

The Whore’s Dialogue: An Annotated Script

Cast and Crew

Performers

Daughter	Camille Beaumont
Mother	Denise Dowse
Anima	Suzanne Ford
Wife	Alexandra Morgan

Crew

Director of Photography	Tobias Spellman
Grip	Luis Guizar
Additional Camera	Jason Matzner
Sounds Recordist	Kevin de Kimpe
Post-Production Sound Mix	Ronald Murphy
Color	Tobias Spellman
Production Manager	Barbara Queenan
Production Assistants	Cristina Cary, Fabien Flievet, Natalie Kovacs
Readers	Jennifer Berger, Phoenix West, Jasmine Woods

Extra Hands

Ben Au
Jane Brecht

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Yvonne Rainer
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¹ The whore’s dialogue is an extinct genre of written pornography, popular in Europe up until and through the Victorian era. The genre emerged in early Renaissance Italy as an erotic and parodic counterpart to the surge in popularity of Platonic dialogues. The whore’s dialogue takes the form of a conversation between an older libertine and a young protégé. The experienced whore holds forth on sex and seduction, but (in keeping with Plato’s ability to make the erotic political and the political erotic^a) the whore also often performs an authoritative command of the social apparatus surrounding her profession: discussing human nature, local politics, manners, social behaviors, and survival tips.

The main portion of the text of a whore’s dialogue involves the “Mother’s” advice to her “Daughter”; but often includes a Daughter’s response, in which she describes her own experience after her wedding night, her first lover, or after having turned her first trick.

The most influential writer of this form is widely accepted to be Pietro Aretino (1492-1556)^b, whose *Ragionamenti* dialogues were first published and widely distributed in England in 1584. It would be another century before a major erotic work was written in a style *other* than a dialogue, and innumerable new dialogues and translations and reprintings of older dialogues continued into the 1890s. The word “pornography,” coined in 1857, means “whore’s story” or “whore’s writing”; early erotic novels maintained a structure based around a whore’s storytelling: e.g., the de Sade’s *120 Days of Sodom* (1785) and *Justine* (1791), John Cleland’s *Fanny Hill, or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1748).

² I came to the whore’s dialogue through two iterations of its influence: the Marquis de Sade via filmmaker Luis Buñuel. In Buñuel’s 1930 surrealist masterpiece *L’Age D’Or*, an often hilarious skewering of sexual aggression, sublimation, frustration, and the hypocrisies of Catholic morality, the final section is based on De Sade’s *120 Days of Sodom*. The transition title card of this section reads:

120 days earlier, four godless and unprincipled scoundrels, had, driven by their depravity, shut themselves away to indulge in the most bestial of orgies. To them, the life of a woman mattered no more than that of a fly. They took with them eight lovely adolescent girls to serve as victims for their criminal desires. Plus four women well versed in debauchery, whose narrative skills would serve to stimulate their already jaded appetites whenever interest flagged. [Emphasis mine]

Buñuel then cuts to the instigator, the Duc d’Blangis, emerging from the castle, looking startlingly like Jesus Christ.^a

I was struck by the idea of these skilled, well-versed narrators. In de Sade’s unfinished 1785 novel, he makes clear that the four aged madams hired to *speak* the orgy are its most important ingredient; more than the wives and male and female virgins brought for the corrupt nobles to despoil and kill:

The plan was to have described to them, in the greatest detail and in due order, every one of debauchery’s extravagances, all its divagations, all its ramifications, all its contingencies, all of what is termed in libertine language its passions. There is simply no conceiving the degree to which man varies them when his imagination grows inflamed...and he who should succeed in isolating and categorizing and detailing these follies would perhaps perform one of the most splendid labors...finding some individuals capable of providing an account of all these excesses, then of analyzing them, of extending them, of itemizing them, of graduating them, and of running a story through it all, to provide coherence, and amusement.

The four women’s tales are divided into 150 stories of “simple passions and the least esoteric or most ordinary deviations,” an “equal number of unusual passions involving one or more men with one or several women,” 150 “criminal whimsies and those which most outrage the laws of both Nature and religion,” and 150 murders, with their incipient process of torture.

This role of the older woman as the taxonomist of the perverse, sexual memoirist, relegated entirely to the role of language, seemed to be a provocative container for my own ambivalent and conflicted investigations of sexuality and gender.

a A whore’s dialogue of the era, *La Cazzaria* (*The Book of the Prick*, by Antonion Vignali, 1525), actually climaxes in an “extended fable of civic conflict in which personified body parts fight for dominance in an imaginary commonwealth.” Vignali allegorizes the collapse of his government as a fragmented body: Cocks, Cunts, Assholes and Balls each correlating to one of the major factions of Sienese politics. In “Sade and the Pornographic Legacy,” Frances Ferguson writes that porn “shifts the burden of sexuality from sensation to representation...from individual bodies to the political world. Pornography thus registers the symbolic capital of even of apparently private experience.”

b Poet and playwright whose biting satires resulted in the nickname “Scourge of Princes” and his banishment from Rome. He gained international repute for his “Postures”, sonnets based upon and published with erotic engravings by Marcantonio Raimondi (themselves based on drawings by Giulio Romano, a student of Raphael). Aretino claimed his letters to the Pope helped spring Raimondi from prison, where he had been jailed for the engravings. Aretino’s many literary talents aside, he is most remembered for his influence as a pornographer.

a The introduction to the recent translation of *La Cazzaria* notes that the similarity “to the work of the surrealists of the 1930s is not accidental. Like Buñuel’s *L’Age d’Or* or Dali’s coprophilic and masturbatory paintings, *La Cazzaria* is the product of a hyper-intellectual, religiously skeptical, intensely masculine community, and was written at a time when a traditional, deeply Catholic society was undergoing massive social change and political disruption.”

ACT I: Definition of Terms at Stake and at Play³

MOTHER⁴

[What begins as the sort of sounds made while feeding a baby becomes sounds made in a moment of sexual arousal.]

Aaaah. Aaaah. Aaaah. Aaaaum. Aaaaum. Aaaahmmmm. Aaahumm. Mmmmm. Mmmmm. Mmmmm. Aaahummm.⁵

DAUGHTER

[Echoing the mother.]

Aaaaah. Aaaaah. Aaaaah. Aaaaummm. Aaaaummm. Mmm. Mmm. Aaaaahummm. Hmmm. Hmmm. [Giggles.] I like that. Aaaaahhhhuuummmmm. So what’s next?

