

\*excerpt 11pg sample *HOT AND HOLY: SEX IN A COMA*

## ACT 1 SCENE 1

A witness stand, a hospital bed in which lies a young girl, COROLLA, in a hospital gown. A night table and a chair next to the bed.

COROLLA (*ELECTRIC CRACKLE AROUND HER HEAD ON SCREEN WE SEE A MOTORCYCLE CRASH*)

Wake me up, Wake me up! Please—no, please—Oh! my God. I'm on fire! No no no! I'm falling! HELP ME! MAKE IT STOP! There's splinters in my eyes-- Oh my God, I'm blind—where're my legs? I can't move my legs please, help me, GET ME OUT. I can't move, please, please, am I dead already? Oh I feel something. Reverberations—someone, anyone--

*WE HEAR muffled sounds and STACCATO CLICKING of approaching prosecutor's high heels*

*COROLLA lies still*

*PROSECUTOR walks on to stage/court. SHE is buttoning her shirt, finishing dressing. SHE CARRIES A SMALL BRIEFCASE. SETS IT DOWN ON TABLE. TAKES OUT A HAND MIRROR AND LIPSTICK. HOLDS UP MIRROR, PUTS ON LIPSTICK. SHE REPLACES LIPSTICK AND REMOVES LIP PENCIL FROM BAG. SHE SLOWLY TRACES HER LIPS. Turns to THE AUDIENCE*

### PROSECUTOR

Ladies and gentleman of the jury--My opening statement---

Corolla, her name is Corolla. From the Latin, for crown.

*(Gestures to girl in bed)*

Don't be confused by her silence. She's not a fortune cookie, or a sealed box, something less than human. She's the daughter you never had, your sister who died at sixteen—special to someone, as she should be to you. Because you are her guardians, ladies and gentleman of the jury, that's who you are today. And she deserves your protection.

*(Walking)*

Corolla has been in a coma since she slammed into a tree trunk so hard she left a small gold earring embedded in the bark—She can't speak but there are things we can know—

Listen, that's her heart,

*(WE HEAR Single heart beat, COROLLA'S)*

And-- there's another one,

*(WE HEAR a Baby's heartbeat QUICK)*

Another heart ticking away like a tiny clock tightly wound or a time bomb that you can't detonate--life quickens in all its inestimable glory--

Corolla has been raped. I will prove this to you today beyond a reasonable doubt—and I will ask you for a conviction. For it was not an angel, not a shower of light, not a broom handle jammed up her vagina—--a man did this. A man so excited by her helplessness that he took the last shreds of dignity this girl had left, without remorse, devoid of empathy.

*SHE makes a note on a pad*

Pen-a-tration.

*(Resuming)*

Before she came to Silverglade who was she? A suburban virgin, a rosebud tightly closed, fragrant but not yet opened, with friends who drove too fast. Modest, God fearing, she loved her mother—perhaps. We can only guess.

But Ladies and gentlemen, I submit to you that even if all she has left now are her dreams and respiration; as long as she is breathing we owe her some kind of dignity.

*(Turning toward Audience)*

Oh-- but why don't I trust you? Do you too notice the softness of her breasts, the roundness of her belly, are you too excited by her helplessness, enticed by the complicity of her silence? I can already hear the whispers. Maybe she's *not* a virgin. Another slice off a cut loaf. See how her nightgown strap slips off her shoulder, the curve of the clavicle exposed like a crescent tea cookie, no skin under her nails, no broken teeth--this can't be rape—rape is a rhapsody and this girl didn't sing—she didn't scream, she didn't speak, she didn't even wake up.

It's the fear that's forbidden, without fear it doesn't count and she snoozed right through it--

Oh, but to be opened like a cabbage---This girl is worthy of our protection, if only to keep us human. Return a verdict of guilty.

He took off her diaper, for Christ's sake.

*PROSECUTOR TURNS as NURSE enters. NURSE TAKES HER PLACE AT THE TABLE HAND in the air to TAKE OATH*

NURSE

The bible the whole bible and nothing but the bible. That's how I swear because I witness for Jehovah. I am *in* the truth.

PROSECUTOR

You are a Jehovah's Witness.

NURSE

I am. I am ruled by the kingdom of heaven.

PROSECUTOR

Then I think we can count on you. (*MAKING A NOTE*) How long have you been a nurse?

NURSE

Don't I get some lawyer?

PROSECUTOR

No, this is an investigation. Grand jury. *LOOKING AT AUDIENCE* They will decide if an indictment will issue.

NURSE

Well—all right then. I've been a certified progressive care nurse for thirty-two years, the last sixteen at Silverglade Long-term Hospital, that's where I'm working now.

PROSECUTOR

You're the nurse responsible for Corolla's care?

NURSE

I've been Corolla's primary from the day she came in. Just over a year.

PROSECUTOR

And what does that involve?

NURSE

You take care of your patient body and soul. Corolla she had the healing from the accident. Not a scar on her. And then there's the feeding, keeping her cleaning, keeping her pretty, keeping her moving. Not one bedsore ever on my girl. Jehovah commands that you love your fellow man and follow in the steps of Jesus, and that's how I do.

PROSECUTOR

Changes in her condition?

