

FUN HOME

Music by
Jeanine Tesori

Book and Lyrics by
Lisa Kron

Based on the graphic novel by Alison Bechdel

Characters

Alison - 43 years old, a cartoonist

Medium Alison - 19 years old, a college freshman

Small Alison - around 8 years old

Bruce Bechdel - Alison's father

Helen Bechdel - Alison's mother

Christian Bechdel - Alison's brother, around 10 years old

John Bechdel - Alison's brother, around 6 years old

Roy, a young man Bruce hires to do yard work

Mark, a high school junior

Joan, a college student

Pete, a mourner.

Bobby Jeremy and the Susan Deys,
imaginary television characters

Alison enters, goes to her drawing table, takes up her pen, and begins to draw. MUSIC IN.

Small Alison appears.

SMALL ALISON

Daddy, hey, Daddy, come here, okay, I need you

What are you doing, I said come here

You need to do what I tell you to do

Listen to me

Daddy

Come here, hey right here, right now, you're making me mad

Listen to me

Listen to me

Listen to me

I wanna play airplane

I wanna play airplane

I wanna play airplane

I wanna put my arms out and fly

Like the Red Baron in his Sopwith Camel! No wait-

Like Superman

up in the sky

'till I can see all of Pennsylvania

Bruce enters with a big, crapped-out box of stuff.

BRUCE

Hey, gimme a hand.

Small Alison drags the box in. Bruce fetches a second one.

SMALL ALISON

What'd'ja get, Daddy?

ALISON

Right, right, right.

BRUCE

It's from Clyde Gibbon's barn. What a haul. He said, "Take what you want," and I said, "You sure, Clyde?" He said, "It's all junk to me," so I said, "Alright, Clyde, alright." Come here. Look.

(MORE)

BRUCE (cont'd)

(Small Alison looks on as he combs through
the box.)

You go to auctions, yard sales, comb the dump
and crap, there's crap, there's crap, there's--
(Pulls out a clump of cloth.)

Ah! What's this?

SMALL ALISON

More crap?

BRUCE

(Rapturously inspecting the wadded
fabric.)

No--

Linen

This is... linen

Gorgeous Irish linen

See how I can tell?

Right here, this floating thread, you see?

That's what makes it damask

And the weight, the weight, this drape

And the pattern, crisp and clear

See how it's made from matte and shine

It's tattered here, but all the rest

How beautiful How fine

Okay, okay... What else is here...

Crap...

Crap...

Dead mouse.

SMALL ALISON

Ooh. Can I have it?

BRUCE

It's all yours.

(Pulling a grey metal coffee pot out of
the box.)

What's this...?

Silver

Is this silver?

Is this junk or silver?

With polish we can tell

I love how tarnish melts away

opening to luster

And the mark, is there a mark?

Yes, this stamp, you see right here?

That's how the craftsman leaves a sign

*that he was here and made his work
so beautiful, so fine*

*This has traveled continents to get here
and crossed an ocean of time
And somehow landed in this box under a layer of grime
I can't abide romantic notions of some vague "long ago"
I want to know what's true, dig deep into
who, and what, and why and when
until now gives way to then*

ALISON

*Did you ever imagine I'd hang onto your stuff,
Dad? Me either. But I guess I always knew
that someday I was going to draw you. In
cartoons, yes, Dad, I know you think cartoons
are silly, but I draw cartoons. And I need
real things to draw from because I don't trust
memory.*

*(Taking a coffee pot, identical to her
fathers, out of identical the box in her
space.)*

*But god, this thing is ghastly
You were so ecstatic when you found it
at a yard sale, no, no, wait, in Mr. Gibbons barn
It all comes back, it all comes back, it all comes back
There's you
And there's me
But now I'm the one who's 43
and stuck
I can't find my way through
Just like you
Am I just like you?*

ALISON

*I can't abide romantic
notions of some vague "long
ago"*

BRUCE

*A sign that he was here
and did his work*

ALISON AND BRUCE

*I want to know what's true, dig deep into
who, and what and why and when
until now gives way to then*

*All the characters peopling this
story swoop in and put the Bechdel
house into place while singing
various La La's, as Alison, Small
Alison, and Bruce sing:*

SMALL ALISON
*Daddy, hey daddy
come here, okay? I*

BRUCE
What is true

ALISON
What is true

need you.

Airplane I wanna play
airplane
airplane I wanna play
airplane
airplane

This has
traveled to
get here
Beautiful

I wanna play

I wanna play

Beautiful is
What is true What is true

Bruce lifts Small Alison up into
the air. Small Alison laughs as
she flies

ALISON

Caption: My dad and I were exactly alike.

SMALL ALISON

I see everything!

ALISON

Caption: My dad and I were *nothing* alike.

SMALL ALISON

I'm Superman!

ALISON

My dad and I... My dad and I...

Bruce unceremoniously dumps Small
Alison back down, suddenly more
interested in something else.

SMALL ALISON

Daddy come back!

ALISON

Caption: Sometimes my father appeared to enjoy
having children, but the real object of his
affection was his house.

John and Christian enter, playing
with blocks and trucks. Helen
practices her piano.

BRUCE

(returning)

I just got a call from Eleanor Bochner,
Allegheny Historical Society. She was calling
about the house tour.

HELEN

Oh. That's wonderful.

BRUCE

She's on her way over right now. I'm not sure
what to do. This place is... I'm not
dressed...

HELEN

Go take a shower.

BRUCE

But-

HELEN

Take a shower, get yourself dressed.

He exits.

HELEN

Kids? Kids? An important lady is on her way
over here to see the house--listen to me,
please--This is one of those times you need to
do what I say, quickly, and without any
shenanigans.

*He wants the Hepplewhite suite chairs back in the parlor
Move the GI Joe. It can't be on the floor
He wants the Dresden figurines back in the breakfront
A slinky messes up the period décor
Get the lemon pledge and dust the--
These should face the same direction--
He wants it vacuumed
The surface gleaming
He wants it closer to the door*

*He wants--
He wants--
He wants--*

*He wants the brass candelabra set at an angle
The crayons and the glue should go back in the drawer
He wants the bust of Quixote square on the mantel
Sweep that lint away, it's what a broom is for
Gently wipe the eucalyptus
Polish up the crystal prisms
When he comes down here
He wants it ready
We've got to get it done before...*

*He wants--
He wants--
He wants--*

The bathroom door opens. Bruce
wearing just a towel around his
waist, emerges:

BRUCE

Where's my bronzing stick!

HELEN

It's in the--

Door slam.

ALISON

*Welcome to our house on Maple Avenue
See how we polish and we shine
We rearrange and realign
Everything is balanced and serene
Like chaos never happens if it's never seen*

ALISON AND HELEN

*Ev'ry need we anticipate and fill
And still--*

HELEN AND SMALL ALISON

He wants the real feather duster used on the bookcase

HELEN AND CHRISTIAN

Find all the books we read and carefully restore

HELEN AND JOHN

He wants them alphabetized by classification

HELEN

A volume out of place could start a third world war

HELEN AND THE KIDS

*That's an inch out of position
Watch it, that's a first edition*

HELEN

*What are we missing?
What have we left out?
When he comes down here what's in store?*

HELEN AND THE KIDS

*He wants--
He wants--
He wants--*

*Bruce re-enters, now fully
dressed, and inspects the house.*

HELEN, CHRISTIAN, JOHN

Welcome to our house on Maple Avenue

ALISON AND SMALL ALISON

Welcome to our house on Maple Avenue

HELEN, CHRISTIAN, JOHN
See how we polish and we shine

ALISON, AND SMALL ALISON
See how we polish and we shine

HELEN, CHRISTIAN, JOHN
We rearrange and realign

ALISON AND SMALL ALISON
We rearrange and realign

HELEN, CHRISTIAN, JOHN
Everything is balanced and serene

BRUCE
Everything is balanced and serene

ALISON AND SMALL ALISON
Everything is balanced and serene

HELEN, CHRISTIAN, JOHN
Like chaos never happens if it's never seen

BRUCE
Like chaos never happens if it's never seen

ALISON AND SMALL ALISON
Like chaos never happens if it's never seen

WHOLE FAMILY
We're a typical family quintet

HELEN
And yet--

BRUCE
(Doing a final check of himself in the
bathroom mirror.)
Not too bad, if I say so myself
I might still break a heart or two
Sometimes the fire burns so hot
I don't know what I'll do.
Not too bad, if I say so myself

BRUCE AND ALISON
Not too bad

Bruce, composed and charming,
greet's the (unseen) visitor.

ALISON
It all comes back...
It all comes back...

(simul with the family:)

FAMILY
(perky but tense)
Deet deet...

What is he after?
What are we doing?
Right foot is tapping
That means he's stewing
Stay very still and
maybe we'll please him
Make one wrong move and
demons will seize him
Try hard. What else is
family for?

He wants--
He wants--
He wants--

BRUCE
Mrs. Bochner, pleasure to
meet you! Come on in!
(she is dazzled)
Thank you. Obviously still a
work in progress. Oh yes,
yeah, I've done all the work
myself.
That's how we're able to
afford the place. No no,
historic restoration is an
avocation for me but that's
flattering. I teach English
at Beech Creek High and the
Bechdel Funeral Home, is our
family business. So I'm also
a funeral director.
(she sees the mirror he
was working on)
You have a keen eye! This I
found yesterday at the dump.
Isn't it? [.] Actually I
believe Rococo Revival.
(she asks if she can
take a picture)
Absolutely. Would you...
like one with the family?
(calling)
Kids? Mrs. Bochner wants to
take a photo.
(the kids and Helen come
and arrange themselves
for the photo)

ROY
(Calling from offstage.)
Hello. Anybody home?

BRUCE
(Calling back.)
Be there in a minute.
(Explaining to Mrs. Bochner)
Young man. Helps out with the yard work.

