

6. BARBIE BREAKS DOWN

“Barbie, your lips are so kissable.”

“Do you want to kiss me?”

“I’d prefer to talk about it.”

Barbie wonders if her kissability is simply an add-on, something copied from someone else but hardly integral to her own character.

“Why don’t you want to kiss me?”

“I do. I already said that your lips are kissable. I just want so much more. I want to understand the essence of kissing.”

“Could it be my lips?”

“Your lips are so much more.”

“What then? I am so confused.”

“I want to get to know you better. What makes you tick?”

“You want to get to know me.”

“That’s part of it.”

“What’s the rest of it?”

“I want to learn what is kissability.”

“You want to take away my essence? Where does that leave me?”

“Wanting more.”

“But you’ve taken away the very thing that makes me what I am. You are making me unsure of myself.”

“You can never be too sure of yourself!”

“What does that mean?”

She reviews her basic rights. Most fundamental is right to start a church, her own church. What is offered her does not supply her with the needed results. She will never attain salvation under the existing paths. She needs a new religion.

THE DEGENERATION OF NEW HARMONY

Josie realizes the truth: “I can’t be with just one man. I can’t leave my husband. What am I going to do?”

“Miss Smith, you need a new morality.”

She could learn from her husband’s example and just sneak around. She married young. In retrospect, it seems like a mistake. But she can’t let her marriage come apart.

Thankfully, she has no children. It would be easy to jump in the car and go somewhere. She recognizes that there are loads of women who feel in conflict just like her. It would be easy to run around on her husband. But then she would not be true to herself.

She needs guidance. She cannot let the contradiction destroy her.

She stares up at the powerball billboard. She needs to be a winner this weekend. What is the combination, the code to unlock the system? Where does she need to buy her ticket? How will the luck shine on her? This is the key to refashioning her character.

If I win, it could mean everything to my life.”

She is standing under the sun so that it reflects just right on her body, enough light absorbed for the perfect tan, enough light bouncing off to capture her wondrous glow. It’s not a

good idea to get too much sun so she has adjusted the angle to protect herself. This is how miracles happen, a proper confluence of forces. If not this victory, maybe she can again attempt a contest from middle school. The girl with the most prospects for her future, the girl standing in the light.

“I have seen the truth. Hallelujah.”

“You are standing in my light, dear. Please move!”

Each buyer yearns for a victory. They each give part of their soul. Some have expended more energy on a victory. They feel they have even more riding on it.” The greater risk gives the player the illusion that she is closer to victory. There is really no chance on victory, only a more increased chance of heartache.

Why do so many risk so much for such ridiculously low odds? What kind of distraction is it from the actual moment of revelation?

She has promised herself that she will win. She looks like a winner. If they had to choose, she would be the ace face for the promotional victory shot. Just take a look. Make up! ACTION!

What she wouldn't give for a shot at the title. This is more than a beauty contest. This is once and for all, FATE!

She needs to contemplate the rigors of defeat so that she can properly negotiate all the twists and turns that lead to victory. It's way beyond the feeling that someone is looking over her shoulder.

Go through the numbers. Contemplate the patterns. It all follows a sequence, an order of the world. How the body is put together.

“You need to stand in the right place to make it all happen.”

Have the universe sing through the body.

“I'm picking it up.”

It's something special, like the primary force that moves through the body.

“This is greater than anything that you could ever feel in sex or in meditation. It is the primitive rhythm that washes over the body. The eternal sea. Swim in its tides.”

She knows that this is her work. Everything reminds her of the sympathies of the heavens. The universe aligns just so.

“It's not just a matter of winning it. You have to figure out how to hold on to your winnings. Holding on to what you have is like stealing something. The law needs to protect what I have.”

What does it feel like to be inside? It is not enough to let that tingle wash over the body. How can the lover attain the heart. There is that point in love-making when everything else seems to shut down. There is only the belief in oneness as the warmth rushes all over the body and attains the soul.

