

Funny, Like An Abortion

A full-length play

By Rachel Bublitz

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Performances of any kind,
including in classroom settings,
must be approved by the
playwright.

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Characters:

Monroe, she/her, twenties. Makes bad jokes. Can juggle quite well.

Jade, she/her, close in age to Monroe. Has legitimate concerns and distress over how to actually help her friend.

Setting: The living room in Monroe's apartment. It's a comfy place. The furniture has obviously had multiple owners. Duck tape might be holding some things together.

Time: Maybe soon.

FUNNY, LIKE AN ABORTION

MONROE's apartment.

Shabby, comfortable, and small. Maybe one half hearted attempt to be stylish with a funky bright pillow or rug. For sure there's half folded laundry on the couch and a whole lot of mail stacked up on the coffee table. Probably a to-go food box too, it's empty. The apartment can feel messy and for sure run-down, but it's not gross.

On the coffee table sits a small black rectangular box. It's a device like an Alexa or an Echo. It's called BUTLER. The voice is female, and can be pre-recorded, or the actor playing Jade could be doing the voice backstage into a microphone.

MONROE staggers in through the front door. She carries an obscene amount of bags and boxes. They're stacked up past her face and she struggles against their weight.

BUTLER

(In a British accent)

Welcome home, Monroe. You are home two hours and twelve minutes later than normal.

She kicks the door closed behind her, potentially having to kick it multiple times if the first time doesn't work. She almost loses the balance on her load, but manages to straighten out and not drop anything, hopefully, if not she re-stacks everything back up and makes her way to the coffee table. She does a few laps with the stuff, trying to figure out how to let it go to create the least mess. Think Buster Keaton.

She completely ignores BUTLER until noted.

BUTLER (CONT'D)

From your movement I detect the presence of shopping bags. Did you take advantage of the sale at Walmart? Two-for-one blenders! Stock up now for Christmas! Perfect gift!

She finally dumps the boxes and bags on her couch, failing at doing it without a mess. She takes a moment to take all the stuff in.

BUTLER (CONT'D)

Be sure to post your shopping prizes on Friend Vault! Friend Vault is where friends show they care with all the things they share!

MONROE carefully digs through the boxes and bags to find one almost completely un-muddled box, a bakery box. She opens it, mouthing a silent prayer, and is relieved to find all 1/2 dozen cupcakes un-smashed inside. She sighs in relief and places them out of the way of the rest of the mess.

BUTLER (CONT'D)

Target is also having a sale this week! Save 15% off your total purchase when you apply for a Target Mastercard!

(Quickly)

Customers must be approved to receive discount.

(Back to normal speed)

At this time you do not have a Target Mastercard, Monroe. Shall I schedule a trip this week for you? You have no plans on Wednesday evening at this time.

She takes a deep breath and looks around. Stands, stretches, then gets to work. She sets up a party, a fake birthday party, but we'll get to that later.

BUTLER (CONT'D)

Knowing your plans and routines helps me help you!

One corner or wall of the living room is designated as party central, and is where all the decorations go. Some she pulls out of a bag, these should all feel really kiddy. Like with cartoon characters and animals. They've also obviously been used a few times before. She may have to tape up some rips as she hangs up streamers, and a banner.

She goes to a closet, maybe just off stage, opens the door and then braces herself against all the stuff that's falling on her. As she pushes back the mountain with one hand, she searches by feel with the other. She pulls out mardi gras beads, ridiculous hats, a hammer to hang things, and other party party items. Again, all of it's been used before. But it's still good. Mostly.

She gives the content of the closet a good push and quickly closes the door. She gets back to her party wall, trying to adult it up best she can with what she got her hands on from the closet.

BUTLER (CONT'D)

Please rise and place your hand over your heart!
It is time for the nightly Pledge of Allegiance.

Patriotic music. MONROE keeps working on the wall throughout the pledge.

BUTLER (CONT'D)

(Drops British accent)

I pledge allegiance to the flag
Of the United States of America
And to the republic
For which it stands,
One nation
Under God,
Indivisible,
With liberty and justice for
All American men and women
Amen

The patriotic music fades out.

While MONROE nails up some streamer or other decoration-

BUTLER (CONT'D)

(Back to British accent)

Jade is scheduled to arrive shortly.

The mention of her friend gives MONROE a light-bulb oh-shit moment. She walks over to the small device on her coffee table.

BUTLER (CONT'D)

Should I show her my beat-boxing? That always makes you both laugh!

Boots and cats

And boots and cats

And boots and cats

And boots and cats

And boots and-

MONROE smashes the device with the hammer. A lot more than would seem necessary. She checks the window for movement. Nothing has changed. She whispers a small hope then returns to the device. She empties out one of the shopping bags and puts all the pieces of the smashed device into it. She then tosses it off stage toward her kitchen.

This is a moment of no return. We should see more urgency in her movements now.

MONROE finishes up the wall as best she can. She grabs the cupcakes and sets them nearby, maybe there's a higher table she sets these on. She also places two bottles of booze on this table. One of these is a vodka bottle.

She pulls out her phone, then does a few selfie poses in front of the party zone, to see how it photographs. Phone in one hand, bottle of booze in the other.

She might mess with the lights, trying to get the best effect.

She mumbles as types on her phone.

MONROE

Bestie of alllllll besties BIRTHDaaaaaaaY!!!! YAY! Planning the BEST surprise for #1 BESTie! Be waaaaaay jelly! #bffs4life #gurlfriends #paaaaarty #surprisebitch #yologgio #giowbff #2niteislife #yassssss #bestbitches

She posts.

MONROE (CONT'D)

(Under her breath)

And now with a cupcake-

She grabs a cupcake and opens her mouth wide, and holds the phone way up high, to get the best angle, while not dropping the precious cupcake. She does a few like that, then does a few with pouty face, then a kissy face, then one with her tongue out almost licking the cupcake.

She drops the cupcake.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Craaaaaap.

She picks it up, then tries to fix the fancy decoration. It's a lost cause. She gives up, and settles on removing the floor dust and hair that got smooshed into it. She returns the cupcake to the table then posts the pic. More typing/mumbling.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Chocolate chocolate triple WHISKEY with foam FUDGE and butterscotch crumble. BEST CUPCAKES EVEEEEEER! #paaarty #bffs4life #chocwhiskfudgebitterscotchcrumblebitches....

She struggles to think of more hashtags.

MONROE (CONT'D)

.... #fuckyes.... #bestbitches4eva..... #cupcakelife?

Decides that's probably fine. She posts.

She refreshes her app to see who's hearted her pics. She's got a couple. Thank god.

Time to get the rest of the apartment in order. As she gets going though, she gets distracted by all the things she has to do. She flits from task to task making little headway on any of them. The tasks are:

1. Getting rid of the laundry. Which she may shove under her couch or throw off stage toward her kitchen.

2. Finding a new spot for the huge stack of mail. The closet? Some place that makes no sense.

3. Getting rid of trash. This could also end up under her couch.

4. Setting up many gift bags. They vary in size. She has tissues too. None of it is the most attractive. She sorts through items putting them in various bags. We don't see exactly what's going in the gift bags. Her wrapping job is way rushed.

5. Displaying all these gift bags in a pattern around the room which will eventually just devolve into a random mess.

Her rushing around should feel cartoony. Music should be played over all of this, something like "Flight of the Bumblebee." You might be thinking that's too on the nose, if you are, buckle up, we'll be doing a lot of that here.

In the middle of all this business she pulls out three vitamin bottles and starts to juggle. She's pretty good at juggling. She let's it go for a minute or so then catches all three and does a bow to her empty living room.

When she's mostly done with all those chores, and the juggling, and is down to putting together the final bags she lets herself get caught up a little with the contents of a few of the bags. A couple make her laugh, ones sends a little shiver down her back. Right after the shiver JADE enters.

JADE

TIME OUT!

Immediately the music stops. Maybe the house lights come up too.

MONROE

Whoa, what are you..

(Looks offstage for help, nothing. A whisper to JADE)

That wasn't your entrance. I have more-

JADE

Our director said if we were ever uncomfortable-

MONROE

I am 100% sure that was intended ONLY for rehearsal, in case you didn't notice we have an audience now-

JADE

(To audience)

You are about to see a medical procedure done at home by two people who have no idea what they're doing-

MONROE

Shhhh! Stop stop! You're killing the dramatic tension!

JADE

(To MONROE)

But what if they watch this and think it's a good idea or recommended or something and they end up seriously hurting themselves?

MONROE

Shit. I hadn't- I had not thought about that.

JADE

(To audience)

Some of the approaches mentioned and/or suggested in this play can ACTUALLY, 100%, for reals kill you! Or at least land you in the hospital. So. And I don't think I can stress this enough
DO NOT TRY *ANY* OF THIS AT HOME!