Roy enters Bruce's view. He's
young and handsome, and carrying a
shovel, ready for yard work.
Bruce's eyes swerve away from the
camera, toward Roy.

ALISON

He wants more

Caption: My Dad and I both grew up in the same
small Pennsylvania town
And he was gay
And I was gay
And he killed himself
And I... became a lesbian cartoonist

Camera Flash.

Shift to Medium Alison in her dorm
room, drawing.

MEDIUM ALISON

(Assessing her work)

Not too bad

If I say so myself

This outshines the one I first drew

(Suddenly)

I don't know which way's up.

I don't know what I'm supposed to do!

(Back into the comfort of her work.)

Not too bad

If I say so myself...

Phone rings.

MEDIUM ALISON

Hello?

BRUCE

Yes, I'd like to speak to Alison Bechdel, the
college student?

MEDIUM ALISON

Hi Dad.

BRUCE

So? How's it going? How are your classes?
How's your dorm? How's the food?

MEDIUM ALISON

I'm... getting used to it.

BRUCE

A little homesick?

MEDIUM ALISON

No, it's not that, it's just... stupid stuff.
In Modern Classics today the professor told us
that Jake's renewal in Spain in "The Sun Also
Rises" is really an allusion to *Jungian*
rebirth.

BRUCE

What???

MEDIUM ALISON

I almost screamed that's bullshit!

BRUCE

That's bullshit! Jake's not a *symbol*, he's
Hemingway. That book is a roman a clef.

MEDIUM ALISON

I know! And at dining yesterday I mentioned
that my family runs a funeral home and everyone
dropped their forks and stared at me like I was
Norman Bates.

BRUCE

Typical.

MEDIUM ALISON

I probably just need to find the right people.
I'm sure there are people here who aren't total
idiots.

BRUCE

Or maybe not. One surprising thing you learn
when you go away to college: People just
aren't as smart as you want 'em to be. Trust
your instincts, kid. You don't need to twist
yourself in knots trying to impress people who
are Not Worthy Of You. Got it?

MEDIUM ALISON

Got it. Thanks, Dad.

BRUCE

Good. Alright, I gotta get over to the Fun
Home, I've got a viewing in 45 minutes.

MEDIUM ALISON

Who died?

BRUCE

One of that big clan of Hofbruners over in
Lakeview.

MEDIUM ALISON

Ah. Have fun.

BRUCE

Will do. Hey kiddo -- Remember what I said,
okay?

MEDIUM ALISON

I will, Dad. Thanks.

Bruce exits. Medium Alison opens
her journal and writes. Alison
reads over her shoulder:

ALISON

"September 15.
Just had a good talk with Dad and I feel so
much better. (underline, underline, underline)
I'm going to spend four years reading books and
drawing and I feel so relieved to let go of
this insane idea that I'm supposed to throw
myself out into the world.

MEDIUM ALISON

It's not the world anyway! It's Oberlin
College!

Medium Alison exits.

ALISON

Wow. I had no idea what was coming.

Shift to the Fun Home. Bruce
enters the showroom with Pete,
bumping into a vacuum cleaner left
in his path, and spots a tape
recorder left on a casket. He
moves the errant objects out of
the way.

BRUCE

So sorry, the kids must have been cleaning in
here. This is the one we spoke about. Cherry.
Quite popular.

PETE

(Pointing to another casket.)

This?

BRUCE

Also popular. Why don't we take these
brochures into the office where you can think
it over.

PETE

So you say we won't see any of the bruises.
With the IV's she was awful beat up by the end.

BRUCE

No, no. We remove all the signs of trauma.
Don't worry, Pete. She'll look very peaceful.

PETE

Thank you. Thanks, Bruce.

BRUCE

Of course. Let's--

PETE

No, I'll, I'll take these home.

BRUCE

Sound good. Take a look and give me a call
later.

(They shake hands)

Get some rest, Pete.

(The stricken man nods. Bruce sees him
out, then comes back in.)

Kids, get out of there. Now!

(Christian and Alison appear from the
closed ends a casket.)

Where's John?

(John appears from behind a flower stand.)

How many times have you been told Do Not Get In
the Caskets.

JOHN

We were making a commercial for // the Fun Home

SMALL ALISON

Shhh!!

CHRISTIAN

We're sorry, Dad.

BRUCE

We've got two bodies. We've got work to do.

SMALL ALISON

Ooh, I call directory! Who are they?

BRUCE

(Writing it out for her.)

Muriel Swartz. Dwight Johnson.

SMALL ALISON

Wait - Benny's dad?

CHRISTIAN
Benny's in my class!

SMALL ALISON
What happened?

BRUCE
He fell off a ladder. Broke his neck.
Get this cleaned up.
(To himself.)
It's going to be a long night.

John and Christian start to clean.
Small Alison begins putting the
names onto the directory board.

CHRISTIAN
When you break your neck is it just like *crack*
you're instantly dead?

JOHN
Probably his head was hanging from his neck and
then he couldn't see, and he couldn't eat or
anything and then he died from not eating and
running into things.

SMALL ALISON
You guys, we gotta practice the commercial.

She fetches the tape recorder.

JOHN
Yeah, we messed it up before.

Bruce crosses through, now wearing
a gown and a surgical mask. The
kids try and hide the tape
recorder. He notices, gives them
a look, but keeps moving through.
They wait to make sure he's not
coming back, then continue.

CHRISTIAN
Should we start at the top?

SMALL ALISON
Yeah.

CHRISTIAN
Wait, should we say Fun Home? We only call it
that in the family?

JOHN
Yeah, that's right.

SMALL ALISON

It's our commercial. We can do what we want.

CHRISTIAN

I guess it's okay. Places everybody!

Christian and Small Alison climb
back into their caskets. John
goes behind the flower stand.
Small Alison turns on the tape
recorder.

SMALL ALISON

Fun Home commercial. Take seven million
billion thousand.

Jackson Five style number begins!

JOHN

*Your uncle died. You're feeling low
You got to bury your momma. But you don't know where to go
Your papa needs his final rest
You got, you got, you got
to give them the best
Oh--*

SMALL ALISON AND CHRISTIAN

Come to the Fun Home

JOHN

That's the Bechdel Funeral Home baby

SMALL ALISON AND CHRISTIAN

The Bechdel Fun Home

JOHN

Next to Johnson's Department Store

THREE KIDS

in Beech Creek!

SMALL ALISON AND CHRISTIAN

The Bechdel Fun Home

JOHN

*We take dead bodies ev'ry day of the week so
You've got no reason to roam
Use the Bechdel Funeral Home*

JOHN
What it is what it is
Hoo Hoo
What it is What it is
Now baby
Ooh--
Here come da judge
Here come da judge
Baby

SMALL ALISON/CHRISTIAN
Sock it to me
Baby

CHRISTIAN
Our caskets

SMALL ALISON AND JOHN
Ooh!

CHRISTIAN
Are satin lined

SMALL ALISON AND JOHN
Ooh!

CHRISTIAN
And we got so many models guaranteed to blow your mind
You know our mourners--

THREE KIDS
So satisfied

CHRISTIAN
They like, they like, they like

THREE KIDS
our formaldehyde

CHRISTIAN
Yeah!

THREE KIDS
Here at the Fun Home

CHRISTIAN
That's the Bechdel Funeral Home, baby

THREE KIDS
Come to the Fun Home

SMALL ALISON
We got kleenex and your choice of psalm

THREE KIDS
Stop by the Fun Home

CHRISTIAN

Think of Bechdel when you need to embalm

THREE KIDS

*So there's no reason to roam
Use the Bechdel Funeral Home
What it is, what it is
Hoo hoo hoo
What it is, what it is
Hoo hoo*

CHRISTIAN

*Tell em what we got?
What else have we got, Tito?
What else have we got?
What else have we got, you guys?*

*They all look around for more
things to sing about.*

SMALL ALISON

Smelling salts for if you're queasy

JOHN

Folding chairs that open easy

CHRISTIAN

*These are cool, you know what they are?
Flags with magnets for your car!*

JOHN

These are wire and they hold flowers

SMALL ALISON

Here's a sign for the names and the hours

CHRISTIAN

Stand right when you sign the book

JOHN

*This is called an aneurysm hook
En garde!*

KIDS

*Come to the Fun Home
Ample parking down the street
Here at the Fun Home
Body prep that can't be beat
You'll like the Fun Home
In our hearse there's a backwards seat!
That's why we made up this poem
We're the Bechdel Funeral Home.*

*What it is, what it is
Hoo hoo hoo
What it is, what it is now baby
Hoo hoo hoo!*

Bruce calls from the embalming
room:

BRUCE

Alison?

A beat.

BRUCE

Alison. Would you come here, please?

CHRISTIAN

(incredulous)

Does he want you to go back there??

SMALL ALISON

I-- I guess.

CHRISTIAN

Why?

SMALL ALISON

I don't know.

BRUCE

(sharper)

Alison.

Small Alison goes back into the
prep room where Bruce is working
on a cadaver. She stares at the
body, waiting for him to say
something.

BRUCE

Hand me those scissors on the tray.

She hands him the scissors, and
waits again, unsure of what's
expected of her or why she's
there.

SMALL ALISON

Is that all?

BRUCE

Yeah.

Small Alison leaves the prep room.
Her brothers are waiting, looking
at her expectantly.

SMALL ALISON
(cranky)

What??

She blows by them, fetches her
diary, and sits down to write.
Alison reads over her shoulder.

ALISON
"Dad showed me a dead body today."
(Small Alison pauses, mulling over what to
write next. Then)
"Went swimming

Got a new Hardy Boy book

Had egg salad for lunch"

What was that about, Dad? Why did you call me
back there? Is that the way your father showed
you your first dead body? Was it some Bechdel
rite of passage? Or, am I reading too much
into this? Maybe you just needed the
scissors.

