How We Crashed The Car And Had Our Kids By Jim Shankman (6/20/09)

Copyright 2008 Jim Shankman 385 Roaring Brook Road Chappaqua, NY 10514 914-238-5805 jshankman@optonline.net Cast

Becky Late twenties Deena Forty-five

Ronny Becky's husband.

JJ Deena's husband. In his fifties.Lydia Seventeen, Deena and JJ's daughter.

Time: the present

Place: on the outskirts of a small town in Tennessee two couples share a two-family home. So, two kitchens and one backyard patio. There might be a monster barbecue grill, but there is definitely some weathered outdoor furniture including a table with a sun umbrella. A pickup truck is parked on the grass to one side.

Act One

Scene One

(Lights up on Deena sitting in a tall straightback wooden chair. There is an IV in her arm. Stage goes to black. We hear the sound of crickets in the night. A pickup drives down a dirt road grinding its gears as it gets closer. A woman groans in pain. She cries out. The car skids. The breaks screech. We hear the sound of a car crash, crunching metal, shattering glass. Silence. The sound of a baby crying. Silence again.) Lights rise to reveal Deena and Becky sitting in the backyard of the two-family house they share. Becky is very pregnant. Deena is also very pregnant, but not as far along as Becky. They are drinking soda pop and eating potato chips.)

Becky

Well this is just a test. We are being sorely tested, that is all there is to it. I have never been so hot and cranky in all my born days. If I'd of known that I was going to be nine months in August I would of done one of two things, I would have left Tennessee a million years ago or I would of let him watch his Monday Night Football and I would of gone to bed and took care of myself all by my lonesome, like the marriage counselor told me to.

	Deena	
She told you that?		
	Becky	
To go and take care of myself?	Heck yes she did.	You can't rely on the man to make
you happy, that is the bottom lin	ne.	

Deena

She said that?

Becky

She said you got to rely on yourself to make you a happy person. You got to take matters into your own hands.

Deena

She said that?

Becky

She said life is not for sissies. You got to get your hands dirty.



She said that right to your face?

Becky

Heck yes. I pay her good money and she tells it to me straight.

Deena

What about Ronny, what does he say?

Becky

Oh honey that man is so changed. You said so yourself. He is a whole new person. And I am so happy we are having our baby, I only wish I wasn't so damn cranky and sweaty all the time. I am just a bitch on wheels by the time he gets home. I am not fit to live with.

Deena

Sure you are. You are making it out a whole lot worse than it really is. I see you two together. I see the look in his eye. He is putty in your hands is what he is as far as I can see.

Becky

Well I have to admit it I was so scared to death when I took the test. My hands were shaking, my lips were trembling. It was like a soap opera was filming in the bathroom. I saw myself in the mirror and I said you look like one of those actresses when they found out they been cheated on. And then the darn thing came up blue and I said oh shit oh shit, I'm not, I can't believe it, I really thought I was, but maybe just as well cause he would have been bent so far out a shape, would have had to take him down to the body shop and pound him round again. And then I started in crying and my eyes were all smeary and then it hit me like a bolt of lightning blue means yes.

Deena

I was gonna say.

Becky

Well that's what I mean, I was so far gone all weepy and wailing, I didn't know knocked up from a hole in the ground. There I was with a little baby growing inside me and I was thinking false alarm, dodged a bullet, one step ahead of the law.

Deena

But see how it all turned out sweet pea? It's all in His hands. He is watching over you. He is taking good care.

Becky

I know I know. Isn't it true? Babies are just the best, aren't they.

