

KATIE AND FRANK
By Theresa Rebeck

Katie lies on the bed. Frank is in and out of the bathroom.

KATIE
I talked to your mother the other day.

FRANK
(offstage.) What?

KATIE
Your mother called Yesterday.

FRANK
Oh Yeah? *(He crosses through, wearing an open shirt and nice trousers. He is absurdly handsome.)*

KATIE
I told you last night.

FRANK
No you didn't.

KATIE
Yes, I did, remember, after you got home from work, I said-

FRANK
I don't remember.

KATIE
It was just yesterday.

FRANK
I don't remember.

KATIE
It was-

FRANK
Katie. I don't remember.

(Having found his socks he returns to the bathroom. She lies on the bed, thinking.)

KATIE

It was after therapy. I remember telling you because I was so upset, I mean, I came from therapy, I was feeling *good*, you know, I was just feeling, sitting here feeling good for a change and then your fucking mother called.

FRANK

(Offstage) That's nice. That's very nice.

KATIE

Well, I told you to call her and you didn't. The last time? Whenever that was, last week, and I told you to call her but you didn't so then she called me yesterday to scream at me. *(Suddenly loud.)* AND I TOLD YOU THIS LAST NIGHT AND NOW YOU'RE SAYING YOU DON'T REMEMBER.

(Frank appears in the doorway, annoyed.)

FRANK

Katie. Do you mind? I'm about to walk out the door here and I don't have time for one of your... whatever these things are.

KATIE

Where are you going?

FRANK

(Offstage) Work.

KATIE

It's Saturday.

FRANK

(Offstage) I work on Saturdays.

KATIE

Yeah, so you say.

FRANK

Katie, please!

KATIE

(To herself.) Yeah, fuck you, Frank. Why don't you call your fucking mother for once?

(Franks appears.)

FRANK

I mean, I thought you were feeling better. I mean, you said, a minute ago that after therapy yesterday you felt better. Did you not say that?

KATIE

Yes I did. I did say that. But-

FRANK

So why don't you hang on to that? Huh? I just don't – your life is not some huge fucking torture here. I don't know why it always has to be like this.

KATIE

Well, I'll tell you why it has to be like this. It has to be like this because you won't call your mother.

FRANK

I can't talk to you when you're like this.

KATIE

This is my point! This is my whole point! Why don't you call your mother? You know when you don't call her she blames it all on me, and then I end up taking endless hours of shit from her on the phone. Is he there? Well why didn't he call me? Did you tell him? I just don't understand why if you told him he doesn't call. Like it is my fault, you know, God forbid it should ever be *your* fault. It's just, why don't you tell her? Why don't you ever call her and say I'm sorry I forgot to call. Katie told me you called but I *forgot*. That is all I am *saying*.

FRANK

You are going to drive me nuts.

(He crosses through, truly annoyed, finds his tie and exits again. Katie watches him.)

KATIE

(Sad, to herself) I just don't understand why it's all my fault. *(Beat. Quiet.)* My therapist says you don't listen to me.

FRANK

(Out of the bathroom like a shot.) Oh, no. No no no. That's the one thing I said to you, when you went into therapy, I will pay for this, but I will not be *blamed*. You are not dumping all of your problems on me. That is not an option here.

KATIE

I didn't-

FRANK

That is not an option, Katie! *(He goes back into the bathroom.)*

(Beat)

KATIE

I bought a gun.

(Frank sticks his head out and looks at her.)

KATIE
(Innocent.) What?

FRANK
(Disgusted.) Nothing. Nothing. *(He goes back into the bathroom.)*

KATIE
I did. This morning. I went out and bought a gun. It's absurdly easy, you know, you walk into a store and just, like, buy it. Actually, you go in on Monday and pay for it and they don't give it to you until today because of this *waiting* period, they make you wait before they give you the gun just in case you want to change your *mind*, like they think if some woman comes in here going you know, I hate my husband, I think I'll just put a bullet between his eyes, that they need to give her a few days to consider that. Which doesn't seem like great logic to me, frankly. If you're thinking about shooting your husband it seems to me an extra week is just going to make you more determined to do it. Unless that's what they're hoping for.