Shift to a door marked "GAY
UNION." Medium Alison reaches
for the doorknob, then changes her
mind. She is trying to screw up
her courage to go in when Joan
breezes past her, casually giving
her the lesbian nod.

JOAN

Hey.

MEDIUM ALISON

What? Oh. Hey.

JOAN

Comin' in?

MEDIUM ALISON

Uh, no. Uh, German Club?

JOAN

Oh. Over there.

MEDIUM ALISON

Thanks. Danke.

(Joan goes into the Gay Union. Medium
Alison slightly crumples under the weight
of her multiple humiliations.)

Please god, don't let me be a lesbian.

Please don't let me be a homosexual.

(As she exits:)

Danke???

Shift to the yard where Bruce is
entering with a sapling. The
three kids, aka, his "free labor",
are trailing behind.

BRUCE

If we're careful this should bloom in a couple
weeks. Bring me the peat moss.

(Small Alison grabs a bag)

Hold this steady.

(to John)

Gimme that shovel.

SMALL ALISON

This bush came from someone else's yard. That's
illegal.

BRUCE

No one's lived in that house for 5 years,
nobody's going to miss it.

He pours peat around the base and
pats it down.

CHRISTIAN

(Spotting his mom.)

Mom's back from play practice!

Helen enters with bags and
binders.

SMALL ALISON

Are these your costumes?

HELEN

They are.

JOHN

I wanna see!

CHRISTIAN

Me too!

The kids grab a bag, pulling out
big, fancy dresses.

HELEN
Careful, careful!

ROY
(entering)
Hey, everybody. Que pasa?

SMALL ALISON
(shyly)
Hi Roy.

The kids all shyly sidle up to
him.

CHRISTIAN
Hey Roy, what's goin' on?

ROY
(to John)
You look like a guy I met the other day. Are
you the same guy? I know what he looked like
upside down.

He picks John up and turns him
upside down, to the delight of all
three kids.

HELEN
Hello. I'm Helen Bechdel.

ROY
(Putting John down to shake her hand.)
Ah, Mrs. Bechdel, yeah, I'm Roy. Sorry. I
know who you are. My aunt and uncle talk about
you all the time. They see your plays. They're
crazy about you. They're always saying that
you're better than Irma Hornbacher.

HELEN
Oh. No, Irma's wonderful.

BRUCE
Come on, you're in a different class. I've
seen a lot of New York theater, even by those
standards she's exceptional.

SMALL ALISON
Our mom's in a play called Mrs. Warner and the
Professor.

HELEN

Mrs. Warren's Profession.

SMALL ALISON

She studied with Uta Hagen. Do you know who that is?

ROY

I don't even know what you just said.

BRUCE

Wanna get started?

ROY

Sure. Whatever you want. Lemme get my tools.

BRUCE

'Kay

Roy heads out to his car, the three kids trailing after him.

SMALL ALISON

Hey Roy, did you see Herbie Rides Again?

CHRISTIAN

Oh, yeah! It's the best movie.

JOHN

Herbie is a car!

ROY

I didn't see it.

JOHN

The love bug? You didn't see the love bug?

HELEN

Who is that? Why is he here?

BRUCE

I hired him.

HELEN

To do what?

BRUCE

To help me out.

HELEN

Where is he from?

BRUCE

When we went to the lumberyard last week he was there working for Arnie. Kid has a truck, he does hauling. Arnie said he did a good job and he was looking for more work.

HELEN

Oh, so he's just hauling.

BRUCE

Hauling. Other things. I don't know.

HELEN

Okay, so...

You're thinking he's going to be working here, at the house?

BRUCE

What difference does it make?

HELEN

I-- I-- I just--

BRUCE

Arnie recommended him, okay?

HELEN

Okay. I'm just, I'm trying to get a sense // of-
-

BRUCE

Crissakes! I know him. He was my student a few years back. Okay? What, do you think I'm bringing some bum around? Is that the bug up your ass?

The chattering group returns.

JOHN

You know something else about the movie that's funny?

BRUCE

(to Helen)

Jeez.

JOHN

It's that the car is called the love bug. // It's a car, but they call it a bug. Even though it's a car.

ROY

Nope. Read some good books in your class,
though.

BRUCE

My job is to make it interesting.

Helen begins practicing an étude.

ALISON

(Re: Bruce and Roy.)

It's like a 1950's lesbian pulp novel. "Their
tawdry love could only flourish in the
shadows."

Small Alison has wandered in to
hover around her mom.

SMALL ALISON

I like Roy. He's funny.

This brings Alison's attention to
her mother.

HELEN

Alison find something to do. I'm practicing.

SMALL ALISON

(Peering at the music on the piano.)

Did Chop-In write Chop Sticks?

HELEN

It's Sho-PAHN. Alison stop bothering me.

Small Alison goes back to join her
brothers at the TV.

Alison turns back to her father
and Roy.

BRUCE

Sit down. Take a load off.

ROY

I been working, I'm disgusting. Don't wanna
sweat all over your nice stuff.

BRUCE

What are you talking about, it's *furniture* for
chrissakes. Go ahead. Stretch out if you
want.

Roy sits on the chaise, puts his
feet up.

ROY
This place is like a museum.
(Re: a carafe on the bookshelf.)
What's that stuff?

BRUCE
Sherry. Want some?

ROY
Is it good?

BRUCE
Yeah.

ROY
Sure.
(As Bruce pours them both a glass.)
I remember this house before you moved in. We
used to ride our bikes over here when we were
kids. You've done a shit-load of work.

BRUCE
I did. By myself, most of it.

ROY
You must be in good shape, old man.

BRUCE
*Not too bad
If I say so myself
I might still break a heart or two
You'd be surprised just what a guy my age knows how to do*

He brings the sherry to Roy.

BRUCE
Want it?

ROY
Yeah.

BRUCE
(Holding the sherry back.)
Unbutton your shirt.

ROY
Is that your wife playing the piano?

BRUCE
Don't worry about her.

Roy considers, then decides, why
the hell not, and unbuttons his
shirt. Bruce gives him the
sherry.

HELEN
(at the piano)

La la la la...

(Helen stops playing and almost stands. A
beat, then she sits back down and resumes
playing.)

*Maybe not right now
Maybe not right now*

HELEN
La la la...

BRUCE
*I want, I want, I want--
I--
I--*

ROY
*I know this type
this type of married guy
I could just give him the slip but why
It's not a big deal
I know he wants me*

HELEN	ROY	BRUCE	KIDS
<i>I want I want</i>	<i>I know this type</i>	<i>I--</i>	<i>ba ba ba ba</i>
<i>I want I--</i>	<i>this type of married guy I could just give him the slip but why It's not a big deal, I know</i>	<i>could still break a heart or two</i>	<i>ba ba ba ba ba ba ba ba</i>
<i>La la la Me and him Me and him Me and him</i>	<i>he wants just Me and him Me and him Me and him</i>	<i>I want just Me and him Me and him Me and him</i>	<i>ba ba ba ba-</i>

Shift to :

MEDIUM ALISON

Dear Mom and Dad,
Thanks for the care package. I was running out
of granola bars so it came right in the nick of
time. They sell a kind here that I swear is
made of paste.

(Joan enters.)

Nothing else worth writing home about (har
har). Al.

Medium Alison and Joan, in coats
and with backpacks, walk together.

JOAN

That would be great except it's tomorrow night.

MEDIUM ALISON

I could do it by then.

JOAN

Really?

MEDIUM ALISON

I could do it now.

JOAN

You could?

They enter Medium Alison's dorm
room.

MEDIUM ALISON

Just some simple drawing, right? Sure.

(She sits on her bed to sketch)

So you want it to say...

JOAN

We just need really good "No Nukes" posters.

MEDIUM ALISON

(Sketching.)

Right, okay, so something like maybe...

JOAN

(Looking at the sketch.)

Oh, that's funny.

That's really good.

MEDIUM ALISON

This? No. This is just quick and stupid.

JOAN

(Looking around the room as Medium Alison
continues to draw, noticing a photo.)

Who's this in the photo?

MEDIUM ALISON

My dad.

JOAN

That's your *dad*?

MEDIUM ALISON

Yeah.

JOAN

He looks cool. Did he teach you how to draw cartoons?

MEDIUM ALISON

Definitely not.

JOAN

Why's that funny?

MEDIUM ALISON

It's not funny, it's just, he's more... I don't know. Refined.

JOAN

What does he do?

MEDIUM ALISON

A bunch of things, actually. He's a master house restoration, Historical Society kind of guy *and* he's a high-school English teacher *and*, also, he runs the // local - -

JOAN

(thinking she's making a joke)

You didn't have to be in his class, I hope.

MEDIUM ALISON

Why? I was.

JOAN

Seriously? I was joking.

MEDIUM ALISON

Oh. Oh. Yes. What I was going to say is that, everyone in Beech Creek at some point is in my dad's English class, and he's known as a great teacher, so...

JOAN

Oh. Cool.

MEDIUM ALISON

Yeah. He sends me books. We talk about them.

JOAN

He sends you books to read on top of your schoolwork?

MEDIUM ALISON

Yeah.

JOAN

That's a little weird.

ALISON
(Realizing.)
Is that weird? That's really weird.

MEDIUM ALISON
Why?

JOAN
I don't know. Like, what books?

MEDIUM ALISON
Like...

JOAN
Colette??

MEDIUM ALISON
Yeah.

JOAN
Your father sent you *Colette*?

MEDIUM ALISON
Yeah. Why?

JOAN
I don't know. It's just... He's like the
opposite of my dad. He's just like sending you
lesbian books.

MEDIUM ALISON
No! I mean, yes, I guess Colette was a lesbian
but--

JOAN
Oh, she was.

MEDIUM ALISON
Okay, but he sent it to me because he thought
I'd be interested in the whole Paris... Arts...
Bohemian... scene.

