

CAIT - Skeeter

Act 2, sc. 12

Had no idea who she was.

(LIGHT on RAY. Fades)

SCENE 12

CAIT

(to audience) Last night I had a dream that I was coming home from Mom's, and I am going to my car and put the manuscript in the trunk. I shut the trunk and the back of the car starts to sag. I get in and start the car. Then the whole back end just collapses. I jump out, pop the trunk. There's nothing in there but this huge anvil. I know. My dreams are so not subtle. (pause)

I ask myself: how do you own the past? Can you? Is possible to live in the happiness and truth that belonged this family at one time? Do you keep going back to this place so you can move your life ahead, and then things will suddenly work right again? I watch her swimming in these stories, drowning herself. What good is it? Keeping dreams alive for dead people? And never fulfilling your own?

(Lights on SKEETER reading a slender, bound manuscript. CAIT opens her laptop.)

SKEETER

What is this stuff?

CAIT

It's the family history.

SKEETER

Whose?

CAIT

What do you mean whose? What do you think I've been doing all this time. All that stuff you gave me to type.

SKEETER

This is all about you.

CAIT

Well, yeah. Some of it. The stuff in the front and

SKEETER

Where's all the stuff about Mama and Papa and me?

CAIT

It's in there. I did some editing. I was working on an adaptation. Monologues, stuff like that. I've tried some of it out at the Venue. It's a different project, but I thought you might want to see...

SKEETER

What about my book?

CAIT

What do you mean what about my book? It's all in there.

SKEETER

It all just poured out of me. Can't you do something with it like it is?

CAIT

Like what?

SKEETER

Well, I don't know. Publish them or something.

CAIT

I'm not writing your book. You said you wanted to get all this down for posterity.

SKEETER

Well, yes, I wanted to write some things down for Johnny B, Little Sheila, and the other cousins. I want everyone to have a copy of the book, yes.

CAIT

Stop calling it a book. It's not a book. It's a bunch of your stories you scribbled down--

SKEETER

Well, whatever...I just meant...

CAIT

--I'm not saying you can't write a book. Write a book if you want to. There's no shortage of material here. And YOU could do it if you wanted to. But you can't expect me to

SKEETER

Well, I just thought maybe you could talk to that agent-friend of yours. Maybe he'd think it'd make a nice book.

CAIT

Mom, even if I wanted to, I can't turn this in like it is...not in its present form. You have to go through it. Organize it. Collect all the bits that add up to one story that's about something.

SKEETER

It's about something! It's about my family, for crying out loud!

CAIT

Okay, okay. Calm down. I'm not criticizing.

SKEETER

The hell you're not!

CAIT

And even if I was, you'd have to get a little thicker skin if you're gonna work with a publisher.

SKEETER

For god's sake. You wrote that thing about your father.

CAIT

Yeah, so what?

SKEETER

So, you might just want to have some respect for my family! That's all!

CAIT

I do! Come on, shit!

SKEETER

You're so goddamn fascinated with his life. What about your mother's family.

CAIT

Well, there's a hell of a difference! Don't you think?

SKEETER

Don't talk that way to me! I'm your mother!

CAIT

I know you're my mother! Stop acting like you're two!

SKEETER

Caitlin Anne, I swear, the things you say to me!

CAIT

Sorry. I take it back.

SKEETER

I never spoke like that

CAIT

I said I'm sorry.

SKEETER

never

(overlapping dialogue:)

CAIT

I didn't mean that. I meant...
I wrote about Dad. Sure. But
you've there's a big difference

SKEETER

you hard bitch. When did you
get so hard?

CAIT

he's not around to tell his
story! You're here and you get
to tell your own story!

SKEETER

-as soon as you came of age,
you just got mean-

CAIT

where the hell did I get it
from!

SKEETER

I have no goddamn story!

CAIT

You've got more stories than anyone I know!

SKEETER

I'm a goddamn failure, Mama. Why would anybody want to
hear what I have to say?

CAIT

...because it's what *you* have to say.

SKEETER

And what do I have to say, Mama? That I'm alone. Don't
remind me. You're all gone. Shit. Sheila, Ray, Papa. Oh,
what a let down I must be to you.

CAIT

You think you failed her or something. What did she ever
want of you to begin with?

SKEETER

NOT A GODDAMN THING, ALRIGHT!?

(SKEETER cries).

SKEETER

Who the hell are you who the hell. I'm your daughter too, for god's sake! How dare you talk to me like that? What I want....I'll tell you what I want! I want you to shut up and listen to me. Damn it! Just shut up for once in your goddamn life, you little bitch. Just listen to me. Cripes, what would it take for someone to shut up for one second and listen to what I have to say? Nobody ever listens to a goddamn thing I have to say. People have been trying to shut me up my whole life. Well, I'M NOT GONNA SHUT UP ANYMORE! My daughter, my husband, my sister, you Mam...Papa's the only one that listened, and I miss him. GOD, I miss him. The only one who ever understood me...

CAIT

Who are you talking to? Mom, I'm trying to-

SKEETER

You are not trying. You never tried Mama. I tried to get you to listen. I told you I didn't want to sing. You never heard me. What I want...I wanted you to listen. That's all. I wanted you to LISTEN TO ME.

MARY

You were our lucky baby.

SKEETER

I wanted...

(SKEETER cries. A long pause. Then)

What's on A & E tonight?

CAIT

Jesus mother.

SKEETER

That special on Ted Kennedy.

MARY

STOP THIS!

SKEETER

What?

MARY