Deena Oh honey just you wait. You have no idea. How could you?
Becky And you'll be there to help me, won't you?
Deena Every step of the way.
Becky You'll be pulling up the rear.
Deena That's right. Just about the time you are starting to get into some kind of routine with your little one I will be back in the saddle pushing and shoving.
Becky I can't think of anyone I would rather be pregnant with, Deena.
Deena Well me neither, Becky. Almost seems like it was meant to be.
Becky Doesn't it?
Deena Well I mean look at us. Look how long you been waiting and how hard you been praying and how tough it's been on you.
Becky It's true, isn't it. I mean there was a whole long time when I thought this was the only thing could save our marriage and then I got to thinking this might be the last straw would break it's back.
Deena I know and look at me. Whoever would have thought? Lydia is seventeen and Eddie's twelve and Leenya's somewheres in the middle there I don't recall just where, but who on earth would of thunk it, right? I mean this was by far the furthest thing from my mind. The furthest possible thing. And I am blessed again. It don't seem fair. But who am I to say? Who am I to question? (She is close to tears.)
Becky

Aw honey it's ok. It's ok.

Deena

Oh my lord look at me. I'm sorry. It just hits me sometimes and it sends a shiver right through me.

Becky

Well of course it does.

Deena

We are all blessed. You and Ronny are doing just fine. And JJ is coming round. He's coming round. I know what's going to happen is he'll see that little baby, he will hold it in his arms and he will melt right there, he will go weak in the knees and that will be all she wrote, the end, you will not be able to pry that baby out of his arms. I will have to fight him off at feeding time. I will. I know how he works. I read him like a book. I do.

Becky

Course you do. After all these years. You know him on the inside as well as you know him on the outside.

Deena

Yes I do. I surely do.

Becky

I have to laugh when I think how I went traipsing out there in the middle of that Monday Night Football and they were in a two minute timeout and I was fit to be tied so I just climbed on the barca lounge stuck my tongue in his mouth and my hand down his pants and he didn't know what hit him.

Deena

Is that right?

Becky

I shouldn't be saying this, should I. This is private. Even best of friends and all. I'll shut up. (She can't help laughing.) Sorry. (Again.) Oh shit forgive me.

Deena

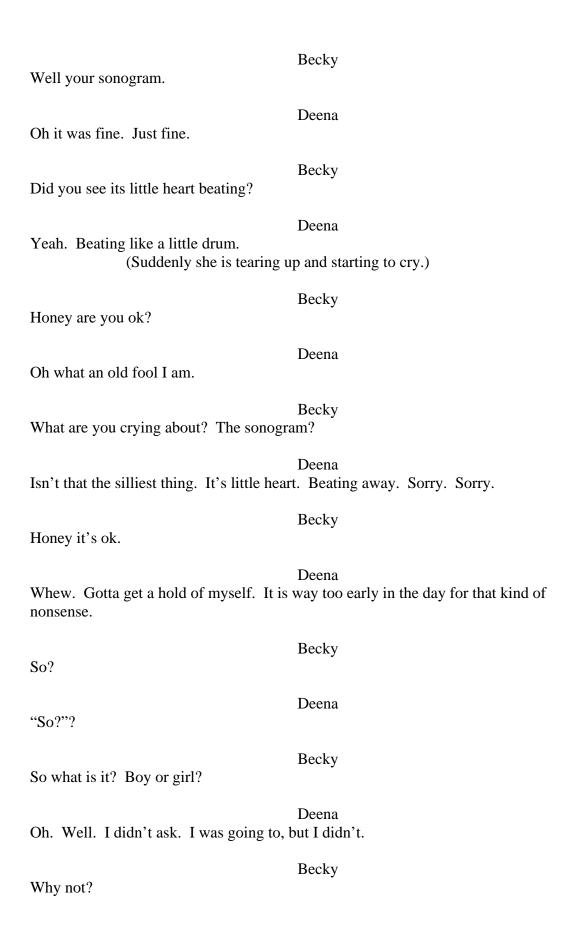
What? What is it?