JOAN
Yeah but he didn't send you a book about
Toulouse-Latrec, he sent you Colette. I think
it's amazing that he's cool with you being a
dyke.

MEDIUM ALISON
What? I don't think so.

JOAN
Oh, he's not?

MEDIUM ALISON

No. I don't know. I - Can we talk about something else?

JOAN

Okay. Why?

MEDIUM ALISON

My parents don't know because I just figured it out myself.

JOAN

Oh.

MEDIUM ALISON

About two weeks ago.

JOAN

Huh. With who?

MEDIUM ALISON

With who what?

ALISON

(Overcome with humiliation at the memory of the awkwardness.)

Oh god.

JOAN

Who were you with?

MEDIUM ALISON

(Confused, then suddenly getting it)

Nobody! Nobody. Oh my god, I'm so embarrassed.

ALISON

(Quietly writhing in the refreshed humiliation.)

Oh god.

MEDIUM ALISON

I was in a bookstore.

JOAN

In a bookstore? Nice.

MEDIUM ALISON

What? No! Two weeks ago I was downtown and I wandered into the bookstore, I was just browsing around and I picked up this book -

JOAN

Ah, "Word is Out".

MEDIUM ALISON

And I was like, "Oh, interviews. This looks interesting." And then I was like, "These people are all-

Small beat.

JOAN

Gay?

MEDIUM ALISON

Gay, yes. And *then* I was like, "Oh my god! *I'm*

MEDIUM ALISON

- a lesb

JOAN

-a dyke

MEDIUM ALISON

Yes. A dyke. Yes.

MEDIUM ALISON

And I totally flipped out and shoved the book back onto the shelf and I left. And then I came back the next day and bought the book. And then I came back the next day bought all the other books in that section. And then I made myself go to the meeting at the Gay Union. And then, and then, it's now. Hi.

JOAN

Hello.

(A beat. Then, re: Word is Out.)

That's a powerful book.

MEDIUM ALISON

It is.

JOAN

So. I should probably go.

MEDIUM ALISON

'kay.

JOAN

So then... Will I see you at the Union meeting tomorrow afternoon?

MEDIUM ALISON

Yeah I'll be, uh, yeah, I will come to the meeting. I'll bring these posters. Finish 'em up.

JOAN

Cool. I'll see you then. Bye, Alison.

MEDIUM ALISON

Bye, Joan.

Medium Alison sees her out. Then collapses, face-down, onto her bed.

Shift to Small Alison trailing after Bruce.

SMALL ALISON

No, please, Daddy! I can wear my school pants!

BRUCE

No.

Bruce pulls a party dress from Small Alison's closet.

SMALL ALISON

They're dressy!

BRUCE

No. Don't you want to be pretty?

SMALL ALISON

No!!!

BRUCE

That's enough. It's a party, you're a girl. You will wear a party dress.

SMALL ALISON

(With deadly aim.)

I don't know why I should have to. You're wearing a girl color.

Small terrifying beat.

BRUCE

(Laser beam of rage.)

Where's your barrette.

(Roughly shoving it in her hair.)

Do not take this out // again.

SMALL ALISON

Ow. Ow. OW. Daddy please, don't make me wear the dress. Tami made her cat wear a dress and everyone laughed at it and that cat was so humiliated, Daddy! That's what it's like when I put on a dress. Everyone can see it's wrong. It's humiliating.

BRUCE

Enough.
Five minutes.

SMALL ALISON

Please!

He exits.

Small Alison lets the party dress fall to the floor. She drops the barrette as well. She digs in her closet and pulls out a beloved jean jacket. She puts it on, looks in the mirror, and is reassured to see her true self.

SMALL ALISON

Hey
Hey
How ya doin'?
Al... ison
Yeah sure. Al for short
Hey
Yeah Oh yeah
This is my Mustang convertible
Yeah, I found it at the dump Pow!
I fixed it up myself Blam!
Want a ride?
I'm going to Paris
No? Alright, see you later. Yeah.
I'm in Paris in my 'stang
On the boo-lay, boo-lay-var.
Oh no, Did that man just shove that lady? Did he make her cry?
Pardonnez moi, Mademoiselle
Je voudrais to make sure everything is, uh.. d'accord here.
(impersonating the mean man)
Mindez-vous your own beezness
(narrating her own actions as a super hero)
I grab his arm and twist it behind his back!
Excusez-moi, Monsieur, but I believe I was talking to the Mademoiselle.
(impersonating the beautiful lady)
Merci! Merci!
You are tres, tres gallant
What is your appel?
(as herself, gallant)
I'm Al... ison
Alison
(being the beautiful lady again)
Aaahleesohn.

*S'il vous plait,
cood I ride wees you een your mastang?
I dun know what eet ees about you
bat you mek me fil so safe
I dun know what eet ees about you
bat you mek me fil so safe*

*Yeah sure
Oh, yeah sure
Al... ison
Alison
Al... ison
Al for short*

Bruce re-enters, cutting the song short with his look. Small Alison, defeated, picks up the dress.

Shift to Medium Alison's dorm.

MEDIUM ALISON

I wrote to my parents. I did it. I told them I'm a lesbian.

JOAN

Oh.

MEDIUM ALISON

I can't believe I did it.

JOAN

How are they taking it? What do they say?

MEDIUM ALISON

I don't know. I put it in the mailbox just now. I feel tough! I feel so sure of myself. So many things, just suddenly-- So many things make so much sense!

JOAN

Like, oh, that's why I was in love with my first grade teacher!

MEDIUM ALISON

(huge revelation)

That *is* why I was in love with my first grade teacher.

JOAN

(shaking her hand)

Welcome, my friend. Welcome to the club. Tonight there's a party at the Women's Collective. You're coming.

MEDIUM ALISON

Oh. I have a lot of work.

JOAN

What? Come on. It's going to be fun.

MEDIUM ALISON

Yeah --

JOAN

What?

MEDIUM ALISON

I don't know if I fit in.

JOAN

With who?

MEDIUM ALISON

The lesbians. The real lesbians. You know what I mean. They're political and socially conscious and... Real lesbians. Look the only thing I really know about myself is that I'm asexual. I am. I'm not attracted to men but that doesn't necessarily mean I'm attracted to women.

Joan kisses her. Medium Alison is flummoxed for a beat, then lunges at Joan in an uncontrollable and totally inexperienced onslaught of pent up lust.

JOAN

Oh, okay. I guess we're --

Medium Alison leaps on her again.

ALISON

(A sudden humiliation wave at the memory)

Oh my god it's so embarrassing.

(She picks up Medium Alison's journal and reads:)

"Went to a meeting the Gay Union tonight. I was petrified. A lot of political talk. Almost too much, but ultimately a reasonable amount."

What does that mean?

"I signed up to help organize a 'Take Back the Night March.' I don't know why I did it. I don't know what that is." Oh my god.

MEDIUM ALISON

What happened last night?
Are you really here?
Joan Joan Joan Joan Joan
Hi Joan Don't wake up, Joan
Oh my god last night
Oh my god Oh my god Oh my god Oh my god last night
I got so excited
I was too enthusiastic
Thank you for not laughing
Well you laughed a little bit
at one point when I was touching you
and said I might lose consciousness
which you said was adorable
and I just have to trust
that you don't think I am an idiot
or some kind of an animal
I never lost control
due to overwhelming lust

But I must say that I'm
Changing my major to Joan
I'm changing my major to sex with Joan
I'm changing my major to sex with Joan
with a minor in kissing Joan
Foreign study to Joan's inner thighs
A seminar on Joan's ass in her levis
And Joan's crazy brown eyes

Joan, I feel like Hercules
Oh god that sounds ridiculous
Just keep on sleeping through this
and I'll work on calming down
so by the time you've woken up
I'll be cool, I'll be collected
and I'll have found some dignity
but who needs dignity?
'cause this is so much better
I'm radiating happiness
Will you stay here with me
for the rest of the semester?
We won't need any food
We'll live on sex alone
Sex with Joan

I am writing a thesis on Joan
It's a cutting edge field and my mind is blown
I will gladly stay up ev'ry night to hone
My compulsory skills with Joan
I will study my way down her spine,
Familiarize myself with her well-made outline
While she researches mine!

I don't know who I am

*I've become someone new
Nothing I just did
is anything I would do
Overnight everything changed I am not prepared
I'm dizzy I'm nauseous I'm shaky I'm scared
Am I falling into nothingness
or flying into something so sublime?
I don't know
But I'm*

*Changing my major to Joan
I used to believe I'd be all alone
But that was before I was lying prone
in this dorm room bed with Joan
Look, she drooled on the pillow. So sweet
All sweaty and tangled-up in my bed sheet
And my heart feels--
complete*

*Let's never leave this room
How' bout we stay here 'til finals
I'll go to school forever
I'll take out a dementedly huge high-interest loan
'Cause I'm changing
my major
to Joan*

Shift to the house.

ALISON

Caption: I leapt out of the closet -- and four months later my father killed himself by stepping in front of a truck.

(She looks at her father, sitting in his chair in his library, reading.)

While I was at college, exploding into my new life -- you were sitting here reading a book.

Helen and Small Alison are working at the kitchen table.

SMALL ALISON

Mom, I have a question.

HELEN

What?

SMALL ALISON

What was the name of that street you lived on in New York?

HELEN

Bleecker?

SMALL ALISON

Yeah, good.

She dives intently back into her
drawing for a second, then:

SMALL ALISON

Mom, I have a question.

HELEN

What?

SMALL ALISON

When Dad was in the Army in Germany what color
was your house?

HELEN

Well, it was in apartment, not a house. And --
I don't remember what color it was.

SMALL ALISON

Alright something else about what it looked
like then.

HELEN

Uh... Well, we had a balcony, we had a lovely
balcony and in the mornings friends of ours
would come over and we'd sit there and talk and
have breakfast.

SMALL ALISON

Okay, where did you live after that?