FRANK
(Entering.) Where's the toothpaste?

KATIE
We're out.

FRANK
We're out.

KATIE
No, wait, there's some in that little, one of those travel things I put together. The blue thing in the back of the towels.

(He glares at her pointedly for a moment, and goes.)

KATIE
So anyway, this gun-

FRANK
(Offstage) I can't find it!

KATIE
It's in the blue thing!

FRANK
I TOLD YOU, I CANT- *(Silence.)* Never mind.

(Silence. She continues.)

KATIE

I could have gotten more than one, you know. The make you wait, but you can buy as many as you want. I asked the guy about it. I said, if I wanted to buy like, eleven guns or something wouldn't you worry about that? Wouldn't that seem kind of hostile to you? And he said it was my right. To buy that many guns. Like that made it OK.

(She is vaguely bemused by this. Frank appears in the doorway.)

FRANK

This is ridiculous you know. This toothpaste situation? I mean, I'm just squeezing here for this *squidge*, it's not even, when was the last time you went to the store? I understand that you're *troubled* but I don't think that it's asking too much that you occasionally get it together to go to the store and buy a fucking tube of toothpaste. All right? I do not raise my voice to you, but I feel a little strongly about this.

(He exits again. She reaches under the bed and gets her purse. She pulls out a gun.)

KATIE

So anyway, I have this gun because it's my *right*. Which means, I think, that it's probably my right to shoot you. Because OK this is why: It's my right to buy a gun, a buy a gun because I hate my husband, it's my right to hate my husband because well we don't need to get into that but lets just say the reasons are VERY CLEAR therefore, it's my right to shoot my husband. What's that called? A logical Syllogism. I think therefore I am. I hate you and therefore we are. Therefore you're dead you lying fucking bastard, you lying fuck face, you liar liar lair-

FRANK

This isn't funny, Katie. *(He appears in door, tying his tie. He sees the gun and stops.)* What's that?

KATIE

I told you. I bought a gun.

FRANK

That's not a gun.

KATIE

I told you, Frank. They'll sell a gun to any idiot who asks for one. Did I not just tell you this? Do you listen to a word out of my mouth? This is what my therapist says-

FRANK

Hey-

KATIE

No, this is just what she's talking about, and then you *complain*, you say I'm *blaming* you when it's the truth. YOU DON'T LISTEN.

FRANK

Katie, put the gun down.

KATIE

I'm not going to put it down. I just got it. It's brand-new. I'm getting used to it. I like the way it makes me feel. It's my right to feel this way.

FRANK

I'm calling your useless therapist –

(He starts to move for the phone. She points it at him.)

KATIE

Oh now you're calling her. I asked you, I *asked* you to go with me and you couldn't be bothered because she's a fucking idiot, but now you want to talk to her because I have a gun is that it?

FRANK

Katie, you're clearly losing it.

KATIE

Gee Frank I wonder why that is. *(Beat.)* Anyway, it doesn't matter. I can be completely fucking out of my mind and it's still my right to own a gun, and It's my right to point it at you and it's my right to feel the way I feel. Some country, America. *(She has the gun right up against his head.)*

FRANK

(Really scared now.) Katie. Katie.

KATIE

What Frank?

FRANK

Come on, Honey. Put the gun down.

KATIE

Frank. This is the first time you've listened to me in years. Why would I put the gun down?

FRANK

Honey-

KATIE

Honey. That's a good one.

FRANK

What do you want, Katie? What do you want?

KATIE

(Beat.) I want you to call your mother, Frank. And I want you to say, Mom, how are you? Katie told me you called, and I forgot to call you back.

FRANK

(Resisting.) Katie –

KATIE

Pick up the phone. *(The gun goes to his head again.)* Pick up the phone, Frank.

(He does. Blackout.)

END OF PLAY