

'Til Death Do Us Part
by Jonathan Bernstein

A modern adaptation of Aeschylus's plays *Agamemnon* and *The Libation Bearers*.

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CHARACTERS

ELECTRA 13. Clytaemnestra and Agamemnon's daughter. Smart, scared.

ORESTES 16. Clytaemnestra and Agamemnon's son. Wants to be a hero, but unsure if he has it in him.

CLYTAEMNESTRA Forty-ish business woman. She may have once been a good person, but no more.

AEGISTHUS Clytaemnestra's creepy boyfriend. Not the brightest man, but Clytaemnestra likes having him around. Sexually frustrated.

Other Voices – Principal, Recorded Voice, Man's Voice, Woman's Voice, Garbled Voice.

SETTING

A suburb of a large U.S. city.

TIME

The present.

OPENING INSTRUCTIONS:

Before the play begins, members of the play-crew should ask audience members to make recordings of the lines of the Voices – Principal, Recorded Voice, Man’s Voice, Woman’s Voice, Garbled Voice. New recordings should be made at each performance, so that the voices used are of people in the audience right then.

While these recordings are being made, the four actors should be pulling set pieces, props, chairs, etc., into place, by pulling on strings attached to whatever they are pulling. The strings should be the length of the stage so that the actors are on the edges of the stage, pulling on something at the other end.

When the usual please turn off cellphones announcement is made, also add in: “please also suspend any pain you may be currently experiencing. Theater is a drug that works. Your pain will disappear, your depression will ebb, if you let it.”

SCENE 1

(A house. There is are two rooms visible - Electra’s bedroom and the living room. In the living room there are exits to: the kitchen, the front door, and the master bedroom. Electra is in her bedroom. She stealthily sneaks into the living room. Aegisthus appears to be asleep on the couch. Electra goes and carefully picks up the phone, dials, and gets Orestes on his phone at his boarding school. She begins to speak quietly to him.)

ELECTRA

Listen, you have to come home.

ORESTES

Why?

ELECTRA

Because mom’s going crazy.

ORESTES

What are you talking about?

ELECTRA
There's a guy here now.

ORESTES
Like a plumber.

ELECTRA
No, like a replacement for dad.

ORESTES
Mom's sleeping around?

ELECTRA
He moved in.

ORESTES
He moved in.

ELECTRA
He's right here behind me.

ORESTES
Can you talk?

ELECTRA
For a second. This is why you have to come home. I don't know what to do. He's been here for like two months.

ORESTES
All right, but you need to call the school and pretend you're mom and tell them our grandmother died and they need to put me on the next train home, and would they be so kind as to give me the train fare, which you'll of course send them a check for. You get that?

ELECTRA
Uhh, I'm 13, they're not going to believe I'm mom, and I don't want to use the phone anymore.

(Electra looks back at Aegisthus)

ORESTES
Okay, e-mail headmaster@adelphiacademy.edu from Mom's account, and write what I told you with 'emergency' as the subject.

ELECTRA
So you're going to come?

ORESTES
Yeah, I'll come home.

ELECTRA
Thanks. I better go.

(Electra puts down the phone carefully and creeps away back to her room. She goes to her computer and sends the e-mail for Orestes. Aegisthus stirs and picks up the phone. He dials Clytaemnestra at her office. Clytaemnestra picks up the phone.)

AEGISTHUS
Hello, Clytaemnestra Brown please.

CLYTAEMNESTRA
Speaking.

AEGISTHUS
Oh Clyme, this is Aegisthus Listen up, I just overheard your daughter, umm, Allison...

CLYTAEMNESTRA
Electra.

AEGISTHUS
Yeah. I just heard her on the phone complaining about me.

CLYTAEMNESTRA
To who?

AEGISTHUS
I don't know, whoever could do something about me.

CLYTAEMNESTRA
Well, that's either Orestes or her father. And I've made sure both of them are currently tied up. And she doesn't have anything to go to the police with so, maybe it was a girlfriend of hers.

AEGISTHUS
Or another of your boyfriends.

CLYTAEMNESTRA
I don't have other boyfriends.

AEGISTHUS

What about that guy I walked in on with you last week.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

He was a messenger.

AEGISTHUS

Yeah, having sex with you.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

That's right, he's not my boyfriend. Listen stupid brain, I fuck who I want and I say who I want is my boyfriend. You are my boyfriend. Now stop overacting and continue online shopping or whatever you do when I'm away. I have a business empire to run.

(Clytaemnestra hangs up.)

AEGISTHUS

But Clyme, what if they're really coming back? Hello?

(Aegisthus slams down the phone. Aegisthus walks over to Electra's room and knocks on her door.)

AEGISTHUS

Can I come in?

ELECTRA

No.

AEGISTHUS

Why not?

ELECTRA

Because you'll probably rape me.

AEGISTHUS

I will not.

ELECTRA

I've seen Jerry Springer. You're the adulterating live-in-lover – you're supposed to sexually abuse the kids in the house.

AEGISTHUS

Come on, what's between your mom and me is private. To you I'm just a friend, or like a neighbor or a house-guest.

