coffees and go hang out in your parking lot.

The phone rings. She picks up.

CASSIE  
(to MICK, hand over mouthpiece)  
You're staying right here.  
(into the phone)  
Julibee-- Hi, there... Really? Oh.  
(looking at MICK)  
Just one dude... Yeah, one. Drenched... Flooded out?  
Okay. So stay away. Yeah. See ya.

She hangs up, thoughtful.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
You had anything to eat?

MICK  
Was that your boss?

CASSIE  
You look hungry.

MICK  
Your boyfriend, then?

CASSIE  
(playful)  
Don't be annoying.

MICK  
Me? Annoying?

CASSIE  
So?

MICK  
So okay. So you're offering me room service.

CASSIE  
No, sir. I'm merely offering to make you a sandwich--

MICK  
Jeez.

CASSIE  
On the house.

MICK  
(cynically)  
Hey, great...

CASSIE  
(a flamboyant gesture)  
Rev up, man! It's Christmas Eve, for God's sake.

MICK  
(gesturing at the room)  
Could've fooled me.

CASSIE  
Mind you, I'm not into any Christmas shit, except to take the time off.

As he takes off his jacket, the electrical power goes out.

Dark.

MICK  
Well, Merry Christmas.

CASSIE  
Amen. Hold on. There's a flashlight...

She finds a flashlight, snaps it on.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
You have a name?

MICK  
Does it matter?

CASSIE  
Everyone has a name.

MICK  
Good for them. Mine's shit.

CASSIE  
Your name...

MICK  
You should've read my credit card.

In fact, she did.

CASSIE  
(holding out her hand)  
So hand it back.

He's unresponsive.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
Come on...

MICK  
Mick.

CASSIE  
Mick.  
(beat)  
Ham 'n' Swiss, Mick?

MICK  
Sure, thanks.

CASSIE  
Drive your car 'round back. Park next to mine. I'll unlock  
the door for you.  
(beat)  
Mustard?

MICK  
Sure.

CASSIE  
But you'd better not throw it up.

She walks to the apartment door, turns.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
You're not into drugs, or anything deep, are you? I mean,  
with wheels like that.

MICK  
(patting his pocket)  
Over-the-counter. Does that count?

Pause.

CASSIE  
Stories count.

MICK  
Huh?

CASSIE  
(as if they're old friends)  
You can kick off this evening, Mick. Make up a story for me,  
will you, and think fun-fun-fun, while I throw your sandwich  
together.

MICK

About drugs?

CASSIE

About anything. Like where you thought you were headed tonight.

MICK

How a guy like me ends up in a place like this?

CASSIE

Anything. Like why you're sporting pants that look like the bottom half of a Mafia wedding outfit.

MICK

How about a loser...

CASSIE

(disapproving)

Nah nah nah nah.

MICK

(to himself)

...At this whatever-you-call-it...

CASSIE

Dump?

(pointing at the counter with  
the flashlight)

In case you're wondering, there's a gun in there.

MICK

No shit!

CASSIE

Wouldn't touch it, though, or my cash drawer. I got heavier artillery in the kitchen.

MICK

(startled by her revelations)

Hey...

CASSIE

Yeah. Much heavier. I'm alone here.

MICK

All alone.

CASSIE

And kill any ideas of running out tonight, or driving off. There's a flood out there and they're forecasting a freeze-over.

(pause)

By the way, Mick, I'm no loser, so don't ever call me that, and neither are you.

Well, not unless you just gunned down your entire wedding party back home. And I'm pretty sure you ain't done that.

MICK

I'm dead, anyway.

CASSIE

TV's dead too, Mick. And we're stuck with each other. So we'll crack open a couple of beers and you can tell me your story. Make it good, operatic good, and we'll have us one hell-of-a Christmas Eve ball.

(a joyful twirl, waving the flashlight)

While the friggin' heat holds out, that is.

He puts on his jacket, exits to the parking lot. The rain has lessened.

She goes to the counter, opens the drawer and hits "playback" on her recorder. She's thoughtful.

GIRL'S FATHER

(over the recorder)

GG says, "Wake up, wake up, BB. Rise and shine." "Go away," says BB-Bunny drowsily. "It's the middle of the night."

GIRL

(over the recorder)

Drowsily?

GIRL'S FATHER

(over the recorder)

Sleepily.

Outside, a powerful car-engine revs.

CASSIE

(to the recorder, wistful)

Merry Christmas, Daddy.

She hits "stop," shuts the drawer, exits to the apartment.

Dark.

Soon, the lobby is lit by the portable lamp she brings in from her apartment.

MICK sits on the sofa, eats a sandwich.

CASSIE

How did you find your way here?

MICK

The rain forced me off the freeway. The storm. Remember?

They look at each other as if waiting for the other to speak, as if to find something to say to bridge the silence. Finally -

CASSIE

(coy)  
You seem a bit outta practice, Mick.

MICK

I do?

CASSIE

Yeah. No big deal, but that was just so-so sex.

MICK

I beg your pardon?

CASSIE

Sex.

MICK

I don't get it.

CASSIE

Sex. You know, penises and vaginas, fully engaged. You started us off on the kitchen counter, just like in a porn movie, except it was dark--

MICK

Are you--?

CASSIE

(ruefully)

Wacko? About as wacko as your ham sandwich, which didn't have to wait too long. 'Bout two minutes, I reckon.

MICK

We came right in--

CASSIE

(laughing)

Right! As we speak, your fancy silk briefs are soaking in my tub.

MICK

(springing to his feet)

You're pulling my leg...

CASSIE

Check it out.

For a moment, he's puzzled. Then he unzips his pants, pulls out a handful of his underwear.



CASSIE (CONT'D)

(laughing)  
I was right! They are silk.

MICK

I get it.

He tucks away his underwear, zips up his pants.

