

"MURDER IN ERNEST"

a play by

David W. Boles

"I heard the echoes of my heart calling my name."

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by David W. Boles

Box 5984
Lincoln, NE
68505-0984
[402]464-6660

Cast of Characters

Ernest: In mid-life. Dressed in a blue suit and black string tie. A balding head, shiny forehead and worried lip.

Sol: Young, solemn and blue.

Mindy: Younger, cuter and smaller. Wears lace and ribbons.

Man: Becomes a Doctor, Father, Photographer and football player.

Woman: Becomes a Mother, Dancer and Referee.

Girl: Becomes a Sister, Prom Date and Cheerleader.

Scene

Inside.

Time

The beat of a heart.

SETTING:

The floor is a bright pink. Surrounding the floor are billowing sheets of pure cotton dyed blue.

AT RISE:

The stage is dark. The sound of moaning. A flicker of light on the stage coming from the back of the theatre. FILM PROJECTED on the billowing sheets. We see an EXTREME CLOSE-UP of ERNEST'S FACE. He is sweating and his eyes are bloodshot. The fat in his cheeks jiggle. HIS eyes are looking OFF SCREEN LEFT.

ERNEST (ON FILM)

Please. We don't need to do this. I can explain. Just stay. Don't kill me.

ERNEST'S EYES WIDEN AND HIS MOUTH OPENS. HIS EYES SQUINT. SOUND OF GUN FIRING. THE FILM FADES DOWN TO BLACK...

THE LIGHTS RISE ON STAGE. THE PINK AND BLUE SET GLOWS. MINDY AND SOL ARE ON THE FLOOR, SPRAWLED OUT. SOL HAS A DOLL IN HIS ARMS. MINDY IS CLUTCHING A FOOTBALL. THEY SHAKE AND STAND UP, BRUSHING THEIR CLOTHES.

SOL

Oh, my head!

MINDY

What happened? I got my new dress dirty.

SOL

I remember a man. We saw him get shot in the side of the head.

MINDY

I feel so uneven. My heart skipped more than a beat.

SOL

I wonder who it was?

MINDY

Can I have my doll?

THEY MAKE THE TRADE.

SOL

I'm confused.

MINDY

Where are we?

SOL

We need a phone. We have to tell the police.

MINDY

No we don't.

SOL

We're witnesses. We have to find the killer.

MINDY

Maybe he's waiting right outside. Waiting right outside to kill us when we run to call the police.

SOL

I don't remember you.

MINDY

I don't know. Who're you?
I want my...

SOL

Your mommie?

MINDY

How'd you know?

SOL

I don't know. Listen, there is a murderer out there and we have to stay calm or we're next. Right?

MINDY

Next? I don't want to die!

SOL

We must think. So shut up a while.

MINDY

You always talk mean to me.

SOL

Only because I love you.

MINDY

If you loved me, you'd kiss me.

SOL

If you loved me, you wouldn't ask for a kiss.

MINDY

If you love me, I wouldn't have to ask.

SOL

If you loved me, you wouldn't think of asking.

THEY CIRCLE EACH OTHER.

MINDY

What're you thinking?

SOL

The more I look in your eyes the less I know about you. The less I want to know more.

MINDY

I'm Mindy. You're Sol.

SOL

Sol? How do you know? Where'd you come from?

MINDY

I think I know everything about you.

SOL

You don't know anything. You're a stupid girl.

MINDY

I know you don't want me to go to the Prom.

SOL

I can't take you to the Prom. We agreed on that.

MINDY

I can read your mind.

SOL

You can't have my soul.

MINDY

Then I want to die.

SOL

Don't say that. It scares me.

MINDY

Talk like a man. You always run out of bounds instead of taking the bone-crunching tackle head on. You're a runner. You can't out distance me.

SOL

That's dangerous talk. You stand there all frilly and on the side lines and expect me to take all the punches for you? Scrap it and take me to the showers.

MINDY

You're all wet. Drowned in misery.

SOL

I'll rip the legs off that doll if you don't shut up.

MINDY

I'll get my daddy to beat you up. You didn't save me once anyway.

SOL

Nobody's gonna pinch my head off.

MINDY

How're we getting out? Killer's waiting for us on the other side. I'm getting claustrophobia.

SOL

We have to stay here. Until the air clears.

MINDY

You mean there's no way out.

SOL

You don't want to get out. Stay right here where I can keep an eye cocked in your direction.

MINDY

I'm a big girl now.

SOL

You are not. Don't play your pretend game. Some one else is going to die. I can feel it.

FROM BETWEEN THE BILLOWING BLUE SHEETS, ERNEST ENTERS. HE LOOKS PALE AND WEAK. A DISTANT LOOK HAS TAKEN HIS FACE. HIS HANDS ARE CLASPED BEHIND HIS BACK.

