

## JEWISH JUNKIE PLAY

**MARK**, *an old man*.

**ALICE**: *His nurse*.

**They sit in chairs, facing OUT.**

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MARK: I'm not a junkie.

ALICE: No.

MARK: Don't treat me that way.

ALICE: I'm not.

MARK: You are.

ALICE: I'm not.

MARK: Why are my meds locked up in a box?

ALICE: Orders from above.

MARK: It can't be.

ALICE: From God.

MARK: Oh, come on.

ALICE: The National League of Nurses.

MARK: I don't think so, Alice.

ALICE: I'm just doing my job.

MARK: Jackass.

ALICE: Calling me names?

MARK: Those meds belong to me.

ALICE: Sure, they do.

MARK: Then open the box.

ALICE: No.

MARK: Why not?

ALICE: They're regulated.

MARK: I need steroids, or I'll start to cough.

ALICE: Not without a prescription.

MARK: Then get a prescription.

ALICE: You already have a prescription.

MARK: I need more.

ALICE: Don't call me names.

MARK: Fat head.

ALICE: Great. That 'll do it.

MARK: Why?

ALICE: I'm not going to risk my license.

MARK: Nazi.

ALICE: Jew-boy.

MARK: There you go.

ALICE: Don't call me a Nazi.

MARK: I'm in pain.

ALICE: I'll give you Advil.

MARK: Advil doesn't get it.

ALICE: So, cool it.

MARK: I'll cut your head off.

ALICE: Say it again and I'll call the cops.

MARK: Call the cops.

ALICE: I don't think you want that.

MARK: Call them. Go ahead.

ALICE: You're a sick man, Mark.

MARK: I know that.

ALICE: It's not just the coughing.

MARK: Obviously.

ALICE: It's your fucked up head-brain.

MARK: I know when I'm about to start coughing. I know when it's coming.

ALICE: Calm down, Mark.

MARK: No.

ALICE: You're a junkie.

MARK: No, I'm not.

ALICE: Good. Relax.

MARK: No, you relax.

ALICE: I am relaxed.

MARK: You're hysterical.

ALICE: Just doing my job.

MARK: It's humiliating.

ALICE: I'm sorry.

MARK: Treating me that way.

ALICE: Sorry.

MARK: You're not sorry.

ALICE: Okay, I'm not sorry.

MARK: You're an anti-Semite.

ALICE: Oh, come on.

MARK: It's in the air we breathe.

ALICE: You're an anti-Christ.

MARK: I am a Christian.

ALICE: And you're not a Christian. You can't be a Christian and a Jew at the same time.

MARK: Why not?

ALICE: Let's drop it, shall we?

MARK: One is one and one is three.

ALICE: I have no idea what he means by that. What do you mean by that?

MARK: Nothing. (3 is Jesus.)

ALICE: Shall we continue? Oxygen? 93. Good. Sugar is low, you don't need coverage. Maybe eat something sweet.

MARK: Later.

ALICE: No need to hook you up.

MARK: Good. Religion. It calms the masses.

ALICE: Agreed. But you have no religion.

MARK: No.

ALICE: So, you're not a Jew.

MARK: Yes, I am. It's a way of life, a tradition.

ALICE: You don't pray.

MARK: I do pray.

ALICE: No, you don't.

MARK: I pray every day.

ALICE: If you say so.

MARK: Hear O Israel, the Lord is God, the Lord is One.

ALICE: Congratulations.

MARK: And I haven't used anything for fifty years or more.

ALICE: Imagine – a Jewish junkie. It's unheard of.

MARK: Lenny Bruce.

ALICE: You identify?

MARK: Yes. Him and Cary Grant.

ALICE: You must be kidding.

MARK: We have a lot in common, me and him.

ALICE: Like what?

MARK: We both had bad parenting. We took LSD more than once. We fought our way out, street to stage to screen.

ALICE: You're nowhere near as handsome.

MARK: He was a good man. Archie.

ALICE: How many times?

Mark: How many times what?

ALICE: Acid.

MARK: Maybe thirty.

ALICE: My goodness!

MARK: As Cary said, I had a lot to clarify. It was like coming up for air.

ALICE: Reminds me. Your noon meds.

MARK: Thank you. Somebody told you – someone ratted --  
Mark is a junkie?



ALICE: I know one when I see one.

MARK: No, you don't.

ALICE: Save your breath.

MARK: For what?

ALICE: Come on.

MARK: Like what?

ALICE: You should know the Hebrew payers. I mean *prayers*.

MARK: Why?

ALICE: You brought it up.

MARK: Prayers.

ALICE: Right. Prayers.

MARK: Prayers for everything. Day and night. Entering, drinking, watering, sleeping, and waking. My nephew, Brian, was on a breathing machine, a breathing machine. Eventually we pulled the plug.

ALICE: What was wrong?

MARK: He was shooting up, he got aids from a needle. He was a junkie, Ok? He was a junkie. He looked up at us with those big brown eyes, bleeding for an end to the torture.

ALICE: *Pleading.*

MARK: I meant pleading.

ALICE: Where was this?

MARK: St. Vincent's on 18<sup>th</sup> St. A Catholic hospital. No suicide allowed. We lawyered up and pulled the plug. We threw his ashes into the sea. My sister died a while after. We buried her ashes under a bench in Prospect Park. Then later I couldn't find the bench.

ALICE: Cry if you feel like it.

MARK: I don't feel like it. I was in a wheelchair at the time. Unbelievable. Rolling me around the park, they had moved the benches. When I was four years old, my mother took me to the Prospect Park Zoo.

ALICE: You just remembered that?

MARK: Yes. Peanuts and popcorn and crackerjacks and charlotte ruses, which were little cups of pound cake with whip cream on top. Plus, that smell of the animals.

ALICE: Never been.

MARK: Cremation. Tattoos.

ALICE: Are what?

MARK: Not kosher.

ALICE: You should convert.

MARK: Where did that come from?

ALICE: Be born again.

MARK: Idiot. I've been born again a few times already.

ALICE: I am not an idiot.

MARK: I would never convert. You had better watch out. I could cut your head off for that.

ALICE: Don't threaten me.

MARK: I'm not kidding.

ALICE: You need to die and be born again.

MARK: I'm glad I'm a Jew, I'm proud to be a Jew, I'm honored to be a Jew.

ALICE: Don't overstate your case.

MARK: Five thousand years old. The ones who speak Hebrew or Yiddish.

ALICE: Are what?

MARK: Are Jews.

ALICE: And you?