HELEN

Here. Your grandfather died while we were
there, so we came back.

SMALL ALISON

Oh yeah, 'cause Daddy had to run the Fun Home.

HELEN

Yes.

SMALL ALISON

(A new question popping into her head.)

Oh, I know!

(She takes her drawing into the library.)

Daddy, you saw the Leaning Tower of Pisa one
time, right?

BRUCE

I did.

(Re: her drawing.)

What's that?

SMALL ALISON

(Excitedly showing him.)

It's for school. We're learning maps and globes and Miss Schenck said draw a map to show in class tomorrow.

BRUCE

Map of what?

SMALL ALISON

Places people in our family have lived.

BRUCE

And what's this?

SMALL ALISON

(Bursting with pride.)

Okay, so: This is a keystone because Pennsylvania is the Keystone state. Inside this square? That's Beech Creek, see? Bridge, ford, creek, school, Fun Home, our house, Aunt Jane and Uncle Randy's house. This is Germany. Oh!

(Adding a new part.)

John, Christian, me. See? Floating in bubbles because we're not born yet --

BRUCE

Okay, that's interesting but let me show you how you can make it better. This is visually confusing; you've got about ten different drawings so you can't really see any of them. Pick one.

SMALL ALISON

This is a cartoon. And in a cartoon there's all different parts.

BRUCE

But we can make it better than a cartoon.

SMALL ALISON

I like cartoons.

BRUCE

Sure, cartoons are fun but I'm showing you here how to do something substantial and beautiful. Listen to me, you have the potential to become a real artist. Do you know that? You do. But that means you have to learn the craft, you have to study the rules. Let's talk about composition. You've got too much going on here. Pick one area.

SMALL ALISON
The Keystone State.

BRUCE
That's too much. Watch this. I'm going to draw
our mountains. See that? How I'm shading
them? See how that gives them dimension?

Make this part look rugged...

Mm mm

Allegheny Plateau

This dark shaded stripe bum bum bum is the front

Paint the long ridges and valleys below

Mm mm

SMALL ALISON
I want the whole state.

BRUCE
(Becoming cross.)
I'm explaining to you that you can't do that.

SMALL ALISON
Let me try.

BRUCE
Alison, this is the way it should look.

SMALL ALISON
But I liked the way mine was.

BRUCE
(Losing his temper.)
But you cannot do it like that unless you want
to ruin it. I am trying to teach you something
important.

HELEN
Bruce, it doesn't matter. It's a drawing.

BRUCE
What do you mean it doesn't matter? She's
taking it to school. She's showing it in class.
You know what, never mind. You want to take a
half-baked mess to school, you want to
embarrass yourself like that it's fine with me.
You do what you want. I don't care.

SMALL ALISON
(Holding it out to him.)
I like the one you did, Daddy.

ALISON

(Taking the page from Small Alison,
inspecting her father's drawing.)

Make this part look rugged...

Mm mm

Allegheny Plateau

This dark shaded stripe bum bum bum is the front

Paint the long ridges and valleys below

Mm mm

(She begins a new drawing.)

Our town ... is this dot

Quick dashes

mark the property ends

Beech Creek, a rope that turns and bends

Little squares for houses strung along roads

the land transfigured into topographic codes

Maps show you what is simple and true

I'm laying out a bird's eye view

Where did he travel, what did he see?

A sweeping atlas of my dad's mythology

Dad was born on this farm

Here's our house

Here's the spot where he died

I can draw a circle

His whole life fits inside

Four miles from our door

I-80 ran from shore to shore

On its way from the Castro to Christopher Street

The road not taken

Just four miles from our door

You were born on this farm

Here's our house

Here's the spot where you died

I can draw a circle

I can draw a circle

You lived your life inside

Shift to Bruce's car.

BRUCE

Hey, Mark. Is that you?

MARK

Oh. Hey, Mr. Bechdel.

BRUCE

You wanna lift?

MARK
I'm not goin' far.

BRUCE
I'm happy to give you a ride. Too many
groceries--
(moving a bag off the front seat)
--let me put these in the back. Get in.

He reaches across the passenger
seat and opens the door. Mark
gets in. They drive.

BRUCE
So, Mark. How's your summer? You got a job?

MARK
Yeah, working in the stockroom at Cosgrove's.

BRUCE
Good. Staying on track. That's great.
Wanna beer?

MARK
I don't... I don't think I better.

BRUCE
It's okay. There's some in the bag.

Unsure of what to do, Mark has
retrieved one of the beers.

MARK
Oh, uh, my house is down that way, Mr. Bechdel.

BRUCE
I know. I just like getting the chance to know
you a little better. You got yourself a girl?

MARK
Nah.

BRUCE
Saving for college? You a senior?

MARK
Junior.

BRUCE
Aha.

Shift to :

MEDIUM ALISON

Dear Mom and Dad --
I assume you got my letter. I haven't heard
from you. I'd really love *some* sort of
response...

Shift to Small Alison watching a
Partridge Family-esque show on TV.

SOUND FROM THE TV

(A kid's voice.)

I guess you're not too bad... for a manager.

(Canned laughter. A man's voice)

And I guess you kids aren't so bad either --

Even if you *do* wear chicken feathers.

(Canned laughter, then a young man's
voice.)

A-one, a-two, a-one two three four--

(Sound of a family singing-group.)

Ba Ba Ba Ba....

Everything's alright, babe

When we're together

When we're together

'Cause you are like a raincoat

Made out of love...

Bruce enters, and snaps off the
TV.

BRUCE

God, it's inane.

SMALL ALISON

I was watching it!

BRUCE

That show's awful.

SMALL ALISON

It's the best show! It's about a family that--

BRUCE

I know what it's about. Read a book.

He stands in front of a mirror
straightening his tie.

SMALL ALISON

How come you're wearing a suit?

BRUCE

I'm going to Danville.

SMALL ALISON

(Making a joke, twirling her finger by the
side of her head.)

Are you going to the mental hospital?

BRUCE

(Slight beat)

Yes.

SMALL ALISON

... You are?

BRUCE

I have to see a psychiatrist.

SMALL ALISON

How come?

BRUCE

Because I do dumb dangerous things. Because
I'm bad. Not good like you.

ALISON

Actually it's because you were arrested, Dad.
On a charge of "furnishing a malt beverage to a
minor," which I believe is what they call a
euphemism.

Bruce exits. Small Alison tries
to digest this information. Helen
enters on her way to do the
laundry.

SMALL ALISON

Daddy said he's going to Danville.

HELEN

(Taken aback that Small Alison was told
this.)

Oh.

SMALL ALISON

He said he's going to see a psychiatrist?

HELEN

He is.

SMALL ALISON

How come?

HELEN

The... um...
A judge said he had to go. It's been very...

(MORE)

HELEN (cont'd)
complicated. We thought we might have to move,
and then--

SMALL ALISON
Move?? Where would we go??

HELEN
We don't have to move. The judge said your dad
could, could-- see someone instead. I can't
explain it any better. You don't need to
worry. Everything's going to be fine.

Helen leaves. Small Alison is
left alone.

ALISON
Oh yes, it's all fine.
(She draws, and speaks what she's drawing)
Slam. Crash.

BRUCE
Who fucking left these here?
I just varnished this table!

ALISON
(Continuing to draw the
fight we're hearing.)

HELEN
Bruce--
(sound of him tearing
pages out of the books)
Bruce, what are you doing!
Those are library books!! //
Stop it!

... varnished

... library... books

BRUCE
Take these back to the
library you crazy, // stupid
bitch!

HELEN
Go! Go! Just go! You're
going to be late for your //
appointment. Just go.

...stupid

BRUCE
Don't fucking tell me what to
do!

HELEN
Bruce if you miss this
appointment we are in a lot
of trouble. // Do you
understand that?

... trouble

BRUCE
Thank you for the lecture. //
I can handle my own business!

HELEN
If you're not home for dinner
I'm throwing it in the
toilet!

Small Alison shuts her eyes and
covers her ears.

SMALL ALISON
Ba ba ba ba
ba ba ba ba
Ba ba ba ba
ba ba ba ba ba

To her astonishment and delight
she her song is taken up by
everyone in her family, melding
together with the happy family
from her TV show.

KIDS, MEDIUM ALISON AND JOAN

*Ba ba ba ba
ba ba ba ba
Ba ba ba ba
ba ba ba ba ba*

Bobby Jeremy and the Susan Deys
emerge from the TV.

BOBBY JEREMY

Today I woke up with this feeling that I did not recognize

KIDS, THE SUSAN DEYS

Strange feeling yeah

BOBBY JEREMY

*Our happy life seemed far away and everything was made of
lies*

KIDS, THE SUSAN DEYS

Lies yeah

BOBBY JEREMY

*The sky was turning dark when baby I looked in your eyes
And that's when I knew*

KIDS, THE SUSAN DEYS

*That is when I knew
(Bruce and Helen join)
Everything's all right, babe*

BOBBY JEREMY

When we're together

ALL

When we're together

BOBBY JEREMY

*Cuz you are like a raincoat
made out of love*

ALL

you are like a raincoat

ALL

Keepin' me dry

Magic shield of love

BOBBY JEREMY

protecting me from bad weather

RAINCOAT CHORUS

Rain from the sky

You are like a raincoat!

BOBBY JEREMY

Made out of Love

HELEN AND THE KIDS

ba ba ba ba ba ba

BOBBY JEREMY

Raincoat of Love

HELEN AND THE KIDS

ba ba ba ba ba...

EVERYONE

Everything's all right, babe, when we're together

BOBBY JEREMY

We're together

EVERYONE

Cuz you are like a raincoat

BOBBY JEREMY

made out of love

HELEN AND THE KIDS

Keepin' me dry

EVERYONE

Magic shield of love

BOBBY JEREMY

protecting me from bad weather

EVERYONE

Rain from the sky

You are like a raincoat!