MICK (CONT'D)

This is your "tell me a story."

CASSIE

(exuberant)  
Hey, I had to jump-start you somehow, right? Dig you out of your Christmas Eve sink-hole.

MICK

Porn?

CASSIE

Bed-time stories or triple X. I don't care, long as they're one-on-one. If anything drives me nuts out here, its this viewer-discretion-is-advised shit. We're open 364 days. This is my day off, you're not going anywhere, so spoil me.

MICK

Why don't you quit?

CASSIE

Kiss me first.

MICK

I don't think so.

CASSIE

It's easier than quitting.

MICK

No.

CASSIE

(turning her cheek)  
Come on, tiger. Kiss me to death.

MICK

Kiss.

He forces himself, kisses her lightly on the cheek.

CASSIE

It's New Year's Eve all of a sudden. I feel kind of up. Don't you...? It'd be great to have some bubbly.

MICK

Actually, I have some in my trunk.

CASSIE

No kidding! You got Champagne?

(beat)

Then, who's out there, on this wild and windy night, expecting you for dinner?

MICK

No one.

CASSIE

You pissed them all off?

MICK

Something like that.

The power comes back on. The lobby brightens.

CASSIE

About time. But keep your fingers crossed. My Julibee's on blackout alley.

The portable lamp remains lit.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

So? No family? No little buggers?

MICK makes for the door to the parking lot.

MICK

I'll get the Champagne.

CASSIE

Other door.

MICK

Right.

He swivels on his heels. It's too sudden a movement. He stops, steadies himself, then heads for the doorway to the apartment. She turns on the TV sound, then follows him.

The TV plays Joy to the World.

They return with an open bottle of Champagne and snacks. She turns down the sound. They take paper cups, MICK pours. They settle on the sofa.

CASSIE  
(holding up her glass)  
Make a wish.

MICK  
(raising his glass)  
Cheers.

They both sip.

CASSIE  
This hits the spot. So?

MICK  
So? So why d'you keep turning it on and off?

CASSIE  
(looks around, perplexed)  
What?

MICK  
The TV.

CASSIE  
Oh, do I...?  
(shrugs)  
So, did you...?

MICK  
What?

CASSIE  
Make a wish.

MICK  
Maybe.

CASSIE  
Won't tell me, huh?

He doesn't respond.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
What do you usually do this time of year? Ski in St. Moritz?

MICK  
Maybe.

CASSIE  
St. Moritz, huh? That's a ten hour flight. So, where does a  
ten hour drive take you back to?

MICK  
Nowhere.

CASSIE  
You just drove ten hours straight.

MICK  
Hell.

CASSIE  
So is it "Nowhere" or "Hell"?  
(pause)  
Hey, Mick...  
(pulling a fake smile)  
I'm doing all the work here!

MICK  
Look, no offense, Cassie -- that's your name, right? -- but  
can we just cool the chit-chat.

She leaps to her feet, moves away.

CASSIE  
(to herself, as if alone)  
That's my name. Right. My name...

MICK  
You don't have to entertain me.

CASSIE  
(sadly)  
...That's who I am.

Silence.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
(abruptly losing patience)  
You are one miserable...

He springs to his feet.

MICK  
You nailed it. That's me. Look, I'm really not up to more  
of this. Just let me have my room. Please. I'll keep it  
dark. No one will know I'm in there.

Angry, she finds a key, tosses it onto  
the counter.

CASSIE  
Take your bottle with you.

He ignores the bottle.

MICK  
Keep it. Thanks for the sandwich.

He steps towards the entrance.

CASSIE  
Thanks for the company, buddy. While it lasted...

MICK  
Sorry.

CASSIE  
I was kinda looking forward to--  
(suddenly cheery)  
Don't mess up the room. If you're planning to do yourself  
in, do it clean. I--

MICK  
Oh God!

He doubles over, sinks to his knees.

CASSIE  
Hey, what's wrong?

She rushes over. He cries out,  
frustrated with his condition.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
Take it easy. I get it. It's Christmas Eve, everyone's  
pissed off with you, and now you're stuck with some motor-  
mouth in the middle of nowhere. Right?

He recovers his composure, lets her  
help him to his feet, makes his way to  
the sofa, sinks in, takes deep breaths.

MICK  
My stomach...

CASSIE  
You look like shit. Like your "best before" date's expired.

MICK  
Some water. Just get me some water... Please.

He sits, dazed. She goes to her  
apartment, returns with water and a  
bottle of aspirins. He waves aside the  
aspirins, drinks the water, opens his  
own bottle and washes down some pills.

MICK (CONT'D)  
My stuff's stronger.

CASSIE  
My stuff's legal.

MICK  
(noncommittal)  
Yeah.

CASSIE

Anyway, it's only the flu. Right? Tell me what else you need.

He reaches for her hand, pulls it to his forehead. She sits down beside him. They continue holding hands. He warms to her touch.

MICK

Who are you?

CASSIE

Who do you want me to be?

MICK

Give me my choices.

CASSIE

Okay, then. You just married me and we're on our honeymoon.

MICK

Here?

CASSIE

Nope. St. Moritz.

MICK

Been there?

She shakes her head.

MICK (CONT'D)

Is this our first night, ever?

She springs to her feet, eyes bright, excited. Paces the room.

CASSIE

Now, wouldn't that be just awesome! Our first night ever!

MICK

How well do we know each other?

He's perked up. She stops, looks at him as if surprised by his question.

CASSIE

We don't. That's the fun part.

MICK

Yet we're married. To each other. And we haven't had sex?

CASSIE

You order room service. On this crazy gold-plated phone with a real dial and braided wires. Pretend.