Becky

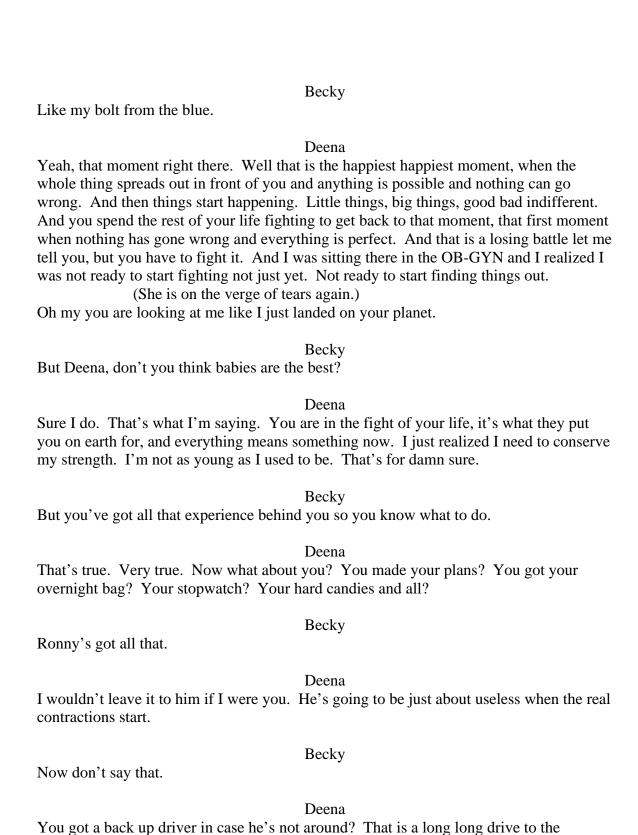
Well you never saw anything like it, I mean he must have had money on that game cause he was, you know, wahoo, and the crowd was roaring, and I was down there on my, you know, whatever, and it sounded like the whole wide world was cheering me on and he was already so damn excited cause you know how he gets when the Titans go into their two minute drill and there I was going into my own two minute drill on him right here on the floor, he almost lost his mind right ---.

I'm sorry I don't think that's funny.	Deena
(Pause.) Oh. Well you asked. I'm sorry. I'll shu	Becky
·	Deena neighbor but I do not go in for all this trashy
I know.	Becky
So I would appreciate –	Deena
Ok, Deena. I said ok. (Deena takes a bottle of beherself a glass.)	Becky eer out of a freezer in the barbecue and pours
Is that non-alcoholic?	Becky
	Deena ng one of these for I don't know how long. Well but to stay hydrated don't they? You want a hit?
Deena?	Becky
No I'm just kidding you, Becky. It's gin	Deena ger beer. No alcohol.
Oh. I can't believe I said that. I am so so	Becky orry.
What did you say?	Deena
I mean I thought.	Becky

I was just kidd	ling you.	Just having fun.	Deena Wouldn't be the end of the world, you know.
You!			Becky
	iquor on 1	_	Deena ng drunk because there is one thing gets his nkly that's about the only time – I'm sorry.
The one time.			Becky
No I think I lo	st my trai	in of thought.	Deena
No you were s	aying abo	out liquor on you	Becky r breath and that's the only time
Oh well. It'll	come bac	ck. If you love so	Deena mething, let it go.
Beg pardon?			Becky
It will come ba	ack.		Deena
Is that true?			Becky
True as Jesus. Here honey. Here you go.	(Deena t	Finishes the glass. akes a tray out of pol themselves wi	the freezer and pops the ice cubes on the table.)
Deena, I don't	mean to	pry, but you have	Becky en't said anything
About what?			Deena



I decided not to.	Deena
You did.	Becky
Yep. (She starts crying again.)	Deena
I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Am I prying?	Becky
No honey no it's ok. You're not prying o today. One of those days, you know?	Deena one bit. I guess I'm just a little bit emotional
Oh yeah sure. I have them all the time. blue as a crayon some days.	Becky We all get blue, don't we? Whole wide world is
Yes it is.	Deena
So I can understand that absolutely.	Becky
What?	Deena
About not wanting to know.	Becky
Yeah I just. For some reason it just come yet.	Deena e over me that I didn't want to know. Not just
Oh. Uh huh.	Becky
I mean, you know that first minute, that you know for real you're going to have a	Deena very first minute when you know it's true and baby.