MONROE

(To JADE)

Well, I mean, it's probably fine to buy your best friend delicious chocolate cupcakes.

JADE

(To MONROE)

We can't nit pick like that. It's gotta be a blanket no.

MONROE

That's hard core.

JADE

This is serious business.

(Back to audience)

DO NOT DO ANY OF THE SHIT YOU'RE ABOUT TO SEE AT HOME!

MONROE

(To audience)

YES! AND TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR!

JADE

OR MIDWIFE!

MONROE

Or PLANNED PARENTHOOD!

JADE

(To MONROE)

Yes! Good point!

(To audience)

If Planned Parenthood still exists, for sure talk to them.

MONROE

But, most importantly

JADE
DO NOT DO ANY OF THIS AT HOME.

MONROE (CONT'D)
DO NOT DO ANY OF THIS AT HOME.

JADE (CONT'D)
(To MONROE)

I feel SO much better.
TIME IN!

JADE exits as the music comes back on, exactly where it left off. If house lights were brought up, they go back down.

MONROE does a final count, making sure all the bags are present and accounted for. She checks the time.

MONROE
.. Okay Jade. Just don't be late. Not tonight.

A knock. She very nearly has a heart attack.

MONROE calms herself and creeps over to her door and looks out the peep hole, to see who it is. She sighs the largest sigh of relief.

She then takes out her phone and blasts music, and rushes over and grabs a cupcake, not the one that fell on the floor, and runs back over to the door, with the cupcake in hand. She takes a very deep breath.

MONROE opens the door.

JADE enters.

JADE
Hey, what's-

MONROE
SURPRISE!

MONROE shoves the cupcake into her mouth then drags her over to the party wall.

MONROE positions them both and does a series of selfies, taking JADE's phone and taking pics on her phone as well.

JADE is completely disoriented.

Finally, MONROE releases JADE as she types furiously on BOTH phones, making many posts on both devices. She then exits into the kitchen with the phones. The music cuts out.

JADE struggles to get the cupcake out of her mouth, looking around the room for water or a napkin. Finally, messily, she gets it out.

WHAT THE FUCK?
JADE

MONROE enters with either many napkins, or one giant napkin, and hands them/it to JADE.

Sorry.
MONROE

JADE uses the napkin(s) to clean her face and hands as best she can.

JADE
You just shoved a cupcake into my MOUTH!

MONROE
Aren't they amazing? So moist!

JADE
WHY did you shove a cupcake into my mouth?

MONROE
Surprise!

JADE
Surprise, what?

MONROE
Surprise party!

JADE
My birthday isn't for two months.

MONROE
Which is why I knew you'd be super surprised.

JADE
Dude. I couldn't breathe.

MONROE
I was nervous. I pushed maybe harder than I should have.

JADE
You think? Jesus.
(Taking in the rest of the room)
This is like, this is a lot.

MONROE
I know.

JADE
You can't afford all this.

MONROE
Don't worry! I borrowed a bunch of the decorations from school.
JADE checks out the party wall.

JADE
I thought I saw Elmo.

MONROE
Tried to hide him in the back.

JADE
How much did those cupcakes cost?

MONROE
Okay, that's maybe one area where I let myself splurge. But we're gonna need them.

JADE
And booze? Monroe.

MONROE
Jade.

JADE
Thank you, but you know I don't want you going broke just for me.

MONROE
Oh, it's not for you.

JADE
You just said it was my surprise birthday-

MONROE
I said surprise party, you threw in the birthday.

JADE
Okay, so what is happening then?

MONROE
Ha. Well. Wait until you hear. It's like a surprise wrapped in another surprise.

JADE
Yeah?

MONROE
Yuuuuuup.....
So, uh, what's funnier than a dead baby?

JADE
Excuse me?

MONROE
A dead baby in a clown costume.

MONROE makes a rimshot drum noise.

JADE
.....

MONROE

That was a, a joke..... Anyway I need to uhhhh.....
So not all surprises are FUN surprises, you know, that's what this.....
Welcome to my surprise abortion party! Wooooooo-

JADE

Hey! You can't say that word!

MONROE

It's okay-

JADE

Neighbors, Monroe! Your walls are paper thin!

MONROE

(Pointing up)

Fishing trip.

(Pointing down)

Rave.

(Pointing right)

Works the night shift.

(Pointing left)

Won an all you can eat steak night out for two, about 50 miles east of here, which is probably gonna be a huge disappointment when they get there and find out it was made up. He really really loves steak. But I think, like if I was a manager at a stake house, and someone had been punked like that, and had driven allllllll that way, I'd just give it to them anyways. So. Fingers crossed, you know!

JADE checks the window.

JADE

You're sure?

MONROE

Super sure.

JADE

Someone could hear you. You don't know.

MONROE

I took care of it.

JADE grabs the blanket off the couch anyway and shoves it in front of the door. Hoping to block more sound.

JADE

They hear things. They know things.

MONROE

And I covered all the bases. Neighbors all gone, my computer is with our phones in my freezer-

JADE

I thought the phone thing was just made up.

MONROE

No way. I was arguing about where we should get pizza with my cousin, we weren't even on the phone, she was just sitting next to me in the car, but then I get this ding-ding and oh hey, it's a 1/2 off coupon for Dominos.

MONROE hums the Twilight Zone theme music.

JADE

But that's for coupons. Coupons don't come from the government.

MONROE

You really think they have this fancy new listening in tech and they're just gonna use it to make us buy more shit? This is America, they're gonna make us buy lots of shit AND arrest us any chance they get.

JADE

You're sure the freezer will do it?

MONROE

I tested the freezer yesterday, we're good. I set it on to make ice, but like, there's no water hook up for that, so it just churns and churns and churns and makes this awful sound. Grrrrrrggggggah grrriiiiiinnnnngggggah.

They're quiet, we hear the freezer trying to make ice without water.

JADE

Okay. But what about- OH MY GOD-

(Starts hunting the apartment)

Your, your, your that assistant smart box thing? You got it free with your apartment!

(MORE)

JADE (CONT'D)

That's why you even picked this place because you were like, "I'm gonna name it Butler and make it talk in a British accent so I feel fancy," and that thing is always just piping in like, "Want me to play music for you, Monroe?" Or, "Shall I order your Chinese food now, Monroe?" And "Fancy a cup of fucking TEA?" And it's for sure recording *everything* happening in this apartment-

(Can't find it)

WHERE IS IT?

MONROE

Right, this was kinda, kinda good luck, kismet type of thing, because, uh, my land lord was like, "Hey, there was a massive recall, blah blah blah," and took it away like over a week ago.

JADE

Really? You're absolutely sure?

MONROE

Absolutely. Cross my heart and hope to, uh, die and all that.

A moment for JADE to get over the fear and come around and remember the situation her friend is in.

JADE

... So, how, um, how far along are you?

MONROE

It depends on where you start counting. From conception, from the first day of my last period, from the position of the moon in the sky-

JADE

From any of them.

MONROE

Seven weeks. Probably.

JADE

And you're sure?

MONROE

One sec-

MONROE exits to her bathroom. We hear her puking. She flushes. She swishes some water in her mouth. She enters.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Unfortunately.

JADE

You could just have the flu.

MONROE

I was hoping for that. Swine flu. Bird flu. Cat and dog flu. The bubonic plague. But. Nope. Just pregnant. I, uh, took a test.

JADE

How did you- Where did you get a test? I thought- You have to check those out now, don't you? From Central?

MONROE

You do, normally. But Maggie, my cousin, was trying, they've been trying for two years. And they miscounted her allotment, so she had an extra one.

JADE

She could get in a hell of a lot of trouble if they figure out the error in the numbers.

MONROE

Maybe, but she's pregnant now, and stoked about it. I think they look the other way pretty generously in that case. And it was just the one. Test.

JADE

I don't know. We shouldn't- We can't be talking like this! If anyone finds out, if your cousin tells-

MONROE

She won't-

JADE

She could!

MONROE

I'm not- I am not having this baby. And I.. I need your help.

JADE

Shit. Yeah. Okay. Let me- Let me just have a moment of some chocolate therapy.

JADE gets a cupcake, takes a bite.

JADE (CONT'D)

WAIT. Is there anything weird in these?

MONROE

No. I didn't lace the cupcakes. Great idea, but no.. It's uh, the presents.

JADE takes in all the presents in the room.

JADE

That's, that's a looooooot of uh, presents. What's in each bag?

MONROE

A different way. A different, um, home option.

JADE takes in all the options.

JADE

Wow.