WIFE⁶

When it was my turn to learn, I was told, “I want page 5. Not pages 1-4. Not page 6. I want page 5.” So: I want page 5.⁷

3 Act I establishes the concepts that will be at play throughout the piece: the body, the conceit of “Page 5”, the roles of language and status, and the relationship between the older women who speak and the younger woman who asks questions.

4 In this whore’s dialogue, the Whore takes a tripartite form, each a different aspect of the whole: this reflects the Sadean influence and the manner in which the installation was envisioned. Its earlier title, “Oracles,” reflected its conception as an immersive, ritual environment. Rather than dividing the women’s text based on the content of the experiences, I divided it based on the manner in which each narrates and mediates memory. The Mother gives advice, models sexual dialogue, and makes jokes.

5 The mirroring of a slide from eating to moaning opens a script about the transmission of language and sexual behavior. If a classic existential crisis of feminist consciousness is the manner in which biology determines one’s destiny and participation in the world of ideas, then that crisis becomes explicit when one actually has a baby. This can be illuminating: in early pregnancy when the placenta is being built, the body demands specific nutrients through strange physical cravings and demands sleep in overwhelming waves. During birth, contractions open the cervix; once open, the body trembles through a “transition”, after which the physical urges to push the child out are uncontrollable. The body does it for you. The suckling of the newborn causes the uterus to contract to its pre-pregnancy size within six weeks; breast-feeding burns off the pounds gained during pregnancy. Pregnancy operates as a mirror image of illness—an abnormal condition of the body’s functionality that makes explicit its normal workings and extraordinary capacities.

Yet this takes on a new and agonizing and rather devastating valence when it moves into the realm of automatic behaviors that transcend one’s agency. The body does things. The elongated consonants and vowels, exaggerated up-and-down intonations of “baby talk,” a cross-cultural phenomenon, is an unconscious performance to introduce a child to the sounds of its native language. This first line came from the attempts to feed my then 6-month old child. When one holds the spoon up a child’s mouth, one automatically opens one’s own mouth, physically modeling behavior to be mirrored in turn. This native, embodied knowledge (my friend recommends new parents surrender to the lizard brain) can make notions of free will and self-determination seem absurd.

6 The Wife suffers.

7 When I was 21 years old, during the first summer I lived in New York, I toyed with how I might enter sex work—without actually performing any sex acts for money^a. I naively thought that, even avoiding penetration by strangers, some kind of sex-industry adjacent work might serve my day job needs: better pay for fewer hours, allowing me to make my rent and produce art.

I interviewed for a job answering the phone for a sex dungeon, but it paid poorly and the whole experience unsettled me—partly because of the dungeon’s location, a fairly corporate setting; but mostly because of the ludicrous script we were supposed to use on the phone to make potential clients “more comfortable.” Despite the fact that we were in high-priced offices off Union Square in Manhattan with multiple fake-breasted sex workers in well-equipped rooms, I was supposed to tell callers, as early into the conversation as possible, “I’m just doing this with my roommate, we’re very discreet” like I was some co-ed secretly doing this for fun and a little spare cash with a buddy. It was a ludicrous but apparently effective lie. The same week, I called a BDSM “Mistress” who advertised that she trained young women to set up their own dominatrix franchises; she asked me for my height and weight, then suggested that I could be better put to use as a professional submissive. I declined.

Finally, I applied to be a copy editor for *Penthouse Variations*, one of the Guccioni empire’s lesser publications; an old school “story” magazine that published tales of (purported) erotic exploits, (purportedly) mailed in by readers. I got an interview and met the editor, V.K. McCarty^b, a tall, beautiful older woman in her 50s, red hair piled on top her head. She saw my tongue ring, and informed me that now that she had passed menopause and no longer “was a swamp down there,” she was thinking of getting her *guiche* (perineum) pierced. She made me take a copy editing test. She also told me that only one third of the material from the magazine came from readers; most of it was written in-house. As such, to make the next interview round, I would have to write a sample of pornography.

She said, “I want page 5. Do you understand?” I said I did. She clarified, “No set-up.” I said, “Yes, I understand.” I was struck by the directness of the phrase ‘Page 5’ and remember my own pride in not needing her to explain it to me further.

I don’t have a copy of my Page 5 sample, but I believe it began with a sentence like, “Jack walked in and stopped when he saw me, his wife’s skirt over her head and her panties in my hand.” I made it to the second round of the interview. Ms. McCarty informed me that, while she wished I had indented the paragraphs, she liked the porn a lot. That being said, they were looking for an employee who would “be at the Christmas party in five years.” That stability-seeking individual was probably not a 21-year old artist just out of school.

a I came into my sexual self in the mid-1990s. It was a post-AIDS-Holocaust, postmodern era of “sex-positivity,” an attempt to undermine the seemingly inextricable heterosexist hold over of the culture around sexual pleasure, sexually explicit discourses, and sex work. Dan Savage’s Savage Love sex advice column was just starting, and he asked readers to begin their letters “Hey faggot!” (as opposed to “Dear Dan”) in order to reclaim the word from bigots; Susie Bright’s magazine *On Our Backs* tried to reclaim pornography for queers and feminists. Condoms and dental dams and sex toys took on a new life with the opening of multiple women-owned, women-run sex toy shops; the long-running San Francisco- based store Good Vibrations became a worker-owned collective. As punk riot girl maven Kathleen Hanna (of Bikini Kill and Le Tigre) said in a recent performance, telling a story about needing to raise \$1000 to get her van running to go on tour: “I did what any self-respecting feminist artist in the 90s would do—I got a job stripping.”

b I later learned that Ms. McCarty lived a second life as a storied New York dominatrix, Mam’selle Victoire. She now works as Acquisitions Librarian for the General Theological Seminary in New York and does not publicly acknowledge her pornographic past.

DAUGHTER⁸

I don't understand.

ANIMA⁹

We're talking about dirty stories.

WIFE¹⁰

Page 5.

MOTHER

Not pages 1-4. Not the set up. Not page 6.

DAUGHTER

Oh. Page 5. In dirty stories. I understand. [Pause.] Just Page 5?

MOTHER

Yes.

DAUGHTER

How can you get to Page 5 without the stuff that comes before it?

WIFE

Because that's how the real world works. You can write pages 1 through 4. You can read pages 1 through 4. But you won't get pages 1 through 4.¹¹

DAUGHTER

Page 5 is all cock cock cock.

