

(LARRY crosses to stairs.)

MICHAEL. Going somewhere?

(LARRY stops and turns to MICHAEL.)

LARRY. Yes. Excuse me.

(He turns and goes up the stairs.)

MICHAEL. You're going to miss the end of the game.

LARRY. With any luck, I won't be back until it's all over.

(He turns and continues up the stairs.)

MICHAEL. (Into ALAN's ear.) What do you suppose is going on up there? Hmmn, Alan? What do you imagine Larry and Hank are doing? Hmmmmmm?

EMORY. Whatever they're doing, they're not hurting anyone.

HAROLD. And they're minding their own business.

MICHAEL. And you mind yours, Harold. I'm warning you!

(A beat.)

HAROLD. (Coolly.) Are you now? Are you warning me? Me? I'm Harold. I'm the one person you don't warn, Michael. Because you and I are a match. And we tread very softly with each other because we both play each other's game too well. Oh, I know this game you're playing. I know it very well. And I play it very well. You play it very well, too. But you know what, I'm the only one that's better at it than you are. I can beat you at it. So don't push me. I'm warning you.

(A beat. MICHAEL starts to laugh.)

MICHAEL. You're funny, Hallie. A laff riot. Isn't he funny, Alan? Or, as you might say, isn't he amusing? He's an amusing faggot, isn't he? Or, as you might say, freak. That's what you called Emory, wasn't it? A freak? A pansy? My, what an antiquated vocabulary you have. I'm surprised you didn't say sodomite or pederast.

(A beat.)

You'd better let me bring you up to date. Now it's not so new, but it might be new to you -

(A beat.)

Have you heard the term "closet queen"? Do you know what that means? Do you know what it means to be "in the closet"?

EMORY. Don't, Michael. It won't help anything to explain what it means.

MICHAEL. He already knows. He knows very, very well what a closet queen is. Don't you, Alan?

(Pause.)

ALAN. Michael, if you are insinuating that I am homosexual. I can only say that you are mistaken.

MICHAEL. Am I?

(A beat.)

What about Justin Stuart?

ALAN. ...What about...Justin Stuart?

MICHAEL. You were in love with him, that's what about him.

(A beat.)

And *that* is who you are going to call.

ALAN. Justin and I were very good friends. That is all. Unfortunately, we had a parting of ways and that was the end of the friendship. We have not spoken for years. I most certainly will not call him now.

MICHAEL. According to Justin, the friendship was quite passionate.

ALAN. What do you mean?

MICHAEL. I mean that you slept with him in college. Several times.

ALAN. That is not true!

MICHAEL. Several times. One time, it's youth. Twice, a phase, maybe. Several times, *you like it!*

ALAN. IT'S NOT TRUE!

MICHAEL. Yes, it is. Because Justin Stuart *is* homosexual. He comes to New York on occasion. He calls me. I've taken him to parties. Larry "had" him once. *I* have slept with Justin Stuart. And he has told me all about *you*.

ALAN. Then he told you a lie.

(A beat.)

MICHAEL. You were obsessed with Justin. That's all you talked about, morning, noon, and night. You started doing it about Hank upstairs tonight. What an attractive fellow he is and all that transparent crap.

ALAN. He *is* an attractive fellow. What's wrong with saying so?

MICHAEL. Would you like to join him and Larry right now?

ALAN. I said he was attractive. That's all.

MICHAEL. How many times do you have to say it? How many times did you have to say it about Justin: what a good tennis player he was; what a good dancer he was; what a good body he had; what good taste he had; how bright he was – how *amusing* he was – how the girls were all mad for him – what close friends you were.

ALAN. We...we...were...very close...very good...friends. *That's all.*

MICHAEL. It was *obvious* – and when you did it around Fran, it was downright embarrassing. Even she must have had her doubts about you.

ALAN. *Justin...lied.* If he told you that, he lied. It is a lie. A vicious lie. He'd say anything about me now to get even. He could never get over that fact that *I* dropped *him*. But I had to. I had to because...he told me...he told me about himself...he told me that he wanted to be my lover. And I... I...told him...he made me sick... I told him I pitied him.

