



A one-act play by **Kevin T. Baldwin**

## Synopsis

**A middle-aged man enters into a hospital room, encountering a woman he had known in his youth. The two engage in a discussion of past missteps which may have brought them to where they find themselves this day.**



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### Cast of Characters

**CAM:** A 48-year-old heavy-set man

**BABETTE:** A 49-year-old dishevelled looking homeless woman

**ORDERLY:** Approximately 30-years-old

**DR. GLOVITCH**



### The Setting

2010; Dawn at Millborough Hospital



### Costumes & Props

Left to the discretion of the Directors and Producers.

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*<At rise, Cam enters a hospital room. A large sign is seen on the wall indicating "Millborough Hospital". It is a very antiseptic-looking room with no windows and only one door. Cam carries with him a small wire-bound notebook or reporter's notepad. He is accompanied into the room by a slovenly looking Orderly. The room is sparse of any furniture or medical equipment. There is just an empty chair where Cam will eventually sit, and a gurney on which Babette lies motionless. Cam seems ill at ease when he sees Babette as he speaks with the Orderly.>*

**CAM:** You... you guys couldn't have at least covered her up? I mean, given her a blanket or something?

**ORDERLY:** Hey, we was told not to touch her and to keep her in here until the police had a chance to investigate.

**CAM:** She looks awful. So pale. Was she raped?

**ORDERLY:** How should I know? They don't give me her medical chart. Doctor Glovitch just told me what to do so I brung her in here so's the docs could check her out. *<After a beat.>* You a reporter?

**CAM:** *<Staring at Babette.>* Yes. Yes, I am.

**ORDERLY:** Cool. You gonna write a story on her or what? *<No response.>* Hey, mister?

**CAM:** Where was she found?

**ORDERLY:** *<Shrugs his shoulders.>* Beats me. Hey, wait a sec. I think nurses said there's an underpass near the railroad station on Union Street?

**CAM:** <Nodding.> Near the old Store 24. I remember. I grew up near there.

**ORDERLY:** Yah, well the cops found her there. <Pulls out a necklace with a two-tone colored pendant.> They found her clutchin' this in her hand.

**CAM:** It's a pendant.

**ORDERLY:** Duh. I can see that. What was she doin' cartin' it around? She steal it or somethin'?

**CAM:** No. It's her pendant.

**ORDERLY:** How you know?

**CAM:** The colors on either side of the pendant have something to do with the Jewish faith. Don't remember what exactly. <Examines it closer then holds it up to the Orderly so he can see.> The clasp is broken. Must have fallen off.

**ORDERLY:** What? Didn't she have no pockets?

**CAM:** <Mildly annoyed.> I don't know. Maybe all her pockets had holes in them.

**ORDERLY:** I s'pose.

**CAM:** Was the family notified?

**ORDERLY:** Family? What family. You kiddin' me? She's homeless, remember?

**CAM:** <Shaking his head.> No, she has a sister. Lives two towns over.

**ORDERLY:** Got a name? I'll check it out.

**CAM:** Thanks. <Pulls out a page from the notebook and hands it to the Orderly.> You'll find her name in here. Yvette.

**ORDERLY:** Cool. Uh, you gonna be long in here?

**CAM:** Do me a favor? Get me blanket.

**ORDERLY:** What for? It ain't gonna—

**CAM:** <More annoyed.> A blanket. <Softly.> Please?

**ORDERLY:** *<Shrugs.>* Yeah, fine. Cool. Whatever. I gotta find the Doc anyways to sign her out. *<Exits.>*

**CAM:** *<Approaches Babette.>* Damn. *<Takes a deep breath.>* Well this is awkward. Here I am a writer and I don't know what to say. *<Takes a step back from the gurney.>* Don't know if you can even hear— . Hell, you probably wouldn't even remember me. *<After a beat.>* It's Cam. *<Beat.>* Cam? From the Dunning School?

*<Babette doesn't respond as Cam sits in the chair and wipes his brow. The Orderly returns with a small blanket.>*

**ORDERLY:** Here you go.

**CAM:** *<Looks up and takes the blanket.>* Oh, thanks. *<Stands up and crosses over to Babette, partially covering her with the blanket. The Orderly looks at Cam perplexed.>*

**ORDERLY:** Why bo— ? *<Shrugs then turns to go.>* Whatever. Just about ten minutes or so. Then after the Doc checks her out we gotta bring her over. *<Exits.>*

**CAM:** *<Crossing back to the chair.>* You've got to help me here, Babette. I can't figure out— I mean, what happened? I know it's been forty years, but still I can't believe you wound up here. *<Sits down in the chair and begins to cover his eyes, rubbing them. He then examines the pendant again.>*

