



## **Biotintillation**

**Marlene - 40s**  
**Julie - 40s**  
**Becky/Rebecca - Late 20s**  
**Victoria - Any age**

**Adjacent rooms, labeled numerically, on a sterile Sperm Bank hall way.**

*(A woman, MARLENE, comes out of one of the doors.  
She is holding a clipboard with several vials of  
identical test tubes.  
She is stilettos with enough mass you can kick  
someone's ass.  
She is Color-stay Lip-wear.  
She is a power suit, un-ironic. )*

**MARLENE**

Every so often it comes up in the legislature—or on the ticket somewhere—  
whether or not we should eat horses,  
and I'm of the 'damn why not' ballot box.  
They, horses, *equines*, know we can do  
what we make them do  
on our own  
so they don't trust us  
and in turn, if I can do it on my own,  
no reason I have to trust them  
especially when they're not trusting us.

Emotional connection, or whatever you call it, we've supposedly got with horses  
or not, they're big and they're meaty and they may *think* they're better than a cow  
but it's all in the presentation.  
If you got a half decent looking cow on the zone diet and dressed her up with  
some extensions, there might just be some rethinking down at the farm.  
Like when hicks turn into Abercrombie models and you have to question your  
*whole* perception of the American social landscape.

My 75 year old mother calls me on the way to the gym about going back this  
summer to the DUDE ranch in Wyoming.  
The very first time we went I should have honed in on the DUDE aspect and  
stayed home with dad  
but I wasn't versed in the true meaning of rancher lingo at 7  
and it wouldn't have flown anyways because my mom never trusted my dad to  
take care of me on his own.

So every year it's this horse infested dude ranch.  
This one's main attraction being trail rides down the side of the cliff to the river  
and a camp site below that's supposedly lying in wait with tin cups and  
marshmallows.

I'm on this trail at 7 years old and that horse they assigned me's moldy hooves are just *teasing* the edges of the precipice down that mountain to those fucking marshmallows.

I try to grab the reins and steer *Easy Rider* or *Snowflake* or whoever I got paired with that morning away from the edge, because, let's be honest:

Snowfucker doesn't have any stakes.

She's just as happy rippity-rolling down that mountainside as being turned into Dude ranch glue at the end of the summer.

So why wouldn't she think about it when she's got me giving her a root canal with the reigns?

Exactly.

So 7 years old and you know what?

I'm off of that horse walking down that trail to the holy tin grail of marshmallows! That's right.

*(To a test tube of sperm)*

Your mother did it on her own. Didn't have to put her trust in anyone else. Just did it on her own because she could.

I think I'll call you mine.

*(MARLENE shuts the door, which becomes a scrim. Just as we see her shadow lift the test tube high into air...the lights behind the scrim go out and:*

*Another door opens. It's JULIE.*

*She's holding a test tube of expired yellow sperm a nurse gave Julie to familiarize her with the insemination process. We know it's expired from the bright orange biohazard sticker on it that says as much.*

*JULIE has a vest and purse with a long thin leather strap, and a long mousy-brown braid down her back. Is she older than MARLENE? Or perhaps she's just had less botox.*

*JULIE is cold in the air conditioned room. She looks around for the nurse.)*

## **JULIE**

I'm afraid of being left behind.

I'm afraid of giving in to something—giving over.

Wading ½ way out into the surf and then the water not rising to take me in and under because I've waded out too late.

In high tide I played putting my toes in the surf to entice it further and at first it seemed to.

It surged when I pulled away and I came to love the ocean.

I loved the way it hit my shins first and then wrapped around my calves.

Loved the way it made me wet and thirsty.

The way it made me warm through knowing cold.

The way salt cleans skin. Sloughs it off.

The way the water diffracts light so that when you look down into it you look into a world of different angles. 45 degrees instead of 60.

Not that different but just so enough to look down and see yourself into somewhere different enough you want to be. Like California. Or in a silk-screening class.

But I didn't dunk my head. I waited for it to come and consume me like it was going to be easy.

It was supposed to be easy. Why else would I work so hard if I wasn't *sure* it was going to be easy?

But I pushed the wrong way, because when I turned around to walk back in, the water receded.

I worked so hard for it to take me in and now it's low tide all of a sudden and I don't understand what went wrong.

Why I worked so hard.

What all that looking for someone was about because I'm standing here with feet on the beach and the water just keeps moving further away.

Where is it going?

And it's not like you can convince the ocean to do anything but what it does.  
I'm so dry I'm cracking.

*(To the test tube)*

You're the first man I've been next to that I haven't felt receding.

*(JULIE closes the door and wonders if the nurse forgot about her. Just as we see JULIE'S shadow behind the door lift the tube of expired chamomile-colored sperm into the air...)*

*Another door opens. BECKY.*

*BECKY is five years out of University of Rhode Island and five years into discovering her path in life.*

*BECKY has recently thought of going by REBECCA—  
though she's not sure yet.  
She holds a tray with the three tubes she has  
narrowed it down to.  
This is the smartest decision she's ever made. )*

### **BECKY/REBECCA**

So right. I think I feel bad every day about the people who aren't alive.

