

BEAUTY SHOT
By Daniel Shepard

ACT 1

INT. KAREN'S BEAUTY SALON - HOLYROOD, KANSAS (real town, btw) - DAY

KAREN TEMPLE (55) - a former homecoming queen with two nicotine patches on her arm - is reading a *Better Home & Gardens* magazine in her big barber chair. She has a sensual, Soprano voice (think Kristen Chenoweth). Her Salon is a small, brightly lit box of a room with cheap hardwood flooring and puke yellow walls covered in vintage photos of women with different hairstyles. **LUCY EARL (58)** - an uptight woman with a light, blonde mustache - walks through the door of the Salon. Her voice is in the vein of a Lyric Spinto (think Betty White from *Golden Girls*). Karen puts down her magazine to greet Lucy.

RECITATIVE

KAREN: Hey Lucy. How was the drive?

LUCY: Would've been better if the damn AC didn't die!

Lucy falls into one of the two wicker chairs that lines the back wall of the salon. **TONYA ARMSTRONG (60)** - the loud, obnoxious woman in their friend group - bursts through the Salon door, looking frantic. She smokes three packs of Marlboro Reds a day so her voice leans Contralto (think Bea Arthur from *Golden Girls*).

TONYA: Hey Karen. Lucy...

KAREN: Tonya... I thought your appointment was at noon?

TONYA: It is. But I had to get here before lil ol' June. Cuz boy do I have some atomic bomb news. You see... Moira told Janet and Janet told Lee and Stacy told Linda and Linda told meeeeeeee...

LUCY: Oh for chrissake, Tonya. She'll be here soon.

TONYA: FINE. (*Sotto Voce*) Ya impatient hussy. (*full-voiced*) Frank is leaving June!

LUCY: No!

TONYA: Yes!

KAREN: For who?

LUCY: It's "for whom."

TONYA: No one knows. All they said is "soon..."

LUCY: Poor June.

KAREN: Poor June.

TONYA: Yeah, yeah. Poor June.

LUCY: Do you think we should we tell her?

KAREN: Nah. What good would that do?

JUNE SAWYER (59) - a sweet woman with a faded Rosie the Riveter tattoo on her right arm walks into the Salon door with a large purse. She is our heroine and her voice is Mezzo Soprano (think Audra McDonald).

JUNE: Hey girls!

Lucy, Tonya and Karen's faces morph from furrowed brows to fake smiles in an instant.

LUCY, TONYA & KAREN: Hey Juuuuuuuuune!

KAREN: It's sooooo good to see you.

Karen hugs June.

JUNE: Oh, well. Same to you!

Tonya points out June's bag and shoes.

TONYA: Oh wow. I love your shoes!

JUNE: They were half-off at Dillards.

LUCY, TONYA & KAREN: Get out!

JUNE: God's honest truth!

LUCY, TONYA & KAREN (Fake Laughs): HA HA HA HA HA!

KAREN: So... who wants to go first?

JUNE: Oh, may I? I know I'm early but...

KAREN: Why, of course!

LUCY: By all means.

TONYA: Don't be silly. After you.

JUNE: Well aren't y'all sweet? Thank you.

June sits in the Salon chair. Karen drapes a barber's cape over her and clips it in the back. Karen pulls out her scissors and snips them as if she's trying to cut her own nerves.

KAREN: Alright, girl. What'll it be then?

TONYA: If you're takin' requests. Make me skinny again!

LUCY: Girl, you haven't been skinny since you were age ten.

TONY: Then, by God, make me TEN FOREVER. Hallelujah, AMEN!

The women all laugh. Once the laughter dies down, June pipes in.

JUNE: Nothin' big for me, Karen. I just need a trim.

Karen begins to snip the scissors to a beat that matches the music.

KAREN: So, June... how are things at home?

JUNE: Oh ya know. Same ol' same ol'. My daughter hates me and my husband's an A-HOLE.

