

LINGERIE SHOP
a male fantasy

by Bryan Colley

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LINGERIE SHOP
a male fantasy

Cast of characters

RAVEN
SALLY
JENNIFER
AVA
STAGE MANAGER
BRYAN COLLEY

"Lingerie Shop" was first performed at the Kansas City Fringe Festival July 22 - August 9, 2009, with the following cast:

RAVEN, Marcie Ramirez
SALLY, Kelli Hahn
JENNIFER, Olivia Marsh
AVA, Charlotte Kyle
STAGE MANAGER, Amy Hurrelbrink
BRYAN COLLEY, Parry Luellan
DIRECTOR, Tara Varney

SCENE: A LINGERIE SHOP.

Where an asterisk appears after a character's name, that actor's real name should be used instead of the character's name.

The play begins about five minutes late. During this time, there is an improvised verbal argument offstage between a man and woman, audible to the audience although what it's about is anyone's guess.

Sometime after the commotion, the stage manager appears before the audience, somewhat flustered, and makes the following announcement.

STAGE MANAGER

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are having a few slight delays. We will be starting the play in a few minutes. This is a good time to turn off your cell phones and I would ask you for no flash photography. Please bear with us. Thank you.

A few minutes later, BRYAN COLLEY enters the auditorium and takes his seat near the front. He is angry and short of breath.

After Bryan has settled, lights come up on a lingerie shop.

RAVEN is at the counter working.

JENNIFER rushes in.

JENNIFER

I'm sorry I'm late, Miss Raven.

RAVEN

First day on the job and you're a half hour late.

JENNIFER

It won't happen again. I was--

RAVEN

Shut up. I don't want to hear your excuses. I should kick your pretty little ass out that door right now?

JENNIFER

Oh please, Miss Raven. I need this job so bad.

RAVEN

I've got one rule around here, Jennifer.

JENNIFER

What's that?

RAVEN

You do exactly what I tell you to do. Understand?

JENNIFER

Oh yes, Miss Raven.

RAVEN

I've got a multitude of punishments for disobedient workers.

JENNIFER

I'll do exactly what you say, Miss Raven.

RAVEN

Good. You can start by scrubbing the floor.

She gives Jennifer a bucket with a scrubber. Jennifer gets down on her hands and knees and starts scrubbing.

Her garters show under her short skirt as she works, and Raven checks out her ass.

RAVEN

You can scrub harder than that. You might have to eat off that floor.

Jennifer scrubs harder, her thrusting motions resembling sex. Raven is pleased.

RAVEN

That's more like it.

AVA enters wearing an overcoat. She sees Raven watching Jennifer.

AVA

The new girl looks promising.

RAVEN

Hello, Ava. Yes, I think she'll be a good little worker.

AVA

Have the new goods arrived?

RAVEN

Not yet.

AVA

Crap! I need something to complete my ensemble.

The throws off her overcoat, revealing
a full dominatrix costume.

RAVEN

Very nice.

Jennifer is stunned and stops
scrubbing.

Raven slaps her on the ass.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Keep scrubbing.

AVA

I was thinking of some sort of crown for the goddess?

RAVEN

I expect the truck here any minute. So how's life?

AVA

I was up all night. I'm getting too old for this job.

RAVEN

Not getting enough sleep?

AVA

I'm sore all over. But not as sore as his ass. You should
have seen it. Even I was impressed.

RAVEN

I still don't get why men pay you to treat them like shit.

AVA

Men make a big show of being in charge, but they really just
want to be told what to do. First their mommies, then their
teachers, then their wives, and then me.

RAVEN

End of the line?

AVA

Oh no, after me it's their nurses.

RAVEN

Good, a second career for you.

AVA

Maybe I should go to nursing school?

RAVEN

You couldn't give up the smell of sweaty leather.

AVA

No, I guess you're right. I do enjoy it when they squeal, the poor things. I guess there is a touch of the sadist in me.

Ava selects some lingerie from the rack and hands it to Raven. Raven stops Jennifer's work.

RAVEN

Put these on.

JENNIFER

What for?

RAVEN

This is the most ill-fitting brand of clothing ever created, but you'll never know it until you try it on.

JENNIFER

Then why do we sell it?

RAVEN

It brings in the customers, but I always talk them into something else. Here.

She thrusts the lingerie into Jennifer's hands. Jennifer takes it off-stage to the dressing rooms.

AVA

I should learn some tips from you.

RAVEN

She was late, so I'm being a hard ass.

AVA

Want me to take a crack at her?

RAVEN

No, I want this one to come back.

Sally pushes in a two-wheeler with several boxes on it. She's wearing coveralls.

SALLY

Delivery.

AVA

Finally.

Sally hands Raven a clipboard to sign.
Raven checks her out.

RAVEN

You're new.

SALLY

Yep, first week on the job. Lingerie, huh?

AVA

No, sporting goods.

RAVEN

Why don't you look around while we inspect the merchandise.

SALLY

Thanks.

Raven opens the boxes.