Can you do that, Mick? Our order rolls in on a fancy little wagon, pushed by a stuck-up, heel-clicking German butler-type in a uniform, a freshly-ironed white napkin over his arm, a silver ice bucket and all. Man, I used to have a fear of waiters! Anyway, what we actually get is ham 'n' cheese on fancy slices of bread. And Champagne in the bucket. We're stark naked, of course. Hot and perfumed after our bubble-bath, in our antique, four-poster bed, under a mountain of goose down. Boy, are we ever turned on!

She holds out her cup. He fills it with Champagne. She lifts it up.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Cheers.

She drinks.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

The rings. The wedding rings. Do you have them on you? The his 'n' hers?

MICK

(gently)

Would it bother you if I were married?

CASSIE

You are.

MICK

No, I mean, right now. Today. Not in our story.

CASSIE

(ignoring his intent)

We stuff ourselves on ham 'n' cheese. Drink Champagne. Make love. Order more room service, and make love all over again. Romantic, huh? You're romantic, aren't you? I'd never have married you otherwise. And in the morning we have breakfast in bed, with silver salt and pepper shakers, eggs Benedict, and--

MICK

Fuck?

CASSIE

(indignant)

Make love. "Fuck" is something you pay for, get paid for, or get the crap beat out of you for. On my honeymoon, I aim to be making love to my new husband.

(beat)

Then we put on our fancy his 'n' hers ski outfits and head for the ski-lifts.

(pause)

Is there a Holiday Inn in St. Moritz?

Silence.

MICK

Who owns this motel?

CASSIE

The St. Moritz--?

MICK

No, this place. Your place.

CASSIE

Don't break me out of our story. We're in snow-covered Switzerland, in the middle of our honeymoon, remember?

MICK

Cool the fairy tales, Cassie. Just for a second. Please. Slow down.

An awkward silence. She rises.

CASSIE

My grandmother left me the Julibee.

MICK

When?

CASSIE

Not long ago.

MICK

(pointing at the memorabilia)

Was she into bikers?

CASSIE

(an affirmative nod)

Yeah. That's her stuff.

He rises.

MICK

Okay, great. I mean, sorry if she's dead, but look, I'll trade you my car for your Julibee.

CASSIE

(earnestly)

See, it's easy. A story's all we need. Best way to get through a wintry night.

MICK

No. I mean it.

CASSIE

It's working! Right now, you are one totally perked up dude.



Take my car. MICK

Stop it. CASSIE

Really. MICK

CASSIE  
(incredulous)  
You sign over your car and I sign over the Julibee?

MICK  
I've no use for it any more.

CASSIE  
Be serious.

MICK  
I am.

CASSIE  
That's not serious, Mick. That's seriously stupid.

MICK  
Because...?

CASSIE  
Because, for one thing, you wouldn't last the first 24 hours out here. Not on your own. For another, I might take you up on your offer. So, next time, I'll agree. And we'll shake hands on it. A handshake agreement's binding.

He nods affirmatively.

MICK  
What if we trade for a week? I stay here, look after your place. Keep it running. You go wherever you want.

CASSIE  
Like St. Moritz?

MICK  
Sell my car, buy yourself a ticket to Switzerland, go live it up. I don't care. But...

CASSIE  
But?

MICK  
But then I get to keep this place.

The electrical power goes out. The lobby darkens, but remains lit by the portable lamp.

CASSIE  
You're hiding out, right?

MICK  
Something like that. Like--

CASSIE  
So tell me 'bout it. We have all night.

MICK  
I was going to say-- Never mind.

CASSIE  
Your car's hot, right? And you're trying to fence it.

MICK  
Did you ever get paid for--?

CASSIE  
Are we still on cars?

MICK  
(embarrassed)  
I mean, hell, I mean you're much too good looking to--

CASSIE  
Now, I'm not sure which part of that stupid question I should take as a compliment.

MICK  
I mean, you're not exactly a...

She gets the drift of his question:  
whether she'd worked as a hooker.

CASSIE  
You're dying to know, aren't you?

MICK  
No I'm not. I am not. It just occurred--

CASSIE  
Sure you are. Admit it. Anyway, what if I have? There's nothin' to it.

(defiantly)  
Well, Mick, you've got three choices. One, you burst into tears, two, you walk out on me, slam the door, or, three, you slap me around. Name your preference.

MICK  
Why?

CASSIE  
So's we can move on. Cut the tension. So, what's your deal? What turns you on?

MICK  
None of the above. Definitely.

CASSIE  
A spanking. How about that? You could spank me.

MICK  
Is that what you want?

CASSIE  
Five bucks a spank. Deal?

MICK  
No deal.

CASSIE  
Tears, then. Show me those big tears.

MICK  
What will all this bullshit buy me?

CASSIE  
Your bullshit?

MICK  
Let's say...

CASSIE  
Well, let's say then, that in exchange for things that are nice, I can put up with quite a bit. Bullshit included.

MICK  
Time out, okay? Question: what's the longest you've really stuck this place out on your own, your very own?

CASSIE  
I'd rather not--

MICK  
Let me guess. Two weeks? Thirty days, tops. Now it's Christmas Eve, you're alone as hell. And it hurts.

CASSIE  
Shut up.

MICK  
Your first Christmas on your own.

CASSIE  
Shut up.

MICK  
No mom. No dad.

CASSIE  
(a flash of anger)  
Shut up!

MICK  
I was right!

She goes to the main door, looks out.  
The storm has abated.

CASSIE  
Rain's over. Now for the freeze-up, and more power lines  
down.

She turns back to him.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
Make it tears of frustration, then, Mick, and after a bit of  
teeth-grinding and fist-clenching, you can crash your arm  
through the drywall. Show me how much you care.

MICK  
(seriously)  
You've got to tear yourself away from this crap, Cassie.

CASSIE  
Me? Look who's talking.

She pours herself Champagne, sips, but  
isn't visibly tipsy.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
(staring into her cup)  
Great stuff this.  
(rising to her feet)  
What was that you said about hiding out? You said,  
"Something like that."