MONROE

And I posted a million party pics, anyone watching ChitChat or Friend Vault will think we're just getting drunk. I figure we have like an hour, hour and a half maybe? We just go through the options, pick one that hopefully won't kill me, and then we do it. After we can jump back on with more posts! Then no one will be suspicious or think anything about tonight. It'll just another night. Just another night where two gurrlls got all crazy and stupid. Yeah?... Jade?

JADE

I'm sorry, I couldn't hear you after you said something about you hopefully not dying.

MONROE

I really don't want to do this alone.

JADE

And you don't have to.

MONROE

Plus, I figure it can't hurt to have a trained medical professional here. In case, you know?

JADE laughs.

JADE

Um. I was a lifeguard. In high school?

MONROE

But you took first aid. CPR.

JADE

A million years ago? More!

MONROE

Once you learn the subtle art of saving lives it never leaves.

JADE

Oh my god, the only thing I remember was to do the chest pushes to the beat of a song.

MONROE

The other day you were all like, I fantasize about that sexy bar tender choking on peanuts so I can jump over the bar and save his life and then we'd have like super crazy sex.

JADE

Right, yeah. This is exactly like that.

MONROE

All I'm saying is that you think about it still.

JADE

I'm for sure running though all of my training during sex fantasies... Does Kevin know that you're..?

MONROE

Yeah.

JADE

And you didn't think he should be here?

MONROE

He can't handle buying me tampons.

JADE

Right.. Well, let's, uh, as the young people say, get this party started.

MONROE

Yes! That's the spirit!

*MONROE squeezes JADE's shoulder then
bounces up off the couch.*

MONROE (CONT'D)

SO! I, uh, to make it more fun and like, interactive-

JADE

Hold on, *can* you make a surprise abortion party *more* fun? Because, honestly.

MONROE

For sure, it was a challenge to make this MORE fun, but I think I did it. Pick three numbers between one and thirty!

JADE

You turned this into a magic show?

MONROE

Just give me some numbers.

JADE

Are there bunnies? Will you release a flapping dove into the audience?

MONROE

Please.

JADE

Oh lord. Okay.. Twelve. Twenty six. And, uh, twenty eight, I guess.

MONROE

(In a weird announcer voice)

Come on down! You have been selected! That's right! I'm talking about you, bag number twelve! And you! Bag twenty six! And let's not forget, last but in no ways least, bag number twenty eeeeeeeeeiiiiiiiiiiiiight!

MONROE does a weird running bit around the room, making the grabbing of bags #12, #26, and #28 way over the top. JADE at the same time grabs the vodka bottle. They meet back at the couch.

MONROE (CONT'D)

It's kinda like Christmas.

JADE

This is nothing like Christmas.

MONROE shoves the bags onto JADE's lap.

MONROE

But SURPRISES!

JADE

You packed alllllll of the bags.

MONROE

I know, but I don't know what's in each number! Okay, you ready?

JADE

Yeah. Hold on.

JADE takes a swig, immediately spits it out.

MONROE

Oh yeah, that's just tap water.

JADE

Whhhhhhy would you do that.

MONROE

Booze is super spendy.

JADE sets the vodka bottle down on the table.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Just playing that partaaaay gurl part, you know. Now go on! Open! OPEN! OPEN!
OPEN! OPEN!

JADE opens up bag #12. It's a bottle of drain-o.

JADE

JESUS FUCKING CHRIST!

MONROE grabs the drain-o, trying to hold back her laughter.

MONROE

Hear me out-

JADE takes the drain-o back from MONROE.

JADE
IS THIS A JOKE?

MONROE
Just-

JADE
NO! Because, this isn't funny! Holy shit! I thought, are all the bags filled with fucking
poison? Because this will KILL you-

MONROE
They're-

JADE
TIME OUT!

*If music is playing, it cuts out. The house lights
come on again.*

JADE (CONT'D)
(Addresses the audience)
This is EXACTLY what I was warning you about. DO NOT DO THIS AT HOME!

*JADE exits to MOROE's bathroom. We hear
water running.*

MONROE waits, strumming her fingers.

MONROE
(To audience)
... In my defense, that was mostly a joke...

JADE comes back in.

JADE
Goddamnit. Time in.

Music returns, house lights down.

MONROE
(Back to JADE)
Jade-

JADE
(To MONROE)

You do NOT have permission yet to talk.

MONROE

Right.

JADE

No, I'm serious! What the actual FUCK, Monroe? You like, you set up this whole thing and ask for my help. And I say YES because I love you, and I want you to not go to jail, or worse, and then we open one of your stupid bags and you have one of your stupid little fucking JOKES inside. That was a joke. I know you, and it was shitty and stupid.

MONROE

I wasn't exactly joking.

JADE

I DIDN'T SAY YOU COULD TALK YET! Do you want to die? Is that what you want? Because. Drain-o? Jesus.

MONROE

You didn't even let me explain how it would work.

JADE

I'm 99% sure it involves DRINKing poison, so-

MONROE

Just, like, just a little itty bit. Not enough to kill a grown adult, but probably enough to take out a pea sized baby! I mean, maybe I'd get a little sick-

JADE

A little? You think?

MONROE

But

(Unable to contain her laughter)

It's supposed to clear drains, so..

MONROE laughs even more.

JADE

THIS IS NOT FUNNY!

MONROE

Maybe just a tiny bit-

JADE

Zero bit funny. None funny. NEGATIVE funny.

MONROE

(Trying to compose herself)

I'm just saying, like, not right now, but maybe in a couple of hours from now, or two months, a year, I say Drain-o and I guarantee you will bust a gut.

JADE

You're a monster.

MONROE

Hey, I thought we might need some comic relief. I didn't expect it to be the first thing we picked. That's what's tricky about doing it random like this. You get the thrill of a game show, but your pacing might be off.

JADE

Any of the other bags that lethal?

MONROE

I think that one was the most lethal-est.

JADE

Good. Jerk.

MONROE

Open another! Do it! Do it! Do it!

JADE opens bag number twenty eight. It's ginger tea. JADE reads the side.

JADE

Okay, this is for reals, just straight up ginger tea?

MONROE

More than half of these are old wives tales and hard to tell if they're like at all helpful or not. There's something about ginger. I don't entirely know.

MONROE grabs the tea and tosses it.

JADE

I really like that it seems unlikely to kill you.

MONROE

Yeah, I guess that's a nice feature. Open the next one!

JADE opens bag #26, it's chock full of essential oils. MONROE grabs the bag.

JADE

Essential oils?

MONROE

Oh god, I had to buy these from Tiffany, who works at school with me. She's like ass deep in some essential oil pyramid scheme and just pops up whenever I'm on break. Lavender for stamina! Frankincense for focus! Lemon for healthy skin!

JADE

I know the spiel, I have my own very special Tiffany at my work.

MONROE

Well, apparently these are all pretty toxic if you consume them. It can cause all sorts of medical problems, one for example, is miscarriage. So, I was thinking-

JADE

(Takes a few from the bag)

These are all labeled DO NOT INJECT.

MONROE

This isn't doctor recommended or anything.

JADE

Well it's not life-guard recommended either.

MONROE drops the bag of oils to the ground and takes out a checklist. Crosses items off after confirming with JADE.

MONROE

Great! So it's a no on the drain-o?

JADE

Abso-fucking-lutely.

MONROE

What about ginger tea or essential oils?

JADE

Ginger tea can stay.

MONROE

Ginger tea is the least likely to actually do anything.

JADE

Like kill you?

MONROE

Or a tiny baby. Which, is the point of all of this. Pick more numbers.

JADE

Fine. Twenty three and, uh, twenty nine.

MONROE

*(Same announcer voice, does a run
around the room again)*

Annnnnnd, look out! Your number has been called! Get down her bag twenty nine and twenty three!

*JADE gets the other bottle of booze, MONROE
gets bags twenty three and twenty nine.*

JADE

(Motioning with bottle)

What's in this?

MONROE

Iced tea.

JADE

I would have brought over booze.

MONROE

It's tacky to have someone bring booze over to their own surprise party.

JADE

This is your surprise party.

MONROE

But not to, you know, the world.

JADE

All of this would be a lot easier with booze, that's my only point.

MONROE

(Handing over the bags)

Want to open more?

JADE

Oh goody, thanks! Let's see how this one could kill you.

*JADE opens bag number twenty nine. It's a
punching glove.*

MONROE

(Another voice)

I'm gonna knock you out!

(Her voice)

For this one you'd hit me in my stomach a bunch.

*MONROE punches the air, maybe making
fighting sounds as she does.*

*JADE tosses the glove, then opens the other
bag, it's filled to the brim with vitamin C.*

JADE

Ummmmmm... Fights the common cold and ends pregnancies?

MONROE

A huge dosage of it, could, yeah.

JADE

(Reading the bottle)

This one is better. Let's just stop and do this one. How much are we talking?

MONROE

Like three pills every four hours for two weeks straight.

