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## BREWED

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## BREWED

Characters:

**The sisters** (in birth order):

Nannette, Juliette, Paulette, Roxette, Babette, Collette

**The outsider:**

Lee

*Note about dialogue: Interruptions in dialogue are noted by slash-marks (/). The interrupted actor should treat this as a true interruption and continue through their line. These women are not polite. Where an asterisk (\*) appears, the line ending with the asterisk is responded to immediately by the next line that begins with an asterisk. In early monologues, a double asterisk (\*\*) begins a section in italics which is to continue quietly or silently underneath the dialogue between Juliette and Collette. Lines across the page denote new scenes within each part.*

*Note about location: the 'brewing room' is separate from their home in some way, but on the same grounds. Perhaps a cellar, or basement, or auxiliary cottage. The 'brewing room' is something of an indoor/outdoor location, not fully secure or exposed, not fully real or imagined. Maybe they were canners once upon a time. Or witches.*

*Note about structure: The play is divided into three Parts. The play can be presented with two intermissions (between each Part), or with a single intermission after Part II.*

*Note about casting: This play requires complex, ritualized fight sequences and ideally the sisters will be physical with each other throughout. Hand-to-hand stage combat and movement experience/ability will be a plus in casting the show.*

*Note about stirring: The direction of the stirring should always be counter-clockwise, and great attention must be paid to spoon placement. There should never be a moment when there is not a spoon in the pot, no matter how brief. There is a difference between slowing/stopping the stirring motion and actually removing the spoon, and there is only one moment in the play that allows for the spoon to be removed fully. Also, the pot should be a fixed set piece that never leaves the stage, and there should always be someone stirring, even when the scene does not take place in the brewing room.*

## BREWED

### PART I

*At rise, a cauldron. Its contents are unseen. There is no fire beneath it. Sitting behind the cauldron is PAULETTE. She has bright eyes but a very tired face. She looks into the cauldron, as though she is looking at a picture of someone she misses terribly. She stirs the cauldron slowly. Counter-clockwise. The direction must NEVER change. There is a clock sound, a loud ticking (the clock does not have to be visible, can be out over the audience, for example)*

PAULETTE:

*(sighs)*

Motherfucker.

*Lights change to another area on the stage. NANNETTE sits at a table in NASCAR gear and a hat (if racing gear isn't available she can be in something more comfortable like a t-shirt or polo shirt). She's giving a press conference. In the dark, elsewhere, COLLETTE and JULIETTE watch the press conference on tv. They're sitting in the half-dark, tv light. On the tv is the headline, "NANNETTE WINS AT LAS VEGAS SPEEDWAY". PAULETTE, elsewhere, continues to stir.*

NANNETTE:

Well I knew I had the car, it was just a matter of findin' the opening I needed. Denny wasn't backin' down in those last couple laps and I was lookin' for an opportunity, and I got one finally, gettin' that bump from Juan Pablo comin' outta Turn 2. We took a chance obviously, not pittin' outta that last yellow flag, but I don't know what Denny's fuel situation was, you'll have to ask him about that. I can only control my own situation, and that was the chance I got. And my crew did a fantastic job, I gotta hand it to Andy and those guys. Wouldn't be anywhere without them.

COLLETTE:

What's going on?

JULIETTE:

Nannette won a race.

COLLETTE:

That's good. I'm jealous.

JULIETTE:

It is good. It's a milestone. A testament to her hard work.

COLLETTE:

So we're happy for Nannette.

JULIETTE:

Yes, we are. It's a very positive thing for her.

COLLETTE:

But she looks upset. Why / does she look upset?

JULIETTE:

She always looks upset.

NANNETTE:

Again, you know, was it reckless of him or wasn't it? I don't know, that's not my job to decide, you know, the league will have something to say about it and you guys can have a ball writin' about it. He made a move, and that's what happens sometimes, you know that. And I don't care if it was one car or 30 cars or...or a dozen cars? Dozen, yeah? got taken out in that wreck \*\*, *that's racing, sometimes you get caught in the wrong place and that's too bad, you know, I still had to run my race, and that's all I can do. That's my job. And you can say whatever you want. I was on the lead lap when the wreck happened, you know, I mean it's not as if...you know what, nevermind, nevermind, next question, please, next topic. I don't want to talk about that anymore.*

COLLETTE:

\*\*Nannette overreacts sometimes, is she overreacting?

JULIETTE:

I don't know, Collette. It sounds like they don't want to give her credit / for what she's accomplished.

COLLETTE:

So what? She won, who cares who gets the credit?

JULIETTE:

It's about respect.

COLLETTE:

She wants credit *and* respect? That's pretty demanding. She's demanding.