*<While Cam is distracted, Babette quietly stirs, sitting up on her gurney. She looks around. She is frightened, unaware of her surroundings at first, then realizes she is in a hospital.>*

**BABETTE:** Oh, Christ. Not again. How'd I get here this time?

**CAM:** *<Stands up, startled.>* You— you're in a hospital. They brought you in. I heard it on my police scanner.

**BABETTE:** You a cop?

**CAM:** *<Shaking his head no.>* I'm Cam. Cam Stewart. *<Beat.>* Do you—do you remember me at all?

*<Babette looks at Cam for a moment then shakes her head indicating she doesn't. Cam takes another beat and decides to change the subject.>*

**CAM (Continued):** They found you in an underpass. Do you remember anything about how you got there?

**BABETTE:** *<Adjusts the blanket around shoulders.>* Cold. *<Beat.>* I was cold.

**CAM:** Yes, Babette. It was cold, but I mean why did they find you there?

**BABETTE:** I dunno. Guess it was... warm. Yeah, it was warm... there.

**CAM:** But why there? Why not a shelter?

**BABETTE:** *<Shrugging.>* Shelter was full.

**CAM:** What about the methadone clinic? You were a patient there. Why couldn't somebody there have helped you?

**BABETTE:** *<Coldly, yet almost casually.>* Closed on Mondays. Nobody there—wait. *<Looks at Cam, then slowly tries to get out of bed with the blanket still wrapped over her shoulders.>* You know about the methadone clinic? *<After a beat.>* You new here? I don't recognize you. *<Begins to wander as if on new legs.>* Where's Glovitch?

**CAM:** The orderly went to get him.

**BABETTE:** You a doctor?

**CAM:** *<Helping her get off the table.>* Easy. No. I told you, my name is Cam. I'm a reporter. I know a lot about you.

**BABETTE:** *<Breaks away from Cam, and with a bewildered looks about the room.>* Not a doctor?

**CAM:** No.

**BABETTE:** *<Looks at Cam.>* A reporter?

**CAM:** Right.

**BABETTE:** Why the hell would anybody wanna do a story on me?

**CAM:** Babette, I know this may be a little confusing, but I'm not—I don't want to do a story on you. We... *<After a beat.>* We know each other. We've met before. A long time ago.

*<Feeling disoriented, Babette begins to wander about the room.>*

**BABETTE:** I don't get this, none of it. I gotta get outta here. Where's the door?

**CAM:** It's over there.

**CAM:** I'd pass you in the hall, or I'd see you with a guy, maybe walking hand in hand, whatever. Back then I probably wasn't crazy about seeing you that way. Today I realize that you were just being a perfectly normal girl.

**BABETTE:** Normal. Right.

**CAM:** But then I saw you in school less and less until eventually you disappeared. And nobody I knew who also knew you ever spoke about what was going on with you.

**BABETTE:** *<Aggravated.>* Oh, God. Let it go.

**CAM:** Some kids said you started going to the vocational high school. Others thought there were family issues.

**BABETTE:** *<Getting defensive again.>* Who said anything about "family issues"?

**CAM:** *<Backing away.>* Or whatever, whatever.

**BABETTE:** Dude, it was my family and nobody's business but my own. It was my life. I don't blame anybody for how I got to be where I am, least of all you. *<After a prolonged pause, she looks at Cam. She smiles, approaches and hands Cam the necklace.>* Do you think you can fix the clasp?

**CAM:** *<Slowly takes the necklace.>* I'll try. *<Begins to work on it.>* I think you misunderstand—

**BABETTE:** Nah. That's crap. I totally get it, dude. Cam, no offense, but you're pretty transparent. But I'm telling ya, you haven't been a thought in my mind since maybe sixth grade. Maybe even fifth. By the time we got to junior high, pfft. You was gone. Outta sight outta mind. Otherwise, don't you think I'd seek you out and try to get even or something?

**CAM:** *<Hands the necklace back to her.>* Here. Get even?

**BABETTE:** *<Puts the necklace on.>* Well didn't you say you thought you had something to do with my winding up in this place?

**CAM:** It's true.

**BABETTE:** Then time to fess up. What the hell did you mean by that? What is this all about?

*<After a long pause, Cam walks around the room to describe the following.>*



**CAM:** Really? Now? You want to cast dispersions now? Listen, I may look like crap now but even at my worst I look a lot better than you at the moment.

**BABETTE:** *<Fixing her matted hair.>* Well, that's a matter of opinion, I guess.

**CAM:** *<Angry.>* And it beats the hell out of me why but I'm still the only one who cared enough to show up here today.