*MONROE grabs three of the bottles and starts
to juggle them.*

JADE

Hey now, you're juggling, since when do you juggle?

MONROE

I suddenly found myself up all night with nothing to do but freak out. So I thought, TIME TO LEARN A NEW SKILL! The kids love it. Helps with nap time at the preschool.

JADE

Not too stimulating?

MONROE

No, no, it's a carrot. No nap time equals no juggling.. I also picked it up because, you promise not to laugh?

JADE

I cannot make such a promise.

MONROE

Thanks friend!

(Genuinely embarrassing)

.. Kevin let it slip that one of his fantasies was watching a woman juggle in nothing but her underwear and I thought I could give him that for Christmas.

JADE

Christmas is forever away.

MONROE

I can't turn it off.

JADE

You don't want to turn it off.

MONROE

Juggling takes time to learn. I'm trying to get up to five items.

JADE

You sure he just didn't want you to juggle his balls?

MONROE

No, creep. I'm already super good at that.

JADE

So I am definitely voting vitamin c. I'm also voting that Kevin probably left out the weirder parts of his fantasy which will be super fun for you to find out on Christmas Day! Like he's gonna want to add a toaster oven or an animal or something for sure.

MONROE

You don't know him like I do. AND for the record, with this method, it's not just the vitamin c, it's, you gotta take a few other things with it, and there are other complications.

JADE

Like?

MONROE

Like potential kidney failure. And it won't- It can end the pregnancy, but sometimes it doesn't, um, evacuate it. And I for one don't know how to get all that stuff out of my body, so, infections and other in general disgusting nightmares.

JADE

What do you do, if, the uh, if it doesn't come out?

MONROE

Go to the hospital, I guess? Where I'll spend exactly two minutes, because they'll call the police the second they figure out what I did.

JADE

Right.

MONROE

It's kinda a hiccup with most of the herbal methods. That and apparently they're only 40% accurate

JADE

60% not accurate is a LOT not accurate.

MONROE stops juggling, she catches the vitamins and places them on the table.

MONROE

No applause?

JANE does a half hearted clap.

JADE

This option is sounding potentially not great.

MONROE

Yeah. I know.

JADE

Can there be a maybe, we'll get back to it, list?

MONROE

Sure.

(Back to her list)

Vitamin c, maybe.

(Singing, or in a funny voice)

Come on my baby, come on my darling, pick another number please!

JADE

We can't just skip to the part where you tell me the best option?

MONROE

If there was a good option, we wouldn't be doing this.

JADE

Right.

MONROE

Number?

JADE

Five.

MONROE

*(Announcer voice, runs around the room
again)*

Come on down gift bag #5, you've been selected-

JADE

Stop! Stop it with the voice.

MONROE

Killjoy.

*MONROE grabs bag number 5, she opens it this
time. She pulls out a needle and a small vile.*

JADE

Heroin? So classy!

MONROE

No, but maybe I should write that one down?

JADE

We're not injecting anything, anywhere.

MONROE

You don't even want to hear what it is and where it gets injected?

JADE

I guess.

MONROE

Neem oil, gets injected into my uterine horns.

JADE

Hold on.

MONROE

Yes?

JADE

I don't even-

MONROE

I know.

JADE

Neem?

MONROE

Neem.

JADE

And, and did I hear uterine horns?

MONROE

You did.

JADE

Uterine horns?

MONROE

Uterine horns.

JADE

What are uterine horns?

MONROE
I haven't the slightest idea.

JADE
Great, that sounds great.

MONROE
They didn't teach you that in lifeguard class?

JADE
OH! You mean those uterine horns, well oh yeah, we spent a week studying uterine horns, of course, they come into play so often in swimming pools. Duh... What's neem?

MONROE
Indian lilac oil.

JADE
As in Native American or from India, Indian?

MONROE
I don't know. Will that help you come to a decision?

JADE
No. I guess not... What else is neem used for?

MONROE
Mostly, uh, it's a pesticide.

JADE
It's gonna be a hard no from me.

MONROE
It seems wrong to eliminate a potentially great solution because sometimes people use neem to protect their flower gardens-

JADE
NEXT.

MONROE
Fine.

(*On list*)
Neem equals no go.

(MORE)

MONROE (CONT'D)
(Back to JADE)

Number?

JADE

Uh, seventeen.

MONROE gets bag seventeen.

MONROE

It's so boring now, without the voice and running around.

JADE

We'll survive.

MONROE looks inside the bag.

MONROE

Oh.

JADE

If it's as stupid as Drain-o or punching you in the stomach-

MONROE

It's not. This one, you're going to like this one.

JADE

Okay then...

MONROE

But it's probably not possible. Just keep that in mind.

JADE

Why's it an option then, if it's not possible?

MONROE

Desperation.

JADE

Great. That makes me feel great. Give it.

JADE grabs the bag and takes out something Canadian, an over-the-top cute maple leaf stuffy, a bottle of syrup, something

JADE (CONT'D)

.... Okay?....

MONROE

I could go to Canada.

JADE

YOU can go to CANADA! Yes. Solved. Boom. Done.

JADE starts to sing the Canadian national anthem in a slow and over the top way. She sings and dances with whatever she pulled out of the bag.

JADE (CONT'D)

Oooooooooo, Caaaaaaaaannnnnnnaaaaddddddaaaaaaa-

MONROE

I told you-

JADE

No, no, this sounds great and safe and pleasant and super safe, they have gravy they put on french fries! And did I mention it sounds safe? So safe! Like Canada has real doctors. They still perform all their doctor functions!

MONROE

I don't have a passport.

JADE

Shit.

MONROE

And they make you-

JADE

I know, I know, all women must take a pregnancy test in order to get a passport. We could bribe someone?

MONROE

I would get caught. Not to mention that my credit cards are all maxed out and my bank is over-drawn. Not sure what I could use, to do the bribing?

JADE

Sex?

MONROE

You're hilarious.

JADE

I'm... I'm not entirely joking... I am on birth control.

MONROE

Shut up.

JADE

I am.

MONROE

Since when? How? Why have you never said a thing?

JADE

It's not exactly your business. I got it from my OB.

MONROE

You had sex with your OB?

JADE

I just gave him a blow job.

MONROE

For birth control?

JADE

So I'm just saying... It's possible.

MONROE

How, how did that even come up? That's what freaks me out, because that is an awkward as fuck type of situation. Did you laugh? I think I would laugh at an inopportune time and ruin the whole thing. Did you do the offering? Or did he ask? How did you know he wasn't undercover or gonna turn you in? How do you even start that conversation?

JADE

He asked, in a coded type of way, and I took a leap of faith.

MONROE

I don't trust anyone. Well you, I trust you. I could give you sex, and then you could get me a passport?

JADE

I can't get you a passport.

MONROE

Damn.

JADE

But we could ask around, try and figure out someone who'd be into it?

MONROE

I... Look, you are so much more of a badass than I ever knew. But, I just, I can't pull something like that off. I'm, I get nervous and stupid and would yell weird things. I'd probably cry or something. I, I can't. It just... No.

JADE

Okay. Just throwing that out there.

MONROE

But while we're on the subject. Let me just say that no one has EVER asked me for a blow job in return for ANYthing shady, and maybe I'm a little angry about that? Like, am I just seeing the wrong doctors? Maybe I wouldn't have said yes, no offense to you for saying yes, but a girl likes to at least be considered, you know?

Awkward.

MONROE (CONT'D)

How did he get it? The medicine, I mean, I can imagine the blow job part.

JADE

I don't know. I just take it and don't get pregnant.

MONROE

Do you think. Shit, this is a WEIRD question for me, but do you want to go and get it and maybe share it with me?

JADE

How will it help you now?

MONROE

I don't know, maybe I could take it all at once, you know?

JADE

There are only- I'm almost out, is the thing. I have to go and get more in a few days-

MONROE

Right.

JADE

No seriously.

MONROE

It probably wouldn't have worked anyway. So whatever. Never mind.

JADE

Right. Probably you're right.

MONROE

... I never would have thought you'd go so far-

JADE

Hey condoms are insanely expensive.

MONROE

I wasn't, like I said, I'm not judging-

JADE

Really really expensive.

MONROE

I know it! Nothing like having a corner on a market to jack up prices. Thanks capitalism!

JADE

And I don't want a kid.

MONROE

Preaching to the choir on that one.

JADE

I really don't have a lot left. I'm almost out.

MONROE

That's what you said.