MICK  
Cut the bull. How many days-nights straight have you stuck  
it out here?

CASSIE  
(lost in her own thoughts)  
There's nothing to it, long as you can take getting trashed  
by johns, raked over by cops, or slapped around for  
freelancing.

She takes his hand and slaps her own  
butt with it.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
Spank me! It's on the house. Come on. Do it!

MICK  
If you really think-- Tell me you're making all this up.

CASSIE  
(lost again, in her thoughts)  
It's obvious, isn't it?

MICK  
What is? God, you need help even more than I do.

CASSIE  
(as if she doesn't hear him)  
Yeah. Johns never give up trying to cut out the middle guy, shoehorn a girl into a side-deal. I can't tell you how many times...

MICK  
(looking around)  
God damn it. By the way you talk, I'm kind of expecting some slime-ball to burst out of the woodwork. This stuff... Yours. It's all made up. Right? Say it.

CASSIE  
Okay.

MICK  
So say it!

CASSIE  
(convincingly)  
Okay. I'm making it all up as I go along. I'm just trying to pass the time. Feel better, now?

Pause.

MICK  
(unable to quit probing)  
How long were you, I mean, you're not still...?

CASSIE  
(back to her story)  
That's right. St. Moritz. Which hotel are we at? The Holiday Inn? There's a snow storm outside, and we're cuddled up in our honeymoon suite.

MICK  
I love it. Now it's a suite.

CASSIE  
Why not? With two bathrooms, two TV's--

MICK  
And a guy who loves being with you.

Pause.

CASSIE  
(wistful)  
Just one...

MICK  
Do guys tell you they love being with you?

CASSIE  
Some do. Some really do.

She does a brief Fred Astaire dance.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
(dancing)  
Better watch out. Some men say I'm a drug.

MICK  
Still, you got yourself slapped around.

CASSIE  
You figure?

She returns to the sofa.

MICK  
Yeah, in your imagination, of course.

CASSIE  
Yes.

MICK  
'Cause you are the most frustrating--

CASSIE  
Yes. That is what they tell me.

MICK  
Never a straight answer...

CASSIE  
(apparently relenting)  
Okay, Mick. For two years. Years ago. Is that all you want to know? I worked for a "service." More? Okay. I did time, exclusive. A married guy. An artist. He needed me because I inspired him more than his wife did. You interested? Huh? Do you have that kind of cash?

MICK  
I did once.

CASSIE  
(delighted)  
Awesome!

MICK  
Okay, so I'd need cash, but you'd need references.

CASSIE  
References. Got plenty.

MICK  
You're funny.

CASSIE  
Imagine. I'm your personal trainer -- "personal" as in  
"extreme personal" -- and your wife never finds out...

MICK  
By the way, there's no Holiday Inn in St. Moritz.

CASSIE  
Pity.

MICK  
There is a Kempinski. Grand Hotel and Spa. One of their  
suites will do us just fine.

CASSIE  
You been there?

MICK  
It feels weird saying this, but I kind of like being with  
you. Makes me feel... Must be your voice.  
(nods)  
Yes, it's your voice.

He sits down beside her.

MICK (CONT'D)  
I'm glad I found you tonight. Do you mind?

CASSIE  
Are you apologizing for liking me?

MICK  
Well--

CASSIE  
Poor, frustrating little me?  
(off his look)  
Hey, don't go all glum on me again. I'd be real insulted if  
you didn't. Like me, that is. And...

She pulls him to his feet. They hug.

MICK  
(awkwardly)  
I understand. No, I don't. How could I possibly?

They look into each other's eyes.

CASSIE  
I don't care what you're hiding from. I like you.

MICK

How did you break away? Eventually.

She fusses with his hair. Sniffs him,  
moves away.

CASSIE

You need a bath and shave. And I'm getting mighty hungry.  
Go settle in. Get changed. I'll fix up something to eat.

MICK

(insistent on his question)

How, Cassie, how?

CASSIE

But don't take too long. I don't want to find out what it's  
like to miss you. Until tomorrow.

MICK

Cassie!

Pause.

CASSIE

I killed my pimp.

Pause.

MICK

No kidding.

CASSIE

He had it coming. And no, I've never been to jail.

MICK

It doesn't add up...

CASSIE

My grandma, my Julibee grandma, hounded me day and night.  
They should have slapped that bitch in jail. She beat the  
crap out of me 'til I quit turning tricks. Grandma never let  
up.

He makes as if to leave.

MICK

I'm going to freshen up.

CASSIE

Use my bathroom. I don't want my rooms lit up.

Pause.

MICK

The guy who called...



A cop.

CASSIE

Your boyfriend?

MICK

He runs license plates for me.

CASSIE

Pause.

MICK  
(suddenly bitter)

Don't. I don't want to know.

CASSIE

Know what?

MICK

You don't have to pay him. Right?

CASSIE

Good thing you don't want to know.

MICK

He does small favors?

CASSIE

What do you think?

MICK

I just told you what I think.

CASSIE

No you didn't. He drops by, now and then...

MICK

I'll bet. And he's stuck in an unhappy marriage.

CASSIE

So now you want to know?

MICK

No.

CASSIE

He's separated. Got two kids.

MICK

And he's twice your age.

CASSIE

I like older men...

MICK  
(openly disgusted)  
What other shit does he do for you?

CASSIE  
He's handy.

MICK  
I'll bet.  
(pause)  
Roofing, wiring... Whatever turns you on.

CASSIE  
You don't have to push this--

MICK  
Plumbing, leaky faucets...?

CASSIE  
Okay, okay. Yep. All of the above. Enough info for you?  
He goes to the main exit, turns.

MICK  
You know, I've had it. Want to find out about me? Go ahead.  
Get your handyman to run my plate.