**BABETTE:** *<Confronting Cam.>* Yeah, about that. *<Pulls out a cigarette and lighter and heads back to the gurney.>* Why are you here, anyway? Forty years? You still live around here? Why didn't you ever get out of this stinkin' town?

**CAM:** Well, my Pulitzer hasn't come in the mail yet so I thought I'd stick around a bit longer till it arrives.

**BABETTE:** *<Laughs.>* You're funny. *<Looks him up and down.>* Fine. *<Approaches him; starts to rub against him.>* You want some of this, is that it?

**CAM:** *<Uncomfortable.>* No.

**BABETTE:** You lookin' to score? *<Leans up against Cam hard, wraps the blanket around the two of them and slowly licks his face.>* Cause I can give it you ya, baby. Real good.

**CAM:** What? Herpes?

**BABETTE:** *<Seductive.>* C'mon. Right now. Door's locked. *<Gently, slowly, nibbles on his ear.>* Let's go. *<Grabs Cam's crotch.>*

**CAM:** *<Pushing her away.>* Look, that's not what this is about! *<Goes to stand behind the chair as Babette crosses back to the gurney and tries to light the cigarette.>*

**BABETTE:** Oh, sure it isn't. You mean you wouldn't have done me in high school?

**CAM:** Maybe. But I didn't even really know you in high school. I barely saw you in middle school. Come to think of it, I hardly ever saw you at all after Dunning. I mean, where did you go?

**BABETTE:** Junior high? High school? I was there.

**CAM:** Yeah, off and on. It sure seemed like you were out all the time.

**BABETTE:** *<Takes the cigarette out of her mouth.>* I had... *<Long pause as she gets up the nerve.>* I had some issues. Mental, y'know, stuff.

**CAM:** What sort of “stuff”?

**BABETTE:** Just stuff! I dunno. Back then they just thought I was crazy. Nuts, y’know? They didn’t know much about the stuff I was going through. My parents sent me to doctors, but they didn’t know how to deal with it all.

**CAM:** Deal with what?

**BABETTE:** Oh, guess my head wasn’t always as clear as it could have been... should have been.

**CAM:** You’ll forgive me, but that’s hard for me to believe. You were one of the smartest girls I knew.

**BABETTE:** Would you just shut the hell up and stop saying nice things? You didn’t know me all that well and you certainly didn’t know me past Dunning. *<Points an accusing finger.>* And that was your choice, by the way. Not mine. We could’a stayed friends. *<Bangs on the walls with her fists.>* Hey! Orderly! Can I get some food in here? *<Turns back to Cam.>* Anyway, eventually I got on a methadone plan to help me off all the other stuff I was doin’.

**CAM:** But this is what I just don’t get. I remember a lot of the drug crowd in school, the “heads”, and you weren’t ever around them.

**BABETTE:** Oh, yeah. I was there. Maybe you just didn’t want to see. But I was also out a lot. Too stoned to come in or just out partyin’.

**CAM:** That’s why you never graduated.

**BABETTE:** Graduate? Oh, man. There were times I was so stoned— You know, I barely remember the last two years of school. It’s just a void.

**CAM:** You said you were dealing with some stuff with your family. What sort of stuff?

**BABETTE:** Family stuff— personal stuff... none of your business stuff. If you must know I’m still dealing with it. My own sister won’t even see or talk to me.

**CAM:** *<Nodding.>* I tried to reach out to Yvette, wrote to her. She never responded.

**BABETTE:** “Reach out”? What the hell is it with you, anyway? *<Crosses back to the gurney and sits. Tries to light the cigarette again but it still won’t light.>* How’d you find me in the first place and for that matter why? And what the hell gives you the right to butt into my life?

**CAM:** I don't know. I really don't. *<Sits down in his chair.>* See, I'm a court reporter in another town. *<Fumbles through his notebook and pulls out a newspaper clipping.>* I was doing research for a story. The subject of that story had the same last name as you, Newman.

**BABETTE:** I also went by the name Mendoza, too. *<After a beat.>* Briefly.

**CAM:** I know. But Babette is not the most common of names. I searched by your full name on the internet and a police report came up on you. I did a criminal background check and—

**BABETTE:** *<Taking the cigarette out of her mouth again.>* You did a what? You come across the name of somebody you knew forty years ago and that gives you the right to invade their privacy? My privacy? Just like that? *<After a beat, changes demeanor to a little more enthusiastic and curious.>* I was in the paper? Lemme see.