MARK: I don't speak Hebrew or Yiddish. And obey the Commandments. Or try to. No one can obey the commandments. Six hundred and thirteen commandments.

ALICE: Do you believe in God?

MARK: Wait a minute.

ALICE: You're finished if you don't believe in God.

MARK: Maybe I do.

ALICE: You're done for.

MARK: Subconsciously.

ALICE: You should know.

MARK: I don't know.

ALICE: What do you want for dinner?

MARK: Nothing.

ALICE: You must eat.

MARK: No, I don't.

ALICE: Yes, you do.

MARK: Art's Deli. Corned beef on rye.

ALICE: I'll order.

MARK: Why?

ALICE: Why what?

MARK: My meds are locked up in a box.

ALICE: That was the arrangement. Trust me.

MARK: No.

ALICE: I'll be darned.

MARK: What's the diff?

ALICE: It's a Unity, not a Trinity.

MARK: Correct. In Judaism God is absolute, and one. Below is the Tree of Life. Spinoza was ostracized because of causation.

ALICE: Excuse me?

MARK: He proved the existence of God by way of natural causes. God was in nature. God IS Nature. So, they threw him out of the Congregation.

ALICE: You're so smart.

MARK: Spinoza was smart. Forget the corned beef. It's my Ego that needs to die, not my birthright.

ALICE: Good luck with that.

MARK: Thank you very much.

ALICE: Easier said than done.

MARK: Three things. One to remember the higher. Two to remember the lower. Three to remember myself.

ALICE: Take a break.

MARK: I'm taking a break.

ALICE: You can't talk so much.

MARK: You're in my face.

ALICE: Sorry.

MARK: Back off.

ALICE: You must eat.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Why not?

MARK: I don't want to eat. They came to my door one night. They were devils selling bonds. It was a con. A Christian Evangelist con. Somebody must have told them that I was a mark, no pun intended, an ex-junkie who'd give them money.

ALICE: And?

MARK: I refused.

ALICE: (He had a nervous breakdown.)

MARK: I wouldn't call it that.

ALICE: (He fell to the floor shaking and quaking -- he was out of his mind trembling on the kitchen floor.)

MARK: They sent me to re-hab. I was neither an alcoholic nor a junkie at the time. I had to go. I still had faith in my

body, though it was already broken. They understood there, in the house by the sea. They treated me well and let me out early. It wasn't bad. You get to talk to people and look at the ocean. Nice drugs like suboxone. Good food. Therapy. Not a single person visited me.

ALICE: Unfortunate.

MARK: Not one.

ALICE: No self-pity.

MARK: Not even you, Alice.

ALICE: May your suffering come to an end.

MARK: Good idea. That's a Jewish saying. But suffering never comes to an end.

ALICE: That's junkie talk.

MARK: There's murder and famine and sickness and death.

ALICE: True.

MARK: All day and every day.

ALICE: We have a choice.



MARK: We have no choice. We have no power. A little Jewish poet in the Valley can do nothing. The dammed evangelicals imagining Armageddon, sociopaths running the country, the country awash with guns. It's all against all. Murder in the streets.

ALICE: Where is our solace?

MARK: I don't know where.

ALICE: The Psalms.

MARK: Maybe the Psalms.

ALICE: Your blood pressure just hit the roof.

MARK: It is in our Psalms, in our persecuted soul.  
*Give us this day...*

ALICE: We'll have to oxygenate you.

MARK: Again?

ALICE: Again.

MARK: Why?

ALICE: It's too low.

MARK: I need a magic bullet.

ALICE: You don't say.

MARK: Right through the head.

ALICE: I don't think so.

MARK: The Baal Shem arrived in the Carpathians and brought singing and dancing and a festive life.

ALICE: Bully for him.

MARK: I need a bullet in the head or a magic pill from my medicine stash.

ALICE: Stay calm, please.

MARK: Which is locked away from me by the cruelty of nurses.

ALICE: We're here to help.

MARK: Yeah, yeah. Can you write a prescription?

ALICE: Of course.

MARK: How about some heroin?

ALICE: No.

MARK: Oxycontin?

ALICE: No.

MARK: Morphine?

ALICE: Come on, Mark.

MARK: They thought I was mentally ill.

ALICE: Who did?

MARK: They did.

ALICE: I don't think so.

MARK: I'm not crazy.

ALICE: We didn't say so.

MARK: And I'm not incompetent.

ALICE: Who told you that?

MARK: Nobody.

ALICE: You imagine things.

MARK: A little bird told me. Imprisonment. Deprivation. Isolation. Paranoia.

*Silence.*

ALICE: Come on, Mark. Speak up.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Why not?

MARK: I don't want you to go.

ALICE: I can't stay.

MARK: *Why?* Because you don't care about me, you know nothing about me, you think I'm an incompetent jerk and you don't give a rat's ass.

ALICE: Okay.

MARK: You don't give me the time of day.

ALICE: Okay.

MARK: I have lost faith.

ALICE: You need insulin. Four units. Where?

MARK: My arm. Thank you. *(Pause)*

ALICE: Mark?

MARK: I'm afraid to speak.

ALICE: Why?

MARK: It's not me. The manifestation of me is not me.

ALICE: Okay.

MARK: He is a stranger to me. I do not know him anymore than you do. And you do not know him at all.

ALICE: Not true.

MARK: You think I'm some kind of senile fruitcake. Am I right? The representative of me, the mannikin who jumps around and sings and dances and tells jokes and makes a fool of himself.

ALICE: Take a breath. I'll set up the prescriptions, you'll be fine.

MARK: More painkiller.

ALICE: No.

MARK: It's not me. They don't have a clue.

ALICE: Who is that?

MARK: The ones pulling the strings. They don't know any more than you do.

ALICE: There is no "they."

MARK: Wait. About the Jewish thing. For example: I was standing in the subway. Ready to join up. Martin Buber world.

ALICE: What stopped you?

MARK: The train came.

ALICE: No joke.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Fear.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Lost.

MARK: No. An impulse toward the sacred. A sense of responsibility. A search for meaning.

ALICE: The mind plays tricks.

MARK: Yes, that was the thing: *This can't be happening. Is this really happening?*

ALICE: You couldn't believe it.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Understandably.

*MARK: Typhus broke out in the ghetto. They put thousands into a synagogue and burned it down. The rest they lined up naked along the ditch and shot them through the head.*

ALICE: You can see why someone might want to shoot themselves.

MARK: People don't want to talk about it. People don't want to remember it. Jews. They want to live their lives. Unblemished.

ALICE: You'll be fine.

MARK: How can this be happening?