It makes me feel things more than a lot of my friends, but that's ok.  
Because it makes me deeper too.  
That's the part of me that's letting me know I'm going to make a great mom.  
The deepness and also the desire for things not to be dead,  
but more like the opposite.  
The desire for things to be *alive*.

It because things happen to me.  
Things happen to me that could happen to anyone and just be brushed off,  
but when these things happen to me, they CHANGE me.

The time I realized that death can sit right next to you and tell you its name:

It's my senior year of high school and I'm touring the East Coast looking at colleges, right?  
Looking at their campuses and dining halls, eateries and dormitories and also looking for stuff to say on those boxes that ask:  
WHY DO YOU WANT TO GO HERE.  
I figured if I attended a lecture or symposium or something I'd have something positive and really specific to say about the place.  
Like "I 'knew I was a perfect fit when Dr. something mentioned the something theory and its effect on the something-ization of Haiti."  
I was a lot more focused in high school...

Anyways, the first college I visited made the search even *easier* by printing a calendar of events on campus.  
I thought I was pretty clever because I didn't even get this calendar from the admissions office,  
nu-uh,  
mine came from the biology bulletin board in one of the science buildings.

My application was going to be *really* specific.

I got to the 3:30 *lecture* on Neurobiology and the brain tumor 20 minutes early, you know, in case any admissions officers decided to also attend to scout out for bright young science students who were also punctual.

I wore a yellow hair band I think. It drew focus to my head, and ipso-defacto, my intellect.

As I took my seat in a white folding chair, I was really kinda impressed by the non conventional, non conformist arrangement of the chairs, set up in this circle to promote a sense of community.

Though I guess I was spending too much time rearranging the brain-highlighting-headband, because it took me until the arrival of the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> lecture attendee that I realized I wasn't actually at a lecture, I was at a brain tumor support meeting.

I didn't even have time to put away my notebook—which I brought to take notes, you know, in case the admissions officer was looking for a particularly astute note-taker, before the meeting began.

Peggy, from Warick, had first learned about her intracranial mass 4 years before when she started seeing double.

Edward, this guy from Providence, to the repeated contradiction of his doctors, was convinced he got his from exposure to Vinyl chloride in his breakfast cereal. 'You didn't get it from Vinyl chloride' Susan, the mediator with the flower print skirt tried to confirm to Edward.

'Yes, I did.'

'Do you work for a polymer, polyvinyl chloride plant?'

'No.'

'Then you didn't get it from Vinyl chloride.'

'Yes, I did!'

Anyways! So they moved on...in my direction.

Jean, also from Cranston, and also new to the meeting, had her tumor successfully removed, but it had popped back up recently and metastasized in her spinal canal causing her headaches, ataxia and....the idea that her daughter in law was stealing her fancy guest soaps, I think that was it.

Susan the mediator talked a bit about personality changes and how, before her own surgery, she became really irritated in grocery stores.

When the circle came around to me, I said my name was Becky. I hadn't thought of changing it Rebecca yet. So just Becky. From California. San Francisco, California! NOT LA.

And that I was senior in high school looking at colleges and I just thought they all were so brave and not at all like the characters on Soap Operas who are always getting the brain tumors.

It was one of those moments, you know, that changed me,

like this one will.

*(BECKY makes her decision.  
She chooses one of the three test tubes—probably  
the one that is the most shiny—and closes the door.  
Behind it we see her outline lift the test tube into the  
air just as...*

*The LAST door opens. VICTORIA is holding a large  
white binder filled with laminated pages.  
VICTORIA is sexy. Who knows who she's going to  
meet!)*

### VICTORIA

See it, it's a room filled with scented candles. But somehow all the smells just perfectly...mesh. It smells like bath water. And it's raining outside. Hear that? It's just begun. We lay down in the sheets.

More.

They're satin. No. 500 count Egyptian cotton. They smell like creation.  
We lie together.  
I turn up Michael Bolton sings Sinatra!

*(We hear Michael Bolton sings Sinatra. It's so good  
it's disgusting. )*

You look into my eyes and you KNOW me.  
But

*(Sexy gasp.)*

Who are you?

*(VICTORIA flips through the profiles in the binder.)*

Are you the 6'2" Italian Doctor?  
The muscular Fulbright with the great smile?  
Which one are you?  
Come on.  
Which one.  
Which one.  
You?  
The taxidermist with a college football scholarship?  
No.

Well?  
No.  
Which one?  
The 5'5" Canadian Astronaut?  
No.  
Which one.  
The...  
    oh...  
        oh yes.  
Yes.  
Yes.  
YES!

*(VICTORIA quickly closes the door.  
We see the shadows of all four women: MARLENE,  
JULIE, BECKY/REBECCA, VICTORIA behind their  
respective doors, test tubes raised.  
Simultaneous insertion.  
Music plays.  
The kind that evokes a race to the death and also the  
beginning of life. \*)*

**End of Play.**

**\* Except perhaps in Julie's case. Given her luck and the prohibitive shelf life of certain organic materials.**