She can feel that wind gust as it bathes her all over. She does not want to be alone!

She drives faster and faster as she lets loose on I-64. It is on the way to St. Louis, and she isn't sure where she is going to stop. She has just passed the exit for Cynthiana. She realizes that

She remembers the all important rule, “It's not enough to feel paradise. You have to keep it going forever.”

She understands the mess that final invocation had for her. She has decided that she needs to interpret it differently. She needs inspiration, something to lift her up from the doldrums that have beset her. How can she save herself?

The next exit is New Harmony. This could be a new beginning. A water moccasin threatening to strike her dead. She takes the fatal bite as she would take any other adaptation in her chemistry. She feels that she is being transformed into a new individual.

“I could start it here.”

She is speaking of a new church. She feels that this is one of her fundamental rights. She wants to view herself as the anointed one. Why can't the deity speak through her? This is her purpose, to spread the word of the providence that has filled her body with invigorating spirit.

She sacrifice her old way. No longer Barbie, she needs a new name to symbolize the change in her soul. She is Rose. It speaks of that purity.

Revelation is not sufficient. She needs to offer testimonial of her vision. This is where a gospel becomes so essential to her new state. She needs to detail the aspect of her transformation. What is the story of her conversion?

To what degree has her former state prepared her for this moment? Was she destined from birth for this path. Admittedly she may have been sidetracked by the temptations of a hedonistic life style. Too much indulgence was only a diversion.

All along she knew what was her calling. Her inner sight was always more developed than others. That is why she needed to supplement that state with intoxicants. It helped her prolong her pleasure. She has seen a vague glimpse of the paradise. Her revelation underlines the degree to which her powers were always nascent. Now they flow freely.

Rose's story is all about the path of true belief. How she has become distracted over the years. Religion has never made itself known to her before because it never appealed to her nature. This is a calling that is truly feminine in its origin. It can appeal to both men and women because it appreciates the fundamental truth at the heart of the universe. The world is orgasmic.

She feels liberated by the strength of conviction. All her other experiences were beset by tragedy. For every moment of elation, there were severe bouts of melancholy. In her new state, she does not suffer the lulls. She is constantly full of enthusiasm.

“I called you, and you would not listen.”

“I have opened my heart to you.”

Rose needs to plan for her new life. She will need money. At first, only a little to tide her over. Her demands are meager. She can subsist on a life of poverty. But she will need more resources to spread the word. She will take months to document her metamorphosis. More deep meditation to get at the core of her new power.

She will also seek to demonstrate the power that motivates her. She feels that miracles await. There is a harmony in the universe that is revealed in fortune and numbers. All the gifts of chance are available to her. She could play any game to victory now that she has realized the secret. This is the key to her new knowledge. The spirit assumes a mathematical form and inundates her with all its weaving structures. It is like a complexity of crystals.

“Anyone can make an excuse for her actions. She can claim that she has been inspired by the spirit.”

“It's one thing to make claims. True revelation can be supported with evidence.”

“You make it sound as if you are a victim of the Inquisition. What is next? Boiling oil. Or they are going to cut your tongue out.”

“I haven’t made this up.”

“You’ve redone your hair. You’ve got an exercise trainer. You look more like a super model than a religious leader.”

“We have to use the tools that the spirit has granted us. We have to speak the language of the people.”

“Thousand dollar fashion accessories should complete the picture.”

“What do you have in mind? Are you willing to donate?”

“I was speaking ironically. Have you no sense of irony?”

“You can’t make a joke of true revelation.”

“I’ll take false revelation any day.”

“You will, will you?”

“I’ll take what I can get. And you’ll take more.”

“What does that mean?”

“Your vow of poverty. It’s an excuse so that you can amass an enormous fortune to your church.”

“I’m free to start my own group. To meet with whom I please. To live according to the principles of truth and honesty.”

“Do you get to have sex?”