JULIETTE:

No she isn't. She's Nannette. She's earned it.

COLLETTE:

I'd just like to win something. She's always on that respect junk.

JULIETTE:

That you need to respect her?

COLLETTE:

No, that I need to respect myself. She says no one has any reason to respect / me

JULIETTE:

She might be right.

COLLETTE:

if I don't respect myself. Maybe, but it's like, every time I see her.

NANNETTE:

I had the car, ok? I had the car today, today was my day. My day. Ok? And I'll be honest with you I've been lookin' for this win for some time now, and and and I'm not interested in answerin' questions about what went wrong and how everyone else screwed up or, or that Vegas is some lesser track so it really doesn't mean anything yet *\*\**, *because the truth of the matter is a win's a win. I go out there every weekend to win, doesn't matter where or how. This wasn't handed to me. I led for 26 laps in this race, and I don't need to defend my performance or my crew's performance, and I wish—you know, I wish people would talk more about my crew, the job they did today, cause it was pretty damn amazing. Special.*

COLLETTE:

*\*\**Besides, I respect myself. Of course I do.

JULIETTE:

I just hope she doesn't tick everyone off.

COLLETTE:

I like that she's so pissed. It's funny.

JULIETTE:

Funny?

COLLETTE:

Yeah.

JULIETTE:

You think it's funny to see people you love / angry and...pissed off?

COLLETTE:

Well, not when they're around me, Julie, when they're around me it's scary, but on tv, it's funny. Like that time / Roxette was on the news and she was all pissed off and

JULIETTE:

I don't think it's ever funny.

COLLETTE:

yelling, it was hilarious.

JULIETTE:

It was not.

COLLETTE:

I wish I was on the news.

JULIETTE:

That's not something you want to hear from your family.

COLLETTE:

Did Roxette get in touch with you, about all of us meeting up?

JULIETTE:

Yes.

COLLETTE:

What's it about?

JULIETTE:

I'm not sure.

NANNETTE:

You know, stop veiling the questions you wanna ask, all tiptoeing around the fact that a woman won a NASCAR race like it's such a big deal. It was only a matter of time, it was gonna be me or Danica so just get over it and stop acting like this changes everything. *\*\* I'm a driver, and I won today. That's all there is to it. If it was anyone else up here, you'd be talkin' about the car, the crew, you'd be askin' about you know, that I've finished in the top 10 in every Cup race so far this year, third time in the top 3, anyone wanna talk about that instead of Denny's fuel situation or how Kyle's wreck put me in position to win? You don't win in this league by mistake. I'm sick of being told that I'm a mistake. I mean...\**

COLLETTE:

*\*\*Do you think we smell bad? Paulette said we smell bad, or at least that I do. Do we?*

JULIETTE:

I'm sure I don't know, Collette, just be quiet for one minute.

COLLETTE:

What's going on?

JULIETTE:

Shh.

COLLETTE:

Is she gonna cry? / I hope not.

JULIETTE:

She cried when she won. She was hugging everyone in her pit crew. It was really nice.

COLLETTE:

I like her crew chief, he's got the best name: Andy Mustache. I'd hug him too. She shouldn't have cried though.

NANNETTE:

\* That...this was a mistake.

JULIETTE:

Why shouldn't she?

COLLETTE:

Because that's like, exactly what they expect from the girl driver.

NANNETTE:

You know...it does, ok? Stop right—I know what you're...it does affect me, but—I mean... that huge wreck back in Daytona, y'all didn't ask Jimmie afterward how it affected *him* emotionally, I just wanna point that out. *\*\* But it does, ok? I had teammates in that wreck today... friends. And I can sit here and act like it's no big deal, and on one hand it isn't. It's common you know, that's the—that's the standard, another race, another crash, and you don't want to think of it that way but we all know what we signed up for and that's the nature of it. But regardless, those are still people in those wrecks, a little one or a big one like today's. And people die. And just because it happens all the time doesn't mean it's unimportant, or any less scary. You can say whatever you want about what we do, but the bottom line, in reality? \**

COLLETTE:

*\*\*Isn't that what she's all pissed about, is that everyone's givin' her a hard time cause she's the girl driver?*

JULIETTE:

Something like that.

COLLETTE:

Well then she can't.

JULIETTE:

Why not?

COLLETTE:

Because! If a guy wins something and cries it humanizes him, you know, like he's worked his whole life for something and now he's finally got it and the emotions overcome him and we feel happy for him because his hard work is done and his sacrifice and who knows what he gave up to get here or what toll it took on his life or his family and now to see him break down and exhale and cry after all that hard work, it



COLLETTE (cont.):

just hits you in the gut. If a girl cries when she wins something, everyone just says "Jeez, *girls* cry no matter *what* happens."