ALICE: Quiet. Breathe.

MARK: No one is aware of the wreckage. The lamentations to come.

ALICE: No.

MARK: I just want to live a happy life.

ALICE: Of course, you do.

MARK: And buy a car and buy a house.

ALICE: You never know.

MARK: I remember when they brought the oxygen tanks in.  
*Holy Toledo is that for me!*

ALICE: Easy does it.

MARK: If you found drugs around the place –

ALICE: Is that right?

MARK: They weren't mine.

ALICE: What drugs?

MARK: They were on amphetamine, the S. S. They were drugged. Bennies and dolophine, named for Adolph. Substitute for morphine. Later, our famous methadone.

ALICE: I didn't know.

MARK: People stay on it for life. Because it's impossible to kick. I'm one of the very few. For a year and a half, I suffered with a dybbuk in my chest and no sleep. Bloated and slightly insane.



ALICE: What will you do with your house and your car?

MARK: What kind of stupid question is that?

ALICE: You're right. I take it back.

MARK: It just hit me – the maelstrom, flood, famine, storms, and fire – the Hopi know. This is the Fourth World.

ALICE: Oh. What did they mean?

MARK: They'll go underground. They'll survive into the future.

ALICE: Good for them.

MARK: Methadone was the highest thing. I mean the *hardest* thing. I kicked so I could then be free to work on myself.

ALICE: Which you did.

MARK: I did. Took eighteen months of serious suffering. It's in your chest and in your bones. You don't sleep. You bloat. Your mind is fuzzy. This can't be me, I thought. This isn't me. Nice Jewish boy like me.

ALICE: You're taking too much. *Talking* too much.

MARK: Coughing too much. Pain in my chest, ache in my bones. All my life I studied Judaica. Loved the Hebrew letters, the sounds of Hebrew chanting. Steroids have side effects. I must be able to breathe. Watching my fingers on the keys. Life is fragile. We are part of the atmosphere. Breathing air in and out. Oxygen and carbon dioxide. Little guy in the valley, nobody knows he's there.

ALICE: Lenny Bruce.

MARK: Foul-mouthed Yid. *(Coughs)* Wise guys and liars and mega maniacs prevail. The ugliest killer becomes king of the tribe. It's the raw gnashing of teeth. Blood. Fertilizer. Most of my friends and former friends have vanished. Have I a soul? An energy unbounded, unbound, light as light, lighter than light, a beam or a sound or a spark?

ALICE: I don't know.

MARK: Memory is what counts for a Jew, memory, and the bloodline. Live long and raise boys.

ALICE: The line is matrilineal.

MARK: Go figure. Snorting and coughing and blowing the nose. Nasty. Losing one's temper. Stupidity and incompetence and ignorance and ill-will and duty and slavery. On and on it goes. News on the radio keeps me close, brings me into the present.

ALICE: I prefer jazz, myself.

MARK: From a distance, creatures writhing in the crust of Earth, killer beings writhing in the dust.

*ALICE: Coltrane.*

MARK: Hatred of the Jews is in the soil we breathe.

ALICE: Love. *The Love Supreme*. Nurtured by the sun.

MARK: We'll atom bomb the Solar System and move the Galaxy exactly one inch to the right.

ALICE: Yeah! There you go!

MARK: We'll go up in flames and bring them with us – the stupid and the mad.

*ALICE: The Love Supreme.*

MARK: Everything glitters, electrified. Where does matter begin or end?

ALICE: No-one will ever know.

MARK: No. And so – searching for memory – images of a life just like a movie. You wonder—is it a screen, an electronic process, living and then remembering?

ALICE: I don't know, Mark.

MARK: Glitters on the screen, running water and birdsong.

ALICE: Fantastical imagery. The young woman he loves. Or thinks he loves.

MARK: I don't love nobody no more.

ALICE: Let me check your sugar.

MARK: Forgot to mention. The body doesn't function right no more.

ALICE: Sugar is high.

MARK: Coming at you from every direction. North and South. East and West. High and low. Loud and fast. Coughing your brains out. People who see God, who fear God, who talk to God, who pray to God – Swamped into the gas chambers to die – Not me! Dumped into the Earth like garbage – Not I! *(Pause)* And now we bomb everything in every direction – Stay out of my house and give me my daily meds – And don't spare the postage. *Give us this day –*

ALICE: What?

MARK: Nice Jewish boy on 116<sup>th</sup> Street in Harlem, the Buddha who was reconciled to Junkiedom, very calm, big

black dude – Racing to the Subway, throwing up in cabs, in doorways, Thinking of Rabbis and the Baal Shem Tov. Down in the dark underground at three o'clock in the fucking morning. I'm not your friend.

ALICE: Six units of insulin.

MARK: Hart Crane and Sheepshead Bay, Walt Whitman and the song of America, my friends who rescued me from the Mexico City hell hole, the Brooklyn College boys – I was arrested at the border and pulled off the bus, chained to a courthouse bench, onward to New York City. Still no drugs of any kind -- maybe alcohol and Dexedrine to work the dining rooms. Fast waiter with a good memory, Dexedrine, or Benzedrine, Good-looking little guy, nice for the ladies, Mayhew's Country Kitchen, the slaying of J.F.K. Red jackets, bow tie, black pants, cummerbund, Marijuana and LSD. Jack Klein and the loft on Jefferson Street –Briefcase full of ounces.

ALICE: Here you go. Six units

MARK: Watching out for the cops.

ALICE: In the belly or the arm?

MARK: Big white men with guns.

ALICE: Come on.

MARK: Arm, please. (*Shot*) Thank you.

ALICE: You're welcome.

MARK: I'd break up a kilo into little brown paper envelopes. Take them around town.

ALICE: And then?

MARK: Dinner on Six Avenue, garden in the back. Two Irish whiskeys and a steak. Alone. So much of that: making aims with myself, little measurements of personal worth. I'll get there and I'll do that, and here I am, safe and sound, and I'm done.

ALICE: Bye bye, then.

MARK: Thank you, sit down.

ALICE: What now?

MARK: Last thought.

ALICE: Is what?

MARK: Is the last thought.

ALICE: Yeah? Go on?

MARK: A tiny burst of electricity. A tiny wave. Thrown away into the dark universe, into the maelstrom, as the body glimmers and falls. Wasted by Life.

ALICE: Hold up right there.

MARK: Okay.

ALICE: Drink your juice and breathe the air. *(He laughs)* It's not funny. What's the glimmer mean?

MARK: A light. Like a firefly.

ALICE: Eat sonneting.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Do a breathing treatment.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Drink your juice.

