

SETTING: A dimly lit area behind a two-way mirror. JOEL holds a bag of popcorn. A soda cup with a straw sits on the floor nearby.

AT RISE: JOEL and DEB stand facing the audience. As the lights rise on stage, they also come up ever so slightly on the audience.

JOEL
Want some popcorn?

DEB
No.

JOEL
Soda?

DEB
Just watch.

JOEL
I can't see anything. It's too dim. Can you see anything?

DEB
Just wait. You never wait.

JOEL
These stupid glasses. I can't see a thing through these things. I should get contacts like you. These things are filthy.

DEB
Joel...just...here, put down your popcorn. Give me your glasses. There.

JOEL
That's better. Wait. I can still see a spot. This is maddening.

DEB
Here we go. Stop messing with your glasses. And take your popcorn.

JOEL

You're sure they can't see us.

DEB

Don't worry. It's designed so they could stick their noses right on the glass - wouldn't see a shadow.

JOEL

Good.

DEB

Would it bother you if they could see you?

JOEL

No. A little. What I mean is, it's all a bit voyeuristic, isn't it?

DEB

Voyeuristic?

JOEL

Watching like this. Surreptitiously.

DEB

Surreptitiously?

JOEL

I have a vocabulary. I'm no chimp.

DEB

One would hope.

JOEL

Don't you feel a little...I don't know...watching like this. This doesn't bother you?

DEB

Oh, come on. Let's not get melodramatic. We're just... dispassionate observers.

JOEL

Sure. Not like there's a connection. It's not like we're responsible in any way. I mean, not directly. I mean, we can't interfere, right? Live and let live. We can't... I mean it's possible, we could. I could break the glass. Throw a rock or what-not and...I wouldn't, but it's within the realm of possibility. But if we did that, it would change...well, there would be profound implications if they...

DEB

Did you see that? Oh for crying out loud.

JOEL

What?

DEB

Over here. Look. Way up there. See that?

JOEL

I can't quite make it out. Is it dark or just me?

DEB

Just you.

JOEL

Stupid glasses. You know, I don't think I see as well as I used to. I think I might need to get a new prescription.

DEB

How long has it been?

JOEL

I don't know. Couple years I suppose.

DEB

Time for a change. You need to go lasik. Get it over with.

JOEL

Did you do lasik? I thought you were happy with your contacts. Seriously, they cut your lenses right off? I don't know...that seems...I mean, I'm not afraid...

DEB

There. You missed it again. Quit fiddling with your glasses. Just put them on and squint or something.

JOEL

What did you see?

DEB

You see that fellow there? I think he's making the moves on that pretty young thing beside him.

JOEL

A little young for him, don't you think?

DEB

Not that one, the other one.

JOEL
Oh. OK. What is that in his hands?

DEB
What do you think?

JOEL
Huh. How about that?

DEB
Yeah, how about that. Ooo. What's this over here?

JOEL
Do you think he should be holding that? Out in the open. I mean...is that OK?

DEB
Doesn't seem to be bothering the others. Come here.

JOEL
That would make me uncomfortable. Wouldn't that bother you? If you were sitting beside him. That's not right.

DEB
You're going to miss it.

JOEL
Wouldn't it? Bother you?

DEB
Depends on what he looked like.

JOEL
Funny.

DEB
Get over here.

JOEL
Oh, thanks. What now, Ms. Fossey?

DEB
Just watch.

Pause. They watch in earnest.

JOEL
Can you see what...

DEB

Look from this side, there isn't so much...obstruction.

JOEL

That's...funny. You know, what I mean? Odd. They can't hear us either, right?

DEB

No. We are completely isolated.

Pause. Suddenly, as if surprised by a sudden movement, JOEL jumps back.

JOEL

Whoa! I didn't expect that. Did you see that?

DEB

Didn't think he had that in him, did you?

JOEL

Wow. That really got the 'ol ticker moving. Great. Smudged my glasses again.

DEB

Isn't this fascinating? Are you glad now that you came?

JOEL

We'll see.

DEB

I will anyway. Just deal with it, so you don't miss something important.

JOEL

Like what? They gonna perform opera or something?

DEB

You aren't bored are you?

JOEL

No. I think I got 'em clean. Finally. This is...really...sorry, look over here.

DEB

What is it?

JOEL

Over here, behind that...

DEB

Oh, I see what you're looking at.

JOEL

Funny looking, isn't...

DEB

Joel.