RAVEN

I should have just the thing for you in here, Ava.

AVA

Good.

RAVEN

I was thinking of you when I ordered it.

She pulls out a giant dildo.

Sally holds some lingerie up in the
mirror and looks at herself.

SALLY

Perfect, but not for me of course.

RAVEN

Find anything you like?

SALLY

Do you think this would look nice on me?

RAVEN

Why don't you try it on and let me see?

SALLY

Can I?

RAVEN

Right in here.

She shows her to the dressing rooms.

AVA
Flirt.

RAVEN
She's cute.

AVA
For a dyke.

RAVEN
You know I'm a sucker for the working class.

Jennifer enters wearing her lingerie.

JENNIFER
You aren't kidding. This stuff sucks.

They check her out.

AVA
But you do it justice.

JENNIFER
Thank you.

RAVEN
Here, try this one on.

She hands her a skimpier outfit.

JENNIFER
Are you sure?

RAVEN
You have to get to know the merchandise.

Jennifer takes it off-stage.

RAVEN
(to Ava)
Happy birthday!

Sally comes on in her lingerie. She's stunning, if timid.

SALLY
What do you think?

AVA
Well, you have hidden talents.

Raven nudges Ava and moves in on Sally.

RAVEN
It's not a perfect fit, though.

SALLY
It isn't?

RAVEN
No. See how it's loose here?

She runs her hands along Sally's
breasts.

SALLY
Yes.

RAVEN
It should be taut and supportive like this. See?

She lifts Sally's breast up. Sally
takes obvious pleasure in it.

RAVEN
Oh yes, I see.

She slides down Sally's body and
inspects her panties.

RAVEN
This looks good though.

SALLY
It does?

RAVEN
Let's try something else - something a little more seductive.

Raven searches through the racks.

SALLY
I really should be getting back to work.

RAVEN
Nonsense. I'm going to get you everything you need.

She hands her a new bra.

RAVEN
Try this on.

SALLY
Okay.

RAVEN

It's a little more complicated, so if you need any help just call me.

SALLY

Alright.

Sally leaves. Raven and Ava watch her go, then Raven turns on Ava.

RAVEN

Get out!

AVA

And miss the show?

RAVEN

It's a private event.

AVA

What about Cinderella?

RAVEN

She'll get an early lunch.

AVA

Well, moving in for the kill.

RAVEN

Keep the cock. It's a gift. Just go.

AVA

You sure you won't need it for Miss Delivery?

RAVEN

Trust me. I've got all the tools I need. Now get out before she comes back.

AVA

Alright, but I want hear all the details tomorrow.

RAVEN

I'll write a book.

Ava leaves. Raven runs to the mirror and removes her blouse, revealing the lingerie underneath. She covers up with a see-through gown.

Jennifer comes back in - wearing even less than before.

JENNIFER

This is much better.

RAVEN
Beautiful. Now go to lunch.

JENNIFER
Lunch, but I just --

RAVEN
Are you being disobedient?

JENNIFER
No, Miss Raven. I just -- I'll go change.

RAVEN
No time for that. Here.

She grabs a robe from the rack and
throws it over Jennifer.

RAVEN
Now go, for at least an hour.

She shoves her out the door just as
Sally comes out of the dressing room.
Her outfit is sexy and revealing.

SALLY
What do you think?

RAVEN
Wow, you look good enough to eat.

SALLY
It's not too revealing?

RAVEN
No way.

She stands up straight.

SALLY
Does it lift and support?

RAVEN
Perfectly, but there's something missing.

SALLY
What?

Raven gets some lipstick and tenderly,
seductively puts it on Sally's lips.
Sally is getting excited. They're about
to kiss.

That's better. RAVEN

Do you like me now? SALLY

Yes. RAVEN

Do you want me? SALLY

Yes. I want you. I want -- I want.. RAVEN

What do you want? SALLY

I want to kill the fucking man that wrote this script? RAVEN

Um... Yes, I want you so bad too. SALLY

This is bullshit! RAVEN

She storms offstage, leaving Sally alone, ad-libbing.

Maybe I'll just think about you while I play with myself. SALLY

She reaches between her legs but is stopped by a CRASH and arguing off-stage.

I can't put up with this fucking chauvinistic crap anymore. RAVEN (O.S)

Ava is shoved onstage. She stands gawking at Sally for a beat, searching for words just as her whip is tossed out from backstage.

Time for your lesson, slave. AVA

It is? SALLY

Get down on your knees. AVA

SALLY

Okay.

AVA

(cracking whip)

You say "Yes, Mistress!"

SALLY

Yes, Mistress! What do I do now, Mistress?

Another loud CRASH as Raven and Jennifer argue offstage.

RAVEN (O.S)

I don't know why I agreed to do this fucking play.

AVA

Shit, I don't know. These shoes are killing me. Rub my feet.

She takes off her stiletto heels and Sally complies.

SALLY

Yes, Mistress.

Raven storms back onstage, script in hand. She scans the audience for the playwright and hurls the script at him.