JULIETTE:

You cry sometimes. I hear you.

NANNETTE:

\* No one likes a wreck.

*Lights up on Paulette, stirring in the brewing room.*

PAULETTE:

*(half muttering to herself, half ranting to the ether)*

I fucking swear, she better not be late tonight. I will tear her ears off if she's late tonight. I will tear her ears off and wear them as earrings if she's late tonight. I will tear her ears off, wear them as earrings, and then knock out her teeth. I will knock out her teeth, string them on a necklace, and sell them at a flea market. Who would buy them? I'd buy them. If she is fucking late tonight I will tear her ears off, wear them as earrings, kick out her fucking teeth and swallow them myself, then puke them back up and shove them back into her gums so then I can say "Taste that? That's the taste of the bile that backs up into my stomach because of you, the bile and the acid that burns my insides, shortens my life, and aggravates the two dozen hemorrhaging, quivering stress ulcers the size of strawberries that I have because of you. That's not my choice, and yet, it's all I have. You, a spoon, and a stomach full of bleeding ulcers, and you're always fucking late!"

*(pause)*

I'll kill her if she's late tonight.

*(pause)*

I will tear her ears off and...and I'll fucking kill her.

*Lights up on Juliette, talking to Babette, who is offstage.*

JULIETTE:

Babette. Don't be late for your turn.

BABETTE:

I won't be.

JULIETTE:

I think you might be already. Daylight savings.

BABETTE:

It is not.

JULIETTE:

Half a year of the time that flies.

BABETTE:

I bet you aren't right.

JULIETTE:

Well, I won't bet, I just think you should get down there. It's important that you're on time. Paulette's been down there by herself, she'll be happy to see you.

*COLLETTE comes in.*

COLLETTE:

When is Roxette getting here?

BABETTE:

Did you say Roxette is coming?!

JULIETTE:

Yes, Babette.

BABETTE:

I've gotta go! She's gonna steal my turn!

*A thud offstage.*

JULIETTE:

Babette, what was that? Babs?

BABETTE:

Huh?

JULIETTE:  
*(frustrated)*

Did you fall again?!

BABETTE:

I got a pain.

JULIETTE:

Are you alright?

BABETTE:

Mostly.

COLLETTE:

She keeps gaining weight.

JULIETTE:

Is that why my back hurts?

COLLETTE:

You need to exercise more. Do I need to get anything ready for the meeting?

JULIETTE:

I don't think so. Is it a meeting?

COLLETTE:

What would you call it?

JULIETTE:

A gathering?

COLLETTE:

Anything? No? Nothing? I could get a cake or something.

BABETTE:

Help me.

JULIETTE:

One second, Babs.

COLLETTE:

Is Nannette really coming?

JULIETTE:

*(sighs)*

Yes, she is. / Don't tell Paulette though. She'll throw a fit.

COLLETTE:

Really?! That's so great! Is she flying in? Maybe she / can pick up a few things.

JULIETTE:

I assume she's flying, it's the only way she'd get here by tonight.

COLLETTE:

Too bad she can't drive her NASCAR on the highway.

JULIETTE:

Yeah. Too bad.

BABETTE:

Help me!

JULIETTE:

Babs, hold on, I'm talking to Collette!

BABETTE:

I'm on the floor!

JULIETTE:

I know. I'm coming.

BABETTE:

There's roaches!

JULIETTE:

Ok, Collette, could you go down and check on Paulie?

COLLETTE:

Could I?

JULIETTE:

Please, she's been / down there alone.

COLLETTE:

Nuh-uh, nope, Babs forgot daylight savings and she'll be all pissed off.

JULIETTE:

Yeah, you're probably right.

BABETTE:

They're gonna eat me!

JULIETTE:

Ok, I'll go down with you.

COLLETTE:

I don't need your protection.

JULIETTE:

Yet you won't go alone.

COLLETTE:

I never said I wouldn't, I said I don't want to.

JULIETTE:

You said "nuh-uh," which seems like "no" to me.

COLLETTE:

Fine, whatever, I'll go down but I really don't feel like fighting.

JULIETTE:

Then don't fight.

COLLETTE:

She'll want to.

JULIETTE:

Don't antagonize her, then.

BABETTE:

Oooooooh! So many legs!

JULIETTE:

Alright, Babs! Will you help me pick her up?

COLLETTE:

I was working my arms today.

JULIETTE:

Perfect.

*They go to Babette, offstage.*

*Lights on Paulette, stirring. She's looking even more frustrated and tired.*

PAULETTE:

*(hollers)*

Babs!