JADE

And some of the time I'm still using a condom too, even with the expense, because what if something goes wrong or malfunctions and then I'm totally-

*(Doesn't want to say "fucked" because
MONROE is currently totally fucked.)*

*(An apology, an explanation, a
distraction, a defense, a back off me:)*

(MORE)

JADE (CONT'D)

.. It was a little strange. With the doctor. I, when it was happening, I thought of this guy I knew in high school. He was a lifeguard too, and we'd always land the morning shift together, when the pool is empty except for adults swimming laps. Which, for lifeguarding, can get pretty boring. But after our shift ended he'd take me to get this frozen coffee drink, which was basically just a morning milkshake, but whatever I had an amazing metabolism at sixteen, and we'd sit in his car and mess around and one day I asked him if I could give him a blow job and I had heard from so many of my friends that blow jobs were gross and terrible, but it was just, it was so fucking sexy. Everything was clean, because of the chlorine, I guess, and I could still taste my melty coffee, and the noises he would make, I have never before or since caused such noises in another person. So I think about him. Imagine him. When I. With the doctor.. Really, if I had any I would get it for you, I'm not trying to hold out on you, really.

MONROE

It's okay. You're almost out.

JADE

You could wait? Until I get more?

MONROE

Spoiler, I am ending this pregnancy tonight. 100%. One way or another.

JADE

Right.....

MONROE

(Olive branch)

.. Sex without a condom is amazing though, right?

JADE

SO AMAZING! Oh my god.

MONROE

.. Kevin and I had never. Before, neither of us had never had.. Without a condom.

JADE

Really?

MONROE

Yeah, duh. Getting pregnant is only my number one fear. But I thought lookie how smart I can be, I'll do the whole track my period thing because apparently you can only really get pregnant a few days out of your cycle. But that's just bullshit!

(MORE)

MONROE (CONT'D)

Or I counted it out wrong. And I've been, my cousin had been trying for FORever, and I just thought, it can't happen that quick!

JADE

It's not fair.

MONROE

SO not fair.

JADE

Just the one time?

MONROE

Oh no, we had, girl, once we realized how much better it was, we probably had a lot more sex than we should have, but, it still just took the one cycle. I am a fucking idiot.

JADE

Hey, rude! Don't talk about my friend like that.

MONROE

It's true.

JADE

We're, we'll figure this out. Okay? You got, one of these things has got to work. Or maybe we could bribe a doctor?

MONROE

Oh shady back alley abortion is in one of the bags. It has the same problems as Canada. No funds.

JADE

Maybe Kevin could help.

MONROE

He did. He- He sprung for more than half of all this crap. And, he's found all the information for me.

JADE

Oh god, please tell me he didn't just search online! I can feel the sirens coming on-

MONROE

No, he's not stupid. He, he found some books at the library.

JADE

Shut the front door! There, there aren't any books at libraries anymore.

MONROE

There are still a few, at least at Kevin's. They're stashed in the basement. He used his breaks to dig through them all to see if there was anything. Turns out they saved almost all of the old herbal medicine section, which was all told a total of four books... After combing through those he turned up some possibilities for us, for me, to do it at home instead of, you know, trying to bribe a doctor and getting caught and then immediately getting burned at the stake.

JADE

They'd make you have the baby first.

MONROE

Ha. Yes. Right. Thanks for, for that reminder.

JADE

Hey well, go Kevin. A benefit for dating a librarian.

MONROE

Woohoo.

JADE

Hooray for being alive right now!

MONROE

Yeah. So, no for Canada.

Crossing out on list.

JADE

Put it as a maybe.

MONROE

But-

JADE

And we'll just have to win the lottery or something.

MONROE

In the next week?

JADE

Where there's a will, there's a way.

MONROE

That's one of the ways too, I've already been employing it.

JADE

Winning money?

MONROE

No, willing the pregnancy to end. Telling it and your body it's unwanted. I have a whole chant, more like a song. It's. It's dark.

JADE

I'll bet. Drain-O make it into your lyrics?

MONROE

Jade, you know me so well.

JADE

Sicko.

MONROE

You have no idea. Every night I go to sleep willing blood to seep out of me, warm and thick. It would stiffen my sheets, stain everything. I'd wake up and for like a split second I'd think, "Damn it Monroe, when are you going to be old enough to know your body so you don't make a mess at the top of every single period?" But then I'd remember! And I'd laugh and laugh and laugh, and then I'd call in sick to work, and go out for like a five mile run!

JADE

You don't run!

MONROE

I know! And then I'd smoke a cigarette!

JADE

You don't smoke!

MONROE

I know! And then I'd spend the whole day eating pancakes.

(In the blissful fantasy)

It would be everything...

(MORE)

MONROE (CONT'D)*(Coming back to reality)*

Canada is a no, pending a miracle. And I might as well

(Rummages through the bags)

Get rid of back alley abortion too, since the same money problems would apply.

(Finds two bags, pulls out a cat stuffed animal from one)

Here it is, number two, look I had a stuffed ally cat as its representation.

JADE

Cute, I guess?

MONROE

(Sending the stuffed animal flying across the room)

MEOOOOW!

(Pulls out chips and guacamole from the other bag, sets it out on the table)

And Mexico, number twenty four. Can't really rely on Mexico for similar reasons.

JADE

YES! I am STARVING.

JADE digs into the chips and guac.

MONROE

Not to mention that it's pretty illegal there too, I just. I mostly just wanted a themed snack that was still delicious. Which given the circumstances was not the easiest idea to conceive of.

JADE

This is tasteful and restrained. Well done.

*They both eat.**Suddenly a very loud noise from outside.
MONROE dives to the ground or behind the couch in total panic.*

MONROE

OH MY GOD- HIDE, HIDE!

JADE

What? I think it was only-

MONROE

GET ON THE GROUND! IS THE DOOR LOCKED? OH MY GOD.

JADE gets up and checks a window.

JADE

Monroe it's, it was just a garbage truck.

MONROE

Are you sure?

MONROE gets up and cautiously looks out the window with JADE.

JADE

Pretty sure.

MONROE exhales.

JADE (CONT'D)

.. Something you want to tell me?

MONROE

.. Ha. It was- That was- I was just joking. Hahahaha! Got you! Got you good. You should have seen your face. Got you so good.

JADE

You were scared. Why were you so scared, you said you'd thought of everything?

MONROE

Let's just, let's jump in and get through these bags, yeah? Yeah. Totally. Jump in and bag it up. Get a bunch.

MONROE grabs a bunch of bags. JADE watches her.

JADE

What aren't you telling me?

MONROE

It was- It was just a joke. Really. I just didn't land it. I can't always be hilarious. I strike out sometimes too.

JADE doesn't believe her, but grabs a bunch of bags anyway. They meet back at the couch.

MONROE (CONT'D)

... You have to admit it, it's like, it's a little bit like Christmas.

JADE

Shut up.

MONROE

No time like the present. For presents! Get it? Get it?

JADE

You are such a preschool teacher.

MONROE

(Opening bag number 4, pulls out tea)

Pennyroyal tea, a classic.

JADE

Good?

MONROE

Also a poison.

JADE

No good.

MONROE

You drink it in small doses-

JADE

Still no good.

MONROE

(Opening bag fourteen, pulls out a white flower with root)

Queen Anne's Lace, which really works better as contraception, but look it's so pretty!

JADE

Very pretty.

MONROE

Maybe I'll chew on it anyway. Just in cases.

JADE

(Opens bag number eighteen)

Okay this one is..... The Greek flag?

MONROE takes the flag.

MONROE

There's this plant that grew there, in like, ancient greek times, Silphium, it was supposedly very safe and very effective. They used it into extinction.

JADE

Didn't realize ancient people were stupid like us.

MONROE

Where do you think we get it from? I thought, maybe I could go and like, discover something everyone else overlooked. Like in a cool Indian Jones way, but, you know, with plants instead.

JADE

Right, with your vast knowledge of ancient plants. And money. And passport. And time?

MONROE

Yeah.

JADE opens bag number twenty five, she takes out a barbie doll.

JADE

..... Um?

MONROE

It's a visual thing. Here

(Takes the barbie, puts in on the table)

Watching?

JADE

Yeah.

MONROE pushes the barbie off the table, it falls on the floor.

MONROE

The stairs leading into my apartment could work, but it'd be better I think to not fall on to concrete. Do you think I'll need a helmet?

JADE

No, no. This. No.

MONROE

No helmet?

JADE

No falling down the damn stairs.

*(Tosses the barbie, then grabs and opens
bag number eleven to find a papaya)*

Is this mango? Are we making smoothies?

MONROE

Papaya.

JADE

And that will?

MONROE

Something about the seeds, but it was, it was not a reputable source.

JADE

Can it kill you?

MONROE

Don't think so. But I also, I don't know. All the things that can't kill me seem to be things that also can't, you know, kill a very small baby.

JADE

It's not a baby, it's a fetus.

MONROE

Now who's using illegal words?

JADE

If it doesn't work, why have it in a bag?