RAVEN

Bryan, I am not going to do your fucking wet dream play! You can just go home and jack off to your 'Lingerie Shop' by yourself.

She bolts offstage, then bolts back on.

RAVEN (CONT)

And I only slept with you to get on stage.

Jennifer runs on stage, still in lingerie.

JENNIFER

You slept with him too?

RAVEN

Oh, great. Did you fuck everyone?

AVA

What is your problem?

RAVEN

This shitty play - this 'we're all lesbians, we wear lingerie, we're so horny all the time' fucking fantasy that he's forcing us to do.

SALLY

Nobody's forcing me to do anything.

RAVEN

Sally*, you're on your knees rubbing Ava's* feet. Don't tell me you aren't being controlled. Every woman on this stage -- every woman on this fucking male-dominated planet is being controlled and I'm sick of it.

AVA

Not the feminist rant again.

Sally tries to lead Raven off. Raven breaks away.

The stage manager runs from the booth to backstage carrying her prompt book.

RAVEN

Let go of me! I am not letting this play go on. It's disgusting.

BRYAN

Get off the stage!

RAVEN

Fuck you!

BRYAN

I'm sorry you can't appreciate art.

RAVEN

This isn't art. This is your big fantasy you pervert.

SALLY

Come on, Raven*, let's go.

RAVEN

(being dragged offstage)

Go home everyone. The show is over! Don't give in to male domination...

BRYAN

(to audience)

Um... I'm really sorry about this.

JENNIFER

She does have a point though. I mean, women really aren't like this. Are you like this?

AVA

Honey, this is the most uncomfortable costume I've ever worn in my life.

JENNIFER

This is just how men want us to be. They want us to think about sex all the time like they do. They always want us to kiss other women and stuff.

AVA

I'm not saying I agree with it. I'm just playing a part.

JENNIFER

But isn't that what Raven* is always talking about - how we're always complacent and just give in to men's desires.

AVA

What's wrong with that?

Sally enters and addresses the audience.

SALLY

I'm sorry, everyone. Raven* has been under a lot of strain lately.

RAVEN

(off-stage)

Right, like it's all my fault, not the fucking playwright!

SALLY

This is very embarrassing! We're going to continue the play with the stage manager playing Raven. I hope you can overlook the fact that she's reading from a script. Thank you.

AVA

Whatever.

Ava picks up her shoes and exits.

Sally calls off stage for the stage manager - who refuses to enter.

Ava pushes the stage manager on stage and starts pulling her clothes off. Jennifer and Sally help.

The stage manager fights back and they argue under their breath until the stage manager is in her underwear. She covers herself with her call book - terrified and totally insecure.

The stage manager crosses to Sally - can't go on and tries to make an escape, but Jennifer stops her and pushes her back in place. The stage manager nervously reads her lines.

Jennifer watches with fascination, guarding the exit.

STAGE MANAGER

Um... Wow, you look good enough to eat.

SALLY

It's not too revealing?

STAGE MANAGER

No way.

SALLY

Does it lift and support?

STAGE MANAGER

Perfectly, but there's something missing.

SALLY

What?

The stage manager fumbles with the lipstick, unable to seduce Sally and hold her prompt book at the same time.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Just give it to me!

Sally snatches the lipstick and applies it herself.

SALLY (CONT'D)

That's better. Do you like me now?

STAGE MANAGER

(turning the page and searching for her line)

Yes.

SALLY

Do you want me?

STAGE MANAGER

Yes, I want you. I've wanted you since the moment I laid eyes on you.

SALLY

Have you? Wow, I wanted you too.

STAGE MANAGER

Then don't you think it's time we did something about that?

They move in to kiss, but the Stage Manager avoids touching Sally, and holds the script between them like a shield.

SALLY

I'm sorry. I can't do this.

Ava steps onstage.

AVA

What the hell?

SALLY

Raven* is right! This play is like pornography or something. He just wrote it to amuse himself by making girls kiss each other and stuff.

AVA

So what if it is? You agreed to do it.

SALLY

But that's before I knew it was written by a pervert!

BRYAN

I'm not a pervert!

AVA

Actually, Bryan, you are. But we're here to do a play, and everyone's watching, and if we could just get through it we can all go home.

SALLY

I won't do it. I don't think its art. And I don't think it's right for men to tell us what to do all the time.

STAGE MANAGER

Just do it!

The stage manager grabs a handful of pages from her script and tears them out. She throws them on the floor and storms off the stage.

JENNIFER

Let's just quit and go get drunk, okay?

AVA

No. We are not quitting. This is ridiculous. Just do the stupid play, Sally*.

SALLY

But don't you agree with me?

AVA

I'm not here to agree with you. I'm just trying to get this over with. I don't care that the playwright's an asshole. I don't care if he's staging his sick erotic fantasies for the entire world to see. I don't care if he's slept with every woman in the cast.

(to Bryan)

How could you sleep with them?

BRYAN

It's not like that at all.

AVA

Was it before or after?

