

The kitchen: Sally is on the phone much disturbed.

Sally: You're saying....? (Pause.) You're saying...? (Pause.) And this is what you're saying? I *know* what you're saying. Is this responsible? Are you doing a responsible thing? I think *not*. I think *bullshit*. I think fuck *you*.

(Sally hangs up. Polly has entered the kitchen, and witnessed the action)

Polly: What?

Sally: Nothing. Fucking babysitter. Fucking little teenage bitch.

Polly: That was her?

Sally: You make a commitment, you make a business arrangement...is it me? Am *I* insane?

Polly: On the phone?

Sally: You say, this I will do. I will make this commitment. I will shoulder this burden. I will take your money for doing so. Do you say, I will be a teenage cunt and change my mind? Was that option explored? Should I have *anticipated*?

Polly: She's not coming?

Sally: The deal was made. The bargain sealed. So what is a bargain today? What is honor? A meaningless concept. A dead thing.

Polly: So she's not coming.

Sally: Because her mother—is this comical? You tell me—is in the hospital. With a stone. Today, of all magical days.

Polly: Gall?

Sally: *Kidney*. Painful, I grant you. But life-threatening?

Polly: Still...

Sally: No still. No extenuations, please. Mommie Dearest is not going to die. So this pussy makes a deal, she says I will have my teenage ass in your house at seven o'clock, and she reneges for a mother who will not be dying. And that's right? That's a valid decision? I don't mean to be *flippant*, but where are the priorities?

Polly: So no babysitter.

Sally: So I'm dicked.

Polly: And you have no alternate plan.

Sally: I'm royally dicked. I'm taking it dry.

Polly: You should have anticipated.

Sally: I trust. I'm a trusting individual. I subscribe to the code which says "This I say, this I do."

Polly: Sally...

Sally: I know.

Polly: Sally, Sally, Sally.

Sally: Hey.

Polly: And what time is your...?

Sally: Soon. Very soon. (*checking her watch.*) Not even soon.

Polly: Is cancelling a possibility?

Sally: For those who cancel, yes. I do not cancel. I will be there.

Polly: How will you do it if you can not do it?

Sally: I will think about it, I will solve the problem, and I will be there.

Polly: How about Joe?

Sally: You know what I say about Joe? I say, fuck Joe.

Polly: Fuck Joe?

Sally: Fuck him. Yes, he's my husband, but fuck him. Consider him fucked. A man is only a thing, and a husband is less than a thing. And if I can't depend on *people*, if I can't depend on pimple-faced teenage *cunts*, how can I depend on *things*?

Polly: You can't.

Sally: I don't.

Polly: So...

Sally: So. I have to think about it. I'm thinking about it now.

Polly: What are you thinking?

Sally: I'm thinking about thinking. I'm doing the preliminary work.

Polly: If I may...

Sally: Hmm?

Polly: If I may make a suggestion...

Sally: A suggestion?

Polly: A small suggestion.

Sally: You have a suggestion?

Polly: If I may. You need a babysitter. This is a fact.

Sally: This is a true fact.

Polly: You have an engagement which you would not cancel. Could, but would not.

Sally: A *business* engagement.

Polly: An engagement of some import. Financially. Promising remuneration.

Sally: Let us pray.

Polly: An engagement, then, with profitable consequences, not to be lightly dismissed.

Sally: Serious cash may be expected to change hands.

Polly: We're talking about a large body of women.

Sally: We're talking a swarm.

Polly: We're talking twenty or more?

Sally: Or more. Women of wealth.

Polly: Women of position?

Sally: Women with keen storage needs. Women who appreciate a fine plastic container.

Polly: Tupperware women.

Sally: Even as we speak. Twenty or more. A herd. A coven. Perched on folding chairs, chewing cauliflower and sundry vegetables. (A pause) So. The suggestion.

Polly: You need a babysitter.

Sally: Square one.

Polly: On short notice. No one available. And consider Joe fucked.

Sally: So here we are.

Polly: So what would you say...?

(A lengthy pause)

Sally: To you?

Polly: To me.

Sally: You would babysit? You would do this thing?

Polly: I would not *not*.

Sally: You would take it upon yourself to watch my baby, and let your own evening's plans lie fallow? You would? Would you? You're not dicking me?

Polly: Sally...

Sally: Polly?

Polly: Need you ask? *Need* you?

Sally: But this is an act of kindness. This is a true human gesture.

Polly: Friendship demands. We have an essential bond. I breathe with you, you breathe with me. Inhale, exhale. Symbiosis. What I give to you, I give to myself—there is no loss. Others would pause: is this wise? Is this politic? But I say *no*. I say, is this *right*? Is this *good*? And I *act*. That is the difference.