“You are being perverse?”

“I am only exploring what is natural.”

“If it is good and natural, then it is available to me. But there may be delights that appeal to the soul with much more vitality. These are the bases for my pursuits.”

“So you’re getting off with the help of the heavens.”

“You have to make it so vulgar.”

“It’s not vulgar. It’s part of your makeup. You’re just inflating your own pleasure to further enhance the ego.”

“That’s not it at all.”

“You posit this totally non-biological source for your revelation. But it is really an exaggeration of something that goes on in the body.”

“Some things are not that way. The mind has the power to create its own world and to support that creation by transformation of the material world.”

“A stock broker says pretty much the same thing. This sounds like junk bonds for Barbie.”

“I go by Rosie now.”

“You said the same thing when you started calling yourself Barbie.”

“A transformation of the soul needs a new name.”

“Every girl goes through that struggle.”

“Did you go through it too?”

“I’m not sure what you’re saying.”

“Can you admit confusion if you are to really hear your calling?”

“What happened to the new religion?”

“It’s as new as ever. I’m just investigating all the aspects. I do want to be consistent. I don’t want you or anyone else to be able to destroy the foundation of my new commitment.”

“The honeymoon eventually ends for all of us.”

“I don’t want it ending sooner than later.”

“I am sympathetic with your situation. But you’ve gone out on a limb.”

“It’s not me. It’s something greater than myself.”

“But that is the definition of the self: something greater than the self.”

“I am still searching. But I have felt the power.”

“That is only one half of the equation. You feel the power because you have felt the lack of the power. And the self exists in this fluctuation.”

“And providence exists in the constancy. Your own argument is falling down. The spirit always fills my soul.”

“You are simply reorganizing your body. It is your evolution.”

“It is pure creation. That is greater than evolving. Evolving depends on the environment. Creation bypasses the needs for origin. It is the beginning and the end.”

“You are talking gibberish.”

“This is my right.”

“Of course, and it is my right to challenge you.”

“I welcome the challenge. It will only make me stronger.”

“You have become closed-minded.”

“I still have a mind. But the mind is now open to the spirit.”

“You’re just looking for a way to extend your high. You’ve lived off of such peaks of elation. Your psyche doesn’t know how to come down. Now you have the perfect excuse. What has got into you?”

“The thing that was always there. I have always had this calling. I did not listen. This is my chance.”

“It sounds as if you’ve been invited to a super shopping spree.”

“This is not about spending money.”

“What is your goal? What do you need to make yourself free?”

“I need the words of revelation. I am writing all the time. I am working to record the testament of my change.”

“Who is going to read this?”

“Other souls who were lost the way that I was.”

“You’ve always wanted this dominant ego. Now you have found a method to extend this desire to the rest of the world. A religion of paper dolls.”

“Quit making fun of me!”

“I would if you were the least bit honest.”

“New Harmony, Indiana has shown me the way. I have drunk from the clear waters. I have bathed myself in the healing powers. I have rescued myself from the iniquity that has surrounded me.”

“You sound like an automaton for the lord.”

“This is not about a lord. This is an immaterial spirit. No longer a male dominance.”

“It’s pretty much the same. You just want to cash in.”

“You’re getting it all wrong!”

She lays out her organization plan. It is her blueprint for success

INVESTMENT: you can’t start a church without the potential to develop its message.

BYLAWS: the organization needs to be clear. This is just like a corporation.

THE PRODUCT (THE TEACHING, THE GOSPEL): others need to be convinced of the truth to the message.

GROWTH: the message can only survive if it has a chance to spread.

She uses her outline as a guide and fills in all the details.

“I suggest that you learn a technique how to work around an audit.”

“Are you talking about an external or internal audit?”

“Both.”

“Explain.”

“You need to avoid the deleterious effects of an internal audit.”

“I’m not skimming money off the top.”

“Not really. But you do need some form of creative financing.”