BRYAN

After. Long after. We weren't even speaking to each other.

AVA

You fuck!

SALLY

You never slept with me! What's wrong with me?

BRYAN

Look girls, this isn't the time or place.

JENNIFER

No, I think this is the perfect time and place. I want everyone to see what kind of man writes a sick, slanted, chauvinistic play like this.

AVA

Come up here where everyone can see you.

JENNIFER

Yeah. Show your face to your adoring public.

BRYAN

Listen! Enough is enough. People didn't come to see any of this.

SALLY

I don't know. This sounds pretty interesting.

(to audience)

What do you think? Wanna good look at the guy that wrote this crap?

She encourages the audience to respond as Bryan balks. Ava cracks her whip.

AVA

Get up here you asshole!

Bryan quickly obliges, climbing onto the stage.

SALLY

We'll show you what it's like to be humiliated.

JENNIFER

You're gonna pay!

AVA

You prick! I'm going to cut off your dick!

Bryan breaks free and rushes offstage, only to be pulled back on by Raven, leading him by his necktie.

RAVEN

Well, well, well. What have we here?

SALLY

I think we ought to give him a taste of his own medicine.

AVA

Why don't we make him wear lingerie?

JENNIFER

Yeah, see how he likes that!

They strip Bryan of his clothes and dress him in lingerie. He struggles against them but Ava holds him down.

RAVEN

Men are obsolete! They're the victims of an outmoded masculine mystique that makes them feel unnecessarily inadequate when there are no bears to kill. It's time for women to revolt against the domination of men. Time for us to say no to male authority. Time for women to rule the world.

They put a dog collar and leash on Bryan and lead him around the stage.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Time for us to take our place as leaders of this civilization - the child bearers, the creators, the pacifists, the nurturers of a new way of being. We will stand for no more dominion. No longer will we remain second class citizens.

Sally ties his hands and holds him down over the counter as Ava lashes him with her whip.

Bryan cries in pain.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

From now on, men will do what we tell them to do. We'll write the plays. We'll make the art. We'll create the laws. We'll fight the wars. This country is now ours!

JENNIFER

Wait a minute! Wait a minute.

RAVEN

What?

JENNIFER

He's enjoying this.

AVA

He's getting off on our power trip.

SALLY

My God. Look what's happened.

JENNIFER

What? What's happened?

SALLY

We're still doing his stupid play.

RAVEN

What do you mean? This is revolution!

SALLY

No. This is still his fantasy. Four women, tying him up, beating him, forcing him to submission. He's loving every minute of it.

AVA

I'll give him something to fantasize about.

She lashes him again with the whip.

SALLY

No! Stop! That's exactly what he wants us to do.

JENNIFER

He wants us to beat him?

RAVEN

Of course he does. You perverted son-of-a-bitch!

SALLY

Stage Manager*, come here.

The Stage Manager enters, still in her underwear, still hiding behind her call book.

STAGE MANAGER

When do I put my clothes back on?

SALLY

Not now. Give me your script?

STAGE MANAGER

No!

SALLY

Give it here?

She grabs the script and wrests it from the stage manager's iron grip.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Let go, or I'll tell everyone what you did at the cast party.

The stage manager releases it and hides behind a clothes rack.

Sally begins to read the script.

RAVEN

What does it say?

SALLY

(reading)

We'll write the plays. We'll make the art. We'll create the laws. We'll fight the wars. This country is now ours!

RAVEN

Every word I said. It's in there.

AVA

What happens next?

SALLY

(reading)

The stage manager sneaks off stage as Sally reads from the script.

The stage manager dashes off stage as Sally reads from the script.

RAVEN

She's right.

AVA

But how does it end?

Sally reaches toward the end of the script, but can't turn the pages. She finds herself resisting.

JENNIFER

Turn to the end.

SALLY

I can't!

AVA

Why not?

SALLY

It's not in the stage directions.

RAVEN

What are the stage directions?

Sally throws the prompt book on the floor and approaches Bryan, struggling against all her will.

Unable to resist the directions in the play, she grabs him and kisses him full and hard. They continue making out as the other women stand dumbfounded.

RAVEN

I can't believe this.

Jennifer begins moving toward Raven against her will.

JENNIFER

I don't know what's going on but I really want to kiss you.

They both move toward each other.

RAVEN

No. Don't get any closer.

JENNIFER

I can't help it.

RAVEN

We have to fight it.

JENNIFER

I am. It's no use.

RAVEN

But... you... are... so beautiful.

They embrace and begin kissing.

The stage manager inches out on stage, still undressed, to retrieve her prompt book.

AVA

Wait! Let me see that!

The Stage Manager snatches it and covers herself with the prompt book.

STAGE MANAGER

It's mine! It's my prompt book! Nobody touches the stage manager's prompt book! Or I'll kill you!

AVA

But how does it end?

STAGE MANAGER

You'll know when you get there.

The stage manager rips more pages out of the script and throws them on the floor. She marches off-stage.