*(mutters)*

Every fucking time...

Baaaabs!

*(listens...deep breath)*

BAAAAAAAAAAAAABS!!

*Lights up on Roxette and Lee, en route. Roxette crouches with a bag of spare parts, circuits, wires, etc, which she is using to build something. She is intensely focused. Lee has a bag that has a baguette sticking out and a suitcase.*

LEE:

I decided I couldn't wear any of those old things, so I tore them all up and made this. I been makin' my own clothes for a long time. I made everything I'm wearin'. We had money when I was a kid, but my Mama would be so tired when she came home from the bank that she never wanted to take me shopping or anything. My daddy never

LEE (cont.):

wanted to go shopping, he only wanted to be in the kitchen, so that's where we let him be. Mama would give me money to buy clothes but I'd never spend it on clothes, I'd always spend it on stuff I couldn't make myself, like bourbon. And I probably coulda made bourbon myself, I just never bothered to learn. And besides, there are just some things that are best left to professionals. Bourbon's one. And I liked goin' to hockey games and basketball games and soccer games (sorry, soccer matches, they're matches) and gymnastics meets, pretty much any sporting thing I could find. I can watch people do anything they're really good at. Sometimes I'll even stand outside a construction site and just watch everyone work. It's amazing, what they do. People really are so skilled, don't you think, Roxie?

ROXETTE:

*(checking out her contraption)*

Definitely.

LEE:

I once saw a guy eat 48 hot dogs. I was so impressed I coulda peed my pants. And apparently that's not even the world record. To think there's someone out there who can eat more than 48 hot dogs. It just dazzles the mind. Of course none of that's nearly as impressive as watchin' you work. The stuff you can build outta nothin'. Your hands. I just don't get it. How do you do it?

ROXETTE:

I don't know really. Machinery just makes sense to me.

LEE:

There is something neat about machines. Every time I see a machine, any machine, I'm like: somebody built that! And I get so impressed. I just wonder how they do it. How you do it.

*Roxette finishes working.*

ROXETTE:

One piece at a time. That's what I like about machines. They're extensions of people.

*It's a flashlight. And it works. Roxette shines it around.*

LEE:

Amazing.

ROXETTE:

Parts fit together.

LEE:

We could tell scary stories with this, you know? Do this thing?

*Lee takes the flashlight and shines it under her chin, making a scary face.*

ROXETTE:

Nice.

LEE:

Do I look like a goblin?

ROXETTE:

More like a gremlin.

LEE:

I was going for goblin. I'll just have to work on my goblin.

ROXETTE:

We aren't too far away now, maybe a mile or so. Got dark early isn't daylight savings supposed to make / the days longer?

LEE:

Are you ok?

ROXETTE:

I'm nervous.

LEE:

Roxette, we're gonna get along just fine. I get along with everybody. Plus / I come bearing gifts.

ROXETTE:

Maybe I don't want you to get along with them. / Maybe I want you to go in there and



LEE:

What do you mean?

ROXETTE:

shake things up, you know?

LEE:

That's a lotta pressure.

ROXETTE:

You can handle it, we need a referee, someone friendly, there's too much...

LEE:

Too much what?

ROXETTE:

...they can be pretty hostile, especially Paulette.

LEE:

She can't be that bad.

ROXETTE:

She is. She's pissed off all the time. You can actually smell her anger. It smells like gasoline. You'd think it'd smell like sulfur or something, or burning trees, but no, gasoline.

LEE:

Well, I hope she's furious then. I love / the smell of gasoline.

ROXETTE:

Of course you do.

LEE:

I'm sure we'll all get along.

ROXETTE:

Yeah...yeah, me too.

*(beat)*

Nannette won't be there. She's never home. I invited her of course, I mean you have to, but she won't come.

LEE:

You haven't told me much about Nannette.

ROXETTE:

I don't want to talk about her.

LEE:

You should. I should know about your family. I want to know everything.

ROXETTE:

You can ask them all about themselves then. But if I were you, I'd stick to Juliette. She's the coolest one. If you can stand sitting next to her.

LEE:

What's wrong with Juliette?

ROXETTE:

She doesn't bathe.

LEE:

*(smacks her)*

Stop it!

ROXETTE:

What?! It's the truth! She says it's good for her skin...and that we waste too much water. She smells like / she slept in the gutter sometimes.

LEE:

Don't be so mean to your sisters, you wouldn't want me to meet them if you didn't love them. There isn't some fatal flaw with everybody in the world.

ROXETTE:

Yes there is.

LEE:

Oh yeah...what's mine?

ROXETTE:

You're with me.