“I like your advice. I’m just not sure what I need to do to make it all a reality.”

“You’re not going to embezzle any funds. But you do have to keep yourself liquid. Accounting will make every effort to rein in your appetites. You cannot succumb to their control. The purpose of the religion was to offer you the needed liberation.”

“Sounds great.”

“This is more than great. It is stupendous.”

“Tell me more!”

“Your spiritual guidance was instituted since you know what to give to providence and what to give to your brethren. This distributive mentality makes you a leader.”

“What are you saying?”

“You need money to do your work. You can’t let anyone else tell you what to do.”

“Who do I have to fear?”

“The investors. The other professionals in the firm. An over-zealous lawyer or a rogue accountant.”

“What about an external audit?”

“The IRS poses a significant danger and might use its power to revoke our status as a tax-exempt religious organization. We need to hide our assets from them. We can’t allow them to discover the actual channels that the money travels.”

“Is this illegal?”

“We have chosen not to violate natural law. You have to use your own judgment. The IRS may decide that some of our spending does not fall within the bounds of sanctioned religious expenditure. You cannot yield to their artificial determinations.”

“I’m not sure how I can make sense of it all.”

“That is why I have agreed to help. I can offer you advice.”

“I’m not sure where to start.”

“You have to build loss into your profits picture. This helps you protect the real source of growth.”

“What is that?”

“Spiritual commitment. As belief grows, the funds of the organization need to accumulate at high rate. This helps attract more investors. But we can’t leave this money exposed.”

“How do we balance things?”

“With miracles. By a sleight of the hand. When we experience a deficit in our cash flow, we need to advance the emergence of miracles.”

“How will that help?”

“We have to make this a strictly cash for miracle exchange.”

“This is grotesque. It distorts the spiritual mission.”

“Not at all. The miracle makes the recipient grateful. He wants to donation. We just provide him a mechanism to show his generosity.”

“Is it a strict exchange?”

“Actually, it will be even more tightly controlled. Particular miracles will result in specified cash returns.”

“What would qualify as a miracle?”

“Healing a sick person. Curing an addiction. Raising the dead

“Is this like ordering a pizza from a menu?”

“Not a bad analogy. This is all about spiritual sustenance.”

“Many of those who need our hope the most can’t afford the costs of our ministry.”

“Others will sponsor them. Or the overall promise of one success will be enough to demonstrate the worth of future commitments.”

“I don’t know if I have enough miracles in me.”

“You don’t have to worry about it. It is like a river. Everyone will get caught in the movement. They will create their own evidence and attribute it to your guidance.”

“Damn, if I’m not good!”

She realizes that she will need help if she is going to succeed. She draws counsel from her financial adviser.”

We are going to watch a movie that explains our spiritual journey. How we started out in a state of doubt and confusion. How the body was ravaged by these external threats. Only by discovering the power from within are we able to overcome our enemies.

The film is a story like that of Moses and the burning bush. Only we are introducing a new spiritual order. It is not based on the former patriarchy. We do not trace our ancestry along familiar lines and try to graft our spirituality onto an existing religious tradition. We derive our own threads of prophecy, and we preach the establishment of this new history.

From our point of view, we have lived in a state of darkness and obscured the actual paths of truth. Worse, we have forgotten the events that have made us who we are. Living within this amnesia, our psychological troubles have prevented our spiritual growth. It has degenerated as we have imitated the worse moments of our heritage. We have no recollection why we have been driven by these impulses.

By turning to the path of righteousness, we will liberate ourselves from the discomfort that rages inside our soul. We contemplate an utter spiritual cleansing. And there are still traces of the old self in all of us. That is the power of the movement. We come together to expose the weakness in all of us.

In the tradition, we have persecuted those elements which promise us freedom. This has only made us more susceptible to being corrupted by the modern world. For our experience is full of just such confusion. We delight in the perverse. Many times we have become so attached to the provocative that our own pleasures are the only gage of our psychic well-being. We dig ourselves deeper into a hole of our own making.