ANIMA

But you like that. I know you do. Cock cock cock, while you're squeezing your eyes shut real tight, rubbing yourself, holding your breath, tightening your legs.

DAUGHTER

Oh. Yes. [Pause.] How did you know?

MOTHER

We know. And besides, you don't just say that.

DAUGHTER

What do you say?

MOTHER

Something that reveals what is between two bodies. Not just "cock." Or even "sucking cock." But rather, "she's desperately sucking a big fat cock."¹²

8 In reading various whore's dialogues, I found myself strangely moved by the naive, flat manner in which the younger figure speaks. Sometimes the Daughter petulantly and pridefully pretends a vast experience, then is humbly brought to heel. Sometimes she simply doesn't know. Sometimes she gets aroused by the stories. Sometimes she reveals sweet surprise and innocent astonishment.

And yet she says nothing of substance, or real knowledge, or observational acuity. She simply operates as a foil, her lumpen phrases ("I don't understand." or "Tell me again?" or "How marvelous, tell me more!") instigating the next performance of expertise by the old whore. The *transparency of the daughter as narrative device* is irresistible. It undoes the very definition of "Dialogue", and yet without her, there is no whore's dialogue. What else justifies the old whore speaking?

Part of the eroticism of the form involves the idea that the reader has been allowed into the intimate exchange of insider knowledge.

But there is also a gap in this ritual transmission: the older woman who says, "this is how it's going to be," is also saying "this is how it was". The woman who "used to be" speaks to the woman who is "about to be". The woman who is fulfilling this role in the present is absent, a lacuna.

9 In this script, the Anima speaks only as the person who is not her in the sexual act. In Jungian terms, the Anima^a refers to the "projection of certain archetypal images" that a man inscribes onto a woman. This "eternal image of woman", a fundamentally unconscious "deposit of all the impressions made by a woman," reflects the female or feminine elements in the man's own psyche; often, the emotions the man himself suppresses in his quest to be masculine. When a man engages in Anima Projection, he is projects these ideals of what a woman should be onto an object of desire. Jung states that, "most of what men say about feminine eroticism, and particularly about the emotional life of women, is derived from their own anima projections and distorted accordingly."

Filling out a container with your own primordial images, yearnings and desires can be a positive experience, if it brings out the best in yourself: it "holds the possibility of finding one's own complexities answered by a corresponding diversity." It is also dangerous: "one should on no account take this projection for an individual and conscious relationship."

The Anima can only be the container for the desire that is not her own. She can only be the projection of someone else's desire.

10 What is it about Page 5? Page 5 is *in flagrante delicto*. Page 5 is fucking. Page 5 is pounding away. Page 5 is whatever series of activities or actions will lead to ejaculation. Page 5 is the moment after the lubricious foreplay and early eroticism and dam of sexual tension breaks into frenetic activity. The switching from one position to the next. All pornography ends up in this systematic in-and-out, up-and-down, bobbing on-and-off that is Page 5. And the cynical thesis of this dialogue is that eventually, everything—even memory—becomes Page 5, the repetitive action on its way to release.

11 From conversations with actor and writer Grace Zabriskie, who was originally going to play the Wife. We spent many hours discussing the script and the ideas under the piece; her rigorous questions shaped the final edit of the script. One evening she told me that, as she thought about the script, she realized what she wished she had told her now-adult daughter years ago, when her daughter was first blooming into adolescence and sexual experience. She realized that she most wanted to tell her daughter not ruin her body and ruin her erotic expectations with the exhaustive extended foreplay that occurs during the teenage years; a time before intercourse, before orgasm. She wanted her daughter to know that once she lost her virginity, gave it up—once Page 5 was reached—the heightened madness of fooling around, the ecstasy of delayed gratifications, would be gone forever, never to return^a.

Grace didn't know if this meant she should have warn her daughter to avoid teenage petting and play altogether, so as not to set her body up for a lifetime of sexual disappointment; or whether it would have simply been enough to prepare her daughter for the inevitable.

12 As the Mother begins to give specific advice on how to speak sex, we return to the idea of pornography as political. Here, I adapt Bertolt Brecht's words to the Mother's mouth to define the structure of Page 5, specifically, Brecht's definition of the "social gest" and "gestic language"

Brecht's gestus, or gest, applies to "gestures, actions, tableaux" in performance. These gests qualify as social gests if they are moments of action that reveal "relations between men." Elin Diamond further defines Brecht's social gestus as "a moment in performance that makes visible the contradictory interactions of text, theater apparatus, and contemporary social struggle", for which I would replace "theater" with "art-making."

a I came to the Anima via the novel *The Manticore* (1972) by Robertson Davies, the second in his Deptford Trilogy, which deals with magic in terms of autobiography, mythic history, performance, trauma and fantasy. A main character engages in Jungian analysis and reflects on his first love, whom the therapist explaines was not truly a love but an anima projection.

a I've often, during sex, felt that the journey towards the obliteration of an orgasm to be like going over the top of roller coaster—teenage foreplay is the highest roller coaster in the world, one that climbs endlessly without ever going over the top.

Oh my goodness.

DAUGHTER

MOTHER

Yes. When you say, for instance, “sniff the girl’s cunt,” it leaves the listener with a nose in her cunt, as opposed to knowing who he is in the situation.¹³

DAUGHTER

So how should I say it?

MOTHER

Try, “if the girl inspires you, sniff her cunt.” In that way, you set her status as a muse, his as the artist. We know who’s who and what’s what.¹⁴

DAUGHTER

I see. So instead of saying I like to fuck, I should say, for a girl like me, fucking comes naturally.

ANIMA

Or you can say, I was born and made to fuck.

DAUGHTER

Oh, that’s really good.

WIFE

And then what do you say next?

DAUGHTER

What do you mean?

WIFE

After you say, “I was born and made to fuck,” what do you say next?

DAUGHTER

I don’t know.

WIFE

You say, “Let me tell you all about it.”¹⁵

DAUGHTER

Which brings us back to Page 5!

WIFE

Exactly! I am so glad you understand. Like all human activity directed towards the mastery of nature, a dirty story is a social undertaking, an interaction between men.¹⁶

13 According to Brecht, language becomes gestic when “it is grounded in a gest and conveys particular attitudes adopted by the speaker towards other men.” In his essay, “On Gestic Music,” he uses the following example:

The sentence, ‘pluck the eye that offends thee out’ is less effective from a gestic point of view than ‘if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out.’ The latter starts by presenting the eye, and the first clause has the definite gest of making an assumption; the main clause then comes as a surprise, a piece of advice and a relief.”