MONROE

I don't know. I'm stressed and tired and probably went way way overboard on all of this. What do you want from me?

*MONROE opens bag number twenty seven.
Pulls out a single shot bottle of Jägermeister.*

JADE
(Grabbing the bottle)

You DID have booze!

MONROE
Lots of drinking CAN induce miscarriages, so.

JADE
Why why why Jägermeister though?

MONROE
Because it's disgusting and that felt right.

JADE
You'd need more. Like a boat load more.

MONROE
I realize that, it's, it represents drinking into oblivion. Use your imagination.

*JADE drinks the Jägermeister, then tosses the
bottle. She grabs bag number eight and opens it.
She pulls out a wire hanger.*

JADE
Not. Funny. At. All.

MONROE laughs, grabs the wire hanger.

MONROE
Come on. All these bags, did you really think one of them wasn't going to have a wire hanger?

(Doing a voice)
NO WIRE HANGERS! NO WIRE HANGERS!

MONROE laughs.

JADE
I thought the Drain-o was the extent of your terrible TERRIBLE jokes.

MONROE

You gotta match the jokes to the occasion, like you match your t-shirt to your socks. I don't make the rules.

JADE

Shut up.

MONROE

Seriously though-

JADE

We're not seriously considering-

MONROE

No, I'm trying to explain the humor, friend.. You remember that time I was telling you stuff that makes me uncomfortable during sex?

JADE

Uh, yeah?

MONROE

One of them was eye contact.. And you were like, "Jesus, Monroe, were you like brutally raped or something?" And then we laughed for like ten minutes straight and could barely breathe?

JADE

Yeah.

MONROE

It's funny like that.

*(Opening bag number ten, not sure what
she'll pull out for this)*

Faking an ectopic pregnancy to get medical help. Of course with this one you run into the same problems as earlier, because it will involve either lying so well that I convince a doc, OR having them lie for me, which I imagine will involve bribing and money, so not great. Maybe we could hack into an ultra sound machine though? And like fake the position to look like it's on my fallopian tube instead of where it's supposed to be? I have ZERO idea how any of that would work, but-

JADE

That's no longer a valid- They're not allowing for abortions in the case of ectopic pregnancies any more, you didn't see that on the news?

MONROE

No...

JADE

Like three weeks ago. No longer permitted.

MONROE

But it kills people.

JADE

Yeah.

MONROE

Like, internal bleeding, boom, dead, over.

JADE

I don't think that's a big concern these days. They're calling it a "God's will" law...

MONROE

Well then is everyone gonna stop wearing glasses? Because it's apparently "god's" will for them to be nearsighted? And oh yeah, sorry dude, your dick doesn't work? Viagra is out because it is GOD'S FUCKING WILL. Like, all medicine right? No aspirin, head aches are God's will. Straitening your teeth. Getting bigger boobs! God wanted your boobs to sag, we're sorry.

JADE

Apparently some doctor back East has "discovered" some surgery to place the baby in the uterus, where it's supposed to go. All his patients so far have died, but he's convinced he'll get the kinks worked out eventually.

MONROE

So you can have bullshit surgery to move it, but not an abortion? Why is that different???

JADE

I don't know.

MONROE

God. You get knocked up and distract yourself with trying to figure out how to safely end the damn thing and the whole world goes to hell in a hand basket while you're not paying attention.

JADE

We were already there.

MONROE

Go America! Where they'll fight for your right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, as long as you are the correct gender, race, sexual orientation, economic level, and belief system.

JADE

Faking ectopic pregnancy is not going to work, what's this one?

*(Grabs bag number twenty one and
opens it, pulls out a book)*

Oh shit! Is this really a copy of the Kama Sutra? They destroyed all of these years ago.

MONROE

I'm dating a librarian revolutionary who hordes books. It's, he read something about sex helping to end pregnancies. Semen, I guess?

JADE

Trying to eliminate competition?

MONROE

I don't know. It's stupid. I wish he hadn't of shoved this one in with all these other more reliable options.

*MONROE takes the book from JADE and tosses
it aside.*

JADE

Right, because Drain-o.

MONROE

Drain-o was funny.

JADE

It wasn't. It's still not.

MONROE is quiet.

JADE puts her arm around her.

JADE (CONT'D)

Uh. Hey, I know. Knock knock.

MONROE

Ha. Who's there?

JADE

Orange.

MONROE

Orange who?

JADE

Shit. I uh- I did it wrong. I was supposed to- Never mind. Here's, here's another one. Um. Wait. This is better than a joke. So last week I'm down at Rocky's, and like in the middle of one of my silly fantasies, when sexy bartender actually walks over to me, and says, "Hey Jade, whatcha drinking tonight?"

MONROE

Whoa, he knows your name?

JADE

I KNOW! And like, I almost fall off the stool I'm so surprised. But then I smack back to reality because he's also asked me a question and I've just kinda been smiling and staring back at him in return, so I stutter out, "S- s- s- sex."

MONROE laughs.

JADE (CONT'D)

Yeah and then I turn bright red and keep going because I know there's an actual drink with the name sex in it, and if I can just get the rest of the name of the drink out this won't be that bad. And so words at this point are just happening, like "At ocean" and "On water" and "Under bridge" and not one is right, and I know it, and they just keep keep coming. Oh my god.

MONROE

This is the best story ever.

JADE

Yeah. He finally was like, "On a beach?" And I just shake my head yes, and he brings me the drink and it's. God. It's awful. But now I HAVE to drink it no matter what. And life is just pain. And now I can never go back to my favorite bar.

MONROE

Wow.

JADE

Yeah. A gift for you, my friend. My humiliation on a platter.

Hug.

MONROE

Thank you. Be sure you get in all your bar time now, because who really knows how long our type will be allowed-

JADE

Don't ruin the funny story.

MONROE

I'm just saying, they're gonna change the drinking laws too. Soon. Really soon.

JADE

I was just trying to get you to feel better.

MONROE

And you did. Really. I'm- I'm fine. I'm sorry for being an ass. I just. I hadn't heard about the, the, the whole new ectopic law thing.

JADE

Yeah.

MONROE

Every month, day, hour, there's just so many new. Rules, regulations. Ways to hurt. Hunt. End. I should have been paying attention. I shouldn't have. I was so caught up in my own shit, I should have seen it coming.

JADE

What difference would that have made?

MONROE

I... I don't know. I just hate getting surprised by all this. I feel guilty. Ashamed. Over-fucking-whelmed. All the time! And now my hormones are going crazy and I just. I feel like knowing would have. Helped? I don't know. It's like when it started. Those decrees. Small, a state here, a state there, then national changes. Big changes. Over night changes. Changes to speech. Gathering. Protests. The fact that the government DOES have the right to know EVERYthing between a woman and her doctor. And you'd find out from headlines while scrolling on your phone, which is just glued to your hand permanently now, and it's all punctuated by brand new televisions on sale, here's a coupon! And clever funny ass t-shirts. Cat videos! And I just feel like. Maybe I could have. Maybe I should have. I watched it happen. I am watching it happen. And I keep thinking, this is as bad as it can get. THIS is the bottom. But it's not the bottom, it's never the bottom.

They sit.

JADE

..... Hey, let's. Hey, time for a cupcake break.

MONROE

I want to save mine for after. For after it's done.

JADE

There are four left. Let's have two now, then two later.

MONROE

Ugh. Fine. You know I can't say no to cupcakes.

JADE

I know.

JADE gets two cupcakes, one is the smashed one.

MONROE

(Pointing out the smashed cupcake)

You eat that one.

JADE

Oh gee, thanks.

MONROE

It fell on the floor. I think I got all the junk off.

JADE

I hope.

They eat their cupcakes in silence....

JADE (CONT'D)

Aw, dangit! We should have saved one of those, then you could have juggled the cupcakes! That would have been epic. You could have landed each one in your mouth.

JADE juggles invisible cupcakes then mimes throwing them up into her mouth one at a time and munching down.

MONROE

That would have been disgusting.

JADE

..... I thought you were mad at me. These past few weeks. I'm such an ass.

MONROE

Why?

JADE

I couldn't get a hold of you! You didn't text or anything. And when you did it was just to bail on things.

MONROE

I know. Sorry.

JADE

No, I shoulda reached out. I didn't know you were losing your mind in all this weird research and plans.

MONROE

I don't know how I could have explained this in a text.

JADE

Fair. But I could have driven my ass over here. I love you.

MONROE

Thanks. I love you too.

*MONROE stands and grabs another bag,
number sixteen, opens it.*

MONROE (CONT'D)

Smartweed and wild yam.

*Tosses the contents. Another bag, number three,
opens it.*

MONROE (CONT'D)

Cinnamon.

*Tosses the contents. Another bag, number twenty
two, opens it.*

MONROE (CONT'D)

Peacock flower.