JENNIFER

I don't understand. This isn't even a play anymore. It's just us pretending to be ourselves pretending to be horny women.

BRYAN

It's called deconstruction.

JENNIFER

What's that?

BRYAN

You break down the components of the art, expose the conventions and formulas, and reconstruct the piece in a manner that shows how it's built.

JENNIFER

Like wearing a shirt inside out?

BRYAN

People are always aware that they are watching a play so they can remain objective to the experience. The fakery is apparent.

JENNIFER

It is? I'm not sure what's a play and what's what anymore.

SALLY

I don't get that. When I go to a show I want to be completely immersed in it. I want to forget everything else around me. This is nothing like that at all.

BRYAN

That's simply an agreement between the writer and the audience that these are the conventions we are going to uphold for one evening. You buy into that, you remain subjective. You shut down mental reasoning - this is a play - this is all fake - for some sort of false experience. But I don't want that. I don't want you to turn off the mental light. I want you to be totally aware that none of this is real - that all of this is pretend.

JENNIFER

Then why even do it if none of it's true?

BRYAN

Exactly! Why bother to do a play? What's the purpose of even trying? What is it that we are really here for? It's not to simulate emotions. That doesn't do any of us any good - to pretend we're mad at each other - the pretend we love each other. There's no truth in that.

JENNIFER

So... why even do it if none of it's true?

BRYAN

To understand the motives of the playwright. What am I trying to tell you? Why did I write this strange sequence of events with dialogue in between. It's communicating my ideas, in the most highly evolved form of communication imaginable - by putting ideas into physical, relatable action.

SALLY

So what are you communicating?

RAVEN

That he's a sick fuck?

BRYAN

I'm exploring ideas of fate, subjectivity. Audience complacency with respect to conventional storytelling. The purpose of art and the structure of drama.

RAVEN

And that you're a sick fuck.

BRYAN

The sex is just there to bring in an audience.
(remembering the audience)

...and what better way to demonstrate the dominion of the playwright over the world of theatre than by forcing beautiful women to kiss me.

JENNIFER

Against our will!

BRYAN

A subjective statement.

RAVEN

Fine! Then if all of this is fake the audience is now well aware of that fact, I think we call it quits and go home. This is the most ridiculous thing I've ever done.

She walks to the edge of the stage and stops.

RAVEN (CONT)

What's wrong with me?

BRYAN

You can't leave the stage.

RAVEN

Why not? I want to.

BRYAN

Not while there's an audience.

RAVEN

And the audience can't leave?

BRYAN

The audience can leave whenever it feels like it.

AVA

I think some of them already have.

BRYAN

But you're an actor. You're bound to finish the play.

RAVEN

Why?

BRYAN

For the benefit of the audience. As long as they're here, you're here.

RAVEN

So how much longer is it?

BRYAN

About twenty-two pages.

RAVEN

Shit!

(to audience)

So could everyone please go home now? I'm really sick of this and you just heard straight from the playwright's mouth that this isn't even a real play. It's not even worth your time.

AVA

Please end this nightmare. Go home. All of you. Go see [insert the name of another show or theatre].

BRYAN

As long as one person stays to watch - we're here until curtain call.

The women try to coax the audience into leaving the theatre. With any luck, this will not finish the play off.

RAVEN

You fuckers! Why are you doing this to us?

SALLY

Fine. You think you have power over us. We won't do anything. Right girls?

AVA

That's right. We'll just stand here until everyone leaves.

And so they stand there. For a long time. Meanwhile, Bryan covers himself with an elegant bathrobe.

BRYAN

That's clever, girls, but it won't work.

RAVEN

Watch us.

BRYAN

The script is already written.

SALLY

Then rewrite it.

BRYAN

Why? I've got you right where I want you.

RAVEN

That's what you think. We're not doing this shit.

BRYAN

But, maybe you're right. Maybe a little rewriting is needed. Stage Manager*, your prompt book.

Like a robot, the stage manager walks out and hands Bryan her prompt book.

BRYAN

Pencil.

The stage manager hands him her pencil.

BRYAN

Thank you.

He starts scribbling in the prompt book.

Back to her senses, the stage manager dashes off-stage covering herself.

SALLY

What are you doing?

She stops - suddenly feeling an idea coming over her. She starts doing jumping jacks.

JENNIFER

Sally*?

AVA

He's doing that.

RAVEN

You little shit.

She charges for him as he writes. Suddenly she freezes -- then shakes her head.

RAVEN

No!

BRYAN

Yes.

He finishes his sentence, putting in the period.

Raven starts hopping around the stage like a bunny.

RAVEN

(straining to speak)
I'll kill you, you bastard.

He looks at Ava - thinking of how to torture her.

AVA

Not me!

He gets an idea and scribbles.

BRYAN

This will be good! Watch this!

AVA

Oh shit!

She sits down on the floor and starts sucking on her thumb.

BRYAN

One more.

He writes again, and Jennifer comes over to him, grabs him, and starts making out.

SALLY

Girls! He's right.

RAVEN

What?

SALLY

The play. We've got to finish it.