**CAM:** Are you sure you want to—

**BABETTE:** Just lemme see. *<Cam hands her the article. She begins to read.>* This was two years ago. "Homeless woman arrested on warrants. A homeless woman was arrested Monday at 10:47 p.m. on a pair of warrants, police said. Babette J. Newman, 46, had a District Court warrant that charged her with OUI. According to police, Newman had a second court warrant charging her with distribution of a Class C substance." *<Smiling.>* How about that? I'm famous.

**CAM:** What were you carrying? Valium?

**BABETTE:** Vicodin. *<Hands back the article.>* Helps with pain.

**CAM:** What pain? *<Puts the article back in his notebook.>*

**BABETTE:** I used to get headaches a lot. I'd take pot and other stuff to help with the pain.

**CAM:** When did it start?

**BABETTE:** *<Stands up and wanders around the room.>* I dunno. Always, I guess. Maybe junior high. I really don't remember. I used to get really depressed sometimes too, and the pot helped. Then this and that and other stuff. Listen, can you get me outta here or what?

**CAM:** No. I can't. Babette, when you saw those doctors, did anyone mention the possibility of some sort of bi-polar disorder?

**BABETTE:** In 1975? No way. And even if I was, back then, who'd even know what to do about it? How to treat it?

**CAM:** Yeah, probably true.

**BABETTE:** Anyway I don't think that was it. I just liked getting stoned, is all. I was just a chick who liked to party. Listen... I wanna get outta here.

**CAM:** Why? I can't believe you think so little of yourself.

*<The following dialogue overlaps as the two come nose to nose with each other.>*

**BABETTE:** Like I give a crap what you believe? Why? What's it to you? Nobody asked you to come here. My life may not have been ideal, but dude, it was my life. I had friends—

**CAM:** Friends?

**BABETTE:** Yeah. Friends.

**CAM:** Then where are they? Where are they now?  
Where were they when you first became homeless?

**BABETTE:** Now that's not fair—

**CAM:** Where were they when you got your first bust  
for possession? Your first three streetwalking busts—

**BABETTE:** Shut up.

**CAM:** And how about the shoplifting? Vagrancy?  
You smell of booze and urine. Your liver was

probably

ready to fail under that bridge.

**BABETTE:** I needed— you know you should really go.

**CAM:** You're sick and I'm trying to help you.  
That's all. I'm not trying to be judgmental. I'm trying  
to be helpful. No one else seems to know why you  
dropped out of sight and as far as I can see no one  
seems to give a damn that you ended up in homeless  
shelters and methadone clinics. So cut me some slack,  
wouldja please?

**BABETTE:** Like your life turned out so good? Look at you, you frickin' jerk. You're fat, ugly and balding at the back. Your love life sucks so much you had to come here and find a homeless chick to try and score with just to add some value to your pathetic life? How sick is that? What the hell kind of loser are you, anyway?

**CAM:** That's not what I did. That wasn't my intention. Look, you are way off base here, Babette. Way out of line. You know I didn't have to come down here. I could have just stayed at home, minding my own— That's NOT what I did, dammit! It' isn't!

**BABETTE:** Sure it is. You talk about how horrible it would be for us to become like those appalling adults who all came before? Well look in the mirror, pal. You became one, too.

*<Cam pauses for a moment as he does not know how to respond.>*

**BABETTE:** Ha! You blinked. I win. *<Sits back down on the gurney.>*

**CAM:** *<Calmly, sincerely.>* Where were your friends, Babette? Growing up, I mean. Paul, Cindy, Amy. You had a lot of friends in school. What happened?

**BABETTE:** I dunno. Life, maybe? Guess they had their own lives to lead. Yeah, well so did I. And no matter what I was goin' through, I wasn't going to impose myself on them like you're trying to impose yourself on me.

**CAM:** I am not—I swear—I am not trying to impose myself on you, really.

**BABETTE:** You sure you're a writer? Cuz that's' the worst sentence structure ever. *<After a beat, returns to the subject.>* Okay, so then what's this all about?

**CAM:** *<Throwing his arms up in the air.>* I guess—I guess I'm just hoping for a God's wink, I suppose.

**BABETTE:** *<After a long, thoughtful pause.>* God's wink? I've heard that before. Wait a sec. Oh, great. Don't tell me. You're one of them Christian nut jobs. You gonna try and save the poor dispossessed Jewish girl from herself and her heathen ways?

**CAM:** No. Nothing like that.

**BABETTE:** Good. Then what do you mean?

**CAM:** It's hard to explain. *<Beat.>* I moved to town when I was in third grade. Didn't even know you till fifth grade. Mrs. Hart's class, remember?

**BABETTE:** Nope. Sorry. Don't.

**CAM:** First time you turned around to hand me a paper, I think it was another math test I was probably destined to fail. But anyway I saw your eyes and I was hooked. That was it. To me you were 'Babette Perfect'.