Tosses the contents. Another bag, number one, opens it.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Avocado skin and pit. Apparently, and I'm almost 100% sure this is bullshit, but if you grind them up and paint the goo all over your stomach, and like, sleep outside, it'll take care of it. Mostly I just didn't want to run out of guac.

Tosses the contents. Another bag, number six, opens it.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Pineapple juice. Put this together with the papaya and we could have our very own jamba juice up in here.

Tosses the contents. Another bag, number nineteen, opens it.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Raw parsley leaves. I didn't know if it meant flat leaf or curly, so I got both.

Tosses the contents. Another bag, number nine, opens it.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Goji berries.

Tosses the contents. Another bag, number thirty, opens it.

MONROE (CONT'D)

A hand held vacuum cleaner with a very small nozzle attachment, meant to make cleaning your car easier. This one was also supposed to make you laugh, but maybe I should use it with one of those herbal methods, yeah?

Tosses the vacuum. Another bag, number fifteen, opens it.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Castor oil. Glug glug glug.

Tosses the contents. Another bag, number thirteen.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Mugwort. Real wing of bat feel to it, this one.

Tosses the contents. Another bag, number twenty. Takes out a bunch of different herbs.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Ah yes, the “helper herbs.”

(Juggles some of them)

So the abortifacients are all well and good, but you really have got to pair them with the right helper herb or herbs. You got your dong quai, your black cohosh root, blue cohosh root, tansy, rue, juniper, and cotton root bark. Use these in combination with other herbs to create the perfect abortion cocktail for your body. Just keep in mind any of these could be self-poisoning. And you know, that very special combination is different for every goddamn body, and you should have a herbal understanding and knowledge before you jump into herbal remedies. But we don't have that now do we? No. We used to. But we called those women, the ones who knew, we labeled them witches, and took it away. No, we didn't just take it away, we burned it, burned all that knowledge along with the poor women who were just trying to help. Then we sanitized it, and put it under fluorescent lights, made it “safe.” And we thought, this is better, and hell, maybe it was. It probably was better, but then they took that away too, and left us with nothing. No alchemy, herbs, old-world remedies, or bright and shiny hospital approved, nothing. Now it's just sex is wrong. Well wait, if you're a dude it's fine, because that's the way dudes operate. It's the women! Women are wrong. And sluts. And evil. And shameful. And stupid. I am so stupid, how the fuck. How did I. The rhythm method is a lie. A total sham. I want my money back.

JADE

Well, did you keep your receipt?

MONROE

I thought I had it here, somewhere.

JADE

No receipt, no refund. Store policy.

MONROE

I think I have the credit card I used, could you just look up my purchase?

JADE

I'll have to ask my manager. Manager says no.

MONROE

Damnit.

JADE

But we are having a sale right now! You should alleviate some of those bad feelings with buying things.

MONROE

Buying things does make me feel better.

JADE

Course it does. You're a happy happy consumer.

MONROE

Sometimes I think if we just keep buying things, then they won't really care what we do.

JADE

Unless you have a vagina.

MONROE

Right.

JADE

Or are gay. Or not white. Or from another country. Or poor. Or sick.

MONROE

Or a kid.

JADE

Yeah. Or a kid.

MONROE

Who wouldn't just be foaming at the mouth thrilled to bring a small person into all of this, you know? Like, like it's bad. It's. It's terrible. And I can barely. Just by myself. Or with Kevin. Like the two of us is one thing, you know? That's all I can handle to stress about and still manage to function. But. I can't. I couldn't move if there was more. More to worry. More to feel pain. Suffer. And I never ever wanted- I love kids, but I never wanted- And then you add in all this, this, this shit. It wouldn't be moral. What if...

What if it was a girl.

My mom. She told me two things. Rinse out your cereal bowl and don't get pregnant.

I hate this country.

MONROE is still juggling, by the way.

JADE

But have you seen the deals on microwaves here?

MONROE

Oh yeah! Bought twelve myself. That way I can have a microwave within an arm's length in every room of my apartment.

JADE

Must make showering awkward.

MONROE

Nah, the electric shocks keeps the radical thinking at bay.

Twenty to thirty seconds of just juggling.

JADE

I spy one bag still standing.

MONROE

We didn't get them all?

JADE

(Pointing to the last bag)

No, see?

MONROE

Okay.

MONROE lets all the herbs fall. The room is a hot mess by this point.

JADE gets the bag.

They both return the couch.

JADE

Is there a flesh eating virus in here?

MONROE

No, but I can't believe I didn't think of that.

JADE

A gun?

MONROE

No! Jesus. You're dark! Dang!

JADE

Not as bad as you!

MONROE

No, a gun is worse than any of my stunts.

JADE

I'm scared to open it.

MONROE

(Thinking)

I'm 99% sure we opened all the ridiculous ones already.

JADE

I know, but what if it's not, what if it's not a good idea either? What if none of them are good ideas?

MONROE

Jade, spoiler.... None of these are good ideas. That's why I did all this.

JADE opens the final bag, number seven. It's a bottle of medication.

MONROE (CONT'D)

(Taking the bottle)

Ordered that online. Used a funny name and shipped it to the library.

JADE

Is that what I think it is?

MONROE

It cost all of Kevin's savings.

JADE

I thought, you can't- It's-

MONROE

There are a lot of dark internet corners where you can get a lot of things.

JADE takes the bottle back, reads it.

JADE

This is what you should do. Take this! It's, it's medicine used to induce miscarriages, this, this is exactly how you should handle-

MONROE

You haven't heard of all the poisonings?

JADE

Well yeah.

MONROE takes the bottle.

MONROE

It's how they get ya. You think it's some shady doctor, or someone from China or something, but it's really good ol' Uncle Sam selling you death in a bottle. Punishment for living.

JADE

What site did you use?

MONROE

Doesn't matter. They're on all the sites. There's no way to know for sure. Oh, well, there's the one way to know for sure.

JADE takes the bottle back.

JADE

This looks super legit. Clear instructions, you can tell it hasn't been opened or tampered with, look there's a seal!

MONROE

It could be fine. It totally could be.

JADE puts the bottle down on the table.

JADE

Okay. So. What are the other choices, are there any other good choices? We can't have gone through all the bags.

JADE hunts for more bags as MONROE takes out her list.

MONROE

(She crosses off items they've eliminated)

I think... I think it's down to mystery drugs, some herbal combination that we cook up here and now, or...

JADE

I could get you in to see my OB, he could, I don't know, if he's getting me birth control maybe he'd help.

MONROE

Maybe I'll do that if whatever I decide on tonight doesn't work. I'll have to practice my blow job skills, Kevin will be pleased.

(Back to the list)

Looks like I can narrow it down to six. This look okay to you?

MONROE shows the list to JADE.

JADE

Wait, I thought we said no to the Pennyroyal Tea?

MONROE

Small doses will be fine. I think. It's one of the more effective herbal methods.

JADE

How do we pick from here?

MONROE

Got that worked out too. I figured we might encounter a situation where there wasn't a clear winner and so, may I present: Lady chance!

MONROE brings out a single six sided die. Is it giant? That could be really fun.

JADE

Always with the dramatics.

MONROE

Got to keep it interesting. Ready?

JADE

No.

MONROE throws the die across the room. They both head over and look at the number it has selected. Then check the list.

MONROE

Okay. Let's do this.

MONROE moves to find the winner.

JADE

Wait! Let's, um, let's have, the, uh, we, you can't forget, the uh- THE LAST CUPCAKES! There are still two whole cupcakes, sitting, waiting, and I've already had a lot, maybe we should take a break and you should eat the cupcakes and then, we can, um, do the uh, the thing?

MONROE

I'll have them after.

JADE

But what if it goes not well?

MONROE

That's why I brought my lifeguard.

JADE

I don't want you to get hurt.

MONROE

I don't want to either.

JADE

I lied before, I have- I am so so sorry. Let me go and get my birth control, I do have some. We should try that first, I'm sure it's safer than-

MONROE

It's okay. It's gonna be okay. Fate has decided. You hold on to your birth control so you don't end up like me.

JADE

But-

MONROE

No more buts. Just, if anything goes wrong try- Do whatever you can for me before you bring me to a hospital or anything, okay?

Before JADE can argue further, MONROE picks up the item the die selected. JADE takes it out of her hand, then runs around the room.

MONROE (CONT'D)

Hey, don't be dumb!

JADE

I'll bet you can't catch me!

Music starts. The music is opposite the mood. Something that sounds like it could have come from a Shirley Temple movie.

JADE plays keep away from MONROE. They rush around the stage, making an even bigger mess of the living room.

Their movement evolves into a dance. Something wholesome feeling, a tap dance, to go with the Shirley Temple music. They tap around the room, in a very big show-off fashion. It should be silly and fun. Joyous.