ERNEST

I heard the echo of my heart. Calling my name. Chicken Little was right.

MINDY

It's the killer!

SOL

Don't you move, buddy!

ERNEST

I didn't think anybody would be here.

MINDY

Don't kill us!

ERNEST

Kill you?

SOL

There is something so very familiar about you.

ERNEST

I'm not going to kill anybody.

MINDY

We need to get out of here. I want to go home.

SOL

Quiet, Mindy.

MINDY

We want out! Let us escape. Show us how you got in here!

SOL

Indefinite time out! You're the man we saw! Up there!

ERNEST

I'm lost.

SOL

I saw you. Heard the bullet leave
a gun but didn't see where it landed.

ERNEST

The last thing I remember was the
smell of burning leaves. The wind
spoke in my ear and I felt cool.

MINDY

I'm Mindy. That's Sol.

SOL EXTENDS AN OPEN HAND. ERNEST BRINGS HIS HAND FROM
BEHIND HIS BACK. HE IS HOLDING A GUN.

SOL

What's the idea!

MINDY

A gun! The killer!

SOL

Hold on, buddy. We won't tell
any one you were here. Just
leave us alone.

ERNEST

I didn't kill anybody. I'm
lost. I don't know where I got
the gun.

ERNEST TOSSES THE GUN TO THE FLOOR AS IF BURNED BY ITS FEEL.

SOL

Who are you?

MINDY

That's Ernest.

SOL

Stay out of this.

ERNEST

No. Wait. Maybe I am Ernest.
Somebody was calling my name.
I don't feel very well. Lightheaded.

MINDY

You need to see a Doctor.

ERNEST

No Doctors. I've spent a lifetime with them. They charge and pull.

SOL

We'll call you Ernest, then. Now. We have to get a plan.

MINDY

Who made you group leader?

ERNEST

I want to throw up.

MAN, WOMAN AND GIRL ENTER AT VARIOUS POINTS BETWEEN THE SHEETS. MAN IS DRESSED IN OVERALLS AND IS A FATHER. WOMAN DRESSED IN APRON AND IS A MOTHER. GIRL IS DRESSED IN A SKIRT AND SWEATSHIRT. THEY ALL CARRY A PICNIC BASKET, BLANKET, JUG OF WATER AND BUG SPRAY.

WOMAN

Is this a good place?

MAN

I don't like the sun. Heats me right up and sweat goes ahead and trickles down my arms from my pits.

GIRL

I don't like ham salad, mom.

THE FAMILY PREPARES THEIR PICNIC SITE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STAGE. THE MAN LEAVES THE PICNIC, PUTS ON A GREY WIG AND GOES TO ERNEST.

WOMAN

Honey, we have fallen on hard times. As corny as that sounds, the crops have shriveled up and made your father an un-popped kernal. So shush and eat the ham salad.

GIRL

I still don't like it.

WOMAN

You father will shove those sandwiches down your fair little throat if you don't stop that bitching.

MAN

Stick out your tongue.

ERNEST IS ENTHRALLED WITH WATCHING THE FAMILY. HE DOES NOT NOTICE THE MAN AS DOCTOR NEXT TO HIM. MAN TAKES OUT A BLOOD PRESSURE CUFF AND WRAPS IT AROUND ERNEST'S ARM.

SOL

Who are you people? What's going on here?

MINDY

Do you know my father? Yoo hoo! Can you hear us?

SOL

Like we're not even here.

WOMAN

Ernest! Come over here, boy!

GIRL

You don't have to yell at him. He's different but he isn't deaf. Just tell him to stop trying on my clothes.

MAN RELEASES THE BLOOD PRESSURE CUFF AND THE SOUND OF ESCAPING AIR. HE TAKES OUT A FLASH LIGHT AND SHINES IT IN ERNEST'S EYES.

MAN

This doesn't look good.

MAN GOES BACK TO THE PICNIC. HE TAKES OFF THE WIG, STUFFS IT IN HIS POCKET AND BECOMES FATHER AGAIN.

SOL

What's the problem? Ernest? Are you crazy? That guy's feeling you up and you don't move! Is he going to kill us too? Why won't anybody talk to me?

MINDY

Mommie?

MINDY SITS DOWN AT THE PICNIC WITH THE REST OF THE FAMILY. SOL STANDS ALONE, WHILE ERNEST CIRCLES THE PICNIC.

WOMAN

There you are, darling. You had us worried.

MINDY

I was looking around. Pretty trees and grass.

MAN

Shouldn't run off that way. Who knows what'll happen out here in the woods.

MINDY

It smells funny all of a sudden.

GIRL

It smells like ham salad.

MINDY

No. Like burning leaves. It smells like fire.