It is terrible that we cannot extricate ourselves from such terrible exile. We have been cut off from the live spring that sustains us. We are choking in the polluted air. As we gasp for breath, we have to realize that our only hope is to accept the healing power. This lights burns deep inside us.

I wish that we could fully document every detail of this struggle. To detail sin is to endorse it. To retell the story without some kind of moderation is make the sinner the star of this presentation. That is why sin had such appeal in the first place. She experienced herself as the center of the universe. Anything that attempted to shift her from this center was challenged and destroyed. For the sinner, her story is all about me. And we need to cure this perspective. We can make reference to the circumstances of the fall. But if we dwell on every failing and shortcoming of the individual, we will appear to endorse her journey towards the light. That would seem to suggest that you need to embrace the sullen before you can accept the glory.

We are all subject to delusion. That is that foundation of our calling. We need to emphasize how the light has always been shining no matter how faint its radiance. The lord provided Moses his enlightenment. We need a guide to stabilize ourselves in the wilderness.

“What do you want me to do?”

“You know what I like!”

“How am I supposed to know that?”

“My body is like a message to you. You can read what it says.”

“How is that so?”

“I’ve contoured the shapes to reflect my intent.”

“Now it is all starting to make sense

Everything about her body repeats her desire. She has starved herself down to pure sexuality. Her taut abdominal muscles point to the eventual direction of his caress.

“That is why I exercise so hard. I want to leave no doubt in your mind about my expectations. You know what to do to satisfy me.”

“Is that all that it takes?”

“You have to commit yourself to my satisfaction. Get into it. Just go crazy on me!”

“Is there anything that I can get for you?”

“Can you get me a drink?”

“That would be easy.”

“Can you get me high?”

“I’m not sure.”

“Can you get me off?”

“Can you get me to heaven?”

“You’re just too big for me. I don’t think that you can fit.”

“This is all about the process of transformation!”

“I am not ready for that kind of transformation. I am trying to turn away from sensual

pleasure.”

“Are you telling me that you are in the process of composing a complete text for the faithful?”

“If that is what is needed, I am up to the task.”

“You’ve never even written much more than an essay at school.”

“I have received inspiration that makes me wise beyond my years.”

“Don’t let your pride over take you.”

“There is so much to tell. I simply can’t do it on my own.”

She recognizes the key features of her task. She wants to make the story understandable. She is using her life as a waitress as an analogy. She recognizes the inherent risk in this description. When she first started working as a waitress, she loved the independence that it offered her. The work hardly seemed daunting. At the same time, she had all this money. She could get her own place. She could buy a car.

As time went on, she found that she was barely hanging on just to make the same amount. She has to make sure that her religious treatise does not suffer from the same let down. After, the ease of work only became back-breaking. Her body could barely deal with the wear and tear. And her dreams became stunted by the hours. She had accommodated to the life.

How can her new revelation become an aid to help others deal with their disillusionment? She fears that she may be asking too much. She needs help to guide her through this morass.

She tried to smile through the trouble that beset her at the restaurant. This may be the key to understanding a deeper power that can guide us through our worst disasters. She understands that there is a perverse impulse within us to exacerbate any catastrophe that befalls us. It is a reverse form of salvation. We destitute that we are beyond rescue. This is the appeal of drugs. They raise the ante. If the high is more intense, the low is even more severe. We seek a deep floor to propel us to the ultimate paradise. There is none!

She realizes how deeply her search has taken her.

Ride me out of this place!

She needs to solve the mystery of her own situation. She recognizes how she was carried out of the darkness. In her mind, she needs to replicate that journey so that she can communicate it to other people. There is the interplay between the dilemma of our everyday lives and the revered desire for liberation from our malaise. This is the source of our spiritual yearning. What is the target of this longing? If the spirit does not literally inhere in the world, how does it make its presence known?