14 Terry Eagleton claims that the gest is always rhetoric, and rhetoric is gest, whether in action or language:

Brechtian theater deconstructs social processes into rhetoric, which is to say reveals them as social practices. Rhetoric here means grasping language and action in the context of the politico-discursive conditions inscribed within them...gest denotes the curve of intentionality...its task is to reveal the repressed rhetoricity of nontheatrical utterances, a revelation which is for Brecht ineluctably materialist because it involves contextualizing what is said or done in terms of its institutional conditions. The function of theater is to show that all the world’s a stage.

Substitute “political” for “social.” Substitute Brecht’s “relations between men” as “status relations”. There’s an inextricability of status and political information inscribed in pornographic exchange.

15 The narratives of *120 Days of Sodom* and *Justine* depend on detailed recounting of specific sexual experiences. Taking a brief moment to consider the specific historical context under which these novels were written can help us understand the way that Sade collapsed the dominant political dialectic of his moment.

Written at the rise of the French revolution, Sade existed in a contradictory political space: a nobleman who was both anti-monarchical *and* anti-Republic. He was jailed by both the Royalists and the Republicans, and, ironically, wrote both *Sodom* and *Justine* during extended stays in the Bastille: pornography as direct social resistance.

In its anti-monarchical version, politically directed pornography served the role of destroying the royalist’s claim to a non-physical body (King as God). Sade’s work attacked the monarchy directly in multiple ways: undermining the transcendental royal body, profaning religion, and staging brutal burlesques on feudal property rights, with incestuous fathers endlessly abusing their daughters, then marrying them off to their noble friends.

At the same time, his work was anti-democratic. Sade denigrated Rousseau’s ideal of humanity, instead creating man whose nature is evil, brutal, violent, uncontrolled by notions of the rule of law or the common good. As written by Bataille, Sade “propounded to his readers the concept of a sovereign type of humanity whose privileges would not have to be agreed upon by the masses...”

Ferguson writes about Bataille’s analysis of Sade:

Sadean pornography not only reveals the fundamental equivalence of sexuality and violence; it also comes to represent an inequality absolutely fundamental to even the apparently egalitarian republican state...sexual pleasure is supremely private, comes to be the epitome of the bodily sensation as absolutely ungeneralizable (nontranscendental).

Sexuality thus “reinaugurates social inequality; sexual pleasure makes tyrants of us all.”^a

16 More Brecht.

a Bataille also writes that Sade’s pornography “becomes the aesthetic replacement for monarchical glory,” a consolation for the end of monarchy, that thus undermines the fantasy of equality of a new Republic.

This echoes to me in two works made contemporary to each other: Pier Pasolini’s filmic adaptation of 120 Days of Sodom, Salo (1975), set against the backdrop of fascist Italy; and Rainer Werner Fassbinder’s play Preparadise Sorry Now (1969) which juxtaposes scenes exploring transubstantiation with scenes that examine the “fascistoid underpinnings of everyday life, in which two characters gang up against an individual.”

In an era struggling with the failed and failing ideals of new democratic freedoms, both Pasolini and Fassbinder critique fascism through an aestheticized and oft-pornographic performance of it.

Between men?	DAUGHTER
Between mankind.	WIFE
Like an orgy?	DAUGHTER
Kind of.	ANIMA
Can you show me?	DAUGHTER
We will try.	WIFE
Are you ready?	WIFE
I think so. ¹⁷	DAUGHTER
So.	ANIMA
Then.	WIFE
Page 5?	DAUGHTER
[Pause. Anima, Mother and Wife each do something to make themselves comfortable. Stretch, sigh, breathe, take a sweater off. A simple gesture of preparation.] ¹⁸	

17 Cut for flow and timing.

18 Cut for the purpose of editing and the flow of the piece, this is nonetheless a thematically important moment. Here, we establish the mysterious relationship between material affect and image. Before launching into the pages of “Page 5”, the women do an exercise in “getting present”.

Taught to me by my directing teacher, James Luse, and based both in Michael Chekov acting technique and Tai Chi, “getting present” in your body means a type of pre-performance preparation that allows the actor or performing body to enter a heightened state, a readiness for action and response.

The exercise is fairly simple: one imagines and then describes through language all the physical sensations currently existing in one’s own body as an image. For instance, “I have pain in my right shoulder, it looks like a rough hewn wood block with splinters coming off of it, but it’s blue,” etc.

Given that this art work exists as a cinematic representation—as an image—I originally wanted to create a bridge by which we can introduce to the viewer the idea of images living in the body. And then, present images to the viewer in a manner that provokes the question: in whose body is this image?

I also wanted the viewer to have access to the insider knowledge of the master actor preparing for fully “present” performance.

ACT II: Page 5¹⁹

WIFE
We were so high on cocaine I told him to rub his flaccid penis against my asshole in the tub.²⁰

MOTHER
When you push your fingers into any hole, moan like the fingers are being pushed into you.

WIFE
My teeth chattered as the fingers were pushing pushing pushing pushing against my spot it hurt it felt good there would be no coming just that high pitched sensation like needing to piss.

ANIMA
I pulled my cock out₂₁ of his mouth and slapped his face with it, leaving little wet marks on his cheeks.

MOTHER
Don't go straight for the business. Do you know what I mean? Refer to it. Move around it. Your fingernails brushing along the top line of hair. Or don't refer to it at all. Focus on other things.

WIFE
After I'd come and she'd come she'd beat me.²²

DAUGHTER
Is that Page 5? It sounds like Page 6 to me.²³

WIFE
For some people this is Page 5. You don't know that yet, but it's true.

DAUGHTER
Tell me again?

WIFE
After I'd come and she'd come, she'd beat me. I'd be waiting all day for it, scared and ashamed and waiting and also wet. Because I had to come fast. She'd make me strip and push me down to the ground and spread my legs and use her mouth and fingers and made me come, fast. Then I'd have to do the same for her, fast. It always took her about 30 seconds once I started touching her. And then so we could be clean from what we did, she would beat me with her belt until I bled, because we were dirty.

19 This section, a parade of pornographic sexual language, is the heart of the piece. If we are to take the Sadean view, it turns the gallery into the orgy space. While working on this piece, I repeatedly sketched and re-sketched the site. The viewer, in the center of the screens of speaking women, is placed as the camera and audience.