TONYA: Well, ain't that the truth.

LUCY: From your lips to god's ears.

JUNE: But luckily Frank's dead now - so that'll save me some years...

The Silent grows silent. Lucy, Tonya and Karen look at each other.

LUCY: Wait... what?

KAREN: What did you say?

TONYA: Did you say Frank's dead?!

JUNE: Yup. As a doornail. *(Makes a gun sound with her mouth)* Shot in the head.

LUCY: Oh my GOD!

KAREN: When did this happen, June?! When? WHEN? WHEN?!

JUNE: I think it was Sunday.

TONYA: You mean yesterday?

JUNE: Oh yeah. Ha ha. Then.

LUCY: Was it an accident?

JUNE: Oh no, it was ALL me.

ARIA**JUNE**

I killed him on Sunday as the church bells rang
 Locusts screamed in the willows as the black birds sang

Heavy steel weighed white on my skeleton skin
 As red shadows grew jagged on his silver chin

Death found him in the frame of our bedroom door
 Where his knees gave way to the cold oak floor

And I sat in his chair with my smokin' gun fixed
 On the bones pokin' out his skin lookin' like sticks

I pulled his bloody body past the desk he never used
 I drug him through the kitchen where our daughter learned to chew

His head hit the steps of the porch he said he'd finish
 And when I heaved him in the hole I thought I'd cry but I didn't

His dumb limp corpse bounced in God's dirt mouth
 Hit the bottom so hard that his soul jumped out

it danced in the wind till his holy spirit bled
 Then I looked right at it and this is what I said:

I'm not sorry I killed you and I'm not sorry you're dead
 I'm not sorry I shot you in your big fat head

I'm only sorry I could never be enough for you
 And I'm sorry you loved me cuz I loved you too...

RECITATIVE

TONYA: Jeeeeeeesssus christ! You shot him?

JUNE: Yup! Shot him and left him all broken and bloody. If life were a play, he'd need an understudy!

KAREN: But why, June?! WHY?!

JUNE: Oh, I had my reasons.

LUCY: Did he hit you or stab you or give you a beatin'?

JUNE: Nah. None of that... I found out he was cheatin'.

TONYA: You dingbat! You could've just gotten a divorce! Now you'll go to jail or, hell, even worse!

JUNE: What's worse than jail?

TONYA: The damn death penalty!

KAREN: Forgive me for askin' - but with who did he cheat?

LUCY: I think you mean whom...

TONYA: Lucy! Don't correct people when there's a psycho in the room!

Everyone gets quiet and looks at June.

TONYA: Sorry, June.

JUNE: Oh no worries, honey. It's true.

KAREN: So who did Frank cheat with?

LUCY: *(whispering)* She means with *whom*?

JUNE: Now this is where it gets funny. Cuz I heard it's... one of you...

The women all gasp.

KAREN: One of us?!

LUCY: Oh that's rich!

TONYA: Oh June! You're too much!

JUNE: Yeah, I guess you could say I'm... a little nuts!

June pulls out a gun.

LUCY, KAREN & TONYA: AAAAAAH!

KAREN: June! Put the gun away!

JUNE: Nuh uh. You can't cheat ol' June and hope to be saved. Now... *(June cocks the gun)* which one of you bitches wants to go first?

END OF ACT 1
ACT 2

INT. KAREN'S BEAUTY SALON - DAY

June is pointing a gun at her three friends: Lucy, Tonya and Karen. Lucy and Tonya are sitting in the chairs near the back wall of the Salon. Karen is standing a few feet away from June with her hands up (loosely holding a pair of scissors in her right hand).

RECITATIVE

LUCY: June, put the gun down!

TONYA: You're not thinkin' straight.

KAREN: Don't do somethin' you'll regret.

JUNE: Ha ha ha. Too late...

She cocks the gun.

JUNE: Now which one of you no-good, backstabbin' ho's... stole my Frank from under my nose?!

LUCY: Not me!

