A woman, looks 50ish, has a kind of duffle bag/backpack, sits next to a tombstone. She takes a small blanket/tablecloth out of her bag and spreads it on his grave.

It’s beautiful here today, ain’t it, Dad?

Hey, look, there’s some rabbit doodie next door, there by the Hoffmans. That’s good, right? A visit from the Jewish Easter Bunny. See? You’re not so alone.

A train whistle in the distance.

Oh, listen. You hear? You hear the train? I love that, the whistle. It reminds me of something, I don’t know what, from far away, like from a thick fog.

She sits down on the blanket.

Hey! You know what day it is today, Dad? I’ll give you a clue in case you’re not by your calendar. May 11th! My birthday! Yay! My birthday, Dad! Yeah, I know you know that. Of course you know that. But Dad, did you know I was sixty? Sixty!!! Fucking sixty!!! Jesus H. Christ, what the hell happened?! Dad, did you ever think I would be sixty!!?! What?! How’d we get from six to sixty?! Jeez Louise. How can I be sixty? I’m your little girl for goodness sakes. Unbelievable.

Wait, so then let’s see . . . wait. If I’m sixty, yuck, what does that make you? Huh? Okay. . . . Wait. You were fifty when you had me, so that’d make you, what, a hundred and what, ten? Really? Wow. A hundred and ten?! Brother, that sounds like so old.


But, you know, these days even a hundred and eleven isn’t so old anymore. A lot of people live to that age now. Oh, yeah, a lot. They don’t even write about them in the newspaper anymore, that’s how not a big deal it is.

But. That wasn’t your karma, was it, Dad, to live to a hundred and ten or whatever? Huh? No sir. Or mine neither, for that matter. I’m without you for how long already? 1976? What, forty-five years? Forty-five fucking years with no father!? Really?! What the fuck is that? No. Too much. That’s too much. That’s practically a lifetime, for goodness sakes! Crap.

Can you imagine, Dad, I have friends who still their have parents. That’s unbelievable. Yeah, you’re dead like forty-plus years and they still have living parents?! I don’t want to say I hate them but I kind of do.

Is that why people think I’m such a bitch, Dad? ‘Cause I kind of hate them? I guess that’s probably one reason, right? But is that so wrong?! I mean, why should I be so alone for so goddamn long? What’d I do to deserve that? Hah? Shit.

And everyone wonders why I curse so frigging much. Fuck them. Let’s see how much they’d curse if they were alone for so many fucking years. 1976. Bastards.
Yeah, well, maybe it is karma. Not yours. Mine, I mean.

She opens a bag and begins to take out some food and paper plates, etc.

You know, Dad, everyone says I still look like I’m in my forties. Good genes, right? And I don’t think they’re lying. No. No I don’t. They’re definitely not lying. (pause) I mean, shit, fuck, I hope they’re not lying. Damn, that would suck. I’m not even gonna think about that.

I do look just like you, Dad. I think that’s kind of good.

But can you imagine there is not one motherfucker on this whole entire planet earth who could corroborate that because there is not one goddamn human being left living - except for me - who knows you. Knew you. Saw you. Heard you. Nothing. No one. That’s unbelievable!

And here’s more unbelievable. Soon there won’t be anybody in this fucking solar system who even knows me! Me!? Soon it’ll be my fucking turn. The tip of the iceberg floating to the top. I’m next?! So soon?! Blech.

She takes some stuff out of the basket.

But I’m telling you, I do look like you. Except I got more hair—which ain’t too hard, huh, Dad? You were very handsome for a bald guy. Nice eyes. I do got those Shmulevitch eyes too, that crinkle up like a Chinese, and that good smile. But Dad, you did give me those hairy fucking toes. What was up with that? You had to throw that in? What, I didn’t have enough, no offense? A big challenge for my leg waxer who, by the way, is also the daughter of Holocaust survivors. What do you make of that? Coincidence? Hmm. I think she loves to torture people and hear them scream. “Revenge is mine,” sayeth the leg waxer.

And then again, I do see her every damn month. A match made in hell. But my bikini line is smooth like by a Norwegian.

Lastly, she takes out a bottle and two shot glasses.

Look at this. I brought some stuff for us, Dad. I got us some herring, matjes of course. I tried to get it like we used to eat it, with the bones, but you just can’t get that any more. No, no, people never even heard of herring with bones! With bones?! What do they think, fishes swim without bones?! Idiots. They think fillet is better?! Morons.

Oh, and I got some nice fresh pumpernickel like you like. Of course, butter. And for the piece de resistance? Guess. Guess, Dad, what I got? Come on! Come on! (beat) Stumped? Have I stumped you? OK, I’ll give you a clue. It’s a drink. It’s kosher - I think. It’s in a brown bottle. (beat) Give up? Oh, yeah, and it’s imported. (beat) Now you really give up? OK. I got us some . . . Canadian Club!!! Yay!! Isn’t that great, Dad! When was the last time you had Canadian Club?!

She begins to open the bottle and pour into the shot glasses.