RAVEN

Are you crazy?

SALLY

All we have to do is get to the end, and then we can get out of here.

RAVEN

But then he gets everything he wants.

SALLY

Maybe.

Sally stands up and grabs Raven.

SALLY

Stop jumping.

Raven stops. Sally whispers in her ear - Raven nods.

Sally turns to Ava.

Stop sucking.

SALLY

God, thank you.

AVA

She whispers in Ava's ear. She laughs.

Sally pulls Jennifer off of Bryan.

Enough!

SALLY

Hey!

BRYAN

We'll do it.

SALLY

You'll do what?

BRYAN

We'll do your asinine play.

SALLY

Good.

BRYAN

And then you'll let us go.

SALLY

Fine.

BRYAN

Go sit down.

SALLY

He goes to take his seat.

Where did we leave off?

SALLY (CONT'D)

I don't remember.

AVA

Line?

RAVEN

The stage manager sneaks out and grabs her prompt book. She searches for the right page, rips and tosses the pages before it.

STAGE MANAGER
Wow, you look good enough to eat.

She exits.

RAVEN
Shit. Alright.
(moving Sally into place)
You're here.

SALLY
Right.

Raven continues, but she's not into it.

RAVEN
Wow, you look good enough to eat.

SALLY
It's not too revealing?

RAVEN
No way.

SALLY
Does it lift and support?

RAVEN
Perfectly, but there's something missing.

SALLY
What?

Raven looks for the lipstick but can't find it.

SALLY (CONT'D)
Forget it...

Sally mimes putting on lipstick and pulls Raven towards her.

SALLY (CONT'D)
...do you like me now?

RAVEN
Yes.

SALLY
Do you want me?

RAVEN
I've wanted you from the moment you walked in.

Sally readies for a full on kiss, but Raven suddenly pauses.

RAVEN

Jennifer*, that's your cue.

Jennifer rushes on.

JENNIFER

Sorry, Miss Raven. I forgot my...

She freezes.

RAVEN

Surprise?

JENNIFER

But.

Raven kisses Jennifer quickly. Jennifer acts surprised.

JENNIFER

Oh my, Miss Raven!

They drop all pretense at acting and just start reciting their lines, lazily going through the blocking.

RAVEN

So, little missy, can't do what you're told?

SALLY

I should get going.

RAVEN

No, stay here. We just have to teach the new girl here a lesson.

(to Jennifer)

Come here.

JENNIFER

I'm sorry, Miss Raven. I didn't see anything.

RAVEN

Bend over.

Jennifer bends over the counter.

RAVEN

This is what happens to disobedient employees.

She gently smacks her ass. Jennifer lets out a yelp.

Your turn.
RAVEN

Me? I don't know about this.
SALLY

Do it.
RAVEN

Sally's still acting - taking her time warming up to the slap. Raven grabs her wrist and does the slapping for her.

There! Now let's pick up the pace.
RAVEN

Blocking gets forgotten as they start reciting their lines. Raven claps her hands together in place of spanking.

Oh Miss Raven, please stop.
JENNIFER

Can I do it again?
SALLY

She's all yours.
RAVEN

Sally claps her hands as Jennifer cries "Ouch!"

Her ass is nice and red now.
SALLY

Miss Raven, please. I'll do anything you say.
JENNIFER

Anything?
RAVEN

Absolutely.
JENNIFER

The most important thing in sales is customer satisfaction, got it?
RAVEN

I think so.
JENNIFER

RAVEN

Let's see how well you can satisfy our prospective customer here.

They continue without any blocking or action.

SALLY

Oh my, you give new meaning to satisfaction.

Ava enters.

AVA

Now this is what I call a hard day's work.

RAVEN

Come join the party, Ava.

AVA

Don't mind if I do.

They moan and grunt in ecstasy, climaxing. A brief pause, and they dig into the lines.

RAVEN

The most erotic thing is pleasure - seeing someone take pleasure in the physical act.

SALLY

Giving or receiving?

RAVEN

You don't give or receive pleasure. You just experience it. Or share it.

SALLY

It can be shared. That's the beauty of it.

AVA

I like to watch their face when they come.

RAVEN

The beauty of the world is that women control sex. Leave everything else to the men.

JENNIFER

You control sex, and you control everything.

AVA

That's right. We give it or take it away.

JENNIFER

Men can take it by force.

SALLY

The act, but not the pleasure.

RAVEN

Men just want to pleasure themselves.

AVA

Not my men. They do it to please me.

RAVEN

(removing her wig)

I can't believe that the only way off this stage is to comply with the rules constructed by men in a world constructed by a man. There must be another way - a feminine way - to get out of here.

AVA

When you think of it, let me know.

SALLY

You can't reject a system without offering something to put in its place. What have you got? The same thing they have.

The stage manager comes out and follows along in the script. When they finish a page, she tears it out.

STAGE MANAGER

Let's pick up the pace.

RAVEN

It's easy to tell the enemy. He's the one with the penis.