CASSIE  
You're jealous!

MICK  
Is that what you want me to be?

CASSIE  
Now do you want to spank me?

He's unable to tear himself away.

MICK  
Have the two of you done the St. Moritz bedroom crap, too?

CASSIE  
Don't call it crap.

MICK  
Crap.

CASSIE  
Mick!

MICK  
Crap, crap, CRAP!

Pause.

CASSIE  
He's bald.

MICK  
Who cares?

CASSIE  
He's kind of short too.

MICK  
A short, bald cop?

CASSIE  
He's not a cop, Mick.

MICK  
So what the hell is he? An expired marine?

CASSIE  
Security guard.

MICK  
Brinks?

Pause.

CASSIE  
Zippy Foods.

MICK  
(shouting)  
What the hell is Zippy fucking Foods?

CASSIE  
Sorry, really. You're taking this worse than-- Obviously, I thought "policeman" sounded better than "short, fat, bald, two-kids-and-a separated wife, middle-aged Zippy Foods security guard." I never figured--

MICK  
This is pathetic! Disgusting--

CASSIE  
Beyond words.

MICK  
Why did you say he was a cop?

CASSIE  
Samir might not be in cherry condition, Mick, but he's gentle. A real bona fide nice guy.

MICK  
He should have shown up tonight, right? The two of you, with the joint to yourselves. But I show up, so, why not? You keep right on trucking. The St. Moritz Holiday Inn.

The two of you, love-birds naked under a mountain of goose down.

(looking around, scornfully)  
Anything around here need fixing? I'm real handy with--

He stops, pulls out the roll of cash and his credit card from his pocket, and dumps all at her feet.

CASSIE  
(ignoring the mess, calmly)  
Maybe I should throw you out after all.

MICK  
Get yourself a repairman. Oh, and you can read my credit card now. Save your bald Zippy Foods buddy the trouble of running my plate.

CASSIE  
I know who you are.

MICK  
Okay. So who am I? And why all the shit about running my plate?

(beat)  
Oh, boy. I get it. You've been stringing me along... It's just a story, a lie. There is no Samir.

He sits down again in the sofa, slouches. She slips in beside him.

CASSIE  
Have you never been so lonely, so lonely, you'd--?

Perhaps he's paying attention. Perhaps he's tuned her out. He jumps up, scoots around the counter, yanks open the drawer.

She realizes what he's after, leaps up. Too late. He's leveling her own gun at her. She freezes in horror.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
Put it back!

MICK  
Get back. Move away. And shut your mouth.

She starts forward again anyway.

CASSIE  
(inching forward, humoring him)  
Okay. Not another word. No sir, not from me.

MICK  
(waving the gun wildly)  
Shut your face!

CASSIE  
(continues to inch forward)  
Take it easy, Mick. Life's hard. I'll agree to that. But hey, you'd have found spanking my ass a lot more fun than this.

MICK  
Get away!

CASSIE  
(closing in)  
Go ahead, shoot me... Go on. I'm not afraid... Pull the trigger... Shoot! Shoot, damn it!

MICK  
Back up. Back. Back, back, back!

She takes a step back, swings around, walks towards the apartment doorway. He continues to point the gun at her.

MICK  
Where are you going? Where the fuck do you think you're going?

CASSIE  
(continues walking away)  
Guess.

MICK  
Stop. Stop, damn you.

CASSIE  
(still walking)  
So pull the trigger.

MICK  
STOP!

She stops, turns, stares at him.

CASSIE  
Make up your mind, Mick.

MICK  
That's what you want.

CASSIE  
Let's get this damn thing over with.

MICK  
That's what you've wanted all along.

CASSIE  
Which way do you want me to face?

MICK  
I'll save you the trouble. How about this?

He puts the gun to his head.

CASSIE  
(arms outstretched)  
No, Mick.

MICK  
I'll count to three. One...

CASSIE  
(moving towards him)  
Mick! Please!

MICK  
Two--

CASSIE  
Me first. Shoot me first.

MICK  
What do you want from me?

CASSIE  
(reaching out)  
Give it to me. Give it to me!

MICK  
Back up.

CASSIE  
(gesturing)  
Put it down, Mick.

Uncertainly, he props the gun on the counter, but holds onto it.

MICK  
I can't even do this, get this shit right.

CASSIE  
You're Mick Thurson.

MICK  
Mick Thurson is dead.

CASSIE  
Not yet. Not you, Michael Thurson. Eldest son of James Thurson.

MICK  
How? How do you know?

CASSIE  
I know.

MICK  
(wipes at tears)  
The former son of James Thurson.

CASSIE  
You're Mick Thurson. Of Thurson International.

MICK  
Not any more.

Silence.

CASSIE  
A solid erection. Can you manage that?  
(beat)  
I promise you, things will work out fine, just fine, for both  
of us.  
(beat)  
Grab some sleep first, though. Restore yourself.

MICK  
(sarcastic)  
Right. You'll let me do myself in after a good night's sleep  
and a quick fuck.

She sits down on the sofa.

CASSIE  
(icy calm)  
No. I will not let you do that to me.

MICK  
(startled)  
Do what?

CASSIE  
Do yourself in.  
(beat)  
Open the drawer!

MICK  
Why?

CASSIE  
Do it! Take the recorder out of the drawer.

He brings out the recorder, studies it.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
Press "Play," Mick.

He hits "playback."

GIRL'S FATHER

(over the recorder)

...But GG-Giraffe says, "Choose, BB. What do you fancy for breakfast, BB? Ham 'n' Swiss or, maybe, eggs Benedict?"

MICK

What the hell...?

GIRL

(over the recorder)

Benedict? What's Benedict, Daddy?

GIRL'S FATHER

(over the recorder)

It's what I'll make for you tomorrow, dear, a treat, if you go to sleep right now.