Go away creep. ELECTRA

I want to talk to you. AEGISTHUS

Go ahead, it's a free country. ELECTRA

Who were you talking to on the phone before? AEGISTHUS

I take the fifth. ELECTRA

The fifth what? AEGISTHUS

The 5th amendment of the United States Constitution you idiot. It's a law that I don't have to tell you anything. ELECTRA

Where you talking about me? AEGISTHUS

Of course not, I don't care about you. ELECTRA

Who were you speaking to? AEGISTHUS

My friend. ELECTRA

What's their name? AEGISTHUS

Dead God. ELECTRA

What? AEGISTHUS

I don't know, their parents are hippies. ELECTRA

I'm going to buy you a present.

AEGISTHUS

A restraining order?

ELECTRA

No, a piece of jewelry.

AEGISTHUS

What kind of jewelry?

ELECTRA

I don't know, what would you like?

AEGISTHUS

Something from Tiffany's. Or Van Cleef and Arpels. Your choice.

ELECTRA

Can I come in then?

AEGISTHUS

When you shove the jewelry and the receipt under the door. Get going.

ELECTRA

Do they have websites?

AEGISTHUS

What am I Google?

ELECTRA

(Aegisthus goes away. Electra goes to sleep. Hours pass and it's the middle of the night. Electra is still asleep. Some pebbles are thrown at Electra's window. Startled, she wakes up and goes to the window and opens it. Orestes is outside.)

Who's there?

ELECTRA

Who do you think is there?

ORESTES

I can't tell.

ELECTRA

One hint – b-r-o-t-h-e-blank.

ORESTES

ELECTRA

No it's not.

ORESTES

Yeah, remember you told me to run away from school and come and save you.

ELECTRA

Then why do you have all that fuzz coming out of your face?

ORESTES

It's called a beard.

ELECTRA

No it's not.

ORESTES

Yeah, it is. I've been growing it since I got to school in September.

ELECTRA

Well you need to water it more then, it's ugly.

ORESTES

It's an experiment that makes sense at an idiot all boys school.

ELECTRA

Well yeah, that's true. I'm coming down.

(Electra comes down to meet Orestes. They hug.)

ELECTRA

I'm so glad you came. This Aegisthus guy is a total freak. He keeps on trying to rape me.

ORESTES

Oh my God, I'll kill him.

ELECTRA

Well he hasn't actually done anything yet, but that's because I keep 300 feet away from him. It's so bad. Mom is totally nuts. All she does it work, and when she comes home, she doesn't even spend time with Aegisthus, she just brings some other guy over and has sex with him. So Aegisthus sits and uses the computer in the living room and I hide in my room.

ORESTES

That's awful.

ELECTRA

And they won't even get me a cell-phone, so I can never call my friends, I can't call you. I risked my life going into the living room to call you now.

ORESTES

It's kind of cold here, can we go inside? Maybe get some food.

ELECTRA

I don't know if that's a good idea. Aegisthus was asking me all these questions about who I called today. I bet he heard. I'm thinking he told mom and now they're just waiting for you to come home so they can send you back or to a military school or maybe even to jail. You know mom would do that, remember when she did it with dad right before he left on his business trip.

ORESTES

You were like three.

ELECTRA

Well I don't remember really, but mom likes to tell the story at dinner parties, how she temporarily incarcerated her husband.

ORESTES

That's so sick.

ELECTRA

It's totally gross. She's lost any good in her now that she has total control of the business and it's so big. Not that they buy me anything. But Aegisthus said he might get me some jewelry.

ORESTES

What does that have to do with anything?

ELECTRA

I don't know, he might go to Van Cleef and Arpels or Tiffany's. But I think you should hide out somewhere.

ORESTES

Like where?

ELECTRA

At our place.

ORESTES

The tomb?

ELECTRA

Yeah. You go sleep there and I'll check on you in the morning on my way to school and we can strategize and I'll bring you something for breakfast.

ORESTES

Oh God E, what are you getting me into?

ELECTRA

Look, you want to read about my mangled, disfigured lifeless body in the newspaper? I can't handle these people. I thought I could, but they're bigger and scarier than me. You're the only one who can take them on, I mean you know, the two of us can.

ORESTES

What about dad?

ELECTRA

When was the last time we heard from him?

ORESTES

I think we should try and contact him. People send letters to the President, and just mark it USA and they mail it and it gets there. Or remember when you wrote to Santa Claus care of the North Pole and someone wrote back. Let's try writing to him, okay.

ELECTRA

Fine. I'll send you down a pad from upstairs and you come up with something.

ORESTES

Ahh, I don't know what to write. I'd so much rather be inside eating donuts.

ELECTRA

Orestes, this is your idea.

ORESTES

All right, but can you at least check if there are any donuts?

ELECTRA

I'll see if I can find something. I love you, I'll see you tomorrow.

ORESTES

Bye Electra.

(They say goodbye. End of scene.)

SCENE 2

(Aegisthus is asleep on the living room couch.
Clytaemnestra walks in late at night making a lot
of noise.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA

I'm so fucking tired.

(Aegisthus wakes up.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Oh, did I wake you.

AEGISTHUS

That's okay. I was waiting up for you.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

You were? Why, to give me something?

AEGISTHUS

To give you some loving.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

No, not that. I got a call from the credit card company today. Someone charged
\$15,000 to my card at Van Cleef and Arpels. I told them it was okay. It's okay right.