MARK: What's in it?

ALICE: Life-giving properties.

MARK: Put some dope in it.

ALICE: Just imagine, Mark. Pretend. Here you go. Drink.

MARK: Thank you. Can you sing along, Alice??

ALICE: What's the song?

MARK: A song for the Ancestors, for the Dead and the dying.

ALICE: Take your meds.

MARK: A song of Solomon, for the Dearly Beloved.

ALICE: Let's not do it later and say that we did.

MARK: Good. Impression of myself in this withering body, various systems going awry, diabetes, bronchitis, arthritis, high blood pressure, glaucoma, and that's not all.

ALICE: I know all about it.

MARK: Relentless Ego. It's the Ego must die in the end. Turns to Fertilizer in the end. Runs on its own time, I am not in control, head-brain alone identified with everything that happens, how can this be happening, no inner world, thoughts sliding a screen or a membrane or shadows on a wall.

ALICE: Whoa!

MARK: Life a fluttering electrical beam. You could say. Makes messages of pain and dreamy images, memories lost and



found, leaning edgewise and sideways, not the same as it was, a lifetime of impressions.

ALICE: Yes. *In love.* To be in love.

MARK: Yes.

ALICE: Sex: plug in, two bodies and a transformation, substances exchanged. And then you can't wait to see the person again, you can't wait to be with this person, you can't wait to touch this person. What is that?

MARK: Reproduction.

ALICE: Right.

MARK: Some jerk says it's the meaning of life. *(Sings) I heard it on the radio.*

MARK: Christians running around hysterical worshipping Satan himself. Love Israel, hate the Jews. Bring Armageddon and Gog and Magog, and the mother of all wars –

ALICE: *Hence the Second Coming.*

MARK: So that will be it my friends, use your imagination, the charred skin of Planet Earth, nothing else remains.

ALICE: A flickering current. A memory of the way things were.

MARK: Memory: My father in the projection booth—miss the changeover sign and the film flutters wildly in the machine. Ah. As a child, I was afraid of footsteps coming into my room.

ALICE: I don't have anything like that in my life. I don't know how I feel about that. I'm glad to be American. You can make a living here. I don't have visions or history, or religion and I don't care.

MARK: Imagine, Alice. Imagine dead imagine.

ALICE: Beckett?

MARK: Jewish women and children dead in a ditch eaten by rats and maggots, covered by lime, hidden in the woods all over Europe.

*ALICE: Ashes. Like snow.*

MARK: Electrical machines burnt to ashes, blown about like sand in the wind.

ALICE: You can hear the voices in the wind if you can get to the other side.

MARK: If you can get to the other side, you can hear the voices.

ALICE: Whispering voices,

MARK: Singing voices,

ALICE: Of the Dead,

MARK: Part of the atmosphere, part of the weather.

ALICE: One day that will be I in the storm. Afloat like a leaf  
Blown about by the wind.

MARK: Walking talking *wham bam* squashed like a tomato I  
mean tornado I mean hurricane, fire and flood and volcano  
and earthquake.

ALICE: There you go.

MARK: As I was saying, I was a junkie in New York City, a  
Jewish poet born in Brooklyn, taught to read when I was four  
years old, marched across Kosciusko street *green light walk  
go*.

ALICE: She was okay then, she was normal at the time, she  
was a pretty woman then.

MARK: A blurry memory now: tiny apartment. A crib. Old  
mattress in the yard. The Paramount downtown: Images of  
the stacked dead.

ALICE: it could be you little boy, you too are a Jew.  
*(Sings) They heard it on the radio.*

MARK: This can't be true: I am taking off my clothes in the bitter cold on the edge of a ditch and they shoot bullets into my head, and I fall like a piece of junk.

*ALICE: This cannot be happening.*

MARK: Knife at my throat on fourth street as caravans go by, I'll take your watch and your money and all your dope and then you can run all the way home and cry.

ALICE: Humiliation. Stump of a man. Bright blue sky.

MARK: Prostrate yourself and beat your breast. Say the Hebrew words. Salvation is in the Hebrew. Dump trucks roaring by like monsters from the deep brain of the world.

ALICE: Little Jewish guy scuffling down the alley sad and listless wants to die – no, thoughts on his face, one thought, thoughtless pain in the head waiting to die.

MARK: While a man of many lives am I.

ALICE: Poor motherfucker: mom 's in his head tramping his juices, I have seen it well. Let him out for a walk and now he hurries home. In his head-brain is a loop. *I want to kill her, I'll kill her.* She sits him down and feeds him a Danish. Crumbs aggregate in his lap. He turns the TV on and hisses

though his teeth. Big red bruise on his left arm. Where'd you get that bruise, Mark? Mark?

MARK: I don't know.

ALICE: Did you bang into something?

MARK: No.

ALICE: Mark?

MARK: What?

ALICE: Did you hurt yourself?

MARK: A tree bit me.

ALICE: Never mind.

MARK: I look at my fruits and flowers and I'm pleased, pleased with the day, with breeze and Sun and easy breath.

ALICE: Nice.

MARK: Remembering things with all my might – tattered images flashing though. Life is a movie after all.

ALICE: There you go.

MARK: Mild sexual arousal – thoughts of my neighbor.

Thoughts of the lovely Sabra right next door.

ALICE: You're a diabetic old man.

MARK: Sol -- my dad -- in his undershirt sweating and coughing and splicing the *filum*. The movies got shorter as they went around the towns and villages. I tried to memorize things, The look of things. The look. Always alone, wandering from point A to point B looking for money on the street. Looking out as though to remember what I see -- a poet's duty. The mysterious houses. They had real people in them, people above us, who were poverty-stricken sordid dwarf-like Jewish creatures squashed in with each other while she, my mom, was always in the bathroom doing God knows what.

ALICE: In the John?

MARK: Yeah. Outside, Shepsi Kurts a four hundred pounder sitting by his window looking down on the railroad tracks. He never moved.

*ALICE: Look.*

MARK: He has not moved. He's probably dead by now. What he sees is not connected to his brain. His brain is in one place his seeing is in another, they are not hooked up. Images unconnected to thought. Emotional flickering -- I do and I don't. I have no idea. Leave me alone I'm watching can't you see.

ALICE: What are you watching?

MARK: It's a show.

ALICE: I know it's a show, what else could it be if it's on TV.

MARK: It's a show. People doing stupid things. Night and day in every way. *Okay, okay. Lemme alone. Lemme be.*

ALICE: A far away utterance coming from his mouth.  
A breath.