Becky

hospital even when you are not in labor.

Deena

You see what I mean? Now when are you due?

Becky

Week from Sunday.

Deena

Not much time. I remember Eddie came out on a sled, we didn't hardly make it to the ER.

Becky

Deena, would you be my back up driver? Could I call you in a pinch?

Deena

Sure you can. I will put a full tank of gas in the car first thing in the morning.

(Blackout.)

Scene Two

(Deena and JJ in their kitchen late at night. JJ has just come in. Deena is drinking tea.)

What are you doing up?	JJ
I have to drive you to work. I need the ca	Deena ar.
Ok. What for?	JJ
I'm gonna need it all week until Becky ha	Deena as the baby.
What the hell for?	JJ
Don't you start with me.	Deena
I'm just asking what for?	JJ
In case she needs a ride to the hospital.	Deena
What about Ronny?	Deena
Just in case.	Deena
Just in case what?	JJ
Just in case he don't come home one nigh	Deena nt and it happens to be her night.
Why wouldn't he come home?	JJ
I wish to hell I knew.	Deena

JJ You wish to hell you knew what?
Deena He don't wake you up? In the middle of the night? 3 am? 4 am?
JJ I thought that was Lydia
Deena So did I.
JJ Ain't it?
Deena I heard a truck in the yard Saturday night and I opened an eye and I looked at the clock and it was 3 am. And I closed my eyes and I heard the screendoor slam and I opened my eye and it was 4:30 and Lydia come traipsing in and kicked the dog and started giggling like an idiot.
JJ Aw leave her alone, she's just a kid.
Deena One night last week he didn't come home at all.
JJ And how do you know that?
Deena Because Lydia come home at sunup and I gave her a piece of my mind down in the kitchen and I noticed that his truck was not in the yard.
JJ Maybe he got up early.
Deena Oh you think? Cause why? Cause some damn body needed a tune-up at 6 am?
JJ Well don't get all mad at me. I'm just trying to keep up with your enquiring mind.

Have to be a fool not to know what is going on in his dogsized brain.

Deena

You know it is.

Well don't that make everything peachy kean.

Deena

Ain't that enough for you?

JJ

IJ

It wasn't you fault, Deena.

Deena

I know but still....

JJ

I just wish to hell you didn't have to have it.

Deena

JJ I couldn't. You wouldn't either if it was inside of you.

JJ

Well it ain't.

Deena

It would be like killing Lydia or Eddie. Maybe I could of done it when I was a kid, but I'm not a kid anymore and I couldn't do it.

JJ

That makes about as much sense as a mule.

Deena

I wish it	was inside	of you, JJ	. I wish y	ou could f	eel what	it's like	when it's	kicking	and
rolling.	You would	never bel	ieve what	it feels lik	e.				

IJ

Excuse me for saying this, but you would think that after turning out three dumbass kids, each one crazier than the next, you would be over and done with this sentimental foolish way of looking at children and babies and all.

Deena

Well it's just the opposite. Exactly the opposite. And I don't know why you can't see that.

JJ

I see it. I see it right there. (Her stomach.)

Deena

No JJ no. Come here and feel it. Put your hands on it and feel what it's like.

JJ

Aw jesus.

Deena

Well fine then nevermind. It'll be here soon enough and you can deal with it then.

JJ

Couldn't just have the damn abortion.

Deena

No I couldn't.

JJ

Well I could of.

Deena

Now you are being hateful and you know it.

JJ

I am being truthful.

Deena

Well what do you want me to do? What on earth do you want me to do now? It's too late and that's all there is to it.

JJ

Then I guess you'll just have to live with.

