

Wallace 2 Monologue

GRANDMOTHER. Well, Grandpa's certainly not *Buddha*. And I'm certainly not *lucky*.

WALLACE. (Pause.) Do you ever miss Mommy?

GRANDMOTHER. All the time.

WALLACE. (Pause.) Me, too. (Pause.) All the time.

GRANDMOTHER. (Pause.) Drink your milk. It's good for your teeth.

SCENE NINE

Wallace.

WALLACE. "My Mother's Turtlenecks." By Wallace Kirkman. Age sixteen. My mother loved my father and hated her neck. She thought it was too fleshy or something. If I hated my neck, I'd have it removed, but my mother never trusted doctors, so she wore turtlenecks. All the time. In every picture we have of her, she's wearing a turtleneck. She had turtlenecks in every color of the rainbow, she had blacks, she had whites, she had greys, she had plaids, she had polka dots and hound's-tooth checks and stripes and Mickey Mouse and even a sort of mesh turtleneck. I can't picture her without a turtleneck on. Although, according to Freud, I try to, every moment of every day. We have a photograph of me when I was a baby wearing one of my mother's turtlenecks. Swimming in one of my mother's turtlenecks is more like it. Just a bald head and a big shirt. It's very erotic in an Oedipal shirtwear sort of way. It's a rare photograph, because I'm smiling. I didn't smile all that much during most of my childhood. I'm taking lessons now, trying to learn again, but it takes time. I stopped smiling when my mother stopped wearing turtlenecks. I came home from a typical day in the second grade to find her taking a bath in her own blood on the kitchen floor. Her turtleneck was on top of the kitchen table, so it wouldn't come between her neck and her knife. I understood then why she had worn turtlenecks all along. To stop the blood from flowing. To cover the wound that was there all along. They tried to cover the wound when they buried her with one of her favorite turtleneck dresses on, but

it didn't matter. It was just an empty hole by then. My mother wasn't hiding inside. (Pause.) She wrote a note before she died, asking to be cremated, and I asked my father why she wasn't. He said my mother was two women, and the one he loved would have been scared of the flames. (Pause.) I look at that photograph of little me inside my mother's shirt all the time. It's the closest I can get to security. There are no pictures of me inside mother's womb, but her turtleneck is close enough.

SCENE TEN

Wallace's bedroom. Wallace and Sarah are sitting on the bed. Sarah is reading something on a piece of paper.

SARAH. Oh, I really like it.

WALLACE. Really?

SARAH. Really. It's very good.

WALLACE. Why?

SARAH. Well, it's funny, but it's also sad. It's really sad. And it's so true. I mean, there's so much of you in there. I mean, if I didn't know you, I'd know you after I read this. You know what I mean? I think it's really talented work. What's it for?

WALLACE. For?

SARAH. I mean, is it for English class or something?

WALLACE. No, I just sort of wrote it. Not really for anything. For me, I guess.

SARAH. You should submit it to the school newspaper. I bet they'd publish it.

WALLACE. I don't think I want the whole school reading this.

SARAH. Why not? I mean, you shouldn't be ashamed or anything—

WALLACE. I'm not ashamed. It just seems a little sensationalist, you know?

SARAH. I don't know. I guess so.

WALLACE. So. (Pause.) What do you want to do?

SARAH. Oh, I don't know.

WALLACE. We could go see a movie.

SARAH. Sure.