MARK: He's mesmerized or hypnotized.

ALICE: They mean the same thing, Mark.

MARK: Thank you.

ALICE: Time for soup.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Here, eat.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Eat.

MARK: I don't want to. She got chicken salad sandwiches while no one was looking. Mom. While we ate shit or begged for lunch or stole whenever we kid or hung around waiting to be invited to eat with the people above us /everybody was above us.

ALICE: It's the same to this day – default is inferiority.

MARK: Cockroaches in the basement of the Chelsea hotel where they put me down in the basement like a lost rat.

ALICE: And then?

MARK: *Yes.* The rush. It's the first few minutes that's it that's all. Then you're back on the train.

MARK: Then you're back on the train, New Lots to the Flatbush line. Change at Atlantic Avenue.

ALICE: Be on time.

MARK: Concentrate the mind, like a beam, like a hook,

ALICE: Attention.

MARK: Crack though the swampy woods. Blood splotch on my left arm. Boils on my legs, Mom pops them with a needle. Nits in my hair, she combs with kerosene. Basketball with a clothes hanger wedged in the door. Window into the alley. That was me there.



ALICE: Pink Spalding or a tennis ball. Young junkie in the alley. Don't let me forget – Balm for the anxiety neurotic.  
*(Banging on the door.)*

MARK: Was that you?

ALICE: What?

MARK: Banging in the door.

ALICE: No.

MARK: They love the Psalms but hate the Jews, these people.

ALICE: It's a riot.

MARK: It's an insurrection.

ALICE: Americans. Tear the house down. Burn the furniture. Kill the Jews.

MARK: Formica kitchen table spattered with rancid butter and breadcrumbs. Light coming through windows on the alley.

ALICE: The kitchen?

MARK: No, the stinky bathroom.. She's always in there, hours at a time. What was she doing in there?

ALICE: She wasn't doing anything in there.

MARK: She was sitting in there, door locked.

ALICE: What was she doing in there?

MARK: Sitting in there, door locked. Jewish in name only. But she sent me to Hebrew School. Someone paid my fee. I sang my portion – *Jeremiah* – and then lay drunk on a pile of manure.

ALICE: She was *thinking*.

MARK: Years later – Livingston Manor Rest Home -- She was hopping about like a bird, happy to run and play. Games like tag and hide 'n seek.

ALICE: Run and play.

MARK: Dream of her bones rattling down a runway.

ALICE: The undead.

MARK: Battling nightly over diaphragm – *put it in Betty, put it in why don't you?*

ALICE: **NO**. Big NO there.

MARK: It was the slivovitz. Got down there in the basement and loaded up on it, climbed the manure pile, *now I'm a man*, scared out of my wits. How will I get through Junior High School?

ALICE: Begging for quarters.

MARK: Yes. Dreamt I was in California. Palms waving on the horizon. Sol had fallen on his head. Cracked his skull. Movie man Joe. Handsomest guy in the neighborhood. Deep Brooklyn. Found his vocation at the Paramount. Flow down DeKalb and there you go.

ALICE: He saw all the movies for free. A bit of status right there.

MARK: Sol. He had no idea of best or better or what -- walked with a sense of destination in his head. Had to be near his mother. She crapped out at a P.T.A. meeting about my brain-damaged brother. The one who pissed on me every night wrapped in heavy woolen coats.

ALICE: Grandma: Had a heart attack while yelling.

MARK: Sol. He sat in the kitchen with a knife to his chest. He was going to kill himself right there. He didn't want to live no more without his mother.

ALICE: She never said two words to him out loud.

MARK: No religion but the mysterious Hebrew. Secondhand clothes from the synagogue piled up in the attic with dollars rolled up in socks. Freezing winters. Reading. Jerking off. A shock. I lived in a hell hole until I woke up 30 LSD trips later – on a stoop in NYC in 1963.

ALICE: Maybe it was in Vermont.

MARK: Meanwhile I made Local 11 which was a big deal at the time.

ALICE: You could have been a waiter for the rest of your life.

MARK: Manny and Vinnie and me. Cubans. Good shoes. Making a living and selling dope and writing abstract poetry. Steve K. hounded by the Draft Board. Me, I refused to speak and ended up on Whitehall facing an Austrian with a huge mane of wild hair – didn't speak to him, either. 1Y – anxiety neurotic.

ALICE: And then?

MARK: Psychedelics blew my head up. Felt like I was walking around with half a head, open to the sky above. Painful impressions. That obscene War in Vietnam.

ALICE: Remember college, William Blake?

*MARK: The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. Without Contraries is no Progression.*

ALICE: A glimpse of Paradise.

MARK: Death sky above.

ALICE: The Holy Planet Purgatory.

MARK: Honors class at Brooklyn College – Swedenborg and William Blake. The English Romantic Poets.

ALICE: They were people just like you and me. Same plumbing apparatus and so on.

MARK: 611 E. 6th street, LSD sugar cubes from Rockefeller Center. Manifesting the Unknown. Flashing forward happy as any idiot.

ALICE: Happy as a lark.

MARK: Happy as a cuckoo bird.

ALICE: Happy old man with seven major diseases.

MARK: Meanwhile someone swept through my house for all drugs or happy pills. I think it was you.

ALICE: It wasn't me.

MARK: Who was it?

ALICE: Wasn't me.

MARK: I'll find you and I'll kill you.

ALICE: Ha, ha.

MARK: I had no drugs. They weren't mine. Someone planted them and told a lie. I'll find him and kill him.

ALICE: Up against a wall. Switchblades and guns.

MARK: I am not a junkie.

ALICE: You are a junkie and a junkie you shall remain.

MARK: Say again.

ALICE: You are a lifelong junkie on his way to Hell.

MARK: Thank you.

ALICE: You're welcome. *(Pause)*

MARK: What happens when we die: do we merge with the All? A bolt of three-dimensional light, rising, straight up rising, joy and sorrow together. A huge blast or a silent whimper. A sigh. A nothing. A breeze. An exhale. A cough. A fade. Oblivion. A thought. An image. A pain. A fall or a jump or a sideways slide.

ALICE: A silence. A void. A not being here no more.

MARK: A bright light exploded on my face – I fell backward maybe a foot off the ground –a bolt of lightning.

ALICE: What was that?

MARK: It was you –face full on me like the Sun.

ALICE: Your body was blue, your eyes were red.

MARK: You saved my Jewish ass.

ALICE: Once I felt an arrow from above, an arrow made of nuclear fusion, an arrow of the Sun.

MARK: Once I saw an archer in the sky made of gold.