AEGISTHUS

Yeah, that was me.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

So?

AEGISTHUS

They have to special order it. Probably take a month or two, maybe three.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Oh, well that's okay.

AEGISTHUS

How was work?

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Same bullshit, same idiots, but I was fucking awesome. I cheated those bastards so
badly, they'll take ten years to figure it out. It's really too easy – you put a hundred
pages of numbers in front of them with a big profit at the end in bold, and they'll
believe I'm God.

AEGISTHUS

That's wonderful darling. I really want you.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

You and everybody else. I'm all right though.

AEGISTHUS

Yeah, but I'm not.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Fuck off, get a whore.

AEGISTHUS

Honey, but I love you.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

And I love you, so would you mind just jerking off tonight, I have to go to bed.

AEGISTHUS

Can't you just...

CLYTAEMNESTRA

No. I cannot just. It doesn't work that way. Good night, I'm taking a shower.

(Clytaemnestra goes off to take a shower.)

AEGISTHUS

This is fucking bullshit. You can't keep on doing this to me. I'll fuck you up.

(End of Scene.)

SCENE 3

(The next morning, Aegisthus is in front of Electra's room. He tries opening the door – it's locked. He pushes the Van Cleef and Arpels box under the door along with the receipt. Electra has already left through the window to meet Orestes.)

AEGISTHUS

Electra honey, wake up, you got to go to school. Look under the door, I got you a present. It's what you wanted – Van Cleef and Arpels. Come on and look and open the door. I need to talk to you. Come on, what do you think? It's really nice. Get out of bed, you're going to be late. Sweetie, wake up. You can take it, it's for you. The sales lady said you would flip for this. It cost a lot of money, but you're worth it. Open up.

Let's cut the bullshit and take your present and open up. Come on, this isn't nice. God damn it, what is wrong with you? I'm practically your father, you should speak to your own father. You father's not coming back and your mom's with me now. So open up the damn door. Shit. All right, what? You want more, fine. But I'm not going to keep on wasting money on you if this is the way you're going to act. We can be friends. I'm leaving now, you can go to school.

(Aegisthus walks away from the door. End of Scene.)

SCENE 4

(Inside a large tomb in a graveyard. Orestes is pacing around the tomb. Electra enters carrying some food.)

ORESTES

Hey, our blankets fell apart so I had to sleep with,
(motioning to the coffin)
you know.

ELECTRA

Bob.

ORESTES

Yeah.

ELECTRA

That's disgusting.

ORESTES

It was really cold, I had to.

ELECTRA

I'm sorry for making you stay here. I brought you a yogurt.

ORESTES

Thanks. But you were right, it wouldn't be safe at the house.

ELECTRA

Yeah, we're dealing with psychos.

ORESTES

That's right, if we don't get them, they'll get us.

ELECTRA
Did you write anything?

ORESTES
I tried, but I really couldn't come up with anything.

ELECTRA
Loser. You're supposed to be the writer.

ORESTES
I know, but I needed your help.

ELECTRA
Well what do you have?

(Orestes takes the pad out.)

ORESTES
(reading)
Dear Dad, this is Orestes and Electra, your kids writing. Things at home are crazy. We need you to come home right away.

(speaking)
That's it.

ELECTRA
That's not articulate.

ORESTES
Well what should I add?

ELECTRA
Tell him mom has a boyfriend who moved in and they have sex and mom has sex with lots of other men too and her boyfriend is trying to have sex with me and she's corrupting his business and lying and cheating and stealing and if we try and stop them we won't be around very long.

ORESTES
(finishing writing)
That's good.

ELECTRA
Thanks.

ORESTES
Where should we mail it to?

ELECTRA

Remember we got that postcard from Greece a few years ago.

ORESTES

I'm sure he's not still there.

ELECTRA

Well maybe it was a really good market and he decided to set up a branch of the company there. Mom's books never mention the subsidiaries, so how would we even know about them?

ORESTES

It's too chancy. But maybe he's still in Europe.

ELECTRA

Then let's send it to the European Union, that's like twenty countries.

ORESTES

Yeah, that's much better odds. Here, come and sign it.

(Electra signs it.)

ORESTES

Can you take it to the post office and get an envelope and mail it? I think I better hang out here until we know exactly what we're going to do. Address it: Agamemnon, European Union, Europe. They'll tell you how much it'll cost to send it.

ELECTRA

Isn't it a lot to mail something to Europe, like fifty bucks?

ORESTES

No, like a dollar, two dollars.

ELECTRA

Do you have money for it?

ORESTES

What happened to your allowance?

ELECTRA

I've been investing it in case I need to run away.

ORESTES

Here's five bucks. Bring me the change.

ELECTRA

And the receipt?

(Orestes sends Electra away.)

ELECTRA

Okay, but don't you think we should come up with a back up plan in case dad doesn't show up?

ORESTES

I already have a plan, that's why I need to stay out of sight.

ELECTRA

What is it?

ORESTES

I'll kill them.

ELECTRA

Orestes, you'll kill mom?

ORESTES

Look, she's turned evil, she's disgraced our family, our father, our family business. She's put you in danger and she'll take care of us if we don't do it to her first.

ELECTRA

I don't mind if you kill Aegisthus, but can't we just run away?