TONYA: Not me.

KAREN: Not me, either.

LUCY: Why do ya think one of us is the cheater?

JUNE: Frank told me himself it was one of you. But try as I might he wouldn't say who. So I'm here to shoot my dead husband's whore. Now which tart wants to start? The floor is all yours.

TRIO**TONYA**

Sure as shit wasn't me!
I never liked Frank!
He was a close talker!
And his breath fuckin' STANK!

LUCY

Sure as shit wasn't me!
Frank wasn't my type!
I'm into tan men!
And Frank was SO white!

KAREN

Sure as shit wasn't me!
Frank wasn't attractive!
His beer gut was huge!
And his farts? Radioactive!

TONYA

Sure as shit wasn't me!
I'm glad that he's dead.
I hated his politics

They were MAGA hat red!

LUCY

Sure as shit wasn't me!
Frank was so dumb.
When you blew off his head
I bet you found crumbs!

KAREN

Sure as shit wasn't me!
Frank was so gross!
I'd rather drown in a bath.
Than screw that milquetoast!

RECITATIVE

JUNE: That's it. I've had it. I'm done bein' nice. I'm here for the truth. And I ain't got time for no lies!

June aims the gun at Lucy. Lucy, Tonya and Karen gasp in unison.

JUNE: I'm gonna kill Lucy unless y'all spill the beans!

LUCY: What the hell?!

KAREN: Why Lucy?!

JUNE: Because she's closer to me.

LUCY: But it wasn't me!

KAREN: Or me!

TONYA: It wasn't me neither!

JUNE: Then we'll play chicken with Lucy to suss out the cheater.

LUCY: NOOOO! PLEASE NO!

JUNE: Oh Lucy, it'll be fine. All's they gotta do is confess to their crimes.

LUCY: And what if they don't?

JUNE: Then they're responsible for TWO lost lives!

LUCY: AAAAAAH!

JUNE: I'll give y'all to the count of FIVE to admit to the affair. And after that I'll use this gun to cut poor Lucy's hair... ONE.

TONYA: You crazy bitch! We're your friends! Put down the gun! We can still make amends!

JUNE: TWO.

KAREN: June, be smart! This isn't you! We know you're hurt! But we'll help you through!

JUNE: THREE.

TONYA: I'm sorry Lucy! I wish it was me! I wish I could save you! But I didn't cheat!

JUNE: FOUR.

ARIA

LUCY

I know I wasn't perfect. At times I've been naughty.
Like when I locked my sister in a porta-potty.

But I swear I never touched anyone's man.
I barely even touched my own husband, Stan.

But now I wish I had. I wish I'd done more.
I wish I'd done meth off a bathroom floor!

Oh god, this is it! This is how I die!
So much I didn't do. So much goddamn wasted LIIIIIIIFE!

RECITATIVE

JUNE: FIIIIIIIIIVE! (*June cocks the gun*). Sorry Lucy. This is goodbye! I hope heaven looks nice with a bullet in your eye!

TONYA: NO!

KAREN: WAAAAAAAAAAAAAIIIT!

END OF ACT 2 **ACT 3**

INT. KAREN'S BEAUTY SALON - DAY

June is pointing a gun at Lucy's head. Tonya can't bring herself to look. Karen, on the other hand, finally breaks under the pressure of potentially losing her friend.

RECITATIVE

KAREN: Wait June! Don't kill Lucy! I'm the one who should die!

JUNE: And why is that Karen?

KAREN: Cuz...I'm the other woman.

Tonya and Lucy gasp.

LUCY: You bitch! You almost let her shoot me in the eye!

June pulls the gun away from Lucy's head and listens to Karen's confession.

ARIA

KAREN

It was me, June! I'm your strumpet!
Bang the gong! Sound the trumpet!

I loved that man for four long years.
I gave him my heart. My joy. My TEARS!

And just when I thought he'd never leave you.
He came over last month and said "Baby, I need you..."