No one drinks Canadian Club any more, you know. Remember when Mommy’s family used to come over on Shabbas for a kiddish after shul, and before we’d eat, all the grown-ups would have a shnaps? The women too. Remember? I remember. You looked so
nice with your bow tie and fedora after shul. Everyone gave a big sip and then had a nice piece of herring and challah. That Canadian Club was a big deal drink, right? Very fancy. Imported. From Canada. Remember when Canada was a foreign country? Now no one gives one big, fat shit about Canada. It’s like New Mexico or Pennsylvania. I mean, El Paso is more exotic than Canada.
Nowadays everybody’s all hot for something called single malt whiskey. From Scotland. Now that’s exotic. And you know what, Dad? The men there wear skirts! In Scotland. Yeah. (pause) Why not? There’s a nice change of pace. I’d pay good money to see that someday, right Dad? Guys in skirts. Can you imagine? Then only the guys would have to wax their legs. Yahoo. That’s what I call revenge.
She takes the bottle, pours two shots.
Okay. L’chaim, Dad. Here’s to us.
She pours one shot into the grave.
And to the hairy guys in the skirts. And to a really really strong breeze.
She laughs and then drinks her shot in one gulp.
Mmm, ouch. Good? Good, Dad?
Want some herring? I got some scallions too.
She takes out the bread and butters it and puts some herring pieces on it, all while she continues speaking.
I spoke to Harry yesterday. Yeah. He called to wish me a happy birthday. He’s almost eighty-five, can you believe it? Jesus. I can’t believe I have a brother who’s like twenty-five years older than me.
But he’s doing okay. Living exactly like how he pleases he says; eats, drinks whatever he wants—butter, sugar, meat, cheese; doesn’t do no exercise. He says he’ll live till he dies. If he can’t eat and drink what he wants, who wants to live, he says. Yeah, I think, but that shit’ll get you a stroke and then you won’t be happily dead, you’ll just be in some fucking nursing home, slobbering and sitting in a wheelchair with stained pants and a sling around your neck to support your dead arm, right Dad? Like you did. Right? Ah, but what’s the point? Everybody makes their own bed.
She eats.
Mmm, this herring is delicious. Salty. But hey, that’s your job, isn’t it, Mr. Shnapps?
She pours another two shots.
L’chaim.
She downs her shot and pours the other one into the grave.
I hope you’re not driving.
You know what, Dad? Harry always wants to talk to me about Germany, about the Kindertransport, when you sent him away to England in ‘38. He was like six, right? He doesn’t like talking about you but he sure does want to talk about those days leading up to going on that train, what he remembers of it anyway. And the war. It’s kind of sad, really, Dad. He has no one to talk to about that time but me. It’s like seventy years later
and he’s still obsessed with it. At least here there are other Jews or even survivors—well, not any more survivors—but children of them, like me, or grandchildren of them. But over in England poor Harry never had anyone there to talk to about it. Hasn’t ever met anyone like himself. I mean, I think I’m the only Jew he knows! Can you imagine?! I can’t hardly.

He’s such a Brit, Dad. I remember when you took me to meet him. That was the first time I ever ate pâté - on buttered French bread! Wow, chopped liver from heaven. Boy, talk about exotic.

But I’m sure most of the people who know him have no idea that he was in Germany during Kristallnacht. That he was on his way to school when he saw the looting and the burning and the broken glass. That his mother and baby sister were killed. And that when he married a shiksa in England, his Jew father who saved his life stopped talking to him for years, so that I didn’t know nothing about him till I was thirteen. And now he’s this world traveler who knows more about the Maori than he does about the Chassids—even though he came from that kind of family. Right, Dad? Your parents were - well, not Chassids, but they sure were religious. Right? It must have hurt you so much when he changed his name from Shmulevitch to Smythe. Jeez. You can’t make that shit up.

He still sends me a Christmas card, Dad, every year, even though I told him that I celebrate Chanukkah and not Christmas. ‘What’s the difference?’ he says. I guess to him they’re both just winter holidays where you send cards and get gifts. So I say, ‘Well, if they’re the same, why don’t you just send me a Chanukkah card?’ and he says, “A what?!” And that’s that. What the fuck. “Never mind” I says.

You know what else? He says also . . . he says he still can’t get over that the Nazis killed his little sister. He says, how could they have done such a terrible thing to a 3-year-old child. I’m like: What?! I mean, what?! They were Nazis! That’s what Nazis did. They committed horrible atrocities for no good reason. They did vile, unspeakable things. Is somebody surprised that they did that!? He seems to be, like, ‘How could they?’ Duh. When we’re alone, when I visit him in England, he talks to me about this memory of his little sister, with her wild red hair, laughing, chasing him around their dining room table. And her little shoes, forest green, he says. He says he remembers she had pierced ears and wore a little gold bracelet. Can you imagine that, Dad, that he remembers that?

‘How could they have done that?’ he keeps repeating over and over, all these years. It would be kind of funny if it wasn’t so pathetic and sad. Meanwhile, he doesn’t know borsht about Jews or anything. Even though his sister was killed for being a Jew and his mother was killed for being a Jew and he was separated from his family and his country because he was a Jew, he knows nothing about Jews. More interested in the Incas and the Mayans.

Fuck it. Here’s to Harry. And to the Incas and Mayans. And to Harry’s little sister.

What was her name, Dad? Shit. I can’t remember. Your other daughter. What, Chana, I think? Or was it Blimalleh? Damn. I can’t remember.
She pours another two shots.
To Harry and his sister, what’s-her-name.
She downs one shot.
Hey. Wait. Wait a minute.
She was my sister too, right Dad? Shit.
She raises the other glass.
To my sister. I like the name Blimaleh. It means ‘little flower’. I’ll call her Blimaleh.
Who the fuck is gonna contradict me, huh?
To Blimaleh.
She drinks.
Oops, sorry Dad. I think that was your glass. But you know what? I think maybe you had enough.

She begins to get up to move toward the food.
Ahhhhhhh! (She yowls in pain.) Agghhhhh! Jesus!!!! Yaaaargh!!! Foot cramp, foot cramp. Oh G-d, I hate that. Aaaaah!
She tries to get up. It’s a real struggle. Finally she does and begins hobbling around.
Oh, brother! Does this hurt. Ow, ow, ow, ow.
She hobbles around some more.
Damn. I heard that cramps come from lack of potassium. I think alcohol lowers potassium. Shit. I get these damn cramps all the time. Hmm, let’s see—alcohol/potassium, alcohol/potassium . . . screw the potassium.