

Because of Beth

By Elana Gartner

Cara's mother has just died, and left custody of her sister, Penny, to Cara. This monologue is from Act I, Scene III. Cara enters, carrying a six pack of beer. She wanders through the tombstones until she gets to a fresh grave. She sits down next to it, takes out a pack of cigarettes and lights one. She looks down at the grave.

CARA:

I'm really sorry, Mom. *(long pause)* I know I should have been there. I had so many chances to say goodbye to you and you kept telling me... say goodbye now, you never know... and I didn't want to. Well, so, are you happy? You were right. You were fucking right. *(sighs)* All that time and I never said goodbye to you. *(finishes the cigarette and opens a beer. She sits down.)* And let's get something clear: I'm not saying goodbye to you now. That's not why I'm here. I came to talk to you. Just talk. You and me. *(stands up and starts pacing)* So let's talk... *(looks at grave. Short laugh.)* I always wanted you to listen to me... now that I have your attention, I don't know what to... *(long pause. Cara stares at the grave. Screams, frustrated.)* Aaaaauuuuughhhh! This fucking sucks! I can't believe how much this sucks! You're not supposed to be gone yet, Mom! This whole fucking mess sucks! Penny? She's so fucking whiny! It's like she has no other way to relate to me except to sob on me. And who do I have? No one! My friends aren't here. *(pause)* None of those people today cared about you, Mom. *(gets quiet)* I did. I cared about you. *(pause)* It's worse than when Dad left because at least then I had you. Now I don't have anyone. Oh, and what's with him showing up at the funeral? I mean, what the fuck is that, Mom? *(Angrily)* Since when does Dad even have a clue what the hell is going on in our lives? Do you think maybe you could tell me that? It's sick, you know. It's like I only get to have one parent surfacing at a time. Well, luckily, he's gone again. What a bastard! This is so fucking unreal. You have to come home! You have to! *(accusing)* You didn't even wait for me to show up so I could say goodbye to you! It wasn't my fault! I couldn't get here any faster! Couldn't you have waited just another fifteen minutes? And now Stanley wants to take Penny, the only family that I have left. It's not going to happen. Penny's my sister, not his daughter. Stanley wants me to go with him to the lawyers' tomorrow. He said he thinks Dad's going to try to take Penny. *(looks uncomfortable)* Dad can't do that, can he? He hasn't been here in forever. He can't just come and take custody, right? *(long pause as she thinks)* He won't. He won't get custody. I'll go to the lawyers' and make sure. I'll have to be in the grave next to you for him to get custody, Mom! *(Quietly)* I'm the only one left who actually knows, who remembers everything about you... I do. Even Penny doesn't. I remember the night Dad left. No one else knows about that. *(sits down next to the grave)* Remember how you came into my room and you were crying... and you couldn't tell me what was wrong, but you just crawled into my bed and asked me to give you huggies to make Mommy better. And I did. I gave you huggies. But it didn't get better. And I started crying and we fell asleep crying. *(long pause as she chokes back tears)* Mommy, I need huggies to make it better. I need huggies. Make it better. *(starts sobbing and shaking. Rocks herself in her sobs.)*