Deena Me?
JJ Yeah.
Deena What about you? I said what about you?
JJ What about me?
Deena You have to live with it too. Don't you? I said, Don't you?
JJ Oh yeah.
Deena You walk out on me I will set the dogs on you and I will come after you with both barrels loaded.
JJ (The truth.) No you won't. You got a family to raise.
Deena You are the most hurtful spiteful man. You are hurting me where I live.
JJ And I am at the end of my rope, which you put me there. So I hope you're happy.
Deena Maybe I am.
JJ I'll just bet you are.
Deena Then I guess you aren't interested in the results of the sonogram.
JJ What? You had another one?

Yeah.	Deena
How many you gonna make me pay for?	Il
And	Deena
And what?	JJ
It's a boy, JJ. A little baby boy.	Deena
No shit. Another little hellraiser. Just wha	JJ at I need.
I know. I know. Still. You should have so	
He will. He is in for a rude awakening.	JJ
(Covering her sudden sadne Don't say that.	Deena ess.)
He is. You know he is. His momma hasn'	JJ 't got a hand to spare. His old man is
What?	Deena
Nothing.	IJ
His old man is what?	Deena
Shit.	IJ

Deena All right. What?
JJ Laid off again.
Deena How long?
JJ Don't know.
Deena How long!
JJ Who knows. Six weeks. Six months. (Deena starts to cry in earnest.) I'm sorry. Shit. I wasn't gonna tell you. I know. It's a bad time.
Deena Bad time?
JJ Lloyd went and lost the contract with the city, so he's giving up the lease on the crane.
Deena He lost the crane?
JJ Shit. I never should of come out of the woods.
Deena You don't mean that. I know you don't mean that.
JJ No I don't suppose I do.
Deena It's ok, JJ. We'll figure something out. I know we will. If you could of seen his little head curled up on his chest just sloshing and swimming and his heart beat going whoosh whoosh, it was so beautiful. He is gonna be the best of the bunch.

JJ

Wouldn't take much.

Deena

I've got a feeling about this one.	This one's gonna be just fi	ine. This one's gonna shine.
This one's gonna make it all wor	thwhile. I've got a hunch of	on this one, JJ.

JJ

You do, huh.

Deena

Yes I do. Look at my face. These are tears of joy and happiness.

JJ

Don't look like joy and happiness to me.

Deena

I am having this baby JJ! I am having it! I am having it!

JJ

Well fine then have it then. It is obviously more important to you than me.

Deena

You want me to kill it, is that what you want me to do? You want me to tell the doctor go ahead and cut it up into little pieces cause that's what he will do you know.

JJ

Deena whoa.

Deena

No I will kill it for you, is that what you want, to prove my love for you, you want my baby, take it, take it.

JJ

Deena Deena Jesus no! I never said ---

Deena

You did!

IJ

I didn't mean. I didn't. Please, we'll have the baby. Please. You'll give yourself a miscarriage.

Deena

Don't you wish.

JJ

I don't. Come on, I don't.

Ok.	Deena
Allright. (Pause.) All this waiting. Re	JJ eminds me of The War.
Oh please don't go there now.	Deena
Why not?	Л
It don't do you any good.	Deena
What do you know about it?	JJ
I know. I see.	Deena
You only see it from the outside.	JJ
Yes I know.	Deena
You only see me from the outside.	Л
Hell I do!	Deena
I'm sorry. I didn't mean that. You con	JJ me in there and got me out of the woods
Yes I did.	Deena
Not sure why, but you did.	JJ
Cause that's what makes life worth livi	Deena ng. Helping people.

JJ

Lon	g as	you	know	what	you	re	doing
	_	, , ,			,		

Deena

Just takes common sense and a little bit of faith in your own judgment.

(He gets up to go.)

Where you going?

JJ

Talk to the boys.

Deena

That war is over, JJ. Thirty years that war's ---

JJ

It's Bobby Blue's birthday today. Somebody's gotta go over there and put some flowers down and play taps.

Deena

Don't you ever learn?

JJ

Everything I ever learned I learned in that war.

(Lights out.)