ORESTES

That's not going to solve anything. It's our business too. Dad made it for us. We deserve to have a good future from it. And if this is the way we have to get it, what are we supposed to do?

ELECTRA

Can't we sue her?

ORESTES

If Dad comes back, we can. But without him, she's going to win.

ELECTRA

I really hope Dad comes back.

ORESTES

Of course, I do too. But it's been ten years. He wasn't supposed to take this long. He may not even be alive, and if he is, he may have decided he doesn't want to come back.

ELECTRA
But he loves us.

ORESTES
Yeah, but I'm not sure he loves mom.

ELECTRA
Oh God Orestes, this is so fucked up.

ORESTES
I know.

ELECTRA
I better go to school.

ORESTES
Okay, come by at 3:30. And make sure you mail that.

ELECTRA
I can handle it, okay. Bye.

ORESTES
And don't tell anyone about any of this.

ELECTRA
Oh my God, I am strong too, okay.

ORESTES
Sorry.

(Electra leaves. End of Scene.)

SCENE 5

(At Clytaemnestra's office. She's at her desk. The phone rings. She presses the speaker-phone button. A blank noise is heard.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA
Hello? Yes. This is Clytaemnestra Brown.

(There's no answer. She hangs up. The phone rings again. She puts it on speaker. Again only a blank noise.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA
Yes? Who is this? You're wasting my time.

(She hangs up. The phone rings again. She lets it ring and ring and ring. Finally she picks up the receiver.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Who the fuck is calling me?

(The receiver begins to move by itself. It leads Clytaemnestra to sit on the desk and then it moves underneath her shirt, by her stomach. She begins to heave and push as if she's in labor. The receiver moves so that it's getting closer to her crotch. She's panting and in great pain – as if she's giving birth to the receiver. Finally in a great series of pushes the receiver comes out from her skirt and she cradles it in her arms, like a baby. She sings to it and pets it. After a bit, it cries and she presses it to her breast, underneath her skirt. The receiver suckles. Suddenly she cries out in pain and blood fills her shirt. She throws the receiver down.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA

That fucking phone bit my nipple. Shit. Who's doing this to me? I bet it's that fucking husband of mine.

(She stops the bleeding with some tissues. She thinks. She puts the phone on speaker and dials. It rings and a man answers.)

MAN'S VOICE

Yeah.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

This is Clytaemnestra Brown. I need you to locate Mr. Brown and terminate my agreement with him.

MAN'S VOICE

Are we talking permanently?

CLYTAEMNESTRA

That is what terminate means.

MAN'S VOICE

I understand. Would you like us to inform him of his reasons for dismissal, as a courtesy?

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Tell him he's didn't abide by the agreement. That he's a fucking pain in the ass, I mean pain in the breast.

Excuse me? MAN'S VOICE

Just kill him all right. CLYTAEMNESTRA

Yeah, no problem. MAN'S VOICE

(Clytaemnestra hangs up. She makes another call on speaker-phone.)

Hello. AEGISTHUS

It's me. Listen, something's up. CLYTAEMNESTRA

What do you mean? AEGISTHUS

I'm not exactly sure, but someone's out to get me. CLYTAEMNESTRA

In a deal? AEGISTHUS

No, personally. I figure it's Agamemnon, but he's probably got Orestes and Electra in on it too. CLYTAEMNESTRA

You want me to do something? AEGISTHUS

Well be on your guard and when Electra comes home, don't let her out of your sight. I'm going to call the school and speak to Orestes and see if they can search his room or something. I'll tell them I think he's using drugs. I've already taken care of Agamemnon. CLYTAEMNESTRA

Well sounds like you got it under control. AEGISTHUS

I better, you just don't fuck up anything with Electra. CLYTAEMNESTRA

(She hangs up and makes another call. The phone rings, an automatic voice answers.)

RECORDED VOICE

Hi, you've reached Adelphi Academy, educators of the young mind since 1866. If you know the extension you'd like, please enter it now. If you'd like to speak to an operator, please press zero.

(She presses zero. Funny on hold music plays. A voice comes on.)

RECORDED VOICE

If you know the extension you'd like, please enter it now. If you'd like to speak to an operator, please press zero.

(She presses zero. Funny on hold music plays. A voice comes on.)

RECORDED VOICE

Hi, you've reached Adelphi Academy, educators of the young mind since 1866. If you know the extension you'd like, please enter it now. If you'd like to speak to an operator, please press zero.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Those fucking incompetent assholes.

(She hangs up. End of scene.)

SCENE 6

(Electra comes back home. She's being really careful not to be seen. Aegisthus sees her.)

AEGISTHUS

Hi Electra.

ELECTRA

Shit.

AEGISTHUS

What's wrong?

ELECTRA

Nothing. I need to go.

AEGISTHUS
Aren't you back from school?

ELECTRA
Yeah, but I just came home for a minute to get something to eat and then I have to meet my friend at the library, where they don't allow food.

AEGISTHUS
Oh. Deadgod?

ELECTRA
What?

AEGISTHUS
Your friend you were talking about yesterday.

ELECTRA
Oh yeah, her. I couldn't understand what you said because of your accent.

AEGISTHUS
I don't have an accent.

ELECTRA
Sure you do.

AEGISTHUS
Did you like the present I got you?