**BABETTE:** *<Incredulous.>* Oh, please.

**CAM:** Is that really so hard for you to believe? It's true. Your clothes, your face, hair, oh to me, everything was just without fault.

**BABETTE:** Jesus, I think I'm gonna puke now.

**CAM:** *<Continuing.>* Your eyes, yeah those eyes, oh damn, those eyes. As we were growing up, I'd see you from time to time and those eyes would just slay me every single time you looked in my direction.

**BABETTE:** *<Disbelief, scoffing.>* Please. C'mon, dude.

**CAM:** But most of all there was that famous Babette smile. I guess a shrink would say that because you were the first girl I ever had feelings for I sort of place you on a pedestal above all other women. I did idealize you, I guess.

**BABETTE:** *<Laughing.>* Everybody gave you such a hard time. Chris Manion most of all, I think. He was such a freak.

**CAM:** Yeah, everyone put me down. You included.

**BABETTE:** Hey!

**CAM:** Oh yeah. It's true. They would put me down and you would laugh just as hard, just as loud as any of the rest of them. You remember?

**BABETTE:** *<Surprised.>* Well, I guess I do. Sure. *<Laughing even harder.>* Of course. That's it. We were kids! You wanna get pissed now for how we all acted in the fifth grade? That's nuts. We were all just a bunch of idiot kids back then, Cam. *<Recalls.>* If I remember right, back in Mrs. Hart's class you had us married before we made it into junior high. Of course you were gonna get crap from the other kids. Even Peter and Gary thought that was kinda messed up and they were your best friends!

**CAM:** <Laughing.> I know. I know. You're right and I'm sure deserved the ridicule. But do you know what the damndest thing is?

**BABETTE:** What?

**CAM:** Years later I still couldn't look at you.

**BABETTE:** No?

**CAM:** No. I'd see you sitting in a room, walking down a hallway, or dancing at a party somewhere and I'd do everything in my power to avoid looking in your direction, or to at least have anyone from seeing me look in your direction.

**BABETTE:** Why?

**CAM:** Maybe I didn't feel worthy of looking at you. No, that wasn't it. I think I was more afraid of being ridiculed by others who'd say I still have it bad for you, which was true to a point, but in other ways it wasn't the case.

**BABETTE:** You didn't date much during school, at least I don't think you did.

**CAM:** No. I didn't. See, I could never resolve myself to the fact that kids grew up to be just like the adults that came before.

**BABETTE:** Whoa. Too deep. You lost me.

**CAM:** As kids, we used to watch the behavior of adults and we used to make fun of them all the time. We used to say we wouldn't be like that. Then, it happened.

**BABETTE:** <Looking around the room.> What? What happened?

**CAM:** Chris and Meryl.

**BABETTE:** What about Chris and Meryl?

**CAM:** Well if I had to narrow it down to a specific moment, then it would have to be during some class field trip, fifth grade. I didn't go. Didn't get my permission slip in on time or something like that. So I had to remain with three or four other kids in class that day.

**BABETTE:** <Recalling.> I think they went to Plymouth Rock. Right?

**CAM:** <Considering.> Mystic Seaport? I don't know. Anyways, it was someplace outside. But when the other kids got back, there was only one thing everybody was talking about.

**BABETTE:** Ooh! I remember! I do! I do now! It was Chris Manion with Meryl Janis, making out behind a rock somewhere, right?

**CAM:** Right.

**BABETTE:** And so?

**CAM:** A girl and boy kissing? That hadn't happened yet. So, boys talked. Girls talked. Suddenly the adults didn't look so stupid. From that moment, everyone started to make every effort to do the same stupid things that adults were doing. *<Walks over to the gurney.>* Which was probably the same thing that has been happening for centuries. Instead of trying to be better than the adults that came before, we only managed to be just like them. *<Takes the cigarette away from Babette.>* Do you remember I brought in a cigar into class one day?

**BABETTE:** Yeah. You got in trouble for it, too, right?

**CAM:** I did, but the thing of it is: I didn't bring it in to class to smoke it. See, I had just discovered "Marx Brothers" movies. I brought in the cigar to do my "Groucho" impersonation for the other kids in the class. *<Holds the cigarette like a Groucho cigar.>* They crowded around my desk. I held it in my hand and started doing my impersonation. *<Imitating Groucho Marx.>* "Good morning, good morning, good morning. You know, I was married by a judge. I should have asked for a jury." *<Stops.>* They thought I was going to light this stupid thing up and I was doing Groucho jokes. *<Babette laughs.>* Next thing I know Mrs. Hart catches me with the cigar and my parents are called. *<Realizes.>* Wow, I hadn't thought about that in years.