BOBBY JEREMY

Made out of love

Made out of love

HELEN AND THE KIDS

Love love love love love

Together Together

Raincoat of Love Love

Raincoat of Love

ALL

Everything's all right, when we're together
Everything's all right, when we're together

The TV show disappears and Bruce is left alone. Alison watches him continue in this plastic, upbeat mode.

BRUCE

Everything's all right, when we're together
Everything's all right
Everything's all right

ALISON

It's only writing, it's only drawing, I'm remembering something, that's all.

The song fades out into the sounds of loud, whooshing New York City traffic. Bruce is now in a small, shabby Greenwich Village apartment. He goes into the bathroom to wash up. Small Alison and Christian are at the front door, holding it closed while John pounds from the other side.

JOHN

Hey! Let me in.

SMALL ALISON

Are you a Land Shark?

She and Christian crack up.

JOHN

(Pounding, nearly crying.)

Let me in!

CHRISTIAN

Land Shark. You have to say Land Shark.

BRUCE

Let him in.

They open the door John bursts through, goes right to his sleeping bag on the floor, where he quickly falls asleep.

BRUCE

Don't play in the hall like that. Ellie told us her neighbors don't like it. She won't let us stay here again if you do that.

ALISON

Caption... Caption... Uh... Clueless in New York. In denial in New York. Family Fun in New York. Child neglect in New York. I don't know...

Christian looks out the open window at the busy street below. Small Alison paws through the shopping bags. Bruce is in the bathroom washing up.

SMALL ALISON

(Pulling a box out of Li-Lac Chocolates out of one of the many shopping bags and starting to open it.)

Can I eat one of these chocolates?

BRUCE

No, those are to take home for your mother. Put them back.

SMALL ALISON

(Taking a huge book out of a Rizzoli bag.)

Can I look at the Baryshnikov book?

BRUCE

Yes but be careful with it.

SMALL ALISON

What's the name of that museum we're going to tomorrow?

BRUCE

The Frick.

SMALL ALISON

Oh yeah.

Christian is looking at a Chorus Line program. He shares a private, deliciously scandalized moment with his sister.

CHRISTIAN

Remember this song?
"Shit Ritchie, Shit Ritchie"

SMALL ALISON

That was so funny. What about the song about
the *tits*.

CHRISTIAN

Oh yeah.

Scandalized giggling.

BRUCE

Kids, wash up.

ALISON

(Focused on drawing details of the scene.)

Okay... Sleeping bags, shopping bags, window
was open, really hot, stinky--no, no...

(Writing:)

Humectant. "The humectant air." Something on
"The humectant air" Good phrase. Okay, good.

BRUCE

Get into bed. It's late.

Small Alison and Christian brush
their teeth. There is a big
explosion noise outside. A car
alarm goes off. John doesn't stir
but the other two jump and run to
the window. Alison looks as well.

CHRISTIAN

Whoa! I think somebody blew up that garbage
can.

ALISON

Fireworks.

BRUCE

Just homemade fireworks.

CHRISTIAN

There's so many sailor guys.

BRUCE

It's 'cause there's ships here from all over
the world.

CHRISTIAN

For the bicentennial?

BRUCE

Yeah.

BRUCE

(Getting them settled.)

Come on. Lay down. Go to sleep. Big day tomorrow.

ALISON

Kids in bags. *Loved* that sleeping bag. On the front door, one two three four locks. Amazing. A coat hook - jackets on it, piled like twenty deep on the one hook. Basket with Village Voices.

(Looking out the window.)

The "Village Cigar" sign.

Bruce turns out all the apartment lights and heads for the door.

SMALL ALISON

Where are you going?

BRUCE

Oh. Just out. Just for a minute. What's a matter, you can't sleep? I'm just running out for a newspaper. I'll be back in a sec. You're going to fall asleep so fast you'll be asleep before I get back.

SMALL ALISON

But where are you going?

BRUCE

I said. I'm going out for a paper. Alright? Pony girl?

(Singing her to sleep.)

*Pony girl ride, ride away
I knew you'd break my heart someday
Some folks get the call to go
Some folks are bound to stay
Oh, ride, ride, ride away*

He checks. Her eyes are closed.
He slips out.

When the lock has finished turning behind him, Small Alison sits up, eyes wide, staring at the closed apartment door.

ALISON

Caption: Dad goes out. Dad gets a newspaper. Dad goes cruising? Dad picks up a hustler? No he didn't. Maybe he did. I don't really know. Who knows?

Shift to Medium Alison and Joan.

JOAN

What's the matter?

MEDIUM ALISON

Dad finally responded to my letter.

JOAN

Oh my god. What does he say?

MEDIUM ALISON

(Reading.)

"Dear Al,
Big week at Fun Home. Couple of kids from Lock Haven wrapped their car around a tree and I ended up working two eighteen hour shifts. Bad for my blood pressure. Anyway, that's why I've been out of touch for a bit. Oh, by the way, we got your letter. Well, kid, talk about a flair for the dramatic.

Bruce enters, continuing his letter.

BRUCE

As far as I see it the good news is, you're human.

MEDIUM ALISON

What does that mean? What else would I be?

BRUCE

Your mother's pretty upset though -- not surprisingly, I guess. But I'm of the opinion that everyone should experiment.

MEDIUM ALISON

Ew.

BRUCE

I can't say, though, that I see the point of putting a label on yourself. There have been a few times in my life when I thought about taking a stand, but I'm not a hero. Is that a cop out? Maybe so. It's hard sometimes to tell what is really worth it.

MEDIUM ALISON

The tone is what I can't stand. It's so typical. So all knowing. He has to be the expert. Lots of wisdom and advice about things he *doesn't know anything about*. I'm gay.

(MORE)

MEDIUM ALISON (cont'd)

Which means I'm not like him, and I've never been like him, and he can't deal with that. He still wants to be the intellectual, broad-minded, liberal, bohemian but he can't pull it off because he can't deal with me and you know what? He never could. He never could.

Shift to a diner, Bruce and Small Alison sitting at a table.

BRUCE

I need more coffee. Where's Betty?

SMALL ALISON

She went home. Lorna's on now.

BRUCE

Oh.

(Re: his newspaper.)

Huh.

SMALL ALISON

What?

BRUCE

Bill Smoot's running for town council. He didn't mention it at Rotary.

(Noticing.)

Hey. Where's your barrette?

(She grudgingly pulls it out of her pocket.)

Put it back in. It keeps the hair out of your eyes.

SMALL ALISON

(Under her breath as she puts it back in.)

So would a crew cut.

BRUCE

If I see you without it again I'll wale you. Go find Lorna. I need coffee.

He goes back to his paper. Small Alison gets up to fetch Lorna but, is stopped in her tracks, as, with the sound of a jingling bell, she sees someone entering into the diner.

ALISON

You didn't notice her at first but I saw her the moment she walked in.

(MORE)

ALISON (cont'd)

She was a delivery woman. She came in with a handcart full of packages. She was an old-school butch.

SMALL ALISON

*Someone just came in the door
Like no one I ever saw before
I feel-
I feel-
I don't know where you came from
I wish I did, I feel so dumb
I feel-
Your swagger and your bearing
And the just-right clothes you're wearing
Your short hair and your dungarees and your lace up boots
And your keys*

Oh, your ring of keys

*I thought it was supposed to be wrong
But you seem okay with being strong
I want-
You're so--
It's prob'ly conceited to say
but I think we're alike in a certain way
I, um-*

*Your swagger and your bearing
And the just-right clothes you're wearing
Your short hair and your dungarees and your lace up boots
And your keys
Oh, your ring of keys*

*Do you feel my heart saying hi?
In this whole luncheonette why am I the only one
who sees you're beautiful--
No.
I mean... handsome*

*Your swagger and your bearing
And the just-right clothes you're wearing
Your short hair and your dungarees and your lace up boots
And your keys
Oh, your ring of keys*

*I know you
I know you
I know you*

Bruce has lowered his menu and has seen the butch. A look of disgust crosses his face. Small Alison sees only sees the butch.

A phone ring. Shift to :

BRUCE
Hello?

MEDIUM ALISON
Hey, Dad.

BRUCE
Kiddo. How are ya?

MEDIUM ALISON
I got your response to my letter.

BRUCE
Oh. Oh good.

MEDIUM ALISON
It was a little confusing.

BRUCE
Ah. Listen, before I forget, d'ja get the book
I sent? The Joyce. Portrait of the --

MEDIUM ALISON
Yes, I got it.

BRUCE
You better damn well identify with every page!

MEDIUM ALISON
If you don't want to talk to me about my letter
put Mom on the phone

BRUCE
Well, she's watching something on TV.

MEDIUM ALISON
Would you ask her, please, if she'll talk to
me?

BRUCE
Sure.

Shift from Bruce to Helen.

HELEN
Hello?

MEDIUM ALISON
Hi, Mom.

HELEN
How are you? How's your school work?

MEDIUM ALISON

It's... fine.
Are you ever going to talk to me about my
letter?

A small beat.

HELEN

I'm -- I'm really at odds
here.

I feel responsible --

I do feel children should be
allowed to make their own
mistakes.

You know that and you know
that I don't like parents who
meddle, but in this case I'm
uniquely qualified to warn
you against romanticizing
this path. Alison, you
probably don't know that on
more than one occasion
catastrophe has been narrowly
averted // and it is
difficult for me to --

MEDIUM ALISON

Mom, you didn't cause this--
That's not the way it works

Oh please...

Catastrophe? Could you be a
little more overdramatic?

HELEN

Alison, your father has had affairs with men.

A beat.

MEDIUM ALISON

What?

HELEN

And boys. I don't know how he hasn't been
caught or exposed. There was the thing with
Roy.

MEDIUM ALISON

Our yard guy? Our *babysitter*???

