

CAIT

Act II, Sc 14
CAIT

No I'm sure she's mine.

SKEETER

You had Eric. Then Joey. I had a girl. She was beautiful.

CAIT

What was her name?

SKEETER

(can't remember)

CAIT

What's my name, Skeeter?

SKEETER

Sheila.

Is that my baby or yours?

CAIT

(after a moment) That's your baby.

Do you want to hold her?

SKEETER

Yes.

CAIT

OK. Here she comes.

(CAIT takes baby out of stroller and gives the infant to SKEETER. SKEETER tenderly holds the baby to her chest. Takes it in.)

(Blackout.)

(SIGN change: New York City,
Minsky's Theatre, Storytelling
Festival)

Scene 14

CAIT

As far back as I can remember Mom wanted to be dead. She talked about it. She dreamed about it. She had a Ouija Board under her bed and checked in with all of them on a regular basis. And when her mama and papa died, and later

my dad and my aunt and uncle, she started to complain that she should die too. They she belonged with these dead relatives, not with the living...since she had no life.

I was the same age as my daughter, in the 5th grade when my mom, you know, she had her nervous breakdown. Three suicide attempts. Hospitals. Straight jacket. All that good stuff. I didn't know what a nervous breakdown was. Before she got help, I didn't know what was wrong with her. But at 10, I got that I needed to watch over her. We had that mother-daughter connection. That tie. So I kept an eye on her while she was going mad. It got worse. And worse. When I had to go to school or something, when I was not paying close attention, bad stuff happened. And this sort of set in motion a relationship between us, from the time I was ten, where I was in charge of her life, but I was not in charge of my life.

Until she got dementia. For some it is the worst thing in the world. For me it was my first breather in 35 years. I didn't have to fix her. Just had to keep her safe now.

She was unable to walk. And unable to talk at another point, which was really strange because mom had always been the storyteller. She had always filled in all the gaps for those who had been silenced. She had been their mouthpiece for generations. Her brain was a crazy place, a steel trap filled with presidents and trivia and trunks covered in stickers, filled with her family, our family. Our legacy.

Her dementia got to the point where she was just a body, laying in bed. But even though she couldn't talk. But she could communicate in one small, important way. She still swallowed. That's what we had left. Would she take what's on the spoon? She did. Every time. That's how I knew, after all the talk, really wanted to live.

~~And this went on for years.~~

~~(Cait mimes spooning her the food.)~~

~~And years.~~

~~(Cait mimes spooning her the food.)~~

~~It's just pureed yuck, but she eats every bite.~~

~~Two years. Three years. And then, three more years.~~

~~(Cait tries to to spoon her the food, but Skeeter gags on it. It gets more serious.)~~

~~(Sound cue: ambulance. Lights change.)~~

End