ELECTRA
What present?

AEGISTHUS
You didn't see it this morning?

ELECTRA
No, I was in a rush.

AEGISTHUS
I left it by your door.

ELECTRA
You got me a present?

AEGISTHUS
I sure did, just like you asked me to.

Where's it from?
ELECTRA

Van Cleef and Arpels.
AEGISTHUS

Are you serious?
ELECTRA

Just go and check.
AEGISTHUS

I need to get out of here, I don't have time.
ELECTRA

It'll just take a second, it's a very beautiful and expensive present.
AEGISTHUS

You're kidding me?
ELECTRA

I really want us to be friends.
AEGISTHUS

(Electra goes to her room, Aegisthus follows her.)

Stop following me.
ELECTRA

I just want to see your reaction.
AEGISTHUS

Well watch it from the living room.
ELECTRA

I can't see then.
AEGISTHUS

That's the point.
ELECTRA

All right, check it out by yourself.
AEGISTHUS

Thank you.
ELECTRA

(Electra goes into her room, closes the door, locks it and sees the present on the floor. She picks it up, inspects it and opens it. She's amazed at the necklace. She let's out a squeal of joy. She puts it on and admires it. She looks at the time. It's 3:30. She goes to the window to leave. Aegisthus knocks on the door.)

AEGISTHUS
So what do you think?

ELECTRA
It's really nice.

AEGISTHUS
You like it?

ELECTRA
I love it.

AEGISTHUS
You want to show me how it looks on you?

ELECTRA
No thanks.

AEGISTHUS
Come on.

ELECTRA
Sorry. I have to do my homework now.

AEGISTHUS
What about meeting Deadgod?

ELECTRA
Oh I got confused, I'm meeting Deadgod tomorrow. So now I have to be by myself. So go away from the door and leave me alone.

AEGISTHUS
That was a very expensive necklace.

ELECTRA
Duh.

AEGISTHUS
Well wouldn't you like matching earrings?

Well yeah. ELECTRA

Well then open the door. AEGISTHUS

Sorry, can't right now. ELECTRA

I have them in my hand. AEGISTHUS

You do? ELECTRA

Yeah, bought them today. AEGISTHUS

Well put them under the door. ELECTRA

Nope, can't do that this time. AEGISTHUS

Well give them to me tomorrow, I got to work now. ELECTRA

Afraid I'll have to return them if you don't want them. AEGISTHUS

No, I want them, just not right now. ELECTRA

Take 'em or leave 'em. AEGISTHUS

(Electra looks around. She slowly goes to the door, she opens it. Aegisthus stands by the door with a box. Electra reaches for the box, Aegisthus pulls them out of her reach.)

No, no, no. Let me see how you look in them. AEGISTHUS

(Electra steps aside, Aegisthus walks into the room. He gives Electra the box. Electra opens the box and puts on the earrings. Aegisthus closes the door.)

AEGISTHUS

You look really beautiful, like your mother.

ELECTRA

Okay, go now.

AEGISTHUS

I don't need to go so quickly. Let's talk.

ELECTRA

I don't need to talk to you.

AEGISTHUS

Those look really good on you.

ELECTRA

Thanks.

AEGISTHUS

Would you like to give me a kiss?

ELECTRA

No.

AEGISTHUS

A thank-you kiss or a hug?

ELECTRA

How about a handshake?

AEGISTHUS

Okay.

(Electra puts her hand out to Aegisthus. He grabs it and pulls her to him, kisses her and pushes her onto the bed. End of scene.)

SCENE 7

(Electra comes running into the tomb.)

ORESTES
You're late.

ELECTRA
He raped me.

ORESTES
What?

ELECTRA
He gave me a present and then he pushed me, and raped me.

ORESTES
Aegisthus?

ELECTRA
Yes.

ORESTES
Come here.

(Orestes hugs Electra.)

ORESTES
I'm going to have you stay here and I'm going to go to the house and kill him.

ELECTRA
I don't want to stay by myself.

ORESTES
It's safe here. It's better if you don't come.

ELECTRA
How will I know you're okay.

ORESTES
I'll come get you.

ELECTRA
What if you don't come? He's not going to let you kill him.

ORESTES
I'll do it. But if I'm not back by seven, I want you to take this money and get out of here, as far as you can.

(Orestes empties his wallet of cash.)

ELECTRA
I didn't mean to let him do this.

ORESTES
Of course not.

ELECTRA
He just gave me a nice present, it distracted me. I didn't know what I was doing.

ORESTES
That's okay. I'm going to punish him now.

ELECTRA
Don't kill mom.

ORESTES
Electra, I may have to.

ELECTRA
We don't need their money, this jewelry is worth a lot.

ORESTES
I'm not doing it for the money. They're evil people.

ELECTRA
Mom's not evil, Dad was bad to her.

ORESTES
What are you talking about, Mom sent Dad to jail.

ELECTRA
For hitting her.

ORESTES
He did?

ELECTRA
And she lost a baby because of it.

ORESTES
How do you know?

ELECTRA
I heard them talking - Mom and Aegisthus – and she said how Dad used to hit her, and

then Mom was pregnant and Dad hit her, and she lost the baby. That's why she sent him to jail, and then they agreed Dad should leave.