GIRL

(over the recorder, sobbing)

I don't want Benedict. I want a story.

GIRL'S FATHER

(over the recorder)

Tomorrow, dear.

GIRL

(over the recorder, sobbing)

I want my story back, Daddy. I want my story.

A long silence.

MICK gestures as if to say, is there more? CASSIE shakes her head "no".

He stops the recorder.

CASSIE

(icy calm)

You are not going to kill yourself within a hundred friggin' miles of me. Hell no.

MICK

Because--?

She rises.

CASSIE

Suicide's too easy, dude, and I'm not into "easy." Besides, I aim to be a part of it. Your ultimate and certain death.

MICK

(waves the gun at the recorder)

I don't get it. What's the recorder--? I don't get it.



CASSIE  
(shaking her head)  
Really? You don't get it? Shame on you.

MICK  
Okay. You mean, like your pimp? Like the guy you killed?

CASSIE  
You really don't get it.

MICK  
Are we back to crap again?

CASSIE  
Don't call it crap.

MICK  
Okay. Suffocate me under your mountain of Holiday Inn goose-  
down. Bore me to death--

CASSIE  
Listen, piss-head, I don't care how crappy you feel, don't  
download on me.

(pause)  
What's so hard to figure out? The more I know, the more on  
board with this deal I get.

(thoughtfully)  
Maybe I just want your death to matter to me.

MICK  
And right now it doesn't?

CASSIE  
You got it.

MICK  
(sarcastic)  
Hey, wow!

CASSIE  
Make it matter to me, Mick. Convince me you matter.

MICK  
Are you that lonely?

CASSIE  
You like me. You said, "Something about your voice." You  
apologized for liking me.

MICK  
Something nice.

CASSIE  
Then you smear your shit in my face. What's it gonna be?  
Make up your mind.

MICK

(sarcastic)

Hey, sounds like we're married already.

CASSIE

I told you I can put up with quite a bit, but--

MICK

I know. I know. You need something nice in return.

CASSIE

This is my turf, so if anybody's going to do any killing around here, it's me.

MICK

You've got nothing to do with this. With any of it.

CASSIE

You're an intruder. You're high on OTC drugs. You force yourself on me. We can arrange it. First sex, then death. It's a cinch unless...you're gay.

Silence.

MICK

I'm not gay.

CASSIE

So why aren't you achin' to get it on with me?

MICK

Before I die?

CASSIE

Ain't I pretty enough for you?

MICK

What about security-guard Samir?

CASSIE

Fuck it. There is no Samir, not in my life.

MICK

(sarcastic)

That's certainly a big relief.

CASSIE

Fuck you!

MICK

So? Who were you on the phone with?

CASSIE

A girlfriend.

MICK

You're lying.

CASSIE

She's the one lumbered with Samir.

MICK

You met him?

CASSIE

Does it matter?

MICK

Nothing matters. Nothing. What made you bring up that bastard in the first place?

CASSIE

Because he's totally unlike you.

MICK

What am I like?

Pause.

CASSIE

(furious)

Mick Thurson? Spoiled rotten. He's had everything neatly gift-wrapped all his life. Now the wrapping's come undone, he waltzes into my space and dumps his filthy cash on my floor. He's entitled. While yours truly piece of shit has to work for a living.

MICK

Don't call yourself that.

CASSIE

So correct me.

MICK

That's why you want me dead. You're jealous--

CASSIE

Envious. I envy you.

MICK

Same thing.

CASSIE

(pointing at the cash and credit card on the floor)

Fine. Now pick up your shit. It's soiling my floor.

MICK

Like I am.

CASSIE

You said it.

He moves forward, waves the gun at her.  
She retreats. He hesitates.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Pick it up!

He scoops up the bills and card and  
stuffs them into his pocket.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

A lady invites you to have sex with her, and you can't even  
be bothered to turn up your nose. It's all too much trouble.  
Right?

MICK

Sorry. It's not you.

CASSIE

That's rich. The old it's-not-you-it's-me line.

She wriggles off her sweater, tosses it  
aside. Moving her hips like a  
stripper, she plays with the top button  
of her blouse -

MICK

(raising his hand)

Give it a rest.

She lets go of her blouse.

CASSIE

I'm real easy-going, Mick. If you want it, I want it.

MICK

I get the hint.

CASSIE

If you want to die, hey, I'm with you. It's a lousy life,  
isn't it, for a kid like you born with a golden spoon up his  
ass. Tell me what you did, what you think you did that's so  
damn important. Bottom line it for me, then work backwards.

She wiggles down on the sofa and pats  
the space beside her to get him to sit  
next to her. He ignores her gesture,  
returns to the counter, leans on it.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

When you're ready, Spoon Man.

MICK  
(despondently)  
Well, the spoon's turned into glass. All I have is an ass-  
full of shards.

CASSIE  
More.

MICK  
I need to sit down. Let's switch places, can we?

CASSIE  
Sit with me. Here.

He stays put.

MICK  
(ruefully)  
It was a sure thing. Couldn't lose...

CASSIE  
But you did.

MICK  
(pointing the gun at his pants)  
You weren't far off about weddings, though. My brother--

CASSIE  
Robert.

MICK  
(leveling the gun at her)  
Robert. And Samantha Morgan. Miss Debutante Dipstick. The  
first link in the merger of Morgan Holdings and Thurson  
International. Then the shit hit the fan at the wedding.  
Dinner was over. The speeches were over. The dancing and  
corporate ass-licking were in full swing. I was just about  
to--

He studies her for a moment,  
approvingly.

MICK (CONT'D)  
Pity. You'd have enjoyed it, you know, with your moves...

CASSIE  
Thanks.

MICK  
Just yesterday. On Park Avenue, and everybody was there.  
Shit. Everybody. Anybody that's ever stifled a fart in a  
Fortune 500 boardroom.