**BABETTE:** *<Stands up again.>* Man, anyone ever tell you that you think way too much?

**CAM:** My wife. Lots of times.

**BABETTE:** *<Surprised.>* You? Married?

**CAM:** Oh sure. Almost twenty years. Three kids. Girl, boy, girl, dog, cats, house, Mortgage. The whole nine yards.

**BABETTE:** *<Approaching Cam again in a playfully sexual manner.>* Gee, and here I thought you came here as my knight in shining armor. *<Takes the cigarette back.>*

**CAM:** *<Stands back from her, more than a little intimidated.>* No. Believe it or not, I really didn't "pine" for you lo these many years. I dated in school, college.

**BABETTE:** Can't believe that. You were kinda weird and chunky all through school.



**CAM:** Yeah? Well in college I lost a ton of weight and I looked pretty damn good there for awhile. *<Babette stares at him.>* I said for awhile. *<Anxiously sits back down in the chair.>* We're talking during the eighties here. But I did. I dated a lot. Married twice.

**BABETTE:** Twice, huh? *<Approaching Cam again, more playful than before. Clutches hard at her breasts and wiggles them around.>* Guess nobody could measure up to these puppies. *<Thrusts herself in his face.>* Listen, get me outta here and you got me. *<Starts gently kissing Cam all over.>* You can have me all to yourself, baby, just like you wanted all those years.

**CAM:** *<Stands up and moves away from her again.>* Please! Would you stop? Just stop it! Haven't you been listening? I said I was married. Twenty years married. Happily. I found my soul mate, Babette, and she wasn't you. And we have three glorious kids whom we love and, on occasion, y'know, scold.

**BABETTE:** *<Coldly.>* Fine. *<Goes back and tries to light the cigarette again but it still won't light.>* Then go back to her and leave me alone! *<Frustrated.>* Why won't this damn thing light? *<Throws the cigarette and lighter away.>*

**CAM:** That's the thing. I can't just leave you.

**BABETTE:** Why the hell not?

**CAM:** Because I can't help but wonder if— if something I did, or didn't do, led you to be here now.

**BABETTE:** *<Sits up in her bed.>* What the hell are you talkin' about now?

**CAM:** *<Holds out the pendant.>* You were clutching this when they found you.

**BABETTE:** Yeah. So?

**CAM:** I remembered where you got it. Do you recall Barry Glickman?

**BABETTE:** Well, yeah, just barely. Fat kid, our age. Come to think of it we had a lot of fat kids in our class. Just thought of that. Anyway, Barry. Seemed kinda nice. Went to my temple.

**CAM:** *<Nodding.>* You got the pendant at his Bar Mitzvah.

**BABETTE:** Yeah, sure. Gimme it. *<Cam hands the pendant to her.>* Only two temples in town and a thousand Jewish kids? Hell, every teen in town went to everybody else's Bar or Bas Mitzvahs. *<Tries to put it on.>* We all got these as gifts. Damn. Clasp is still broke. Say, how did you know? Don't tell me you Googled that, too.

**CAM:** No. I was there. He invited me, too. I was the only “goy” kid there, I think. Never been to one before. Talk about being a fish out of water.

**BABETTE:** I never understood that phrase. “Fish outta water”?

**CAM:** It’s a metaphor. It means being in an uncomfortable situation.

**BABETTE:** I’m homeless, not stupid. But a fish outta water ain’t uncomfortable. It’s dead.

**CAM:** Anyway, I didn’t expect to see you there. I was 13 years old then, but to this day I can’t remember anything else about that except that you were the most beautiful girl in the room.

**BABETTE:** Oh, there you go again. Flattering the whore.

**CAM:** *<Beat.>* You’re the only one in the room who thinks of you that way.

**BABETTE:** It’s not what I am. It’s what did, what I had to do once in awhile just to survive, that’s all.

**CAM:** Again, I’m not judging. *<Points to the pendant.>* The colors. Two shades of red?

**BABETTE:** *<Nodding.>* Scarlet and Crimson.

**CAM:** What do they mean?

**BABETTE:** The rabbi’s wife made them for us. She called the colors “tola’at” and “shani”. According to the rabbi, together they symbolize blood, life, sin, bliss and happiness. So she painted the colors on the front and back.

**CAM:** And it’s the one thing you held onto all these years?

**BABETTE:** *<Uncomfortable laugh.>* Well, I couldn’t hold onto a husband. Lost my daughter to him when she was very little. *<Looks at Cam then speaks defensively.>* I wasn’t ready to take care of her, okay? So this seemed like the only thing left I could hold onto. Thanks for getting it back for me.