ALICE: Why? WHY?

MARK: I wanted to stop suffering and that's why.

ALICE: Once a junkie always a junkie.

MARK: Useless suffering. I'll tell you why.

ALICE: Why?

MARK: To ease the suffering mind, the wounded animal in the chest bleeding like a goat or an angel, blood of the

Slaughter, blood of the Holy Spirit whatever that is, an endless line of the weeping dead.

ALICE: And the Yid? The Kike? The Sheeny? The Hebe?

MARK: We take care of our own – you don't see Jewish homeless on the street, you don't see 'them in the hospitals – except my mother, in the Middletown Hospital for the Insane and my father in Mahwah state prison.

ALICE: Not real Jews, wouldn't you say?

MARK: Do I visit? Do I make that effort?

ALICE: Yes.

MARK: What was I thinking?

ALICE: Nobody else could sign the papers.

MARK: I never did anything wrong, said Sol, that wasn't me, I don't know why they put me in here. I never did nothing', it wasn't me, they blame me for everything.

ALICE: They?

MARK: It's a witch hunt!

ALICE: The normal people who run the world.



MARK: What a lie that turned out to be!

ALICE: Dumb and scared and ignorant. Did you go? What did you see?

MARK: Can't remember the look of the thing, huge building on the New Jersey border, you passed it on route up to the Catskills where I worked my ass off for years and years. The Shortline bus – looking out the window and dreaming – depressed –

ALICE: Did you visit your mom in the Insane Asylum?

MARK: Yes. I ran the gauntlet of teenage black girls mobbing me in the hallway toward my mother. Middletown hospital for the Insane. She lay there in an unspeakable terror.

*Silence.*

ALICE: So, Mark, what do you think of the Species?

MARK: Don't ask.

ALICE: I'm only asking.

MARK: It's like a creature eating itself alive. I mean, it grows and eats until there's nothing else to eat and that's it and that's all.

ALICE: Tell us a sexy story, Mark, from your early life. Change the tone.

MARK: One day I came home it was afternoon I was working as a waiter a Mayhew's Country Kitchen, and my wife was in the living room with her friend Stephanie. Stephanie is a virgin, she says, and she is dying to get laid. Why don't you go into the bedroom with her?

ALICE: And?

MARK: I prepared Stephanie and then I went into her from behind. She moaned and cried and came two or three times. I realized that was the end of the marriage. But it took time to set in. Downstairs, there was a whore, a nice woman, I forget her name, and her husband was her pimp. East 9<sup>th</sup> and Avenue D.

ALICE: Yeah.

MARK: Where Peewee, my connection, lived in the projects.

ALICE: Right.

MARK: He nearly slit my throat with a house key one lousy day while I was copping dope in little cellophane bags makes me nauseous to think about it that con artist he's probably dead by now you never know how I sought him out hoping to score all the way from Park Slope and I used to live in that corner building light coming in from the East where all my

worldly goods were in the hall the lock changed doomed to cockroaches in the Chelsea Hotel.

ALICE And the woman downstairs?

MARK: Her name was Mary or Martha I screwed her one time she propositioned me for some reason an exchange about something her husband a sleaze if you ever saw one sad-faced and slimy arranged.

ALICE: And then?

MARK: There I was again on the street sweating and dope sick garbage piling up in the heat you take your life in your hands. You try to avoid traps, but they'll get you on the street in broad daylight -- you move fast up against the wire fence -- knife at your throat East Fourth Street you couldn't make that scene up.

ALICE: No.

MARK: Peepul going by like nothing was happening not even a look fluttering by like rags, like laundry –

ALICE: Like laundry!

MARK: Bright sun on a summer day in New York City. I am a misty fragment invisible to the eye. I have no idea who I am. I do not know who is manifesting me. You know him better than I do.

ALICE: A phenomenological conundrum right there.

MARK: Hielsenbeck his name was: a phenomenologist, self-portrait on the wall behind him 25 bucks to be like him saying don't be an idiot you could make a lot of money if you get your head straight -- my first shrink -- be like me he says with a big fat German ego.

ALICE One day Karma will go house to house for the one percent and mark their doors with blood. And the Angel Gabriel will sort the Evil from the Good.

MARK: I never went back. I have a better attitude now, but I do not see who you see, I do not know who you know. I catch a glimpse sometimes -- it's like a flash or a probe or a white light or a flash or a glow or a shine in the mist.

ALICE: The Lone Ranger.

MARK: Was Sol's favorite show on the Radio. I can almost hear it now -- linoleum floor slanting window beam war on the radio mass murder on the screen bodies stacked near the ashes near the ovens.

ALICE: On the screen. In the Real World.

MARK: Outside old mattress in the vacant lot footsteps zooming into the room I must be crying or throwing up.

ALICE: One two three he pukes.

MARK: One two three four you'll never get away with it -- she'll figure out the missing dollars and throw you against the wall or drown you in the sink or split your head open with the coal shovel.

ALICE: That was Mom?

MARK: A danger to us all. Not her fault. She got it all from her mother, who got it from her mother, who lived in the Warsaw slums.

ALICE: Let's take the marriages in turn.

MARK: Let's not.

ALICE: What the hell, Mark, give it a shot.

MARK: Who wants to hear about it?

ALICE: I do.

MARK: The first one was the business in the hall on ninth: I could never understand what she wanted, I was stoned, working lunches, stoned, writing poems, go back to college get a degree get a job get a real life something – and then she goes and fucks my friend Richie Velez who owned the bar on Avenue B where Groovy was murdered how to figure that?

ALICE: No way.

MARK: Second: K. she comes upstairs with dope and a needle and next thing you know I'm a junkie.

ALICE: Happens.

MARK: I go down to Chiapas to kick and next thing you know I got amoebic dysentery and hepatitis and the next thing you know I'm in Bellevue and the next thing you know I'm on methadone.

ALICE: Hard to kick.

MARK: As was mentioned.

ALICE: Where's the Jew there I don't see no Jew anywhere there.

MARK: Wait. A five-year old in the Paramount movie theatre downtown Brooklyn. Stacks of bodies in the camps. Hebrew School and a drunken bar mitzvah and then Martin Buber and the Tales of the Hasidim and For the Sake of Heaven where the young Rabbi dies intentionally to go to God and ask Him what's holding up the Messiah. He should have come already.

ALICE: And the answer?

MARK: No answer. The man hanging on your wall is a Jew.

MARK: I know.

ALICE: Fantasies of Revenge.

MARK: Too late now.

ALICE: Kill all the priests in Christendom?

MARK: We are the Righteous.