Scene Three

(Middle of the night. Ronny comes stumbling in his kitchen door. Becky is sitting in the dark. He lets the door slam.)

Whoops.	Ronny
Whoops is right.	Becky
Oh shit you scared me. You up?	Ronny
You know what time it is?	Becky
Uh no.	Ronny
Care to take a guess?	Becky
Late?	Ronny
Early. Very early in the morning.	Becky
Yeah. Same difference.	Ronny.
You think so?	Becky
Becky	Ronny
What?	Becky
I am shitfaced. So don't start in on me.	Ronny
Where you been?	Becky

Bars.	Ronny	
With who?	Becky	
Whole damn world. Every last soul.	Ronny	
Anybody I know?	Becky	
Doubt it.	Ronny	
Where you going?	Becky	
(He gets up.) Bed. Hit the sack. Uh oh. Uh oh. Fatal (He sits down.)	Ronny airplane spin. Oh christ.	
Becky Say Beck. By the way what are you doing up? Well Ron, since you ask, I'm having a baby. Having a baby? Yeah my contractions started three hours ago. Three hours ago? Yeah and I been sitting here waiting for you to come home to take me to the hospital but now you can't take me cause you're so shitfaced drunk you can't tell your ass from six o'clock in the morning.		
your overnight bag? Come on come on l	Ronny t's go. You got your thing, your fuck what is it? I'm gonna drive you to the thing the place the know what is the the goddamn motherfucking	
Hospital.	Becky	
Hospital yes the hospital.	Ronny	
(He is at the door.) Oh fuck no wait I wait I uh oh ca	n't uh wait I can't driveI can't drive	

that...that truck... can't drive...Ifuck.

Becky I'll drive myself Ronny No no you cannot drive that truck...can't...can't do that... not that truck...can't drive in your condition... shit....I...shit...don't drive the truck, Beck, that ain't the right thing to do.... Becky You think I oughta walk? Ronny No...I....shit...I ...shit what the fuck are we gonna do...? **Becky** I'll drive the truck. I can drive it. Ahhhh. (She stops for a contraction.) Ronny Shit what is it? Are you having the baby? Are you? **Becky** I'm gonna have it right here if I don't get over to that hospital Ronny No don't do that. (Becky goes to the door.) No you can't drive that truck. (He stops her from opening the door and leaving.) You cannot drive that truck, I'm telling you, no. No sir. No way. Not in your condition. **Becky** Ronny it's a question of who is in a worse way and you are the one so I am elected to drive the truck. Get out of my way. Ronny No Becky no do not attempt to get in that truck. You cannot do that. (A car door slams.) Becky Ronny let me go. Ronny It's for your own good, Becky. Becky

No it's not. You 're drunk, I'm having contractions, I win.

Ronny Becky motherfucking sonofabitch. Sit down and let me think for christ all fucking mighty's sake. (Lydia comes in the door.) Lydia Is everything ok in here? Hi Becky. Hi Ron. I saw the light I thought I heard you guys. Ronny Yeah no hey. Hey Lydia. Sorry we were...hey hey Lydia what are you doing up this time of the night. Lydia I just got home. Ronny Hey listen hey, you got your drivers license, don't you? Are you ok to drive? Cause we need someone knows how to drive can drive Becky over to the hospital so she can have her baby. It's her time. **Becky** No it ain't. I changed my mind. Ronny You what? **Becky** I changed my mind. I'm not having it tonight. You talked me out of it, Ron. Ronny I what? How the hell did I do that? Becky

Yeah you talked me clean clear out it. I'm going to bed to get some sleep if you don't mind. It's been a long long night sitting up here waiting for you to come home.

Ronny

You're not having it?

Becky

No.

Ronny

Well what was all that? What was all that contractions and panic and all that? What was that? Play acting?