MAN

There was a fire up here last week.

WOMAN

Not much shade left here, either.

SOL

Mindy? Are you crazy? Get back over here with me. You only get in trouble when you're out on your own.

GIRL

Dad, tell him not to wear my clothes any more.

MINDY

You sneak!

WOMAN

Hush.

MAN

You're at that again? The lesson I gave you with my leather didn't last more than a week?

SOL

Mindy, run back here.

MINDY

I can explain. She took some of my sweaters. You know how girls are!

MAN

Listen, Mister. You aren't one to talk. You especially do not try and explain something plain as day!

ERNEST

Don't let him get away with that, Mindy! Speak up! Talk in your defense.

SOL

Don't listen to him! He's tricking you Mindy. Come home. Come back!

MINDY

I'm sorry.

WOMAN

You're apologizing more and more.

GIRL

Keep you mouth shut. You get into trouble when you talk.

MINDY

I do not.

MAN

I seen you dress up. Playing with dolls and yourself. You need friends!

ERNEST

Say something back. Don't take it. You'll have to take it for the rest of your life if you don't make a stand right now. Your family should love you.

SOL

I need you, Mindy.

MAN

Gimme that doll.

WOMAN

Oh. No.

MAN

Gimme that doll.

MINDY

Please, daddy. Don't. I promise this time.

MAN

Don't talk back to me son.

GIRL

Want me to get it for you, daddy?

MAN

I want Sissy-Boy here to hand it to me pronto.

MINDY HOLDS THE DOLL CLOSE TO HER BOSOM. MAN COMES OVER AND TURNS MINDY OVER HIS KNEE AND SPANKS HER.

SOL

Mindy!

ERNEST

Take it. You have to take it now.

MAN

You do as I say. You can be a real man. Hear me boy? No more damn doll house playing!

MINDY'S FACE IS RED. SHE DOES NOT CRY.

WOMAN

That's enough.

MAN

Obey and respect.

GIRL

Isn't crying yet. Harder.

MAN

You're next, smart mouth.

ERNEST

Please, Mindy. Keep quiet. Tell him in your mind that he's a son of a bitch for the abuse he hands you. Keep your mouth shut tight.

SOL

Scream! It hurts! It has to!
He has spanked you bloody before!

ERNEST

Don't be proud. You don't have to
be a sissy. You're tough enough
all ready.

MAN STOPS SPANKING MINDY. MINDY SITS ON HER HEELS AND
BEGINS TO WEEP. NO SOUND FROM HER THOUGH, ONLY TEARS
RUNNING DOWN HER FACE.

MAN

This is the end of doll land.

MAN TAKES THE DOLL AND RIPS OFF THE HEAD. HE PULLS OFF THE
ARMS AND LEGS AND FOAM STUFFING FILLS THE AIR. MINDY GETS
UP AND SLENTLY WALKS AWAY FROM THE PICNIC. SOL RUNS TO HER
AND EMBRACES HER.

SOL

Why didn't you say anything?

MINDY

Because he's my father.

SOL

He hit you. He calls you names.

MINDY

He's my father.

SOL

That doesn't give him the right
to hurt you.

MINDY

Pain is all there is. What difference
does it make where you get it from?
You end up with the same pain.

THE PICNIC BREAKS UP. MAN BECOMES A PHOTOGRAPHER WITH A
CAMERA. WOMAN BECOMES A DANCER AT THE PROM. GIRL BECOMES
A PROM DATE. MINDY LEAVES SOL. SOL TURNS AND FINDS GIRL.
HE GOES TO HER AND GIRL PUTS HER ARM IN HIS. MAN DROPS HIS
CAMERA AND RUNS TO ERNEST. MAN PUTS ON HIS GREY WIG IN A
HURRY AND PUTS A STETHOSCOPE IN HIS EARS AND LISTENS TO
ERNEST'S HEART.

MAN

Heartbeat is fading. Need
electric shocks.

ERNEST

Leave me alone.

MAN

Breathe in.

A MIRRORED BALL BEGINS TO SHINE THE COLORS OF THE RAINBOW.

ERNEST

Leave me alone.

MAN GOES BACK TO HIS CAMERA TAKES OFF WIG. ERNEST TAKES WOMAN IN HIS ARMS AND THEY DANCE. MAN TAKES HIS CAMERA AND STANDS IN FRONT OF SOL AND GIRL. THEY POSE FOR HIM.

MAN

Now I want big, cheery smiles!

GIRL

Thanks for taking me, Ernest.
I'm having a terrific time.

SOL

You're welcome. This wasn't my
idea.

GIRL

Dinner was nice. Fast food is
always so quick and tasty.

SOL

I don't have big money to spend.
If you want steak and autographs
go out with a football player.