Sally: Honor.

Polly: Character. And all that applies.

Sally: I'm touched. I'm stabbed to the heart. I don't know how I can repay you.

Polly: *Ah*. Let's *talk* about that. Now the babysitter's salary is probably a pittance, a mere honorarium, cosmetic, unsubstantial—yet it would dishonor us both were I not to accept it.

Sally: Well...

Polly: Beyond this, I should expect some larger compensation for the sudden infringement on my time. We agree on this.

Sally: Do we?

Polly: I think so. Yes.

Sally: Polly, Polly...

Polly: Sally?

Sally: I thought you were making an offer.

Polly: An offer?

Sally: A friendly offer. An offer between friends. *Between*. As in without strings. As in a *favor*.

Polly: A favor?

Sally: A favor.

Polly: A favor, a favor. Wow. *Gee*. No. A deal. A deal in good faith. Business. Business is business. Favors are not business. I do you a favor, I'm showing a lack of respect. I'm taking you for granted. I'm dicking you. I would not dick you.

Sally: I feel dicked nonetheless.

Polly: You shouldn't. What should you feel? Proud.

Sally: Proud?

Polly: Respected.

Sally: You come to me in an hour of need, and you take advantage...

Polly: I offer a service.

Sally: You offer to rape, you offer to exploit, and you conclude that I should be proud. A conundrum. A fucking brain-teaser.

Polly: Sally, Sally...

Sally: Polly.

Polly: These are incendiary words. These are flammable conceits. I merely suggest a balance of trade, a quid pro quo. Mutual interest. You make money, I make money. Women get their Tupperware, and suddenly the world is a better place. Am I an optimist?

Sally: Dicking me...

Polly: You're not listening.

Sally: I'm listening.

Polly: You're not *hearing*.

Sally: Am I hearing? I'm hearing.

Polly: So you're not listening. Listen when you hear.

Sally: Speak when you talk.

Polly: May I speak? I'm speaking now. I offer to watch the baby, a baby I did not personally conceive. Should I not profit? Is there a God? I'm speaking ethics, Sally dear.

Sally: You're speaking bullshit.

Polly: Perhaps. But I have spoken, and you have heard.

(a pause)

Sally: So give me your offer. A neighborhood figure.

Polly: Money is not the motive. I would not be crass. What I need badly is what is easy for you to give.

Sally: Meaning...?

Polly: Well...?

Sally: (Getting it) Ha. Yeah. No can do.

Polly: Sally...

Sally: No can do. Read my teeth. Out of bounds. Tupperware is what I *sell*. It is not what I *give*.

Polly: This is a rule?

Sally: This is a *code*. Sacred, inviolable. I am a Tupperware salesperson. Each item sold is a mark of grace, a plenary indulgence. Give it away? This is not my game.

Polly: I don't mean to trifle with your soul...

Sally: You ask the unthinkable.

Polly: But is there a choice? You didn't anticipate. Time is passing. Wealthy behinds are squirming. The cauliflower is starting to turn.

(a pause)

Sally: I can pay...

Polly: Tupperware. Or *not*. Mutual interest. The scratching of backs. So?

Sally: You're dicking me. Openly.

Polly: If I can't dick my friends, who can I dick? Can I ask a complete stranger to bend over and spread them wide? Trust is essential. Trust makes the world go round.

Sally: And round.

Polly: So the deal is done. It's a done deal.

(Polly extends her hand to shake. Sally declines)

Polly: Friendship.

Sally: Business.

(the phone rings. Sally answers)

Sally: Yes? (she listens) You're saying....? (She listens) You're saying...? (she listens) And this is what you're saying? (Sally hangs up) The stone has passed. Long live the stone.

Polly: Passed?

Sally: Passed and pissed away. The perky bitch will honor her commitment. Thanks for your help, and go fuck yourself silly.

Polly: Sally...

Sally: Polly?

Polly: We had a deal.

Sally: A deal? Hmm?

Polly: A *done* deal.

Sally: Ah. An opportunity missed. The hand not shaken. The back unscratched.

Polly: Honor.

Sally: Business.

Polly: You're dicking me?

Sally: The dick is on the other foot.

Polly: Sally, Sally....*Sal*. Renege? You? I didn't expect. I wouldn't believe. This is friendship? This is *business*? Sal, no.

Sally: What can I say? You out-dicked yourself. A sad but valuable lesson for those who would aspire beyond their competence. Next time, be charitable. I have a sentimental nature, I respond to moments of generosity. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to take a quick leak. Would you let the lovely young lady in when she arrives? Thank you *so much*. (Sally exits)

Polly: Does life suck, or is it me?