NURSE

Not a lot of change. Not for a long time.

PROSECUTOR

And when did you first meet the boy?

NURSE

Benito. It was January of 2000, that's a century leap year, who could forget that?

*BENITO enters with a mop and pail. HE is scared and jittery, on something speedy. HE puts on his headphones. HE mops sloppily. Jumps around to face COROLLA then rapidly backs away. HE dances with his back to her. WE HEAR WHAT HE HEARS. LIGHTS CHANGE on COROLLA. SHE sits up looks at him. COROLLA Lies down*

*BENITO turns suddenly, pulling off headphones.*

BENITO

What? *(HE approaches, leaning over her)*  
You looking at me? You giving me the mal de ojo?  
*(Whispers)* Zafa.

*HE REACHES TO CLOSE EYES. WITHDRAWS HIS HANDS BACKING away.*

Close your eyes. I mean, what the fuck? That's so weird , that's a weird ass thing--  
go back to sleep, stay asleep just keep on breathing—  
*BACKS AWAY. THEN APPROACHES*

BENITO *(cont'd)*

All these fuckin' machines-- -You really alive?

*WHACKS the mop handle on the bed. COMES CLOSE LOOKS FOR REACTION*

BENITO *(backing away)*

Hey! Shut your eyes! Come on. So's-- maybe you don't want me here? So's I  
don't want to be here. I got *sentenced* here by some fat judge so's I could think  
about stuff. And yeah, I've been thinking. I been thinking it sucks here, I been  
thinking it stinks like piss and old people with rotten organs and shit.

*URNS AWAY Starts to mop*

BENITO *(Cont'd)*

I'm gonna listen to some tunes.

*Puts on his headphones, slopping water moving to the music. HE BEGINS TO  
DANCE with his back turned. COROLLA sits up on one elbow HOLDING A  
FEATHER OUT. SHE traces a small curve in the air; it is the side of BENITO'S*

*neck on the other side of the room. HE FEELS IT.*

*BENITO (STOPS. COLROLLA LIES DOWN AS  
HE TURNS slaps his neck)*

What? What the fuck?

*COROLLA laughs. HE GOES TO COROLLA. PULLS UP SHEET covers  
COROLLA'S face.*

*NURSE gets down from the stand and enters HOSPITAL ROOM*

NURSE

Hey! *(Peeling sheet back)* What did I just see you do?

BENITO

You? You weren't even here.

NURSE

Speak to me politely boy. I'm your boss now and I can send you to jail faster than you can tell me your name.

BENITO

Benito.

NURSE

Benito. The Father Almighty alone will come to judge the quick and the dead. Don't you dare disrespect this girl.

BENITO

All these tubes with stuff coming in, and stuff going out--I got to go get more soap.

NURSE

Use what you've got. Just add bleach, it's in the closet.

BENITO

I got stuff --later.

NURSE

Now!

BENITO (*GETTING BLEACH*)

Fuck all. All right. This stuff?

NURSE

Read the label.

*BENITO reads it, slowly*

NURSE (*con't*)

You got to memorize it? Bleach. Mop.

BENITO (*moping sloppily*)

So—what happened to her—

NURSE

Corolla? Motorcycle. What happened to you? What you here for?

BENITO

Me? I killed my fucking stepfather.

NURSE (*snorts*)

Honey, we don't get killers we get losers and the lost. How old are you?

BENITO

Eighteen.

NURSE

You drink?



BENITO

Beers, mostly I do drugs.

NURSE (*TICKING them off with her fingers*)

No drinking, no drugs, no betting no cursing, no spitting and *never* use the Lords name in vain. And tuck in your shirt, we don't have hooligans here.

BENITO

Can I finish now?

NURSE

Sure, Killer. But not like that. Ring it out proper. You're just spreading the dirt around.

BENITO

It's not dirty.

NURSE

Just do it. Sweet Jesus! *SHE takes his hands*

BENITO

What? What'd I do?

NURSE

Look at your hands. Wash your hands, scrub them and get those nails clean.

*BENITO pulls his hands away.*

Let me show you! What you do is get a nailbrush and some soap, there's plenty around here and you go like this.

*She demonstrates nail brushing - he pulls away.*

Don't pull away from me. I'll get you your own brush and a nail clipper myself-- you just do it.

BENITO

Who do you think you are-- my fuckin mother?

*Benito puts on headphone goes back to moping. NURSE goes over and pulls them off.*

NURSE<sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

Whatever your right hand stretches out to do, do with all your might.

BENITO

Huh?

NURSE

Do it right.

*She demonstrates moping the floor.*

BENITO

Like anybody cares, like *she* cares. (*Indicating COROLLA*)

NURSE

Corolla. Call her by her name. And don't be smart with me; it's this job or jail.

BENITO<sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

Jail's OK by me. You can lift weights and you don't have to do floors or clean up some old guy whose piss bag broke.

NURSE

<sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>A good-looking boy like you wouldn't last a week.

BENITO<sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

I can take care of myself.

NURSE (*HANDING HIM MOP*)

Then you do what I tell you, and mop under the bed--you scared to go close?

BENITO

Nah.

NURSE

Then look at her.