HELEN

What do you think he was doing when he went out
in the middle of the night, or taking his
"trips"? One time he came back with body lice.
It's been going on for years. For our whole
marriage, actually.

MEDIUM ALISON

Why are you telling me this and not Dad?

HELEN

Your father? Tell the truth? Please.

Shift to :

JOAN

That's-- Oh my god. Your *dad*??? Are you okay?

MEDIUM ALISON

(Not sure, then deciding.)

I'm fine.

JOAN

Are you sure? Do you need to talk about it?

MEDIUM ALISON

I don't. I don't want to talk about it, I don't want to think about it. I want to... I don't know. Let's go see what's happening at the Gay Union.

JOAN

(Holding up a joint.)

Wanna go to my room? Smoke a joint?

MEDIUM ALISON

Yes I do.

ALISON

Caption: My newfound queerness was-- No. Unable to process this tsunami-like revelation from my father-- Tsunami-like??? No.

(Bruce, searching for something in his tool bag, slams the bag down in frustration.)

Caption: I leapt into my new life with both feet and blocked out everything that was happening at home.

Helen is preparing to leave the house for school.

BRUCE

Where the hell are John and Christian???

HELEN

John's at Cosgrove's probably.

BRUCE

Why?

HELEN
(Does he really not know this?)
Because... He works there.

ALISON
I should have been paying attention *Caption:*
I should have been paying attention.

BRUCE
Since when?

HELEN
He's been working there almost a month.

BRUCE
Oh.

ALISON
And I-- *Caption!* I was, I guess I was *mad* at
you, Dad.

BRUCE
Well, where's Christian?

HELEN
At Doug's probably. What do you need?

BRUCE
Nothing. Nothing. I'll do it myself.

ALISON
My life had just started to open.

BRUCE
(Muttering to himself as he resumes his
search for the missing tool.)
Dammit! Goddammit!

ALISON
I didn't know, Dad, I had no way of knowing,
that my beginning would be your end.

HELEN
(Seeing the broken painting.)
Oh my god. The Brinley. Oh my god, what
happened? Did it fall?
(He keeps banging around the tool box, but
doesn't answer)
Bruce, the painting. What happened?

BRUCE
I threw it down the fucking stairs.

HELEN

Why??

BRUCE

I don't // know why!

HELEN

Bruce I don't know // what's

BRUCE

Because no one fucking helps me around here!
Because I can't stand the sound of your
hectoring, // shrewish voice, your histrionics,
your-

HELEN

You *stop*. You're blaming *me*? After what
you've put me through? // I'm on edge every
minute. You're so...

BRUCE

Every single person in this town knows what
kind of a man I am. You're the one with the
problem.

HELEN

I have to be at school and I'll be at meetings
until late.

Helen exits.

ALISON

I'm drawing. I'm drawing. I'm just drawing.
I'm remembering something, that's all.

Shift to Medium Alison and Joan,
in their winter coats, with a
backpacks and a duffle bag,
approaching the house.

MEDIUM ALISON

This is it. Oh my god, I don't wanna go in.

JOAN

It's going to be okay.

MEDIUM ALISON

How's it going to be okay? Everything's-- Who
knows? Who knows? Come on in, let me
introduce you to my *gay dad*. It's only three
months since I left here! What happened in
three months?

(She pulls herself together.)

Let's go.

They enter.

MEDIUM ALISON
(calling out.)

Hello.
I don't know where they are.
(calling out)
Hey! We're here!

JOAN
(Awestruck. Dumbfounded.)

Oh my god!

MEDIUM ALISON

What?

JOAN

You described it, but I had no idea.

MEDIUM ALISON

Why?
Oh, yeah, I guess it's...

Helen enters.

HELEN

Oh, you're here.

MEDIUM ALISON

Hi Mom.

HELEN

This is your friend?

MEDIUM ALISON

Yeah, this is Joan.

JOAN

Thanks for letting me come, Mrs. Bechdel.

HELEN

Very nice to meet you, Joan.

BRUCE

(Bounding in.)

Hey there you are! Hey! Welcome home! The
prodigal returns!!

MEDIUM ALISON

Hey Dad, This is--

BRUCE

Joan!

(Shaking her hand.)
(MORE)

BRUCE (cont'd)

Nice to meet you. Nice to meet you. Listen, I've gotta pick up some three-quarter inch ply from Bittner's before they close. Hey you wanna go for a drive later?

MEDIUM ALISON

Sure.

He leaves.

MEDIUM ALISON

So.

HELEN

My goodness, it's lunchtime. Are you girls hungry?

JOAN

I'm okay.

(To Medium Alison.)

You?

MEDIUM ALISON

We're fine.

HELEN

Sure?

MEDIUM ALISON

Yeah, we stopped at a diner on the way. But you should go ahead and eat.

HELEN

No, I'm fine. I might have a glass of wine though. Would either of you like a glass of wine?

MEDIUM ALISON

Uh...

JOAN

Oh, no thanks, Mrs. Bechdel.

(Beat.)

Maybe you guys would like some time to talk.

HELEN

Oh.

MEDIUM ALISON

Huh?

JOAN

Cuz I actually wouldn't mind laying down a little bit. I'm still pretty wiped out from last week.

MEDIUM ALISON

Okay. Uh--

(To Helen.)

I thought I'd put her in the lilac room?

HELEN

Sure.

MEDIUM ALISON

(To Joan.)

Upstairs, first room on the right.

JOAN

Great. Come get me whenever.

Joan exits.

HELEN

(Pouring two glasses of wine.)

You must be tired too.

MEDIUM ALISON

I'm okay.

(They sit. Long beat.)

So

How've things been here?

HELEN

He bought that old shell of a house out on
Route 150. Did he tell you that?

MEDIUM ALISON

Oh yeah, I think he mentioned it in one of his
letters. I've been getting two, three,
sometimes four letters a week. They're kind of
// manic--

HELEN

Years ago he talked about buying it and he
looked it over and said it wasn't worth it, it
was too far gone and that was back then so I
don't know why now that it's even more broken
down he's decided he can fix it up. I'm sure he
can.

MEDIUM ALISON

Probably.

HELEN

He's out there day and night, like a maniac,
not eating, I don't think he's sleeping.
Sometimes I walk into a room and he's standing
there, not moving, frozen, like a statue.

MEDIUM ALISON

Yeah, I don't know. He's--

HELEN

I'm sick of it. I'm sick of cooking for him
and I'm sick of cleaning this museum.

MEDIUM ALISON

It's too much. You've done too much.

HELEN

You know, shortly after we were married we took
a drive from Germany where we were living to
Paris. He wanted me to meet an Army buddy of
his. We had a beautiful drive. And then, just
outside of Paris, he just went crazy. Just
started screaming at me. Why couldn't I read a
simple fucking map? I was a stupid, worthless
bitch. I was dumbfounded. I was terrified.
It came out of nowhere as far as I knew. Of
course I learned later that this man had been
your father's lover.

MEDIUM ALISON

I don't know how you've done it.

HELEN

*Welcome to our house on Maple Avenue
See how we polish and we shine
We rearrange and realign
Everything is balanced and-- and--*

*Days and days and days, that's how it happens
Days and days and days
Made of lunches and car rides and shirts and socks
and grades and piano and no one clocks
the day you disappear*

*Days and days and days, that's how it happens
Days and days and days
Made of posing and bragging and fits of rage
And boys, my god, some of them underage
And, oh, how did it all happen here?*

*There was a time your father swept me off my feet with words
We read books, strolled through Munich at night,
drank beer with friends,
discussed the places we would go
And he said I understood how the world made him ache
But no
But no*

That's how it happens

*Days made of bargains I made because I thought as a wife
I was meant to and now my life is shattered and laid bare
Days and days and days and days and days and days and days*

*Welcome to our house on Maple Avenue
See how we polish and we shine
We rearrange and realign
Everything is balanced and serene
Like chaos never happens if it's never seen*

*Don't you come back here
I didn't raise you
to give away your days
Like me.*

Shift to Bruce and Joan at the
piano.

BRUCE
*That's how Mavis, Pearl and Carol
Fancy hats and parasols
Ended up together inside that barrel
Tumbling down Niagara Falls!*

Sang it for the dean's wife!

JOAN
No!

BRUCE
Oh yes.

JOAN
What happened???

BRUCE
The crowd went wild!

JOAN
I can't believe you did that!

Medium Alison enters.

BRUCE
Listen, as far as we knew we were about to be
expelled anyway, so we thought why not stick it
to the man on our way out!

MEDIUM ALISON
Oh god, this story?

JOAN
You didn't tell me your dad was a troublemaker.

MEDIUM ALISON
Has he got you polishing silver??

JOAN

I don't know what to say. He made it sound
like a great idea.

BRUCE

I charmed her into it.

JOAN

He charmed me into it.

BRUCE

(Play the bottom part of Heart and Soul.)

Hey Al, come play this one with your old dad.

Medium Alison is also now having a
good time.

MEDIUM ALISON

No. Dad!

BRUCE

(To Joan.)

Have you heard her play?

JOAN

I have not.

BRUCE

Aha! Well, she learned everything she knows
from me. Keep that in mind. Come on!

MEDIUM ALISON

Dad!

BRUCE

Come on.
Heart and soul --

BRUCE AND MEDIUM ALISON

(With gusto.)

*Jean Stafford must have loved Robert Lowell
because he treated her badly
They took the same romantic path
as Hughes and Plath
Heart and soul -*

MEDIUM ALISON

(Laughing.)

Enough!

JOAN

You wrote that?

BRUCE

It was a collaboration.

ALISON

There's a different version of this visit, Dad,
where it's all alright, where it all comes out
alright.

The piano continues. A bit more
laughter.

JOAN

I'm gonna go help your mom with dinner.

She exits leaving Medium Alison
and Bruce alone together. A beat.
Bruce tinkers on the piano.

BRUCE

Joan's a great gal.