You should know.	Becky
In what way should I know?	Ronny
What are you doing out at this hour of the	Becky e morning, Lydia?
Answer me.	Ronny
I just come home. I was out and I just co and I heard you all goingin the kitchen	Lydia ome home just now, just got dropped off just now i.
Who dropped you off?	Becky
Hey I'm talking to you.	Ronny
Berly dropped me off.	Lydia
You seeing Berly again? Does your Mon	Becky mma know that?
Yes. No. Please don't tell her.	Lydia
I don't suppose I will if you don't want n	Becky ne to.
Please don't.	Lydia
I didn't see him drop you off.	Becky
Yeah he just drove up and dropped me of	Lydia ff and said goodbye and took off.

You shouldn't be out so late young lady. hours like that?	Ronny Aren't you a little young to be coming home all
I'm seventeen years old, Ron. I guess I k	Lydia know what I'm doing.
Well ok. If it's ok with your folks it's ok	Ronny with me.
I'm living my own life now.	Lydia
So you're going out with Berly again. W	Becky Yell well well.
He's ok. I like him.	Lydia
I surely didn't hear him drop you off. I	Becky must be getting old.
Yeah he dropped me off just now. He die he didn't want to wake nobody up.	Lydia dn't come all the way up the drive on account of
Berly, huh?	Ronny
Yeah Berly. Something wrong with that	Lydia ?
Lydia you are not my kid.	Ronny
Yeah Ron I know that very well.	Lydia
Go on home now. Your Momma is prob	Ronny ably worried sick.
I hardly think so.	Lydia

(Lydia starts to go.)

Night Ron. (Pause.)	
Well say good night to her.	Becky
I said goodnight to her.	Ronny
When?	Becky
Good night, Lydia. (Lydia goes.)	Ronny
When did you say goodnight to her	Becky
I didn't mean like that.	Ronny
Well what did you mean?	Becky
I mean for all intents and purposes. Jesu	Ronny s.
(Ronny sits at the kitchen table.)	
Are you coming or what?	Becky
Gimme a minute.	Ronny
	Becky ody drive up. I did not hear anybody drive off. I are in there. What do you make of that, Ron?
	Ronny
All I heard was you, Becky. (Becky starts for the door Where are you going?	.)

Becky Outside.
Ronny What for?
Becky
No reason. Ronny Ronny
Becky, what is the matter with you? Becky
I need some air. Think I'll go for a drive.
Ronny You stay away from that truck.
Becky Why? Why should I? Something in there, Ron? Something in the backseat maybe.
Ronny You are in no condition to drive the truck, Becky and you know that. You are getting yourself all excited over nothing.
Becky I'm not getting myself excited. I am going for a walk or maybe a drive or maybe I'll just curl up in the backseat of the pickup and sleep it off.
Ronny Sleep what off?
Becky I don't' know, Ron. Whatever she was sleeping off in the backseat of the goddamn truck when you brought her home at five o'clock in the morning, you goddamn assface.
Ronny All right I brought her home. What is the big goddamn deal? I brought her home. She was fallingdown drunk at The Chicken Ranch so I threw her in the back and I brought her home. I thought I was doing everybody a great big favor.
Becky And then what?

Ronny And then I forgot she was back there. I got other things on my mind besides that little trampass piece of work. **Becky** Like what? Ronny Like you and me. Like why in the name of hell are we going to have us a baby. Becky I swear to Christ if you are porking that little girl I will take this kitchen knife and I will cut this child right out of my body. So help me god I will. Ronny Whoa Becky whoa. Don't you ever say that again. Ever. That is my child in there too. Becky Then why don't you for christ sake act like it. Ronny I am trying. It's not as easy as it sounds. It ain't real for me like it is for you. It's not part of me. Becky Yet. Ronny Maybe so. Becky It better be so. It damn well better be so. Ronny Or what?

Ronny

Becky

You're making threats you don't even know what they are.

Don't push me, Ron.

Becky

I know exactly what they are. You want to find out what they are? You just keep on pushing. And they will be revealed to you.

Ronny

Put down the goddamn knife.

(She slams the knife down on the kitchen table and runs into the bedroom crying. Lights out.)