Pause.

CASSIE  
Have you ever, I mean, were you or Robert in line for...?

MICK  
CEO of Thurson International?

He shakes his head ambiguously.

CASSIE  
(suddenly)  
Hey, mind if I grab a drink? I'm real thirsty.

MICK  
(nods absently)  
One of my father's toadies whispers in his ear just as someone whispers in daddy-in-law Morgan's ear. Morgan yells, "The honeymoon's over, Thurson." On the dance floor, Samantha and Bobbie screech to a halt. The music stops. Everything stops...

CASSIE  
And?

MICK  
And my father comes at me. In front of everyone.

He levels the gun at his face.

CASSIE  
(licking her lips)  
Okay, so you're no longer first choice in your dad's legacy line. So what?

MICK  
So what? TI's in free-fall!

CASSIE  
Will you put the gun down--

MICK  
The first domino tips.

CASSIE  
...if I promise not to move?

He waves the gun.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
Mick. Hey, Mick.

MICK  
Our balance sheet went sour.

CASSIE  
Mick.

MICK

I borrowed big against TI's assets.

CASSIE

Mick. Mick, baby. Put it down.

MICK

We were up against a consortium from Dubai for control of a new polymer. Light as wood, flexible as steel, strong as concrete. Fire-proof. Hurricane-proof. Earthquake-proof. The sample met all the specs.

CASSIE

Are you an engineer?

MICK

But the test building...

CASSIE

What exactly did you do?

Trembling uncontrollably, he puts the gun to his head.

MICK

The polymer. All you have to do is hold a match to the shit. It doesn't flame. Doesn't catch fire. But the fumes... Toxic!

CASSIE

Put it down. Down.

MICK

People died.

CASSIE

Down!

Reluctantly, he lowers the gun from his head, but holds onto it.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Suicide is a turnoff, Mick.

MICK

Good!

CASSIE

Don't you have any friends?

MICK

No!

CASSIE

You must have someone, your brother...

MICK

No.

CASSIE

There's no one I can call? When the phones come back up, I mean? Your mom?

Pause.

MICK

Admit it.

CASSIE

What?

MICK

You smelled the cash.

CASSIE

To upgrade my classy accommodations, huh?

MICK

The moment you laid eyes on me.

CASSIE

What if I did?

MICK

The National Enquirer will pay you for an exclusive.

A silence as they catch their breath.

CASSIE

(testing)

Okay. Let's hit "reset." Your suicide note better absolve everyone, forgive everyone. Blame only you... I can help ya write it.

MICK

(seemingly cheering up)

Headline: "Whore Shoots Loser In Self-defense."

CASSIE

That'll work.

(beat)

How about ransom?

MICK

Too late. Thurson Industries is already broke.

CASSIE

So I'll take your car.

He's abruptly earnest, almost calm.  
Relieved, she follows suit.



MICK

I had no choice. We'd have been in default.

CASSIE

Are they...gonna come after you? Take you in?

MICK

The feds? Yeah. Soon enough.

CASSIE

Just you...?

MICK

And my brother.

CASSIE

What about your dad?

MICK

Don't go there... I just wanted to please him.

CASSIE

Pleasing your daddy backfired. Yeah.

MICK

Everything. Bonds, equities, retirement plans... Gone.

CASSIE

That'd piss a lot of folks off.

MICK

Yeah.

CASSIE

(forcing a laugh)

It's pissin' me off, actually.

MICK

(surprised)

You?

CASSIE

(forcing a laugh)

Yeah, me. One of the little people.

MICK

(gesturing at their surroundings)

What is it to you?

CASSIE

Might have been my dad's nest egg. If my dad hadn't been fired.

MICK

Your dad worked for TI?

CASSIE  
Sure did.

MICK  
No shit now.

CASSIE  
Right up until Mr. Thurson senior terminated him.

MICK  
(incredulous)  
My father fired your dad?

CASSIE  
Personally.

MICK  
Your dad? You got to be kidding.

CASSIE  
You turning up your nose at me again?

MICK  
Yeah. 'Cause you're making things up again.

CASSIE  
Why would I do that?

MICK  
Because you're a socialist wacko. One of those bleeding hearts.

CASSIE  
Your father...fired...my father!

Pause.

MICK  
(contrite)  
Hey... What's your dad's name?

CASSIE  
Carl Frommert.

MICK  
Frommert, Frommert, Carl Frommert. Doesn't ring a bell.

CASSIE  
Doesn't have to.

MICK  
Branch plant?

CASSIE  
Head office. He was chief dispatcher.

MICK

Must have been an agitator.

CASSIE

An agitator? You could stab him in the back, and he'd turn 'round and ask about your health.

MICK

What did he do?

CASSIE

It isn't what he did.

MICK

I don't get it.

CASSIE

It's what my mom and your father did.

MICK

You're lying again.

CASSIE

(bitterly)

The great, self-made James Thurson. Big money. Check. Big man. Check. Big dick. Check.

MICK

What's new?

CASSIE

My mom was James Thurson's slut.

MICK

(sadly)

Lies, lies, and more lies.

CASSIE

Go check it out for yourself.

MICK

What do you want?

CASSIE

This crap doesn't elevate me, Mick.

MICK

Okay. You hear about Robert's wedding, you know all along who I am, so you warm me up, string me along with pretenses. But I forgive you, Cassie. Really. You've got one hell of an imagination. But you're fresh outta luck tonight, except for my car. Better trade me your motel for it, real quick.

CASSIE

Still on about yourself, Michael Thurson? How about me? How about the Carl Frommert story? Wanna know? Do you...?

(pause)  
Not until you sit down. And I grab a drink. Brrr. Want your jacket? Aren't you getting cold?

She slips on her sweater. Wary, still holding the gun, he sits down on the sofa.