MEDIUM ALISON

Yeah?

BRUCE

Oh yeah. Quick. Bright.

MEDIUM ALISON

Yeah, she is.

Yeah.

(Beat.)

Hey, Dad?

BRUCE

Yeah?

MEDIUM ALISON

I've been wondering...

BRUCE

Yeah?

MEDIUM ALISON

I was just wondering
if you knew what you were doing when you gave
me that Colette book.

Bruce stops playing for a moment.

BRUCE

Oh.

(Beat as he can't figure out how to answer, then, gathers himself and totally shrugs it off.)

I don't know.

He resumes his idle playing. A beat. Medium Alison exits. Bruce gets up and grabs his jacket.

BRUCE

You ready to go for that drive?
Alison?

(He looks at Alison)

Hey Kiddo. You ready?

Alison gathers herself.

ALISON

Yes.

BRUCE

(Flipping his car keys.)

Wanna drive?

ALISON

No, that's okay. You can drive.

She follows him into the car. In the course of this walk she moves back into the past. She's not remembering this, she's living it again.

They get into the car. They drive.

BRUCE

So...

(A beat. Gathering his nerve.)

It's uh-- It's uh--

(Small nervous chuckle. A beat, then tries again.)

You uh--

(Can't do it.)

That too much air?

Alison shakes her head no. They drive in painful silence. She looks out the window, her eyes following the telephone wires.

ALISON

*Telephone wire
run and run
Telephone wire
sun down on the creek
Partly frozen, partly flowing,
must be windy, trees are bending,
Junction 50,
field needs mowing
Feels like the
car is floating*

*Say something
Talk to him
Say something
Anything
At the light
at the light
at the light
at the light*

*At the light
at the light
at the light
at the light*

*Like, you could say,
So how does it feel to know that you and I are both--*

BRUCE

Hey

ALISON

Yeah?

BRUCE

Where'd'ya wanna go?

ALISON

Oh. I don't know.

BRUCE

*I know a bar
It's kind of hidden away
Seedy club
for folks like, you know...
Could be fun*

ALISON

*But Dad
I'm not twenty-one*

BRUCE

Oh yeah. Right.

ALISON

*Telephone wire
long black line
Telephone wire
finely threaded sky
There's the pond where I went wading,
there's the sign for Sugar Valley,
on the mountain light is fading
I go back to school tomorrow*

*Say something
Talk to him
Say something
Anything
At the light
at the light
at the light
at the light*

*At the light
at the light
at the light
at the light
Doesn't matter what you say
Just make the fear in his eyes go away*

BRUCE

There was a boy

At college

My first year there

Norris Jones

He had black wavy hair

Huh

Norris Jones

Where is he now?

Huh

Fourteen years old

In Swensen's barn

It was cold

Lots of boys messed around, you know

For them, it was a game they outgrew

But I always knew

ALISON

Dad, me too!

*Since, like five I guess
I preferred to wear boys shirts and pants
I felt absurd in a dress
I really tried to deny my feelings for girls
But I was like you
Dad, me too*

BRUCE

(He hasn't heard a word she's said, still
deep in his own thoughts.)

Huh

Norris Jones

ALISON

Dad?

BRUCE

Norris Jones

ALISON

Dad?

BRUCE

Did I mention I've taken on a new project?
That old house out on Route 150!
You've seen it, Al. It's been sitting empty out
there for 40, 50 years at least.

ALISON

*Telephone wire
Stop! Too fast!
Telephone wire
Make this not the past, this car ride!*

*This is where it has to happen
There must be some other chances
There's a moment I'm forgetting where you tell me you see me
Say something!
Talk to me
Say something!
Anything
At the light
At the light*

This can't be our last--

They are home.

BRUCE

That was fun.

(Looking at his watch, getting out of the car.)

It's earlier than I thought. Comin' in?

ALISON

(Left in the car.)

*Telephone wire
That was our last
night.*

Alison tries to right herself with her work, going back to her drawing table.

ALISON

This, um... What is this? "Table in living room with jack in the pulpit." Oh. Oh. This is... uh, I was going to draw this // in this panel.

BRUCE

(writing the letter)

Dear Al, It was great to have you home.

ALISON

What was I...? What's this?

BRUCE

I've been flying high ever since you were here.

ALISON

I don't want to.

BRUCE

Dear Al

ALISON

I don't want to.

BRUCE

I'll admit I'm somewhat
envious of the 'new' freedom
that appears on campuses
today.
Dear Al, Did you receive that
Winograd article I was
telling you about? You
should have gotten it by now.
Do you know I was never even
in New York until I was about
twenty?
Dear Al - I just re-read
Araby. That could have been
me - I was rather sensitive
when I was little, you know -
Dear Al, I've been working
like mad on that house I told
you about. Can't think about
much else. Can't sleep -
Dear Al--

ALISON

(Suddenly, fierce,
facing him directly.)
What did it feel like to step
in front of a truck, Dad?
What did it feel like to see
it coming right at you and
not move? And just let it
hit you? *Why?* Was it
because of me? I'm afraid it
wasn't. That's the crazy
thing. I'm afraid it wasn't.

BRUCE

*I fucking love beginnings
Flying high
Hard to know where to start
It's all so fast I'm trying not to spin
I guess I'm older
And it's harder when you're older
to begin*

*Peeling plaster, sagging roof,
two missing stairs, a buckled wall
I'm fired up to do this
But on my own it all--*

*So much damage, broken windows,
pipes are shit, crap veneer
It's hours later. Jesus! I'm still standing here
Still standing here*

*But when the sunlight hits the parlor wall
at certain times of day
I see how fine this house could be
I see it so damn clear
What's the matter? Why am I standing here?*

*Bad foundation, twisting floorboards,
shoddy pipes, a gaping hole
It's a lot, it's a lot to keep under control
Something cracking, something rotting,
piles of ruin and debris,
killing me, crushing me, pushing me*

*But when the sunlight hits the parlor wall
at certain times of day
I see how fine this house could be
I see it so damn clear
What's the matter? Why am I standing here?*

*Dear Al, I'm scared
I had a life I thought I understood
I took it and I squeezed out every bit of life I could
But the edges of the world that held me up have gone away
and I'm falling into nothingness
or flying into something so sublime
and I'm a man I don't know
Who am I now? Where do I go?
I can't go back
I can't find my way through
I might still break a heart or two*

*But when the sunlight hits the parlor wall
at certain times of day
I see how fine this house could be
I see it so damn clear
Oh my God!
Why am I standing here?*

Unbearable sound of a blaring
horn.

Alison, shattered, finds her way
to the drawing table.

ALISON

Caption.

Caption.

Caption.

Caption. Caption.

I'm the only one here.

This is what I have of you:
(Sifting through a pile of drawings.)
You ordering me to sweep and dust the parlor.
You steaming off the wallpaper.
You in front of a classroom of bored students.
Digging up a dogwood tree.
You working on the house, smelling like sawdust
and sweat and designer cologne.
You calling me at college to tell me how I'm
supposed to feel about Faulkner or Hemingway.

(MORE)

ALISON (cont'd)

You standing on the shoulder of Route 150
bracing yourself against the pulse of the
trucks rushing past.

You succumbing to a rare moment of physical
contact with me.

(Picking up her pen and drawing.)

Daddy (comma) hey Daddy
come here okay (question mark)
I need // you

SMALL ALISON

(Stepping forward.)

Daddy, hey, Daddy, come here, okay, I need you

MEDIUM ALISON

At the light
At the light
At the light
At the light

Alison takes them both in, then
draws:

ALISON

What are you doing (question mark)
I said come here
You need //to do what I tell you to do --

SMALL ALISON

What are you doing?
I said come here
You need to do what I tell you to do --

SMALL ALISON

MEDIUM ALISON

Listen to me
Daddy
Come here, hey right here,
right now, you're making me
mad
Listen to me
Listen to me
Listen to me

At the light...

How does it feel to know--

I wanna play airplane
I wanna play airplane
I wanna play airplane
I wanna put my arms out and
fly

That you and I are both
That you and I are both

I was like you

Like the Red Baron in his
Sopwith Camel! No wait-

Say something

Like Superman up in the sky
"til I can see all of
Pennsylvania

Say something

*Put your feet here like this
Daddy, do what I say*

ALISON
(Looking at a drawing.)

There you are.

SMALL ALISON
*Take my hands, give me yours
Bend your knees, not that way
When I say go, you start
pushing me up
okay?
Don't let go yet
There you are
Okay, higher
Just a little*

ALISON

There you are

There you are

ALISON
And now I'm flying away

MEDIUM ALISON
Look at me fly away

SMALL ALISON
-- in my wristband and cape

SMALL ALISON
*Fly
Up so high*

ALISON AND MEDIUM ALISON
Fly

SMALL ALISON (cont'd)
*Our house is over there, and there's our car
The Fun Home - I see it
I'm up so far*

MEDIUM ALISON
So far

SMALL ALISON
*Daddy, there's your school!
And there's Grandma's house.
There's Uncle Pete's farm!*

SMALL ALISON
I can see all of Pennsylvania

MEDIUM ALISON
Pennsylvania

ALISON
I can see all of Pennsylvania

SMALL ALISON
I can see all of Pennsylvania

ALL

Fly away

SMALL ALISON

This is the best game. Up in the air

ALISON

A picture of my father

SMALL ALISON

And I don't even care that it pushes my stomach in

ALISON

Made of little marks

SMALL ALISON

Fly

up so high

Fly

up so high

Fly

up so high

ALISON

Beautiful

Fly

Fly

MEDIUM ALISON

Fly

Fly

Fly

Fly

Alison Bechdel's drawing of her eight-year-old self being lifted by her father into a soaring game of airplane fills the back wall.

SMALL ALISON

I can see all of Pennsylvania

ALISON

Caption: Every so often there was a rare moment of perfect balance when I soared above him.

END