What I found most compelling about Sade's *raconteuses* is the fashion in which the orgy, or pornography, is impossible without their language. And their language is embedded in a narrative of autobiography: they are curating their own erotic histories as a chronological parade of the striking erotic events of their lives.

Also, from the earliest of these women's memories, their sexual experiences occur with, almost require, some element of financial transaction; from their most innocent girlhood (all begin in their youth being abused by priests) their only option is to be a whore.

20 Inspired by memoir.

21 Inspired by the recent grand jury testimony about Jerry Sandusky, former Penn State Football Team defensive coordinator who is currently in jail for decades of molesting young boys he met and "groomed" for abuse through a non-profit organization he created.^a

a Over the past few years, as I was thinking about pornography, politics, performance, control, and becoming a mother, I also was struck by the endless parade of weirdly complex sex crimes reported in the news media:

Josef Fritzl, an Austrian man who kept his daughter trapped in a basement for 24 years, fathering 7 children by her so that she would be unappealing to other men; a Columbia journalism student who was held in her apartment and, over the course of 36 hours, was repeatedly raped, sodomized, doused with boiling water and bleach, forced to swallow handfuls of pills with beer, have her mouth sealed with glue, and being told to gouge out her own eyes with a pair of scissors; Jaycee Dugard and Philip Garrido (see below); Elizabeth Smart's kidnapping by Brian Mitchell as part of a detailed Fundamentalist Mormon religious ritual having to do with his own status as a prophet.

In all these stories, the perpetrator made grandiose justifications for his horrifying desires; and/or required a detailed narrative structure or set of actions to derive sexual satisfaction; and/or had a sexual life that followed an elaborate cycle of constructed behaviors.

These sex acts made me think of certain male artists who construct alternate sculptural and performance realities (Matthew Barney^l, Tom Sachs). There seemed to me a likeness between the artist and the sex criminal.

i I had been working with performance adaptations/thefts of Matthew Barney's "Drawing Restraint", itself a theft of Carolee Schneeman's "Up To And Including Her Limits," in which the central idea is the attempt to make a mark while being physically restrained from making a mark.

22 Inspired by a true story.

23 I wanted to complicate Page 5 at almost the moment of its actual performance in the piece: Page 5 may be *in-flagrante delicto* for many of us, but for the perpetrator in this sexual exchange, clearly the post-climax abuse was its own Page 5.

Wow.

DAUGHTER

Yeah. Wow.

WIFE

Page 5 really can mean different things.

DAUGHTER

Yes. Like:

ANIMA

Push that bitch off her pedestal. Push her off. She’s not supposed to be there. She’s not even there. You’re the one putting her there. Just go up to her like she’s not supposed to be there. You’re the one on the pedestal. You’re the one on the pedestal.²⁴

MOTHER

When you do touch it! You can either move slowly, stealthy, or then, you can grab, aggressively, like you’ve been holding yourself back this whole time, but you can’t resist anymore, you have to have it, you have to have it, you have to have it now! And when that passes, the following five minutes will be charged with the excitement that you did that, you were so animal, so out of control! It’s a single moment that reaps dividends.

ANIMA

“Let me soap your back, you can’t reach it.” And then I bear hugged him from behind, holding him tight. “I’m going to squeeze your guts out,” I said. And I told him, “We’re going to wrestle.” And then one thing would lead to another, you know. My business would be in his face, and his business would be at mine. I’d kiss his thighs, his penis, I’d rub my penis on his face, feeling his breath on it, until I got hard, then I’d push it into his mouth.²⁵

WIFE

He led me across the street, by my hand, to a parking garage. I thought we were getting in his car to drive to his apartment. Near the back of the garage, he gathered me in his arms, I thought to kiss me. But instead he picked me up and put me across the hood of a car and held me down and fucked me. I still can’t figure out how he got the condom on. He drilled me down, finished, and then just walked away, leaving me panting and naked and furious.²⁶

MOTHER

You’ll like it better than my cock, it’s bigger.
It’s too big!
Slap!
If you’re not a good girl, I’ll make it bigger and he balls his hand up in a fist.

24 Inspired by the “seduction community,” a heterosexual (though, to my mind, often homoerotic) male subculture devoted to learning how to manipulate women into sleeping with them. This community fills heavily trafficked for-men, by-men online forums, web sites, self-help books (e.g., *The Mystery Method: How to Get Beautiful Women into Bed*), audio tapes and radio shows and reality television series devoted to how to be “pick-up artist” or “player.” This community has its own slang: “sarging”, for instance, which refers to picking up women with a group of fellow “PUAs” or “pick up artists”. Examples of advice include: “rejection is nothing and all girls are disposable!” and “tell women what they want to hear.”

According to PUAs, a common mistake and a major one, is that of putting a woman on a pedestal. Much time and energy is put onto discussing how to knock women off these pedestals.

25 From Sandusky grand jury testimony. Re-written from Sandusky’s point of view.

26 Appropriated and adapted from *Mercurial Girl*, a blog (purportedly) written by a young woman who made a living in Paris as a high-paid escort to wealthy men.

27 From *Postmodern Courtesan*, a now-defunct blog from about 10 years ago, written by a young woman who styled herself “Olympia Manet”. In this case, the story is about one of Olympia’s favorite regulars, a large Russian bear of a man with a penchant for glass dildoes^a.

a I was an almost daily reader of *Mercurial Girl* and *Postmodern Courtesan* and (the most famous of the genre) *Belle de Jour*, written by young women about their experiences as well paid escorts. Belle de Jour was later revealed to be Brooke Magnati, a scientist who had worked as an escort in London while writing her dissertation; Postmodern Courtesan disappeared; Mercurial Girl still writes, but has long since stopped working as a prostitute.

The zeitgeist of the genre climaxed (so to speak) in Steven Soderbergh’s film *The Girlfriend Experience*, a late-capitalist fantasy parable about worth and work; the film is rather cold as Soderbergh drains the richness of these women’s experience, their active engagement and ambivalence, right out of the story.

What appealed to me so much about these blogs, written wittily and well and balancing erotic writing with the often unpleasant and unsexy and tedious details of working, is that they always felt to me like they were written by women. And they always felt like they were written by women like me— young, highly educated, sarcastic about people yet empathetic. The fantasy that this could be my life, had I made a few different choices or been a slightly different person, was irresistible.

