

**CHILD'S PLAY SAMPLE**

(ALEX tries to grab the manuscript, but LEXI evades him. He pursues as best he can, rapidly losing breath.)

Come to Burlington.  
LEXI

(ALEX shakes his head.)

At least say you'll think about it.

(ALEX makes it to the sofa and his oxygen supply.)

That...would be...a lie.  
ALEX

Then lie! You owe me!  
LEXI

I...don't...owe you.  
ALEX

Maine.  
LEXI

(Alex's breath stabilizes.)

Maine? God, what great summers!  
ALEX

I hated Maine.  
LEXI

The hell you did! We could never wait to get there.  
ALEX

LEXI (READING FROM THE MS.)  
"Kind love, you lit the empty house of life / As down the dimming halls  
each room / Was giving up its shape ..."

Stop.  
ALEX

Then dig. LEXI

The rubber dog turds. ALEX  
(LEXI gestures impatiently.)

Teaching you to smoke. ALEX

Stop pretending. LEXI

I'm not pretending. I've forgotten how. ALEX

LEXI (READING)  
"As down the dimming halls each room / Was giving up its shape / In slow  
surrender to the tug of night."

A little..."mawkish," I think mother might say. But you know, they read far worse  
on Thursday evenings at the bookstore.

Read what you want. Enough games. ALEX

You're getting warm. LEXI

I'm tired. ALEX

Forbidden games. When we were 12. LEXI

That? ALEX

Yes. "That." Don't even *try* pretending you don't know. LEXI

Of course I know. So what? ALEX

So what, he says! *So what?* LEXI

ALEX

That's in there, too. Want me to find it?

(He snatches the typescript from her and riffles through it.)

LEXI

No. I don't need your version. Just say it: "Forgive me."

ALEX

Whoa, wait a minute!

LEXI

SAY IT!

ALEX

Forgive me.

LEXI

You don't mean it.

ALEX

How can I mean it? I didn't do anything.

LEXI

That's so typical. You've always evaded responsibility for everything--love, money, sex, Mother. Even now, you won't take responsibility for your health. It's out of your hands.

ALEX

Well it's not falling into yours. Or Wang's. That's for sure.

LEXI

"What happens, happens." What a pitiful way to live.

ALEX

But the only way to die. Try it sometime.

LEXI

Not before I have to, thanks. And you don't have to, not yet. That's the whole point.

ALEX

I think your point was something different, wasn't it?

LEXI

Oh forget it.

ALEX  
Now she says "forget it."

LEXI  
Why bother?

ALEX  
First you want to nail me on some imaginary cross, and then you want to forget it.  
Who's evading what?

LEXI  
Yes. Who?

ALEX  
Not me.

LEXI  
I'll tell you a story. Once upon a time there were twins, a boy and a girl.

ALEX  
That's an original start.

LEXI  
When they were little, they were very much alike. Oh, the boy was a bit more assertive, aggressive, even. He usually took the lead in instigating mischief....

ALEX  
At the prompting of his younger...

LEXI  
Five minutes younger.

ALEX  
Five minutes you can never catch up. So go on: At the prompting of his younger sister, who, incidentally, not only came up with most of the naughty ideas for which *he* was punished, but who never, ever failed to go along with....

LEXI  
Because in her eyes he could do no wrong. She adored her brother.

ALEX  
No more than he worshipped her.

LEXI  
I thought *I* was telling this story.

ALEX  
Then get on with it.

LEXI

One day when they were 12, the boy said, "I've discovered something amazing." "What is it?" she asked. "Come with me and I'll show you," he said. "Where?" she asked. "To our secret place in the rocks," he said. So they went to a cave-like place down by the ocean, a place they'd discovered. Sometimes they'd have secret picnics there with food they'd steal from the kitchen.

ALEX

That was *her* specialty, as I recall. Their mother used to wonder if she'd left stuff at the store by mistake. She even complained to Mister.... What was his name?

LEXI

Sproul.

ALEX

Right. She told him she thought the kids at the check-out counter were stealing.

LEXI

So anyway, the boy took his sister to their secret hiding place.

ALEX

He didn't *take* her anywhere. She went. Eagerly.

LEXI

Because she trusted him.