She can feel the pressure to complete her work. It is as if a stop watch is ticking away. She can hear the seconds marked by the individual clicks.

She sees herself as an archer. She is trying to find her target with the arrow. Through her own trials, she has learned how to bend back the bow. But there is fog all around that hides what she is looking for. She has to see with her inner eyes.

She understands the deep truth that will guide her. There is a chaos that surrounds us in our daily experience. The chaos seems to reach an apex in a truly catastrophic moment. This is the cry for salvation. It is a crack in the darkness that lets in some light.

She imagines that she is traveling on the road. She is tired and needs to use the washroom. She stops by a rest center. She feels a little scared to go inside. Once she is safely in

the stall, she watches a hand reach from underneath. She quickly opens the door to see that no one is there. This is her sign.

She wonders if her imagined memory is actually some sign of an actual encounter. It all seems vaguely familiar to her. She believes that there is a fund of memory that originates in another dimension of our experience. These memories hold the key to our eventual liberation of the spirit.

The hardest part of her task is communicating how an individual can make a simple change in her life to set herself on the correct path for enlightenment. It is so easy for our lifestyles

“How dirty can you make this story without offending your audience?”

“I don’t think that it’s that type of story.”

“Don’t fool yourself. It’s always that kind of story.”

“The key is to make the reader make the choices. Make her think that she is creating the need for the salacious. I am simply a vehicle.”

She has heard about how small towns have benefitted from their own transformation.

“We never even had a pizza delivery. Now I work at the pizza place. It has been my savior.”

She takes his confession as model for her own transformation. The church must be like a business plan. She will need to convince the faithful of the soundness of their investment. They will not hesitate to give more money to the project. This will finance more and more ambitious endeavors.

“It’s like quality control at the pizza place. The head of all the franchises travels around to make sure that there are the same fundamentals in each branch store. This includes control of costs, use of food products, preparation of the pizza, and actual delivery. Everything follows a standard.”

Religion needs a similar model. This will guarantee the perfection of the delivered product every time.

Her pizza deliverer is smoking a cigarette. He is dissatisfied at the core of his being. He is trying to take his time back. He drags on the cigarette for even more of a buzz. That feeling is long gone. But he still needs the same assurances. He lets the puffs measure each component of his day, of his life.

This is how she once felt. There is that drive for the simple pleasures. Money for gas. Money for a home, a new TV.

Ride me out of this place

“Do you want to have sex?”

“I thought that was one of the fringe benefits of power.”

“Are you going to tell the believers that?”

“They have to believe that there is something more than sheer toil.”

“The attainment of beauty!”

“I wish!”

“You are beautiful. You are the most beautiful girl that I have ever been with.

“I am pretty?”

“Yes!”

Does she have the right to such an assent? Do we all?

“I used to be called Josie. I changed my name to Barbara.”

“It all makes sense.”

“It all does. All dolls are called Barbara.”

“You are a living doll. Let me inside.”

“Can you feel my heart beat with yours? My soul touches yours!”

“This could be a new religion.”

“It already is. Keep toiling for me!”

She wonders why she is giving up so easily. Her dreams are worth more than this.”

“Have you any idea what one of your kisses is worth?”

She needs to calculate these numbers. She want to get down to the core of her being. To strip away all the layers of trickery.”

“You know what I could do with that body of yours?”

“No, I can’t even imagine it.”

“Let me peel off your panties with my teeth. Everything else is pretty automatic from there.”

“You’re going to set me up in a house.”

“No, I’m going to lead you down a path of hell.”

“I was taking that for granted. But could you throw in one of those houses just off the interstate as part of the deal?”

“What do you need?”

“A headquarters for my new church.”

“What are you talking about?”

“You haven’t been listening to a word that I’ve been saying. You’ll just have to wait until the world catches up to me and leaves you in your blindness and stupidity.”

“Whatever you say, sister.”

“OK, just put it in. I want your blessing!”