AVA

Women's chains have been forged by men, not by anatomy. Men are born free, and women are born slaves.

JENNIFER

It's easier to live through someone else than become complete yourself.

RAVEN

I'm a powerful, competent, courageous woman who would never wait for a man to rescue me, or let him be the one to accomplish great deeds. I'm as good as any man.

SALLY

You hate men. That's the problem.

RAVEN

Men define intelligence, men define usefulness, men tell us what is beautiful, men even tell us what is womanly.

AVA

All I want from men is for them to get their feet off my neck.

RAVEN

Men are the bottom of the food chain. I say we shoot them on sight.

SALLY

We're allowed to like them.

JENNIFER

Some men are okay now.

RAVEN

They're sexist.

JENNIFER

I need a man.

AVA

No you don't. It starts when you sink in his arms, and ends with your arms in his sink.

SALLY

If the roles were reversed - that would defeat the whole point.

RAVEN

What point?

SALLY

Choice.

JENNIFER

I just want to be annihilated by love, to be swept off my feet, filled up by a giant prick spouting sperm, soapsuds, silk, and satins and, of course, money.

(to Bryan)

You fuck!

Raven gets the idea to start striking the set as they talk. She goes offstage, grabs a box, brings it back on and starts loading props.

The others catch on and start striking too. Jennifer starts picking up the papers from the floor.

The stage manager keeps her nose in her prompt book, ripping pages one-by-one.

SALLY

I don't want power over men. Just power over myself.

AVA

I ask no favors for my sex.

RAVEN

Sexual liberation is just extension of male privilege.

AVA

A woman with the sexual morals of a man is called easy.

SALLY

Just because we're women doesn't mean we have to hold onto conservative, anti-sexual ideas.

JENNIFER

So it's okay to be sexual?

AVA

I'm all for sexual freedom.

RAVEN

Men say we just made up feminism to allow unattractive women easier access to the mainstream.

Faster! Faster! Faster!

SALLY

So what is feminism?

AVA

It's a state of mind.

RAVEN

It's the radical notion that women are people.

JENNIFER

It's the way we talk about and treat one another.

SALLY

It's the power of the open heart.

They all freeze and shake their heads at Sally.

RAVEN

The battle lines are simple. It's a revolution.

AVA

A feminist is a woman who does not allow anyone to think in her place.

SALLY

It's an entire world view, not just a laundry list of women's issues.

AVA

I don't know what it is. I just know people call me feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat.

RAVEN

Or a prostitute.

SALLY

My idea of feminism is self-determination, and it's very open-ended. Every woman has the right to become herself, and do whatever she needs to do.

SALLY

I'm just a person trapped in a woman's body.

RAVEN

Nobody objects to a woman being a good writer or sculptor or geneticist if at the same time she manages to be a good wife, good mother, good-looking, good-tempered, well-dressed, well-groomed, and unaggressive.

AVA

I am woman! I am invincible! I am pooped.

RAVEN

Gone are the days when reality fed feminism.

SALLY

I used to think feminism was liberating, but it's just a censor under a different name. Liberation was supposed to expand women's opportunities, not limit them. I listen to all these radical women, but most of them are failures.

JENNIFER

And the crazy part is even if you're clever, if you spend your childhood hoping to spend your life pursuing some...

(checking her lines in the
stage manager's script)

...difficult and challenging career, you still have a mind full of all the soupy longings that every high-school girl is awash in. Every girl worries about combining marriage, children, and a career.

RAVEN

Feminism's dead!

They all freeze, stunned at the revelation. The stage is now empty.

AVA

Is it?

The women circle and bounce lines back and forth with amazing speed.

RAVEN

Feminism is a dirty word. It encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism, and become lesbians.

AVA

Blame the obsolete sex roles on which our marriages are based. It's who makes the money, and who makes the compromises, and who makes dinner. Men have nothing to do with home or children - except to bring in the money.

SALLY

You don't have to repress or distrust maternal desire. Self-esteem can be found in motherhood too.

RAVEN

It's not enough just to be a mother.

SALLY

You don't have to sacrifice motherhood in order to be a person. You have to make things work for your own life.

AVA

We're working.

Raven steps into the center of the circle, dominating the stage, speaking her lines as fast as humanly possible.

RAVEN

Sex and race is the primary way human beings have organized into superior and inferior groups and into the cheap labor in which our system still depends. Civilization has failed because it has a one-sided government. No one sex can govern alone. Equality will arrive when we can elect a woman to office that's as incompetent as the men already there.

AVA

It's time we voted for some politicians with breasts. After all, we've been voting for boobs long enough.

RAVEN

Ha! Ha! Laugh line. The world has never yet seen a truly great and virtuous nation because with the degradation of women the very fountains of life are poisoned at the source.

Raven starts to slow down and listen to herself.

RAVEN

I want a society where there are no roles other than those chosen or earned. Feminism has got to be a part of that.

SALLY

We've got a generation born now with semi-equality.

Raven's words start to become meaningful to the other girls.