No, please!
Then let me put it in. Just a little.
You’ll only do it a little?
Yes.
Oh no! It’s too big!
You’re not being a good girl.
Slap!
No, please!
And so on.²⁷

ANIMA
And then I shifted, and she tried to look at me, and I grabbed her by the scruff of her neck, like a mother cat, and made her look down while I pulled my cock out. I told her to say yes. She said yes. And I took the tip of my finger and spread her ass apart. And I started pushing my finger up her ass, slowly, very slowly, while making her say, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.²⁸

WIFE
I told him, “Sticking it in me is like sticking it in a vise.” I turned my back to him, lying on my right side, and with a single wet finger began playing with myself, and waited, waited, waited while I heard him take his clothes off and slide up behind me, his dick hard against my back.²⁹

MOTHER
Touch it...
Say it. Touch what?
You know...
Say it.
I can’t...
Too bad then...³⁰

ANIMA
She knelt between my legs and just put her face so close to my pussy while I touched myself.

MOTHER
After he licks you or fingers you, kiss him, or suck and sniff his fingers. Let him know that you like tasting yourself, and that will make him crazy. Squeeze onto his fingers, so he knows what you will do to his cock. Squeeze onto his cock, and make him hold it there, as you squeeze him, as if given the chance he only ever has to be a cock for you.

ANIMA
She grabbed my hair and pushed my face into her snatch, rubbed her snatch against my mouth.

- 28 Based in memoir.
- 29 Rewritten from Victorian pornographic travelogue about a writer who finds himself having sexual relations with his landlady and her four young daughters.
- 30 Based in memoir.

WIFE
I was so wet, so wet, so incredibly wet that at first I couldn't even feel his dick in me because all I could feel was how wet I was.

MOTHER
You whisper in his ear, is it good?, is it good?, if you're face to face. If you're under him, your back to his chest, then you don't whisper. Then you tip your head back and moan or you stretch your arms out and move forward, or whatever. You know. It's up to you.

WIFE
He eased two of his fingers inside of me and went to town pumping them in and out of me while sucking my clitoris all the way into his mouth. I milked his balls, and the last bit of ejaculate from his penis. He pried my legs apart and added a third finger. When I groaned, he became almost hard again and his cock flapped against my cheek.³¹

ANIMA
I'm going to fuck your face, I'm going to stick my cock so far down your fucking bitch throat, you're going to feel it in your fucking chest. Aw yeah, aw yeah, yeah, oh yeah.

MOTHER
It's a cliché at this point, but you do need to know that at some point, he will say, whose is this? And you say, yours. And what can I do with it? Anything you want.³²

WIFE
Ooh, yeah, do it, do it. Fuck me, fuck me, please, please, I need it, my pussy is so hot right now, please, please don't keep it away, please, please, do it, I need it, fuck me with your fingers, oh, god, why'd you stop, don't stop, don't stop--

MOTHER
Really? How do you like it? Like this? Or like this? Like...1?... or like 2? 1...? or 2...? You can't decide? 1...or 2. 1? 1?³³

ANIMA
I'm going to lick you now, and you have to be very very quiet or else I'm going to stop. Alright?

WIFE
Don't move. Don't you fucking move. I'm fucking you, I'm fucking you, you don't get to fuck me, stay still. If you don't stay still, I'll stop.³⁴

MOTHER—
Ah. Ah. Ah.—

WIFE—
Nnng!—Nnng!—Nnng!—³⁵

31 More *Postmodern Courtesan*. These blogs did occasionally descend into the most bathetic of cheesy Page 5 description.

32 The Mother, as giver of advice, also traffics in clichés.

I was once at a party where this particular “script” came up in conversation.

It was a strange interaction, between me and some guy—it was the only exchange I ever had with him. I don't know his name, I can't remember whose party it was, or anything else that happened that day. Maybe it was uptown, near Columbia? I only know that I was in a living room, eating snacks, and at some point, the conversation began revolving around sex. I think he said the first line: “whose is this?” and I jumped in, like a call and response exchange in church, but with a voice dripping with boredom and finished the last three lines, “yours / and what can I do with it / anything you want”. This intrigued him, but I soon stood up and left.

33 Based in memoir.

34 Based in memoir.

35 Cut for timing.

ANIMA

Oh! Oh! Oh!

I tell her that I’m going to be going on a “run.” The “run” is my time to fulfill all my fantasies, and she’s going to help me.

By giving me an outlet for my sex problem, she is saving other girls. That’s why I took her. I need to do it. She’ll have to stay awake with me for awhile, depending on how much speed I take. I like speed, it really lets me focus on one thing for a long time.

The speed will keep me from coming, so she doesn’t have to worry. We will have plenty of time. I tell her I’m going to teach her to be the best sex slave ever.³⁶

WIFE

He tells me to lie on my back, and he gets on top of me, and he tells me he’s going to talk really dirty but don’t be scared, he’s still the same person, he just needs to release this monkey on his back. And then he says, “you’re a whore, you’re a fucking cunt, you’re a little slut toy,” and he fucks me as hard as he can it seems like.³⁷

MOTHER

You know the joke, what’s the difference between a girlfriend, a mistress and a wife? The girlfriend says “harder, harder!”, the mistress says, “faster, faster!” and the wife says, “beige. I think I’ll paint the ceiling...beige.”³⁸

DAUGHTER

Page 5 can mean so many things, that I don’t know what it really means.

ANIMA

You like getting fingered through your underwear, then having those fingers snake up through the leg holes of your underwear to touch you directly? You like eating pussy, using your mouth while you touch yourself, right? You like it up the ass? Do you like being hurt? Do you like being adored?³⁹

WIFE

Have you been truly and really fucked? Was it good? [Pause.] If you don’t know, then it wasn’t good. Have you loved every second and felt so worked over that you have almost disappeared at the end? Have you felt the hunger in the pit of your stomach that doesn’t get satisfied even as you are fucking?

MOTHER

Have you been on the edge of coming, and held on the edge for so long you can’t believe it? Have you been held on the edge so long that the moment passes and it’s worse than starting from the beginning? Has it happened so fast you didn’t even notice it in your body?

36 In 1991, Jaycee Dugard, an 10-year old girl in South Lake Tahoe, California, was walking to school. From their car, Philip Garrido and his wife Nancy, paralyzed Dugard with a taser and kidnapped her. They brought her to their home, a warren of rooms and storage structures and tents, where they held her captive and sexually abused her. Garrido justified the kidnapping by telling Dugard that she would be saving other girls from his sexual needs. As detailed in Dugard’s autobiography *A Stolen Life* (2011), Garrido would go on “runs,” drug-fueled sex binges during which he would take methamphetamines and repeatedly and brutally abuse her over a course of several days. Dugard lived with the Garridos for 18 years, during which time she bore two children.

