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BABE. (*Flustered.*) Well, I realize that, Meg. Why do you think I'm so worried about his getting public exposure? I don't want to ruin his reputation!

MEG. I'm amazed, Babe. I'm really, completely amazed. I didn't even know you were a liberal.

BABE. Well, I'm not! I'm not a liberal! I'm a democrat! I was just lonely! I was so lonely. And he was good. Oh, he was so, so good. I'd never had it that good. We'd always go out into the garage and—

MEG. It's okay. I've got the picture; I've got the picture! Now, let's just get back to the story. To yesterday, when you shot

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BABE. All right, then. Let's see... Willie Jay was over. And it was after we'd—

MEG. Yeah! Yeah.

BABE. And we were just standing around on the back porch playing with Dog. Well, suddenly, Zackery comes from around the side of the house. And he startled me 'cause he's supposed to be away at the office, and there he is coming from 'round the side of the house. Anyway, he says to Willie Jay, "Hey, boy, what are you doing back here?" And I said, "He's not doing anything. You just go on home, Willie Jay! You just run right on home." Well, before he can move, Zackery comes up and knocks him once right across the face and then shoves him down the porch steps, causing him to skin up his elbow real bad on that hard concrete. Then he says, "Don't you ever come around here again, or I'll have them cut out your gizzard!" Well, Willie Jay starts crying, these tears come streaming down his face, then he gets up real quick and runs away with Dog following off after him. After that, I don't remember much too clearly; let's see... I went on into the living room, and I went right up to the davenport and opened the drawer where we keep the burglar gun... I took it out. Then I—I brought it up to my car. That's right. I put it right inside my ear. Why, I was gonna shoot off my own head! That's what I was gonna do. Then I heard the back door slamming and suddenly, for some reason, I thought about mama... how she'd hung herself. And here I was about ready to shoot myself. Then I realized—that's

right I realized how I didn't want to kill myself! And she—she probably didn't want to kill herself. She wanted to kill him, and I wanted to kill him, too. I wanted to kill Zackery, not myself 'Cause I—I wanted to live! So I waited for him to come on into the living room. Then I held out the gun, and I pulled the trigger, aiming for his heart, but getting him in the stomach. (*After a pause.*) It's funny that I really did that.

MEG. It's a good thing that you did. It's a damn good thing that you did.

BABE. It was.
MEG. Please, Babe, talk to Barnette Lloyd. Just talk to him and see if he can help.

BABE. But how about Willie Jay?
MEG. (*Starting towards the phone.*) Oh, he'll be all right. You just talk to that lawyer like you did to me. (*Looking at the number on the card, she begins dialing.*) See, 'cause he's gonna be on your side.

BABE. No! Stop, Meg, stop! Don't call him up! Please don't call him up! You can't! It's too awful. (*She runs over and jerks the bottom half of the phone away from Meg. Meg stands, holding the receiver.*)

MEG. Babe! (*Babe slams her half of the phone into the refrigerator.*)

BABE. I just can't tell some stranger all about my personal life. I just can't.

MEG. Well, hell, Babe, you're the one who said you wanted to live.

BABE. That's right. I did. (*She takes the phone out of the refrigerator and hands it to Meg.*) Here's the other part of the phone. (*Babe moves to sit at the kitchen table. Meg takes the phone back to the counter. Babe, as she fishes a lemon out of her glass and begins sucking on it.*) Meg.

MEG. What?

BABE. I called the bakery. They're gonna have Lenny's cake ready first thing tomorrow morning. That's the earliest they can get it.

MEG. All right.

BABE. I told them to write on it, "Happy Birthday Lenny—A