ORESTES

Why didn't you tell me?

ELECTRA

I didn't know if it was true.

ORESTES

Well I still have to kill Aegisthus.

ELECTRA

I know. You should.

ORESTES

I don't know, maybe I should still kill Mom. She let that bastard into the house and she's been bad to us and to the business ever since Dad left.

ELECTRA

I think we should leave her alone, even if we don't get the money then.

ORESTES

It's not the money.

ELECTRA

We don't need the money.

ORESTES

Well, we can use it. And it's our money to begin with.

ELECTRA

So we'll get it eventually.

ORESTES

Mom may not give it to us.

ELECTRA

And there's Dad too, it will go to him.

ORESTES

All right, okay. I won't kill mom, not unless I have to.

ELECTRA

Okay.

ORESTES

You'll be safe with Bob.

(Orestes leads Electra into the coffin with Bob.)

ORESTES

Don't go anywhere, no one can know you're here. And remember, I'm here with you too, okay? The police are going to ask questions and we're going to tell them we were both here hiding together, because that fuckface raped you. We were here from four on, all night. When I come back, we'll figure out if there's anything else we have to say. Okay?

ELECTRA

Don't kill mom.

ORESTES

I'll try. I know this is going to be tough for you, but you have to stay strong.

ELECTRA

I love you Orestes.

ORESTES

Yeah, I love you too. I'll see you before seven.

(Orestes walks to exit.)

ELECTRA

Wait.

(Electra gets up out of the coffin.)

ELECTRA

I can't stay here like this. I have to come with you.

ORESTES

No.

ELECTRA

I can help. How are you going to kill him? Do you have a knife or a gun?

ORESTES

I'll pick up a knife at the kitchen store.

ELECTRA

It'll be suspicious, people will see you.
(creating a plan)

I'll go home, pretend I never left, go to the living room. Then you'll ring the bell. I'll get it. I'll say it's the guy mom ordered to check out the kitchen and we'll wrap a knife in a towel so they're no finger prints. I'll go in and tell Aegisthus the kitchen guy needs to speak to him in the kitchen. He'll go in, you'll kill him, then we'll take as much money as we can find and food for a week and hide out and then we'll escape to Europe. No, we'll take our passports and go right away to the airport.

ORESTES

Okay.

ELECTRA

It'll be better.

ORESTES

What if mom's there?

ELECTRA

It's too early for her, she doesn't come home 'til late.

ORESTES

All right, let's go.

(They exit. End of scene.)

SCENE 8

(At Clytaemnestra's office. She sits at her desk. She puts the phone on speaker and dials Orestes's school.)

RECORDED VOICE

Hi, you've reached Adelphi Academy, educators of the young mind since 1866. If you know the extension you'd like, please enter it now. If you'd like to speak to an operator, please press zero.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Oh those fucking idiots.

(she presses zero.)

WOMAN'S VOICE

Hello, Adelphi Academy.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Yes, this is Clytaemnestra Brown. I need to speak to the principal right away.

WOMAN'S VOICE

One moment.

(Music is heard as Clytaemnestra is on hold. The principal gets on the phone.)

PRINCIPAL

Hello Mrs. Brown, how's business?

CLYTAEMNESTRA

It's Miss Brown, but listen, I don't have time for small talk. I need to speak to my son and I also need for you to do a search of his room, I think he's using drugs and maybe selling them to the other students.

PRINCIPAL

I'm not sure if I understand.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

He's a drug dealer, okay.

PRINCIPAL

Yes I understand that, but your son's with you. I was very sorry to hear of your loss.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

What loss?

PRINCIPAL

Was it your mother, or Mr. Brown's?

CLYTAEMNESTRA

What do you mean Mr. Brown?

PRINCIPAL

Oh, his mother died.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

I don't know what you're talking about.

PRINCIPAL

Well you e-mailed us and took Orestes home because somebody's grandmother died.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

No I didn't.

PRINCIPAL

Oh sure you did, I have the e-mail right here.

CLYTAEMNESTRA
That fucking bastard.

PRINCIPAL
I'm sorry.

CLYTAEMNESTRA
Oh just go fuck yourself already.

(Clytaemnestra hangs up. She picks up her bag and runs out of the office. A few seconds later the phone rings, the answering machine gets it.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA
(voice)
Hello, you've reached the voice mail of Clytaemnestra Brown. Please leave a message.

MAN'S VOICE
Mrs. Brown, we took care of the agreement - severing. It's actually severed beyond recognition. I'll send the bill. Buh-Bye.

(End of scene.)

SCENE NINE

(Back at the house. Aegisthus is hanging out in the living room, sprawled out. Electra enters from her room acting carefree.)

AEGISTHUS
Hi Electra.

ELECTRA
Hello Mr. Gosapolis.

AEGISTHUS
That's not my name.

ELECTRA
Are you sure – that's what your business cards say.

AEGISTHUS
I don't have any.

ELECTRA

I know, that's why I'm having some made up for you. As a present, because I owe you for all you gave me today.

AEGISTHUS

That's nice, but my name isn't Gosapolis.

ELECTRA

It is now. You should never refuse a present. That's a very important lesson to learn in life, and best if learned early.

AEGISTHUS

You're acting weird.

ELECTRA

I'm trying to not act, I'm trying to be myself.