37 Only site in the script where the two sides of the same story are represented, and right next to each other—from Garrido’s point of view, from Dugard’s point of view.

38 This joke was told to me by an old friend, who happens to have one of the more damaged relationships to her own body of anyone I know.

39 This section, initially meant to move the viewer into longer narratives later cut from the installation, was inspired by conversations I had with actress Grace Zabriskie: how to create a moment of transition in which the speakers address the viewer directly, potentially bringing the viewers own sexual memories into the ritual space.

WIFE
Have you watched yourself like you're in a story?

ANIMA
Could you only be in your body once you have the story?

MOTHER
Have you felt what it's like to miss your body the way it was?

WIFE
Do you know you'll spend the rest of your life missing your body the way it is right now?...and right now?...and right now?

MOTHER
Have you felt yet like you just stop feeling your body? Like you don't even remember what happened to your body 5 minutes later?

ANIMA
It used to linger, a single finger touch used to linger on your body for days. Burn with newness. Now you can't even remember it and it just happened.

DAUGHTER
It sounds terrible.

MOTHER
It is.

DAUGHTER
It's coming.

MOTHER
It is.

DAUGHTER
What do I do?

WIFE
What have we been telling you?

DAUGHTER
Page 5. [Pause.] Can I try?

~~ACT III~~⁴⁰

40 Act III, which consisted of longer monologues, was cut in the editorial process. See below.

ACT IV: Analysis⁴¹

//Abstract editing of the footage from above.//

[ACT III: Longer Narratives⁴²

MOTHER
You are learning. So now we can tell you more slowly. I'll go first.

First you must know, my darling, that anyone can be persuaded. Anyone.⁴³ Challenge yourself. The ones who seem happy are the ones who need it, badly. They just don't know it yet. Show them.

For instance. Right now. At least once or twice a week, we go on a walk. I'm sure his wife doesn't know. We walk and talk about business and then at some point he makes a joke or I ask a question--when it comes we know how much we've been waiting for it--and then we cross over a bridge into the realm of the intimate. Men like when I talk about my tormented history. They feel like I am allowing them into the inner circle.

One day soon, I will stand up from across the table and sit next to him and lean against his shoulder or put my hand on his leg, or just look at him.

We will end up in some secret corner. The first time we fuck will be so fast he can't stop it, he's entirely implicated and now there's no way out. I will put my hand down to where his cock is inside me and rub the wetness and then wipe that hand across his face, so he can smell and taste it.

I won't let him come inside me, but will slide down and swallow him whole, just suck the cum right out of him. I will suck him into gratitude.

That initial pleasure will transforms him. It always does. Like poison dissolved in wine, melting into their body, and changing their blood.

Anyone can be persuaded. That used to make me very happy.

DAUGHTER
Thank you. I will remember that.

ANIMA
My turn.

"You have the aura of election about you,"⁴⁴ I said the flush of wine on her face, she looked confused and I slid closer to her. It's hard for me to always get around as quickly as I used to but I imagine myself as I was when I was a young man, how my body would feel in such moments, my shoulders were snakes my arms were snakes my head cocked like a snake I felt my hardness my arousal against the corduroy of my pants, my penis doesn't feel quite like it used to.

41 The Daughter's response to this whore's dialogue is a re-edit of the footage from the first three Acts, intercut with video of the body in states of action and repose. The response can only be her own experience in the language she has been given.

42 For the purposes of the installation, these longer stories were cut.

Coming where they did in the script, after "Page 5," after the section of questions, the monologues provided too much narrative and psychological resolution. In the context of the longer script, these stories tend to leave a gloss of finish on the experience. Often, with storytelling, the experiences of hearing the tales are too round, like a ring. I preferred to end this whore's dialogue with open-ended questions triggering the Daughter's response of re-edited, partially absorbed materials.

Broken from the context of the script, the stories, however, are strangely unfinished in the various psychosexual dynamics they sketch out, dynamics which are endless in that they are doomed to be repeated.

It can be painful—enraging, even—to find oneself living a standard script. At the time when I was doing the first sketches for this piece, I found myself a working mother, caring for a newborn while going to school and teaching, and managing the oppressive tedium of my home life: taxes, laundry, and a resentful husband behaving badly. Our life at that time exposed the ways that for years, our relationship was based on a dynamic of my coddling and enabling my husband's often entitled and controlling behaviors.

I grew up in San Diego, where acceptable ways to be female ran a gamut from A to B. There were no models for the kind of person I wished to be, and I actively rejected the roles available, even when I was publicly bullied for it. Spending my young adulthood fighting to be independent from these expectations led to my feeling fairly untroubled with—even proud of—the kind of woman I became (my anxieties centered on other things—the kind of artist I was trying to become, for example).

Yet here I was, just a few years past that, living an entirely middle-class and increasingly middle-aged heteronormative lifestyle greatly funded by a husband's paycheck, shaped almost entirely by his professional choices and concerns. One in which my role was as the soother, the caretaker to an adult child; one in which my work and art-making and interior life was kept increasingly private, cut-off and secret. How did I end up in this life? The behaviors that brought us to crisis seemed wretchedly unavoidable, and now I had a child and there was no reset button to press.

Wrestling with, examining, the feelings of helplessness, rage, inevitability, the feelings of having fought so hard to end up living a trite cliché of gender, greatly informed the thinking in this piece.

43 My mentor, performance artist, playwright and professor Deb Margolin, has a writing prompt: write from the point of view of an enemy.

This monologue originated as I wrote from the point of view of a woman who, working in a male-dominated professional sphere, deploys her sexual attractiveness rather shamelessly. I don't know if it is this woman who is my enemy; or if conventional ideals of sexual attractiveness are; or that, having fought sexual conventions in my life, the enemy is the inevitability of these conventions, their endurance, their resilience, how well they work.

In writing, I remembered a good friend of mine from years ago.

N. acted in my plays. Thought one might not notice at first glance, she was a ragingly successful seductress; her sexual electricity was legendary. I had a terrific crush on her for years.

One night, at a party, I teased her about the number of hearts she had broken. "Men come to me wanting their hearts broken," she snapped, "and I am only too glad to oblige them." Another time, she said to me, regarding seduction, "anyone can be persuaded."

