

Produced at the Rhinoceros Theater Festival (Chicago, 2010)  
Produced by EP Theater (Chicago, 2009)  
Developed at Chicago Dramatists (2008)

## COYDOG

BY S. THOMASIN BARSOTTI

## EXCERPT

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**COYDOG**

**CHARACTERS:** DONNA  
TISH  
HALLIE  
BILLIE

Note: All four are women. They can be cast as any age, though early 30s-late 50s range is probably preferable.

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(Deserted road. DONNA is in a wheelbarrow, bleeding from the arm. HALLIE is inspecting the wound. TISH stands behind the wheelbarrow, leaning on the handles. DONNA pants and groans in pain. DONNA is, or looks, pregnant.)

HALLIE:

You best not be drinkin' like that with that baby on the way.

DONNA:

How many times I gotta tell you, I gotta tell everyone I ain't fuckin' pregnant.

TISH:

Hell you ain't.

DONNA:

I ain't. Doctor says I ain't.

HALLIE:

I says you are.

DONNA:

You ain't no doctor.

TISH:

You need to get yourself a new doctor, you do.

DONNA:

Ain't nothin' wrong with my doctor.

HALLIE:

Cept he ain't got a dang idea what's what.

TISH:

Lost his license.

DONNA:

Shut up about it.

HALLIE:

Worried over the baby, Donna.

TISH:

The health. The well-being.

HALLIE:

Of the baby is all.

DONNA:

I appreciate your worry, everyone's worry, but there's no baby to be worried over, so yeah.

TISH:

Right.

HALLIE:

No baby.

(Pause)

TISH:

Only.

HALLIE:

There likely is.

DONNA:

No there ain't. Not at all.

HALLIE:

You got that big ol' stomach.

DONNA:

Yep.

TISH:

Boobs are bigger too.

DONNA:

I know they are, they're mine aren't they?

HALLIE:

They are yours, too. Your big ol' pregnant boobs.

DONNA:

Just cause you keep sayin' it, you been sayin' it for 7 months does not make it true.

HALLIE:

Everything I say is true.

DONNA:

Doctor, license or no license, said I ain't. Doctor once is more doctor than both of you combined. Said there's no baby, now would you just—

HALLIE:

Right. All right. You ready? Brace yourself.

(She digs in the arm, DONNA shouts. HALLIE pulls out and DONNA regains her composure, drinks.)

DONNA:

Anything?

HALLIE:

Almost, I could feel something but it's stuck in there.

TISH:

What's it again he said? A historical pregnancy?

DONNA:

Hysterical. A hysterical pregnancy, though I don't see what's so hysterical about it.

TISH:

So what's in there, then?

DONNA:

I don't know. Hysterical stuff. My brain made it happen, hormones, my body tricked itself. Mind over matter and all that. It's just gas, fat, and water, plus some other things I do not want to discuss.

HALLIE:

I think you got shot.

DONNA:

Figures.

HALLIE:

What do you think, Donna? Think you been shot?

DONNA:

Sure as hell felt that way.

TISH:

You been shot before?

DONNA:

No, I haven't but I imagine that's what it's like.

HALLIE:

Stray bullet I guess. Hard to see somethin' like that comin'.

DONNA:

You gotta keep at it, Hal, it's fuckin' killin' me. Feel like my arm's gonna fall off and explode.

HALLIE:

I'm tryin'.

TISH:

I think you need the hospital, Donna. We'll take you to a real doctor, one who knows a baby when he sees one.

DONNA:

I can't go to the "real" doctor, Tish. I got no insurance. Hallie'll get it out. You remember she used to win all them piano recitals and all that. You don't win somethin' like that you don't got good fingers.

I'm tryin'.  
HALLIE:

I'll pay for it.  
TISH:

You can't afford that and you know it.  
DONNA:

They got payment plans.  
TISH:

Tish, no.  
DONNA:

I think I can see it. I'm goin' in.  
HALLIE:

Bite on this.  
TISH :  
(giving DONNA something handy to bite on)

(DONNA bites down, HALLIE digs into the wound again. DONNA shouts and struggles)

Jesus Christ. Hallie, what's goin' on?  
DONNA:

That's a stubborn slug, that is.  
HALLIE:

Give me the beer.  
DONNA:

Donna, the baby.  
TISH:

(DONNA glares at TISH. HALLIE gives her the beer).

I think it's stuck in the bone. Complicates it.  
HALLIE:

DONNA:

Figures.

(TISH stares at DONNA's belly)

DONNA:

What?

TISH:

You sure do look pregnant.

DONNA:

Jesus Christ!

TISH:

I just can't believe, Donna, that that's regular ol' bloating, plus you had all that morning sickness, remember?

DONNA:

He said it comes with all that. Brain goes nuts, thinks it's pregnant. Does what pregnant does.

TISH:

It just looks so real. Like there's really something in there.

HALLIE:

My brother Dan, he had a cyst removed off his shoulder. And when they opened it up afterward it had teeth in it, and hair.

DONNA:

You're fuckin' lying.

HALLIE:

I'm not lying. Teeth growing right there on his shoulder. I still have them, buried in the side yard. He asked me, this was after it was taken off, he asked me if I wanted them. So I was like, "Of course!" And I had them in this jar for a while. The doctors said it might have been some kinda tumor, but it also coulda been a weird kinda twin that he brought with him out of our mama, and it was just growing there ever since he was a little kid. Since he didn't have a proper burial, things happenin' as they did, I buried the teeth and hair, you know, next to the house so it could be kinda like he is where he should be. Family ground, ya know? It gives me comfort, anyway.

TISH:

He always had such nice teeth.

HALLIE:

You mean the ones in his mouth.

TISH:

Well, yes. I never saw the ones in his shoulder.

DONNA:

ARRRUGH!! God help me!

TISH:

Donna—hang in there.

DONNA:

I think I'm dyin'. I been shot an killed!

TISH:

That's no way to talk.

HALLIE:

You gotta survive, Donna. Do it for your baby!

(DONNA glares at HALLIE)

DONNA:

Get this thing outta me!

TISH:

If you ain't goin' to the hospital—

DONNA:

I ain't. I told you!

TISH:

Well, *if* you ain't we gotta find you some codine or percocet or somethin'. This situation is not improving and all that shriekin' is bound to attract predators.

HALLIE:

Don't listen to her, Donna.



DONNA:

I am listenin' to her, I like her codine idea. It's a good idea.

HALLIE:

Well, I'm sorry Donna, I ain't got any codine, and I ain't got nothin' else either that helps with pain. Except of course my friendship. Oh, and we have more beer.

DONNA:

Thank God for that then, and don't you (*to TISH*) say a word about it.

TISH:

Lips are sealed I guess.

DONNA:

You don't have any codine, do you Tish?

TISH:

Nope.

DONNA:

Cause I am in serious fuckin' pain here. You ain't holdin' out on me over like...like you ain't got some high and mighty idea about pregnant women and pain killers do you?

TISH:

You know I don't actually, I guess I never thought about it. But maybe I should. That can't be good. Drugs and babies. I was born with two missing ribs, you know. My mother said she was a saint when she was pregnant with me but tell me that ain't suspicious. Two missin' ribs. I coulda used those. I mean jeez, I always felt I had vulnerable lungs, you know? Insecurity, that'll hold a person back.

DONNA:

Hallie, what are you lookin' at? Hal?

HALLIE:

There's someone comin'.

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SAMPLE ONLY

CONTACT THE AUTHOR TO READ THE ENTIRE PLAY

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