ALICE: And so and so and so the withering – the truth is no longer the truth the real is no longer real and Time is passing. In other words, it has no meaning at all.

MARK: But what do you mean by that? Makes me want to shoot up again. Get off the train. Oblivion. The rush. Your life is up for grabs: poison cooking in a spoon, knife at your throat, scabs on your arm. Junkie talk. Harsh bone rattling talk. Line up at South Ferry. I drank the juice in front of them. Five o'clock in the morning. *I can't believe this is happening.* I am online with a thousand junkies in the cold New York morning by the sea.

ALICE: Not the internet line – the Junkie line. South Ferry, biscuits dissolved in lemonade or orange juice.

MARK: I remember by association as if to justify -- what a heroic fighter I was, I fought like hell. Doesn't fit in the self-image. I'd punch you in the mouth. *Hit first* my mother said

and I did. Fist fights all through high school. I'd give no quarter. **Wham, bam.** Forgot all about that. And these were Jewish kids, wiseacres, and sadistic dummies. I was begging for lunch money. That was *me* there. God knows what people see. Shame hanging all over me like a raincoat. Head bowed.

ALICE: Nice Jewish boy.

MARK: What's new?

ALICE: I had the impression.

MARK: Yeah?

ALICE: That I'm becoming you.

MARK: Oh, come on.

ALICE: I'm thinking your thoughts. I am morphing like Kafka's cockroach.

MARK: Don't do that.

ALICE: I'm becoming the nurses who surround you like a fence; I am becoming *he who responds to his nurses*. A personality forms like a crust. Insulin and blood pressure and oxygen.

MARK: Keeping the old gent alive.



ALICE: For what?

MARK: To bear witness?

ALICE: Oh, come on.

MARK: Mysteries of the human organism, which is nourished by suffering. Not the organism, the soul.

ALICE: Say again?

MARK: Man does not have a soul. He must make one by living his life. Mainly suffering on and off. Creates a substance. A spiritual body.

ALICE: It can hear the stars.

MARK: I didn't say that.

ALICE: I know you didn't.

MARK: So shut up then.

ALICE: Fuck you.

MARK: Like light beaming down or an arrow.

ALICE: Is what?

MARK: The soul.

ALICE: I didn't get that.

MARK: I'm not surprised.

ALICE: How does that become me?

MARK: It's a persona, like a face or a mask or a tone. The voice is a musical instrument. And I'm in the equipment, the needles, and the punctures and the blood pressure and the oxygen, I'm in all of those.

ALICE: Take a breath, Mark.

MARK: Circumcision. No tattoos, no cremation.

ALICE: Why?

MARK: it's against Jewish Law.

ALICE: Then we can't have it.

MARK: I have no tattoos, only bruises and scars, given me by life and exaggerated by the nurses. I want a Jewish burial, but you can forget sitting Shivah.

ALICE: Why not?

MARK: No one will show up.

ALICE: Maybe one or two.

MARK: Maybe.

ALICE: Maybe not.

MARK: I been writing my obituary for decades now.

ALICE: I hate that word, *decades*.

MARK: Many years now.

ALICE: What good does it do?

MARK: It does no good.

ALICE: I could have told you so.

MARK: But you didn't. You told me nothing. Because you're righteous and arrogant.

ALICE: No, I'm not.

MARK: She wouldn't give me steroids when I was coughing: five milligrams might have done the trick. But no, got to have doctor's orders no hanky-panky she'll do nothing without a doctor's prescription and that's it and that's all.

ALICE: I could lose my license.

MARK: I hope you die.

ALICE: Whoa. Hold up right there.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Thou shall not kill.

MARK: Yeah, yeah. Hanging would be good.

ALICE: I don't think so. I'm not to blame. Things are out of control. Stupidity and madness. Running amok. Ignorant people, men and women, taking over the country, What to do?.

MARK: So naturally it's time to kill the Jews.

ALICE: Makes perfect sense.

MARK: You cannot trust the Christians. Keep a low profile and control your feelings.

ALICE: Inferior, insubordinate.

MARK: Right. It's like shrapnel in your chest.

ALICE: No, it isn't.

MARK: Like a knife in your chest. You try to say something sincerely, but you're stabbed within and choke.

ALICE: The eruption of Conscience.

ALICE: You might as well kill me now.

MARK: I changed my thinking.

ALICE: No way you can change your thinking. Thinking doesn't change. Thinking flows on like endless chatter endlessly.

MARK: People were drawn and quartered for their beliefs. Arms and legs pulled off. Head cut off. Eyes gouged. Dick stuffed in your mouth.

ALICE: Watch while your guts are torn out.

MARK: Nose and ears sliced off.

ALICE: Shot in the head and thrown into a ditch.

MARK: By the hundreds of thousands and nobody paid the price.

ALICE: They got away with it. Offspring in South America. They're all over the place.

MARK: Let's forget our troubles and go after them.

ALICE: Too late.

MARK: G-d damnit!

ALICE: Too late now.

MARK: Give me my meds, please.

ALICE: I did already.

MARK: Oh.

ALICE: Say thank you.

MARK: Thank you.

ALICE: A prayer for the meds?

MARK: No prayer for the meds.

ALICE: Thank God for the meds.

MARK: I don't know if I believe in God.

ALICE: You know.

MARK: Subconsciously I know. Subconsciously you would have to know. Why? Because it's a part of the Spirit World.

Not of this world. On the other hand. According to the Indians and Spinoza, this IS the real world. Bound by First Cause. Karma.

ALICE: Explain.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Come on.

MARK: When it rains the streets are wet.

ALICE: What else?

MARK: There could be a civil war in this country. A war about belief. A culture war with guns.

ALICE: Between the intelligent and the stupid.

MARK: The rich and the poor.

ALICE: The white and the black.

MARK: The good and the bad.

ALICE: No.

MARK: What then?

ALICE: All against all.

MARK: Let's pray.

ALICE: Let's play.

MARK: Bow our heads.

ALICE: Sacrifice.

MARK: Arm ourselves. Sacrifice. Blood on the altar. In the old days they did pigeons and calves and chickens and lambs. The smoke went up to God, and a feast was held for the poor.

ALICE: Far as you know.

MARK: Ancient Hebrew chanting. They could not have foretold the Annihilation of a people. Brings out that unseen side of myself that wants to fight, cut off heads, pronounce Revenge. **NAKAM.**

ALICE: They thought Yahweh would lead them to victory over the Nations.

MARK: A war-like cry sublimated in the Writings.

ALICE: Sex?