**CAM:** No problem. You know, there were other moments where I’d notice you after Barry’s big day, you know, in school?

**BABETTE:** How so? No, really. I wanna know.

**CAM:** I'd pass you in the hall, or I'd see you with a guy, maybe walking hand in hand, whatever. Back then I probably wasn't crazy about seeing you that way. Today I realize that you were just being a perfectly normal girl.

**BABETTE:** Normal. Right.

**CAM:** But then I saw you in school less and less until eventually you disappeared. And nobody I knew who also knew you ever spoke about what was going on with you.

**BABETTE:** *<Aggravated.>* Oh, God. Let it go.

**CAM:** Some kids said you started going to the vocational high school. Others thought there were family issues.

**BABETTE:** *<Getting defensive again.>* Who said anything about "family issues"?

**CAM:** *<Backing away.>* Or whatever, whatever.

**BABETTE:** Dude, it was my family and nobody's business but my own. It was my life. I don't blame anybody for how I got to be where I am, least of all you. *<After a prolonged pause, she looks at Cam. She smiles, approaches and hands Cam the necklace.>* Do you think you can fix the clasp?

**CAM:** *<Slowly takes the necklace.>* I'll try. *<Begins to work on it.>* I think you misunderstand—

**BABETTE:** Nah. That's crap. I totally get it, dude. Cam, no offense, but you're pretty transparent. But I'm telling ya, you haven't been a thought in my mind since maybe sixth grade. Maybe even fifth. By the time we got to junior high, pfft. You was gone. Outta sight outta mind. Otherwise, don't you think I'd seek you out and try to get even or something?

**CAM:** *<Hands the necklace back to her.>* Here. Get even?

**BABETTE:** *<Puts the necklace on.>* Well didn't you say you thought you had something to do with my winding up in this place?

**CAM:** It's true.

**BABETTE:** Then time to fess up. What the hell did you mean by that? What is this all about?

*<After a long pause, Cam walks around the room to describe the following.>*

**CAM:** Fifth grade. You came over to my house a few times. Sometimes Peter was there, or maybe Gary. We'd all hang out. One time, it was just us.

**BABETTE:** Okay. So?

**CAM:** You and I started sledding on my parent's stairs.

**BABETTE:** Sledding? Stairs? Oh yeah. It was like shag carpet or something like that, right?

**CAM:** Right. A gold shag carpet. Fifteen steps from the first to second floor. We were doing some "stairwell sledding". We flew down those steps. We were having a blast.

**BABETTE:** <*Smiles, excited.*> Oooh! Yeah-Yeah-Yeah! You had this really cool round and shiny silvery type sled. I remember that! It was awesome!

**CAM:** Right. Well, we were doing this stairwell sledding for an hour or so and I was ready to stop. You just kept wanting to go down the stairs faster and faster in the sled.

**BABETTE:** That's right! Zoom! That thing rocked!

**CAM:** The last time out, you went down the stairs way too fast. You slammed against the front door directly across from the bottom of the stairwell. <*Pauses and looks at Babette as he continues describing the event.*> You lay there still, motionless for what seemed like ten minutes. I just stood at the top of the stairs looking down at you. I wasn't sure, but for a moment, I thought you died.

**BABETTE:** <*Recalling.*> This seems really familiar. I think I hurt my head or something.

**CAM:** You began to move. You were okay. You stood up a little groggy.

**BABETTE:** You stayed at the top of the stairs. I looked up, and I remember you came down and asked me if I was okay.

**CAM:** Right. You said you were fine, but that you wanted to go home. I always thought you were mad at me for that.

**BABETTE:** Mad? It was me who went down at break-neck speed like an idiot.

**CAM:** But I didn't try to stop you. And when you crashed I was so shocked that I didn't know what to do. I didn't know how to help you. <*Beat.*> Just like now. You fell and I didn't know how to help you.

**BABETTE:** Oh, man. So that's what this is all about? *<Lies back down on the gurney, turns to her side, covers herself with the blanket and lies motionless.>* Cam, who said it was your job to help me?

**CAM:** No one, but I stood by and watched you crash. I did nothing. And it's like, after I read the article, I thought nothing of it at first. But then it started slowly eating away at me. It was like I was standing by watching you crash all over again. And, again, here I was. Doing nothing.