AEGISTHUS

Well if you'd just be nice, you'd find yourself much better off. That's an important lesson.

ELECTRA

Well I will make sure to file that in my super-duper important index card file under A, A, Asshole's advice.

AEGISTHUS

Listen, about before.

ELECTRA

What before?

AEGISTHUS

Today, in your room.

ELECTRA

Oh, like when you raped me.

AEGISTHUS

Electra.

ELECTRA

I totally forgot about that.

AEGISTHUS

Let's not tell your mom or anyone else. I won't do it again and I'll make it up to you. I'll get you anything you want.

ELECTRA
Well how about you dead?

AEGISTHUS
No, a present.

ELECTRA
Hmm, sounds like a good present to me, but if I can't have that, I don't have any pearls, I'd love some Mikimoto or Tiffany pearls.

AEGISTHUS
I'll see what I can do.

ELECTRA
I bet you will.

(The doorbell rings.)

ELECTRA
I'll get it.

(Electra goes to the door, she opens it a bit.)

ELECTRA
It's some kitchen repair guy mom ordered to check out the kitchen. I'm going to show 'em the kitchen.

(Aegisthus doesn't respond. Electra leads Orestes to the kitchen. Aegisthus interrupts them.)

AEGISTHUS
Hey.

(Electra turns to Aegisthus, Orestes stands with his back turned.)

AEGISTHUS
Hey buddy.

(Orestes turns to Aegisthus.)

AEGISTHUS
Listen, make sure you check the sink, something's not right with the pressure.

ORESTES

Sure thing.

(Electra and Orestes go into the kitchen. After a little while
Electra comes out.)

ELECTRA

Aegisthus, the guy needs you to show him the pressure.

(Aegisthus gets up and goes to the kitchen, a scream is heard.
Orestes comes out of the kitchen with his hands all bloody.)

ELECTRA

Is that his blood? Is he dead?

ORESTES

Yeah. You want to just make sure for me.

(Electra goes into the kitchen. After a bit she comes back all
bloody holding the knife in her hand.)

ELECTRA

Now he's definitely dead. That fucker.

ORESTES

We should get out of here.

ELECTRA

What should we do with the knife?

ORESTES

We'll bring it and leave it with Bob.

ELECTRA

Should we go and find some money and jewelry and our passports first?

ORESTES

Yeah, you're right. You take mom's room, I'll check dad's den.

ELECTRA

This is weird robbing my own house.

ORESTES

It's not your house, it's hers.

(They both go offstage to look. After a little while Clytaemnestra opens the door. As she is about to enter, the postman, off-stage, calls her. She pauses.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA

I don't need the fucking mail right now. Just leave it. All right, I'll take it.

(Clytaemnestra goes out of view for a moment and takes the mail. She enters the house and looks at the mail. She drops everything except for the letter Orestes and Electra sent, which has been returned. She opens it up and reads it. She sees some blood. She's suspicious. She follows the blood to the kitchen and she peers inside it. She screams in horror. She goes into the kitchen. Orestes and Electra come back on-stage, hearing the scream. Orestes and Electra make eye contact. Orestes motions Electra to be quiet and to come to him, so they can escape. Clytaemnestra sees Orestes from off-stage.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Orestes.

(Clytaemnestra comes on-stage.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA

I thought you'd be here, with your little sister. How's it feel to murder a man?

ORESTES

I don't know what you're talking about.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Oh, I see Aegisthus just decided to butcher himself, and your sister likes to carry around a blood dripping knife for good luck.

ORESTES

We're getting out of here. We just came to say goodbye.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

You're leaving?

ORESTES

Yeah.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

I think you should stay. I think you'd *better* stay.

He raped Electra.
 ORESTES
 So you killed him?
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 He raped your daughter.
 ORESTES
 He was an asshole.
 ELECTRA
 So you killed him?
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 What's the difference now that he's dead. He got what he deserved.
 ORESTES
 And so shouldn't you too?
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 We're not getting half of what we deserve. You stole all our money.
 ELECTRA
 Electra, stay quiet.
 ORESTES
 Well what do you suggest we do in this...awkward situation?
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 Cut a deal.
 ORESTES
 I'm listening.
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 We disappear. You wire us 5 million to an account we'll call and provide. You call the police, report a break-in. You keep the rest of the money, you keep the business.
 ORESTES
 Don't you think the police will be curious to speak to you?
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 You tell them you sent Electra and me to Europe yesterday to visit our father.
 ORESTES

CLYTAEMNESTRA

What were you doing trying to contact your father? What were you planning?

ORESTES

What are you talking about, let's cut this deal, it has nothing to do with him.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Your letter was returned.

(Clytaemnestra takes out the letter.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA

What kind of an idiot sends it care of the European Union.

(She opens it.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA

(reading)

Mom has sex with lots of men. She's corrupting your business, lying, cheating, if we try and stop them we won't be around very long.

(speaking)

What did you think I'd do to you?

ORESTES

I don't know, kill me.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

And you'd thought your father would help you?

ORESTES

He's my father.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

He's a bastard, that what he is, and now he's dead. So he won't be coming to rescue you I'm afraid.

ORESTES

When did he die?

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Recently.

ORESTES

When were you going to tell us?