JOEL

No, I just mean...funny looking was a poor choice of words. But, that's not normal is it? It looks swollen.

DEB

Do we need to...

JOEL

Do you think that's hereditary? That's really all I meant.

DEB

What kind of an accident would cause that?

JOEL

How often do you think something like that happens?

DEB

Pretty rare, I suppose. But you never know.

JOEL

Did you ever meet my great Uncle Stan?

DEB

You think you're going to end up with...

JOEL

No, not me, but...what if...there will probably be kids somewhere in my future, wouldn't you think? Huh? It's a valid concern. If it's hereditary.

DEB

I imagine.

JOEL

Well, seeing something like that gets a person thinking. That's all.

DEB

I wish you wouldn't say "something like that." You're not looking at a painting, you know.

JOEL

I'm sorry, you're right. Another poor choice. I should apologize.

(Speaking in the "funny looking" direction.)

Sorry, no offense.

DEB

Just like you.

JOEL

Hope I didn't hurt your feelings...

DEB

Stop.

JOEL

You goofy looking little...

DEB

You don't know when to quit, do you?

JOEL

Popcorn?

DEB

You're a piece of work sometimes.

JOEL

All this...observation...really works me up a thirst.

DEB

Taxing is it?

JOEL

Have you seen enough?

DEB

Look. That fellow from the back is down here now.

JOEL

Now she is too young for him.

DEB

Way too young.

JOEL

Do you think he's the...what...leader? He looks like he's seen some action in his day. Wait a minute. He's not going to...

DEB

He sure is...

JOEL

There's a whole group right there. They can't let...They aren't doing anything. They have to see him. Look, they're just turning away. You think this happens all the time? Is this what this whole thing is about?

DEB

Relax. Look over here. Here comes her hero.

JOEL

Deb, I'm serious...look at her, would you. Look at her eyes.

DEB

It's under control. There's a whole structure going on that we don't really understand.

JOEL

Finally.

(JOEL and DEB both gasp, shocked by what they are seeing. JOEL drops his popcorn.)

Oh my God.

DEB

Are you seeing this?

JOEL

No way.

DEB

He's not stopping.

JOEL

What can we do?

DEB

Nothing. Remember?

JOEL

They can't let...oh my God, look what he's done. What kind of...I would have never believed this if you told me. Not in a million years. That's just plain cruel...no, more than that...what's the...

DEB

Barbaric. Inhumane.

Pause. JOEL observes the violence.

JOEL

That's enough to break a man's faith. Not in a million years. I mean, you see things like that on TV, but you think, that's over there...you can distance yourself from it. It's terrible, but it isn't...I don't know. Who runs this place anyway? Isn't there anyone in charge to prevent some...some, some atrocity like that? Why would they let that happen? If the AARP knew this was going on.

DEB

AARP?

JOEL

What?

DEB

American Association of Retired People?

JOEL

Not them...the other...you know damned well who I meant.

DEB

Calm down. Have some popcorn.

JOEL

You knew this would happen, didn't you?

DEB

What?

(Pause. JOEL stares at DEB.)

What?

JOEL

Nothing.

DEB

You think I knew this would happen. You think I could have choreographed this...this atrocity?

(Pause. DEB stares at JOEL.)

What?

JOEL

You ever feel like...I mean, you ever wonder if you're being watched. Like this I mean. Someone watching you.

DEB

You?

JOEL

I'm not paranoid...it's just...like there was this one bathroom I was in - a bar or restaurant or whatever - and behind the toilet, the whole wall was a mirror. And I started, you know...and I'm standing there and then I got this idea pop in my head like what if that is a two-way mirror.

DEB

Make you stop?

JOEL

I convinced myself it was just my mind playing tricks on me, but...

DEB

I'll let you know if I see a picture on the Internet of you peeing.

JOEL

Yeah, you're right.

DEB

Look at him now. He's right up to the glass.

JOEL

Huh. He looks sad. It's like he regrets...You don't think he can...

DEB

Even if he could, what would it matter?

JOEL

You don't think it would change how he acts?

DEB

If he knew he was being watched.

JOEL

Yeah.

DEB

You believe in God, don't you?

JOEL

Yeah, I suppose.

DEB

You still act the way you do.

JOEL

What is that supposed...I never meant...

DEB

I'm not saying...

JOEL

Yeah. Yeah, I suppose you're right.

DEB

There you go.

JOEL

Yeah.

(As lights fade...)

Stupid glasses. I can't see a thing.