We planned on leaving the day after tomorrow.
To start a new life. Come hell or high water.

But now he's DEAD! And my future is gone...
My heart aches so that I cannot go on.

At least I'll be dead soon. For that I am glad.
Just thankful for the days that he and I had.

And to think when I saw you, I actually felt bad.
Now I hope you rot in hell... you murderous hag!

RECITATIVE

Karen lifts the gun and points it at Karen.

JUNE: Goodbye, Karen.

*Gunshot goes off. Ear ringing SFX. Angelic sounds of harps and wind chimes fill the scene.
Euphoria.*

ARIA

KAREN:

Oh god. I'm dead. She actually shot me.
I should've fought back. I know Karate!

How weird. How strange, I didn't feel a thing.
I didn't see a light or hear the angels sing.

But why am I here and not with St. Peter?
I know I wasn't perfect but I was a believer.

Unless I've gone to hell for all of my sins?
Stuck in my salon with my three former friends.

All of whom hate me because I'm hotter than them
Is afterlife livin' through this shit again and again?

Oh god. Is this my punishment for infidelity?
To stare at these butt ugly faces for all eternity?

Record scratch SFX. The original room tone of the Salon is back. June snaps Karen back to reality.

RECITATIVE

JUNE: Uh. Earth to Karen, you didn't die. The gun was filled with blanks. You're still alive.

KAREN: Wait. I'm WHAT?! What the hell is going on?!

JUNE: You've been duped, sweetie. Thanks for playin' along.

KAREN: But why kill Frank and leave me alive?

JUNE: Oh I didn't kill Frank. He's in the car outside.

The women go over to the window and see him outside.

TONYA: Holy shit! There he is! He's still alive!

KAREN: But you said you buried his body.

JUNE: Oh, yeah. I lied.

June puts the gun back in her purse.

JUNE: He'd never admit to the cheatin' himself. Cuz he's my Frank and his lyin's top shelf.
But I knew in my heart it was one of you bitches, stickin' your hand down my husband's fat
britches.

LUCY: But how?

ARIA

JUNE
WELL...I smelled Estee Lauder on one of his shoes.

A cheap perfume I know y'all use.

Then I found hair in his truck with a reddish hue.
And who dies their hair red? The three of you!

THEN I found some old panties in the pocket of his jeans
The same panties we all bought on our trip to New Orleans!

Puttin' two and two together wasn't hard to deduce.
I just had to get ya together to tighten the noose.

I knew that someone would eventually spill.
If I held a gun to one of your grills.

And you almost called my bluff Karen, I'll give you that.
But you caved like a coward, ya slutty old rat.

RECITATIVE

TONYA: What now?

JUNE: I divorce Frank and take all his money. I can't wait to tell him. It's gonna be funny!

June goes to walk away. But Karen stops her.

KAREN: June! Stop! I'm callin' the cops. Holdin us at gunpoint is against the law!

JUNE: Go ahead. Call'em.

KAREN: They'll be here any minute!

JUNE: Well they can't arrest me without an eyewitness.

KAREN: What about Tonya and Lucy?

TONYA: Oh shut up, Karen! You're disgustin'!

LUCY: We don't side with cheaters. And we didn't see nothin'!

Tonya and Lucy walk out of the Salon. June hangs back for a second.

ARIA:

JUNE

I gave Frank the best years of my life.
Played the attentive mother. The dutiful wife.

I supported him through thick and thin.
I cooked and cleaned and cried for him.

Fucked him. Sucked him. Rubbed his bunyons.
Even let him kiss me after eatin' funyons.

I did everything he asked and more.
But I could never compete with his love for whores.

He and I were like two ships in the sea.
And his ship was always sailin' away from me.

So it's high time I showed his sorry ass the door.
Good luck with him, Karen. My burden's now yours. (alt: My Frank is now yours.)

June walks out of the door. Karen is left behind in her Salon... alone.

END OF ACT 3