CASSIE (CONT'D)  
For this one, baby, you better muster a stainless steel stomach.

She walks to the phone, lifts it, listens, puts it down. Goes to the coffee maker. Returns in moments with two paper cups of coffee. Sets them down. Sits down beside him, drinks.

MICK  
Don't get me wrong, Cassie, but...does this have anything to do with...?

CASSIE  
Does day follow night?

MICK  
Did your dad sue?

CASSIE  
My dad sue your dad? For what? It was my dad who burst into your dad's office and attacked him.

MICK  
Your mom...?

CASSIE  
Let me boil it down for you. For years, Mary Frommert works hard at Thurson International. She rises from file clerk to budget analyst at the CEO's office. Once, when my dad messes up real big, she goes to your father, appeals directly to him. That's when your father locks her into a deal...

MICK  
How long did she work for TI?

CASSIE  
She was real pretty, you know.

MICK  
How old were you then?

She ignores the question of timing, instead jumps forward in her story.

CASSIE

(points to the recorder)

That night was his last. He never finished my story. All week, he and Mom were at each other's throats. He wanted her to quit her job. He begged. They clobbered each other with ultimatums. She did quit, but not her job... Mom quit on us. Anyway, Dad clicks off the recorder and leaves me. I hear him yelling at her on the phone, then quiet. After a while, I hear noises on the roof. Bangs and thumps. I call out. No one comes. I go downstairs. All quiet. I open our back door... All quiet.

He puts his arm around her.

MICK

How old were you?

CASSIE

I go 'round the house. I remember a ladder.

MICK

How old were you then?

CASSIE

Five... I remember being on the roof. Yelling "Daddy, Daddy..." Someone called in the firefighters...

MICK

Your dad...?

CASSIE

Broke his neck.

Silence.

MICK

What was his story about?

CASSIE

BB and GG? BB and GG were supposed to go fishing. Dad made up tons of stories, all on the fly. BB-Bunny and GG-Giraffe.

Pause.

MICK

Your mom. What happened to her?

CASSIE

Car accident, racing home.

MICK

God!

Pause.

MICK (CONT'D)

My dad, did he ever, I mean, did he...?

CASSIE

Get in touch with me?

MICK

What I meant to say is...

CASSIE

You still have your mom, your dad, and your life, Mick. How about a merry Christmas?

MICK

At the Julibee Motel?

CASSIE

Yeah. Right here, with me, at the Julibee Motel...

She eases the gun away from him, puts it down.

He doesn't resist. He's giving in to fatigue and his trust in her.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

(a huge breath of relief)

Whew! I could do with more Champagne. Got any?

MICK

Sure do.

CASSIE

(cheerfully)

So, go get it. But watch your step out there. The parking lot's a friggin' sheet of ice.

He yawns, shuts his eyes.

She fusses with his shirt.

He leans into her, peaceful.

MICK

(snuggling up to her)

Will I...? I mean, will I have to shell out for the whole night?

CASSIE

For the room?

MICK

For the girl.

(pause)

Those stories. Your dad's. Are there any more?

CASSIE

We'll listen to them together.

MICK

So tell me, Cassie, what would BB and GG be getting up to this Christmas Eve?

CASSIE

Oh, lots and lots. But first, they'd have a real hot bath.

He falls asleep against her as Silent Night plays.

Curtain.

END

**Genre:** Psychological drama

**Further Reference:**

<http://www.bandler.com/motel>

<http://www.bandler.com/julibee/>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20211016173623/http://www.bandler.com/motel/>,

<https://web.archive.org/web/20220820195849/http://www.bandler.com/julibee/> (accessed June 20, 2023)

John Bandler Plays: <https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/handle/11375/27422>

**Productions:**

First produced for the 2010 Hamilton Fringe Festival at the Downtown Arts Centre Studio, July 15-25, 2010. Directed by Michael Anania. Featuring Monica Cairney and Duncan Thompson. Stage managed by Riane Leonard. Executive produced by John Bandler. Supported by Beth Bandler, Matt Bergen, Erin Giroux, Albert Snow, Tom Sweeney, Chris Vergara, and Mel Watkins.

Second production for the 2016 Hamilton Fringe Festival at The Players' Guild of Hamilton, Inc, July 14-24, 2016. Directed by Tom Mackan. Featuring Aimee Kessler Evans, James Thomas, and Steve O'Brien. Production team: Anne Hogan, Daniel VanAmelsvoort, Graeme McArthur, Peter Jonasson, Beth Bandler, and John Bandler.

**Themes:** Escape, lust, manipulation, isolation, seduction, power, capitalism

**Pitch from press release for the 2016 production:**

Fancy a Lonely Christmas Eve at the Julibee Motel?

Hamilton, Ontario, June 13, 2016 — You don't? But Cassie Frommert does. You'll meet Cassie in John Bandler's psychodrama Christmas Eve at the Julibee Motel at The Hamilton Fringe Festival, July 14-24, 2016.

It's Christmas Eve and Cassie is about to lock up her Julibee Motel. She's behind the check-in counter, reliving one of her daddy's bedtime stories, when an icy rainstorm sweeps Mick Thurson into her lobby. The well-heeled Mick is willing to pay whatever Cassie asks for a room, while Cassie insists her motel is closed for Christmas. His name is familiar, but she doesn't let on. Instead, she kicks their hard-core banter into an emotional rollercoaster of confessions, threats, and unfulfilled desires. As each of them struggle for control, Mick must decide whether he wants to die; Cassie must decide whether she wants him to live.

Why is Cassie alone in her motel on Christmas Eve? What compels her to relive her father's bedtime story? What calamity is Mick escaping from? And what backstory connects Mick with Cassie?

As Mick vacillates between life and death, and Cassie torments him with her yarns, you'll squirm in your seat. All this at the Players' Guild of Hamilton, 80 Queen Street South.