(A beat.)

MICHAEL. You ended the friendship, Alan, because you couldn't face the truth about yourself. You could go along, sleeping with Justin, as long as he lied to himself and you lied to yourself and you both dated girls and labeled yourselves men and called yourselves just fond friends. But Justin finally had to be honest about the truth, and you couldn't take it. You couldn't take it and

so you destroyed the friendship and your friend along with it.

(MICHAEL goes to the desk and gets address book.)

ALAN. No!

MICHAEL. Justin could never understand what he'd done wrong to make you cut him off. He blamed himself.

ALAN. No!

MICHAEL. He did until he eventually found out who he was and what he was.

ALAN. No!

MICHAEL. But to this day he still remembers the treatment – the scars he got from you.

(Puts address book in front of ALAN on coffee table.)

ALAN. NO!

MICHAEL. Pick up this phone and call Justin. Call him and apologize and tell him what you should have told him many years ago.

(Picks up the phone and shoves it at ALAN.)

ALAN. NO! HE LIED! NOT A WORD IS TRUE!

MICHAEL. CALL HIM!

(ALAN won't take the phone.)

All right then, I'll dial!

HAROLD. You're so helpful.

(MICHAEL starts to dial.)

ALAN. Give it to me.

(MICHAEL hands ALAN the receiver. ALAN takes it, hangs up for a moment, lifts it again, and starts to dial. Everyone watches silently. ALAN finishes dialing, lifts the receiver to his ear.)

ALAN. ...Hello?

MICHAEL. One point.

ALAN. ...It's...it's Alan.

MICHAEL. Two points.

ALAN. ...Yes, yes, it's *me*.

MICHAEL. Is it Justin?

ALAN. ...You sound surprised.

MICHAEL. I should hope to think so – after all this time!
Two more points.

ALAN. I... I'm in New York. Yes. I... I won't explain now...I...
I just called to tell you...

MICHAEL. THAT I LOVE YOU, GODDAMMIT! I LOVE
YOU!

ALAN. I love you.

MICHAEL. You get the goddamn bonus. TEN POINT'S
TOTAL! JACKPOT!

ALAN. I love you and I beg you to forgive me.

MICHAEL. Give me that!

(He snatches the phone from ALAN.)

Justin! Did you hear what that son of a bitch said!

(A beat. MICHAEL is speechless for a moment.)

...Fran?

(A beat.)

Well, of course I expected it to be you!...

(A beat.)

How are you? Me too. Yes, yes...he told me everything.
Oh, don't thank *me*. Please... Please...

(A beat.)

I'll... I'll put him back on.

(A beat.)

My love to the kids...

ALAN. ...Darling? I'll take the first plane I can get. Yes. I'm
sorry, too. I love you very much.

*(He hangs up, stands, crosses to the door, and
stops. He turns around, surveys the group.)*

Thank you, Michael.

*(He opens the door and exits. Silence. MICHAEL
slowly sinks down on the couch, covering his
face. Pause.)*

COWBOY. Who won?

DONALD. It was a tie.

(HAROLD crosses to MICHAEL.)

HAROLD. *(Calmly, coldly, clinically.)* Now it is my turn.
And ready or not, Michael, here goes.

(A beat.)

You are a sad and pathetic man. You're a homosexual,
and you don't want to be. But there is nothing you can
do to change it. Not all your prayers to your God, not
all the analysis you can buy in all the years you've got
left to live. You may very well one day be able to know a
heterosexual life if you want it desperately enough – if
you pursue it with the fervor with which you annihilate
– but you will always be homosexual as well. Always.
Michael. Always. Until the day you die.

*(He turns, gathers his gifts, and goes to
EMORY, who stands up unsteadily.)*

Oh, friends, thanks for the nifty party and the super
gift.

(Looks toward COWBOY.)

It's just what I needed.

*(EMORY smiles. HAROLD gives him a hug and
spots BERNARD sitting on the floor with his
head bowed.)*

...Bernard, thank you.

(No response.)

(To EMORY.) Will you get him home?

EMORY. Don't worry about her. I'll take care of everything.