RAVEN

And they disgust me. We had a torch to pass, and they're just sitting there. They don't realize it can all be taken away. They don't know how it was before, so they think it's not so bad. I worry for them.

AVA

They think feminism is a battle already won. Things will have to get worse again before they'll join in.

They listen - enraptured, serious.

RAVEN

Because women's work is never done and is underpaid or unpaid or boring or repetitious, and we're the first to get fired, and what we look like is more important than what we do, and if we get raped it's our fault, and if we get beaten we must have provoked it, and if we raise our voices we're nagging bitches, and if we enjoy sex we're nymphos and if we don't we're frigid, and if we love women it's because we can't get a real man...

JENNIFER

Shut up!

RAVEN

...and if we ask our doctor too many questions we're neurotic or pushy, and if we expect child care we're selfish, and if we stand up for our rights we're aggressive and unfeminine, and if we don't we're typical weak females, and if we want to get married we're out to trap a man...

JENNIFER

Goddammit, shut up!

RAVEN

...and if we don't we're unnatural, and we still can't get an adequate safe contraceptive but men can walk on the fucking moon, and if we can't cope or don't want a pregnancy we're made to feel guilty about abortion, and--

JENNIFER

I can't stand it! I can't!

Jennifer attacks Raven, jumping on her, pulling her hair, tearing at her clothes.

Ava tries to pull Jennifer off but Jennifer fights back.

A cat fight!

SALLY

Girls! Girls! Stop fighting.

She manages to pry them apart and get between them.

SALLY

Can't you see what he's done to us? He's turned us against each other.

JENNIFER

My God, I'm so sorry.

RAVEN

If we're going to kill anyone it's Bryan.

AVA

Yeah. He wrote this fucking play.

RAVEN

He's the asshole that started all this.

JENNIFER

I'm going to shove his script down his throat.

They surround Bryan and attack, ready to kill.

BRYAN

Just a minute, girls! Let me explain!

They pull him from the audience onto the stage.

RAVEN

You're fucking dead!

JENNIFER

Goddam bastard!

AVA

Let's castrate him first!

BRYAN

You don't understand.

Asshole!

RAVEN

Raven strangles him with a bra as the others hold him down.

Wait! Stop! It's a mistake! I'm not the playwright! I'm not the playwright!

BRYAN

Bitches, shut up! What did you say?

RAVEN

I'm not the playwright.

BRYAN

Raven lets go, confused.

You're not the playwright?

RAVEN

No.

BRYAN

Well then who are you?

SALLY

My name is Bryan Colley*. I'm just an actor playing the playwright.

BRYAN

An actor?

SALLY

A fake!

AVA

You mean I slept with you for nothing?

RAVEN

No!

BRYAN

Does that mean you faked your orgasm?

JENNIFER

No, look, I'm not a fake. I didn't sleep with any of you.

BRYAN

Then who did I sleep with?

JENNIFER

Nobody.

BRYAN

STAGE MANAGER

Well I slept with him, and you girls aren't missing much.

The stage manager rips more pages and
throws them at Bryan

SALLY

So you're not the playwright?

BRYAN

I'm not the playwright. I'm an actor, trapped on this stage,
just like you. I'm not even fond of lingerie.

STAGE MANAGER

I'm not even an actor. I shouldn't even be out here.

RAVEN

If you're not the playwright, then where is he?

BRYAN

I don't know where the playwright is. I don't know where he's
from. I don't know if he's alive or dead. All I know is he's
out there, amongst us, observing us, judging us, trying to
comprehend us, writing down the script that we play out to
it's ultimate denouement. He's the only one that knows how it
ends, the only one that can tell us why. Why are we here?

JENNIFER

He's God?

AVA

He's a hack.

RAVEN

It's not like he's David fucking Mamet or anything.

STAGE MANAGER

Or Sam Shepherd.

SALLY

Or Tennessee.

JENNIFER

O'Neill.

AVA

Pirandello.

RAVEN

Shaw.

SALLY

Moliere.

Sophocles.
 JENNIFER

They all shout out the names of the
 immortal playwrights.

BRYAN
 Hell, none of them can hold a candle to Shakespeare.

EVERYONE
 The Bard! The Bard! The Bard!

They all bow down to the floor and
 worship the Bard, genuflecting as they
 chant his name. Then they begin a
 series of warm-up exercises that
 resemble hysterical religious fits.

The stage manager rips out another page
 from her prompt book and freezes -
 stunned. She tries to stop the others
 but they're completely entranced.
 Finally she shouts out...

HOLD!
 STAGE MANAGER

Everyone freezes.

STAGE MANAGER (CONT'D)
 It's the last page of the script.

RAVEN
 The last page!

JENNIFER
 We did it!

AVA
 It's about time!

RAVEN
 Thank god!

SALLY
 Thank the Bard.

JENNIFER
 Now we can get out of here.

BRYAN
 Well, what does it say?

STAGE MANAGER

It says, "Always give the audience what they want."

Always give the audience what they
want.

Blackout.