MARK: No. Fucking is hard work --

ALICE: No question



MARK: About

ALICE: It.

MARK: There's a person who represents me in all my doings, reactions and/or pursuing his goals, and I have no idea who this person is, I can't see the guy except in momentary sideways glances like the glimmer of light in a window.

ALICE: If you don't believe in God, you can forget it, you have no chance.

MARK: This Unseen guy pops up in my name, friendly and aggressive, a touchy, horny old man. Funny and sad.

ALICE: Do you believe? That's the issue here.

MARK: I worked lunches and jazz clubs – The Five Spot, the Vanguard, The Village Gate – Monk dancing in front of his piano, Mingus grunting at his bass – smells of opiates and whiskey and weed.

ALICE: Yes, or no?

MARK: Yes. But not from the top of my head, from the bottom. From the subconscious.

ALICE: There's hope, then.

MARK: I was blessed with wonderful actresses in my day, Alice. They were right there you know. But there was a hidden essence, you know, that had to be touched. A phrase, a word, a pace, tight attention at the right time, and then there'd be a kind of birth, a joyful birth into the Unknown.

ALICE: You may think I didn't understand that.

MARK: Did you understand it?

ALICE: No.

MARK: Did you steal my dope?

ALICE: Nope.

MARK: Who did it then?

ALICE: You may never know.

MARK: I don't want to know.

ALICE: Then don't ask.

MARK: I won't.

ALICE: Think about your situation.

MARK: Lunatic rhyming.

ALICE: Take a breath.

MARK: Ahh. Thoughts of sex for a change. Warms me up before sleep. All I need is for someone to show interest: boom, I'm fantasizing and hallucinating. Thank God I don't pitch anyone or make moves or come on to you.

ALICE: Me?

MARK: No, I meant the general *you*.

ALICE: Thanks a lot.

MARK: Nothing personal. I mean, I don't know the one who manifests, who says I, who laughs and makes jokes. Who likes women. Who smiles at the women. Who dreams about the women, certain women. Beautiful women in different ways.

ALICE: Beautiful women on different days.

MARK: No. I just realized, how shocked I was to touch a real woman. To smell a woman, to kiss a woman - My idea of women came from the movies. The real thing was a shock.

ALICE: Look in the mirror.

MARK: No.

ALICE: Why not?

MARK: The mirror doesn't get it. It's not me. Inside I was unworthy, outside I looked good.

ALICE: I was in a pile of bodies once and grubbed some guy's nuts. He never knew it was me.

MARK: Do I know this person?

ALICE: This was in High School.

MARK: Was it me?

ALICE: No.

MARK: Those days are over.

ALICE: You need to be armed to go to school now.

MARK: Definitely.

ALICE: And wary.

MARK: Those were the days. I had a fist fight every other day. Sadists think if you're poor you are game. If your mother was loony, you're doubly game. And so on. Fists flying. Blood and tears.

ALICE: Why?

MARK: I was a little guy protecting my honor.

ALICE: What honor?

MARK: My family honor.

ALICE: Did you eat?

MARK: I'd get lunch from my grandmother, or I'd steal someone's lunch. Some days I'd ask for a quarter and get punched in the mouth.

ALICE: Then what?

MARK: Punching and grabbing and hitting and falling -- rocks thrown, curses hurled, teeth split, eyes blackened, blood flowing, hair pulled, tears, limps, bones cracking -- I could say more.

ALICE: Skip it.

MARK: See, I don't really know who I am aside from the imagination, but the consequences are real, you got to pay the piper.

ALICE: Right you are.

MARK: Thank you.

ALICE: You'll hang in the morning.

MARK: Wait a minute.

ALICE: Tomorrow or the next day.

MARK: Yeah?

ALICE: You'll meet your maker.

MARK: I don't think so.

ALICE: In Hell.

MARK: No.

ALICE: What then?

MARK: I'll go into the All.

ALICE: Better straighten it all out now then. Get your house in order. Get some verticality to your thinking.

MARK: Even my dreams are awkward.

ALICE: I'm not surprised.

MARK: Fuck you again.

ALICE: Because you don't believe in God.

MARK: And the horse you rode in on.

ALICE: Passive aggressive.

MARK: I don't know what it means to believe.

ALICE: You're horizontal –

MARK: Otherwise, I wouldn't be here.

ALICE: In your thinking.

MARK: Nothing would exist.

ALICE: Look up. Look up at the heavenly skies.

MARK: It will all be gone. All the animals and plants, all the humans, all the buildings. All the electronica, all the fancy games, all the tech, all the wiring -- it will all be gone.

ALICE: When?

MARK: Tomorrow.

ALICE: Really?

MARK: Tomorrow or the next day.

ALICE: All romance?

MARK: Yeah, it's over. Too late. Too late now.

ALICE: And the sky?

MARK: The skies are barren.

ALICE: The horizon?

MARK: Red sky above.

ALICE: I don't understand.

MARK: Death sky above.

*ALICE: Anything you want is in the play, anything you could possibly want is in the play.*

*MARK: Right.*

ALICE: Who said that?

MARK: I think it was Ionesco.

ALICE: What happened?

MARK: It was Pierrot. The voice you hear is Pierrot. His face is black and white. His eyes are red. He came and showed me the Gate.

ALICE: What Gate?



MARK: To another World.

ALICE: And then?

MARK: I couldn't open the Gate, I had to go around, I couldn't walk, stopped by the pain, you helped me, and I broke into the meeting.

ALICE: I remember.

MARK: And then he slipped me the stash. My own stash.

ALICE Wait a minute.

*Sorry.*

*Did you get high or what?*

*What a jerk.*

*Troublemaker.*

*Old man.*

*He's losing his chops.*

MARK: And now I have the impression that one has when one is mad, wherein there is slip or a cut or a jump or a disconnect --- with reality.

*Maybe a jump.*

*Or a shot in the arm,*

*Or a song,*

*Or a blow to the head.*

ALICE: Mark?

MARK: I said, give me my shot and don't fuck around about it.

*Wait.*

MARK: I join in the Martyrdom of my people.

*Yeah, yean. Wait.*

MARK: Now!

*Here you go, Pal.*

*Good.*

*There.*

MARK: I'm quiet now. (Head drops to his chest.)

**Look –**

*He's lost his life!*

*A burst of pleasure in his heart and then a stop.: A breath of air into the sky.*

*Let us pray.*

*May his lover say his name.*

*May his memory be for a blessing.*

*May his heart come back as rain. (Pause)*

*Give us this day.*

---

**Murray Mednick**  
**June, '23**



