*<Cam puts his head into his hands. After a long pause, Babette slowly stirs again. She gets up and walks over to Cam and gently kisses him on the top of the head.>*

**BABETTE:** See? That's what I'm saying. You think way too much. *<After a beat.>* Listen, Cam, I just lived the life that I lived. The life that wasn't much, but the life that was mine and was what it was. The way I got to be... to be... well, the way I got to be is I guess, I'm not going to put onto anybody else. I got dealt some crap and I didn't handle it well. Don't feel like you had anything to do with it. *<After a beat.>* By the way that's one hell of a bald spot you got budding back there. *<She laughs.>*

**CAM:** *<Also laughing.>* Very funny. *<Sincerely.>* But seriously, I always felt I let you down.

**BABETTE:** You know for a reporter you're a terrible listener. Remember? We were in fifth grade. Fifth grade! And really, you were such a dork. *<Cam looks up at her, then she laughs.>* Okay, and I was a dork, too, maybe. But then I got hot looking in junior high and high school and you stayed a dork. *<Cam laughs again.>* It's not like we were gonna ever wind up in each other's lives. So why reach out for me now? Especially if you've got such a great life like you said with a wife and kids, dog, blah, blah, blah.

**CAM:** They are my blessings, but I guess it comes back to what I was saying before about "God's wink".

**BABETTE:** Yeah. What the hell is a "God's wink" anyway?

**CAM:** Don't you remember? Your rabbi talked about that at the Bar Mitzvah, too, during his sermon.

**BABETTE:** You actually listened to him? Hell, I never did. He sucked.

**CAM:** Oh, yeah. I never forgot it. He said "any miracle is simply just a wink in God's eye".

**BABETTE:** *<Beat.>* I think he got that from a Hallmark card or somethin'. Hoping for a miracle doesn't make 'em happen.

**CAM:** Maybe, but I felt if I didn't reach out to you and you died, then I really was letting you down... again.

**BABETTE:** Cam, let it go. You know, it wasn't divine intervention that brought you here today. You stumbled into this, that's all. *<Heads back to the gurney.>* Years ago all I wanted was to love and be loved. Today... *<Stops, takes a long hard look at herself and breathes a heavy sigh.>* Nothing miraculous is gonna happen here. If I made a colossal mess outta my life then that's on me. I don't blame nobody. Let me go. You go home to your wife, your kids, your life. Whatever stuff happened to me, well, it was all on me. Nothing to do with you. Hell, I didn't give you a single thought all these years and you shouldn't give me a thought now. *<Lies back down covering herself with the blanket again.>* But again, thanks for giving me back my necklace.

**CAM:** *<Stands up.>* Babette, if we could only get you into a program—

*<Orderly returns with Dr. Glovitch behind him.>*

**ORDERLY:** Hey, mister, sorry it took me so long. I brung the Doc with me.

**GLOVITCH:** Mr. Stewart, hi. I'm Dr. Glovitch. I understand you knew the deceased?

**CAM:** *<Startled, looks over at Babette and remembers.>* Uh, yes. I knew her.

**GLOVITCH:** *<Picks up Babette's chart.>* Well, she was a fairly regular patient here but she never provided us with next of kin. She would have had her ashes burned and that would have been it.

**ORDERLY:** I got a hold of her sister. Said she was grateful you tried to reach her.

**CAM:** She was?

**ORDERLY:** Yeah. Said she and her husband were out of the country for awhile but now that they're home she's gonna come by and claim the body. Said they been trying to find her for years.

**CAM:** And all this time she was only two towns over.

**ORDERLY:** Yeah. That's the way it goes sometimes, I guess. Right Doc?

**GLOVITCH:** Yes. It's a miracle anybody came forward at all.

**CAM:** *<Stunned.>* What did you say?

**GLOVITCH:** I said it was a miracle you came forward.  
Thank you for bringing us that information.  
How did you happen to hear--?

**CAM:** *<Sad, distant.>* Police scanner. Call came in. I recognized the name.

**ORDERLY:** We gotta wheel her down to the morgue, now. You all done here?

*<Cam stares at Babette for a moment as it sinks in he has either been dreaming or hallucinating about conversing with Babette.>*

**CAM:** *<After a long pause.>* Yeah. I'm done. *<Reaches out and lifts Babette's hand; holds it for a moment. He whispers to her softly.>* So long, Babette. Rest easy. *<Touches the pendant.>* "Blood, life, sin, bliss and happiness." *<Kisses her on the forehead. Covers up the body. Speaks to the orderly.>* I, uh, just need to gather up my stuff. *<To Glovitch.>* Thanks for letting me see her, Doc.

**GLOVITCH:** *<Making notes in Babette chart.>* No problem. Thanks again for your help. I'm sure she would have appreciated it.

*<The Orderly wheels Babette out on the gurney. Cam picks up his notebook as lights fade.>*

**CAM:** Would she?

*<Cam ponders this question as he exits the room with Glovitch and closes the door behind him. Blackout.>*

***THE END***