It appeared from her track record that indeed, anyone could be persuaded. It didn't matter whether the man she was attempting to seduce was in a relationship; or if the woman was a friend of hers; or if she truly wanted the man or just wanted to confirm her control over him; or if she herself was in a relationship. In the coming months, I watched her engage in an affair with a fellow actor behind her boyfriend's back—only to emotionally fall apart in a public and humiliating way when this fellow actor lost interest. So much of her self-worth was based on her ability to bag men, despite her incredible intelligence and talents, and it made her entirely untrustworthy.

In writing this, I played with both the beauty and sadness of a woman finding her greatest triumph in the world based on her validity as a sexual object, controlling the dynamic and being controlled by it.

44 Inspired by feminist writer Naomi Woolf's story about being sexually harassed as an undergraduate by legendary professor and high modernist Harold Bloom. The extraordinary first line—"you have the aura of election about you," essentially stating that the young woman has been selected, thus elected by his greatness as the target of seduction—belongs to him. The rest is a fantasy based on this unwanted pass, written from his point of view.

In some ways, I have less of it, less sensation, less feeling—but in some ways, I am dropped deeper into the pit of my body. It is both less and more, which is the same with all of age. I trap her, quickly, before she can escape, so she feels the excitement rising off of me, the honor I am bestowing, I am the man and she is the woman, the privilege, her purpose, and I slide my hand down—

I don't mind jeans. I know that for a traditionalist, as I have been accused of being, it is difficult to imagine, but when I was coming up women weren't in my classes anyway, and the skirts the girdles the layers the barriers the foolish obscurings of the body—why?

In this brave new world, soft supple denim hugging tight against a young woman's legs, her buttocks, it feels right. I slide my hand to where the seam runs up the inside of her leg and grab her cunt through her pants, I imagine the wetness I know is there, I push her hands away from where she's trying to protect herself, I rip her pants down and push my face into her crotch and lap, lap, lap through her panties.

DAUGHTER

Thank you.

WIFE

And me. A concubine, meaning a whore, or wife, leaves her husband and returns to the house of her father—or pimp. The husband, a Levite, goes to the father's house, begs her to come back. She agrees—or her father agrees, it's never quite clear.⁴⁵

The Levite and the Concubine head home, but they leave her father's house too late, and despite the fact that his servant warns him not to go to the town of Gibeah, they go to the town of Gibeah and sleep in the square, because no one offers them any hospitality. An old man sees them, and says, "don't you know about this town? It's dangerous! Don't sleep in the square! Come to my house!" They do, and the depraved townspeople come knocking at the door, wanting to sodomize the Levite. "Let us sodomize him!" they say. And his host says, "no, don't sodomize this man! Take my virgin daughter instead!" And the depraved townspeople say, "no! The Levite!" and the Levite says, "don't sodomize me, take my wife, please!" and he throws his concubine into the street.

And they abuse her all night long.

The next day, she crawls to the doorstep and collapses. The Levite opens the door, sees her and says, "Get up! Let's go!" but she doesn't move. She's dead.

DAUGHTER

You skipped the good stuff. This is supposed to be Page 5.

MOTHER

She's right.

45 Karl Marx wrote famously (regarding Napoleon) that history repeats itself first as tragedy, then as farce. These paired stories of brutal sexual violence attempts to reverse that formula: first as comedy, then as tragedy.

The first story, one of the more disturbing passages of the Old Testament (which is really saying something), comes from Judges 19-20. I initially encountered this material while working on *Clown Bible*, a performance piece I devised which used the performance language of clown to explore the running gags of masculinity and failure that echo throughout the Bible, and the strangely vaudeville rhythms of certain Biblical stories (e.g., Saul attempts to spear David and misses; he again attempts to spear David and misses; he falls on his own spear—it's a traditional "1-2-3" comedy rhythm.) My first take on this material translated this story into a burlesque house style comedy routine. A darker play on the idea of "take my wife, please!"

In the Bible, this story of terror and violence sets up a longer tale of gruesome, lawless warfare in the time before the first Kings. After the concubine's death, the Levite cuts her body into twelve pieces and sends them to the twelve tribes of Israel. The Israelites meet at Mizpah "a traditional site of tribal assembly," where they decide to respond to the abuses of Gibeah, a Benjamite town, by slaughtering the townspeople. When the greater tribe of Benjamin refuses to participate, the other 11 tribes slaughter all of the Benjamites, men, women and children, except for a group of 600 Benjamite soldiers who escape.

These men are allowed a reprieve at the moment of their tribe's extinction—but now, in order for the tribe to survive, they will need wives to replace the ones previously killed. To replace these wives, the tribes of Israel attack the town of Jabesh-gilead, who had refused to participate in the earlier Benjamite slaughter, and they kill all the men, children, and non-virginal women. To make up for the gap (600 soliders remain; but only 400 virgins are found in Jabesh-gilead), the Israelites then go to Shiloh, where young women would hold an annual spring ritual dance, kidnap and rape them. And so the tribes of Israel survived.

ANIMA

You skipped it.

WIFE

Do you really want to hear this?

DAUGHTER

I have to, don't I?

WIFE

I guess you do.

I heard one of the men in the crowd say he wanted to pull my pants down.⁴⁶

And then, suddenly, before I even know what's happening, I feel hands grabbing my breasts, my crotch, and it's not one person and then it stops, it's like one person and another person and another person.

My shirt and my sweater were torn off completely. I felt the moment that my bra tore. They tore the metal clips of my bra. They tore those open. And I felt that because the air, I felt the air on my chest, on my skin. And...uh I felt them tear, they literally just tore my pants to shreds.

And then I felt my underwear go... and I remember looking up...and seeing the flashes of their cell phone cameras taking pictures.

No, I didn't even know that they were beating me with flagpoles and sticks and things, because I couldn't even feel that. All I could feel was their hands raping me over and over and over again.

What more can they do now? They're inside you everywhere. They are really enjoying my pain. I thought, not only am I going to die here, but it's going to be just a torturous death that's going to go on forever and ever and ever.

[Pause.]

DAUGHTER

Can I try?

[WIFE, MOTHER AND ANIMA, who have been looking away from the camera in some fashion, look up, directly at the daughter. They each perform a gesture (sitting down if they've been standing, cocking their head, rubbing their hands together, etc.) that says, essentially, "go ahead."]

46 In this second story, I appropriated text around the recent story of Lara Logan, a journalist who was subjected to an extended sexual assault while covering the post-revolution celebrations in Tahrir Square. At the height of the promise of Arab Spring, on the verge of a new rule of law, she was one of many women publicly brutalized in such fashion.

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