Soon.
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 And you don't feel bad?
 ORESTES
 Honey, who's idea do you think it was? Aegisthus wasn't the only one who got what he deserved.
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 He didn't deserve that.
 ORESTES
 He killed my baby.
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 I know, Electra told me.
 ORESTES
 And you don't think that's wrong? You, the great avenger?
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 It is. But you shouldn't have just killed him.
 ORESTES
 You just killed a man.
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 I had to.
 ORESTES
 And so did I.
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 This is so fucked up.
 ELECTRA
 Electra, I'm sorry what he did to you. It's better he's dead, he was a lousy boyfriend.
 CLYTAEMNESTRA
 I can't believe you killed our dad.
 ELECTRA
 He kept on bothering me and I let it go for such a long time and I couldn't anymore. It's no different then with Aegisthus. Except you didn't have to suffer so long.

ORESTES
What about our deal?

CLYTAEMNESTRA
I don't like it.

ORESTES
It's not open to negotiation.

CLYTAEMNESTRA
I don't think you're calling the shots.

ORESTES
You killed someone too.

CLYTAEMNESTRA
They'll never be able to pin it on me, they're not even going to find his body.

ORESTES
So what's *your* offer?

CLYTAEMNESTRA
Electra stays, you leave today, you get nothing. That's it.

(Electra runs forth with the knife, she stabs her mom.)

CLYTAEMNESTRA
What have you done? I was going to spare you.

ELECTRA
You wouldn't be happy until we were all dead and you owned the whole world.

(Clytaemnestra dies.)

ORESTES
Oh shit.

ELECTRA
It's okay. She was going to screw us all.

ORESTES
Yeah, I guess.

ELECTRA
You would have gone to jail, maybe me too.

ORESTES

Yeah, she wouldn't have kept her word.

ELECTRA

That's right. She killed our dad. She was an awful woman. And now she's dead and not a problem anymore.

ORESTES

No, you did the right thing. I should have done it myself.

ELECTRA

It doesn't matter who killed her, as long as we stay a team.

ORESTES

You're right. We should get out of here.

ELECTRA

What about the bodies, we can't leave them here, someone will find them.

ORESTES

I don't know, what do you think?

ELECTRA

I think we better take 'em and leave them with Bob. No one will ever find them there. In the meantime we can pretend to be mom and transfer all the business to our accounts and then go to Europe.

ORESTES

Okay, I'll load their bodies into Mom's car and you find our passports and whatever else we might need, because we shouldn't come back here.

ELECTRA

You got it.

(Orestes goes to the kitchen and starts moving Aegisthus's body. Electra takes Clytaemnestra's purse and then goes off to look for the passports. End of scene.)

SCENE TEN

(At the tomb. Orestes and Electra finish putting the dead bodies into the coffin.)

ELECTRA

Should we leave the knife in?

ORESTES

I don't know, I guess, what else are we going to do with it?

ELECTRA

Yeah, but I'm going to take mom's rings off.

ORESTES

Yeah, okay.

(Electra takes off the rings.)

ORESTES

I guess this is like their funeral. And dad's. Do you want to say something?

ELECTRA

No. You say something. I've never been to a funeral before.

ORESTES

You just talk - we both should.

ELECTRA

Fine.

(as if giving a sermon)

Here lies the man that raped me and the woman I killed, who I also called mom. I'm happy they're both dead and that I'm still alive. My father's dead, and my mom, who I killed, killed him. That makes me sad. But life must go on and so, rest in piss.

ORESTES

That's disgusting and disgraceful to our parents.

ELECTRA

It was your idea to kill them, I'm just going along with the flow.

ORESTES

Fine. I just want to say that we wish everything could have worked out better, and we could all be one big happy family. Except for Aegisthus, who for obvious reasons is better off dead. But we will do our best to make the best of Brown Enterprises, so that your struggle and your deaths will not have been in vain. And hopefully you will be treated okay wherever you are now, except for Aegisthus, who should suffer eternal torture. But Dad - we love you. Mom - it was sad to see you go. Okay.

ELECTRA

So is that all we do?

ORESTES

Yeah, just cover them up with Bob and we'll get out of here and take care of business.

ELECTRA

I'll feel a lot better when this is over.

(They put the cover back on.)

ELECTRA

It's going to stink in here.

ORESTES

Think we should burn them?

ELECTRA

Oh God, that's gross.

ORESTES

Well that's how they cremate people.

ELECTRA

Let's just get out of here.

ORESTES

Yeah, no one will be at Mom's office now.

(They begin to exit.)

ELECTRA

Well thanks for taking care of everything.

ORESTES

Oh, it was my pleasure.

ELECTRA

Shut up.

ORESTES

What am I supposed to say.

ELECTRA

You're welcome.

ORESTES

Okay.

ELECTRA

Good.

ORESTES

Bye Bob.

GARBLED VOICE

[garbled sound]

ELECTRA

Did Bob just answer you?

ORESTES

It sounded like something.

ELECTRA

We definitely killed them both, right?

ORESTES

I don't see how they could be alive, but I've never killed anyone before.

ELECTRA

I'm sure they're dead.

ORESTES

So let's just forget it and go put our family back in order.

ELECTRA:

Okay. Good idea.

(They exit, Electra throws the rings at the audience.)

End of Play