But as they continue, the music gets louder and louder, and their dance becomes less happy and more manic and desperate. If they fall or trip, they get back up. The music gets faster. They dance faster. Faster. Faster. MONROE might also be juggling. There's no joy in it now. It's dangerous and maybe painful, but they keep going and going.

They continue and have about thirty seconds or a whole minute of dancing at the highest possible volume, speed, and intensity.

MONROE

(This may come out between ragged breaths, that's fine)

TIME THE FUCK OUT!

Everything cuts off in one clear moment. The dancing. The music. House lights come up.

MONROE and JADE catch their breaths.

They wipe sweat off their faces and bodies.

They get the fake bottle of vodka and share the water in it.

Once they're back to a place where they can talk in a regular voice, they talk directly to the audience.

This might take several minutes. That's fine.

MONROE (CONT'D)

(To audience)

And then I DIED!

JADE

(To audience)

So dead! Boom over. I was so sad.

MONROE

Ha. No, I didn't die. At least not here. I ended up in the hospital and after that they put me on death row for my crimes.

JADE

Yeah, that stupid smart box thing that you LIED to me about-

MONROE

Sorry about that.

JADE

Had alerted the police and they sent over some officers to check out what we were up to-

MONROE

Banging down my door

(In a Ricky Ricardo voice)

You got some splainin to do!

JADE

I served a life prison sentence for helping!

MONROE

No, we're joking! I was fine.

JADE

Oh duh, that's right, we were both fine!

MONROE

Well kinda fine, Jade was fine.

JADE

Because even though it seemed like Monroe was also fine, she was unknowingly poisoning herself. And then she got super sick and died.

MONROE

Boo hoo!

JADE

And Kevin, her super sympathetic librarian boyfriend, that did all that research and spent all his savings to get his girlfriend the safest abortion possible?

MONROE

The one who thinks juggling in underwear is sexy?

JADE

He killed himself. Because he was sooooo sad.

MONROE

With a gun! Boom pow bam!

JADE

He jumped off a bridge!

MONROE

He hung himself. Dangled out the last of his breath.

JADE

He burned down the library with himself locked inside.

MONROE

No no no! He took the same stuff I took to induce my abortion. It's unusual for men to poison themselves, but he appreciated the symbolism in it.

JADE

Or nothing. He might be fine too.

MONROE
Oh, but you remember my cousin?

JADE
This is so sad.

MONROE
The one who supplied the pregnancy test?

JADE
Who had tried for SO long to get pregnant?

MONROE
And finally, FINALLY, was?

JADE
She was caught.

MONROE
They took her baby.

JADE
And then they named the baby Chip!

MONROE
And burned her at the stake.

JADE
Sent her off to live in Australia.

MONROE
Put her on one-way rocket to the moon.

JADE
Sad.

MONROE
So sad!

JADE
Not really. She's, I mean, I guess she's also fine?

MONROE
Yeah, probably. I mean, really, it doesn't really matter what happened to ANY of the characters involved in the play.

JADE

Because.... Spoiler.... We. Are. Not. Real.

MONROE

And now, please excuse us as we get into the super preachy moment of the play.

JADE

It's gonna be a lot, we know that, we'll try to get through it real fast like ripping off a band-aid! It's just, it's like the reason for the season, but instead of Christmas, it's this play. So buckle up.

MONROE

Real human beings with vaginas die each year from the lack of legal abortion options they have.

JADE

In this country.

MONROE

Now.

JADE

Today.

MONROE

And maybe you think abortion is wrong-

JADE

Wow, then this was probably real uncomfortable for you! Thanks for sticking it out!

MONROE

But even if you think abortion is wrong, making it illegal will not stop abortions.

JADE

At all.

MONROE

None. Zip. Zero.

JADE

It will only vastly reduce the amount of safe abortions.

MONROE

And vastly increase the amount of stupid, dangerous, ill informed ones. Like what you just saw, or worse. If you make abortions illegal, you're hurting half the population.

Poisoning them. JADE

Punishing them. MONROE

Killing them. JADE

Especially the poor. MONROE

The young. JADE

The abused. MONROE

The scared. JADE

The ones we should be standing up and fighting for. MONROE

The following section can be changed as laws/facts change, subject to playwright approval:

96% of Oklahoma counties don't have access to an abortion provider. JADE

93% of Texas. MONROE

93% of Indiana. JADE

93% of Idaho. MONROE

93% of Utah. JADE

90% of Ohio. MONROE

98% of South Dakota. JADE

98% of Kentucky. MONROE

97% of Arkansas. JADE

99% of Mississippi! MONROE

Leaving... JADE

Last, but not least. MONROE

Alabama. JADE

Alabama. MONROE

Alabama doesn't allow for abortion even in the case of rape or incest. JADE

Abortion can be a criminal offense in Ohio. MONROE

And Georgia. JADE

Tennessee is thinking about it. MONROE

Because jail time is the obvious answer. JADE

Now, you might be thinking, wow, a LOT of those states are right next to one another! MONROE

And you're right. JADE

MONROE

Which leaves larges swaths of this country without access.

JADE

You might also be thinking, hot damn, I am flat out overwhelmed by all those percentages.

MONROE

Which is fair. We threw a whole lot at you.

JADE

But just try to keep in mind how overwhelming it would feel to live without access, without options.

MONROE

Without MEDICAL options.

JADE

SO, while you should definitely NOT take at home abortion advice from this play.

MONROE

Please, really don't... The playwright doesn't even know what vaginal horns are.

JADE

You mean uterine horns.

MONROE

Shit, sorry. Yes. Those!

JADE

What you should walk away with.

MONROE

What we WANT you to walk away with.

JADE

Is that protecting the right to chose matters. And there's work to be done.

MONROE

So don't sit by.

JADE

Protest, if you're able. Donate, if you can afford to.

Vote. MONROE

VOTE! JADE

Volunteer. MONROE

Call up Planned Parenthood. JADE

Center For Reproductive Rights. MONROE

National Abortion Federation or National Latina Institute For Reproductive Health. JADE

National Network Of Abortion Funds or NARAL Pro-Choice America. MONROE

Or National Women's Health Network. JADE

Ask them what they need. MONROE

They will tell you! JADE

And talk to your friends, family. Talk TO them. WITH them. MONROE

Not AT them. JADE

Try. MONROE

Really try. JADE

Before at home abortion parties are all the rage. MONROE

JADE
(*Shudders*)

Oh, for reals.

MONROE
Okay. It's almost time to send you away, but before you go- One last joke.

JADE
Oy vey.

MONROE
Don't you oy vey me!

JADE
This had better be better than the Drain-O bit.

MONROE
Give it time, I'm telling you.

JADE
No.

MONROE
ANYway, the last joke. And it's a good one- NO, a GREAT one!

*JADE creeps away and grabs the last two
cupcakes.*

MONROE (CONT'D)
So a couple is at a doctor's office, having a check up, and the woman is really nervous, right? But the doc and the dude don't notice at all, they're just shooting the shit, talking about, I don't know, a football game or something, not important. So the doc starts the ultrasound machine up, and squirts the gel all over the lady's belly, still chatting away with her partner, like they're best buds sitting at a bar instead of in a doctor's office, and by now the lady is just sweating bullets. So the doctor puts the ultra sound wand, or whatever it's called on her stomach and on the screen pops up a fuzzy representations of what's inside this chick's uterus, right? But they don't see it, they're too busy being like, "Yay touchdown, slam dunk, hole in one!" While the woman is about to just pass out, because she DOES notice, of course, and finally the doc sees how much in distress his, you know, actual patient is, and tries to reassure her while looking back at his monitor, right? But then HE sees what's on it and yells, "MY GOD! THAT'S NOT A BABY, THAT'S A-"

*JADE slams a cupcake into MONROE's mouth,
then laughs. A lot.*

ANNNND that's a wrap!

JADE

*MONROE pulls the cupcakes away from her
mouth, tries to swallow as quick as she can.
May need water.*

Hey! You messed up my joke.

MONROE

I owed you.

JADE

Fair.

MONROE

(To audience)

Good night folks!

JADE

Please throw your change in the donation buckets on your way out the door.

MONROE

All the funds are going to (whatever charity the production has decided on).

They take their bows. After applause...

... Time in.

JADE

*Some nice music both MONROE and JADE like
a lot plays.*

JADE (CONT'D)
(To MONROE)

Your apartment is a mess.

MONROE
(To JADE)

You're gonna help me clean it up, right?

JADE
I gotta help you with everything.

MONROE

You're not my best lifeguard for nothing, you know.

They start to clean up the apartment.

They clean. They laugh.

They keep talking while they clean, but we can't hear them anymore. End of play.