GIRL

I want you.

SOL

Will you take the picture, all
ready?

MAN

I'm having trouble with my film
advance.

SOL

Fix it so we can get it on.

GIRL

At least pretend you're having a
swell time.

SOL

Here's a secret. For all my days I have lived a lie. I am quickly tiring of shutting up and keeping quiet. I want to shout and speak up and be heard in the mountains. I am on fire. I am hot. I need air to grow.

GIRL

So tell me your secret.

SOL

I just did.

GIRL

There's more. Tell me.

SOL

I hate women.

GIRL

You're out with me.

SOL

Society binds my hand. My soul yearns to dance but my mind wanders. Besides, this is Prom.

MAN

Almost ready. Keep smiling. Lick your lips.

GIRL

What did women ever do to you?

SOL

Can't trust them. Always want to be liberated.

GIRL

Nothing wrong with that.

SOL

You don't understand.

GIRL

I want to.

SOL

Females try to take over.
They need to be in charge.

GIRL

In charge of what?

SOL

The kitchen. The bathroom. Every
room in the house. Then they want
to creep outside. They want to be
exposed.

GIRL

You want to lock us up?

SOL

I want them to stay where they
belong. In the back of my mind.

GIRL

Your mind?

MAN

Cheese!

FLASHBULB EXPLODES.

GIRL

I'm blind.

SOL

Finally over.

MAN

Beautiful. A stunning couple.
Should be married some day.
Just remember me for the wedding
pictures.

MAN GOES AROUND TAKING PICTURES.

GIRL

The music. I can feel the drums
in my chest.

SOL

I suppose you want to dance.

GIRL

Since you asked.

THEY DANCE.

SOL
I'm only doing this so's not
to make a major scene.

GIRL
You're awfully cool.

SOL
You don't excite me.

GIRL
That was mean.

SOL
I'm sorry.

GIRL
Don't apologize. You do it all
the time.

SOL
I got problems. I'll solve them
one day.

GIRL
You have cute eyes. Girls talk
about how small your butt is when
you strut down the hall.

FLASHBULB EXPLODES.

SOL
That's disgusting.

GIRL
You have women pegged, eh Ernest?

SOL
Maybe not.

GIRL
Do you like me?

SOL
I'm dancing with you.

GIRL
I dressed my hair just for you.

SOL
It looks fine.

ERNEST AND WOMAN DANCE CLOSE TO THEM. FLASHBULB EXPLODES.

ERNEST

Be careful of her. She's dangerous.

SOL

She's the murderer isn't she?

ERNEST

It's all starting to come back.

ERNEST DANCES AWAY.

SOL

You mind if we dance over there?

GIRL

No. Let's stay here in shadow.

SOL

You don't understand. He knows something.

GIRL

Who?

SOL

Just follow me.

GIRL

I've been waiting for this all year. I would think it when you'd walk down the hall and in bed at night.

SOL

Think of what?

GIRL

Dreamed of this moment alone.

SOL

You don't mean...

GIRL

You're mine, Ernest.

SOL

Don't kill me. I take it all back.

GIRL
This is where I get off. The
end.

SOL
Don't!

GIRL
I have to. I won't be able to live
with myself.

ERNEST CALLS FROM THE OPPOSITE END OF THE STAGE. ANOTHER
FLASHBULB EXPLODES.

ERNEST
There's going to be a murder!
Yes! I'm starting to remember
it all now!

GIRL
Ready?

SOL
I want to live. Ernest! I know
the murderer is her!

ERNEST
No. It's not her!

SOL
No?

ERNEST
No.

SOL
What, then?

GIRL HUGS SOL CLOSE AND KISSES HIM. IT IS A LONG AND WET
SMOOCH.

GIRL
There! Done! I feel so dizzy.

SOL STOPS. HE SLAPS GIRL ACROSS THE FACE. FLASHBULB
EXPLODES.

SOL
Don't you ever do that again.
You almost killed me with that
kiss. I will murder you if
you ever touch me again. I think
it's time you go home.

GIRL

Ernest? I'm sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you. I...

SHE CRIES.

SOL

Get out of here. How dare you violate Sol's body. Who are you to reach out with your painted lips and touch my mouth? Now get away!

GIRL

You're so unhappy. All the time you yell and sneer. You make me unhappy too.

SOL

Yeah, well, I've hated myself longer than you ever will. So you didn't ruin my day.

SOL PICKS UP HIS FOOTBALL. MAN PUTS DOWN CAMERA AND PUTS ON FOOTBALL HELMET. WOMAN PUTS ON A REFEREE'S CAP. MINDY AND GIRL GO TO EDGE OF STAGE AND BECOME CHEERLEADERS.

WOMAN

I want a clean game. No cheap shots, men.

ERNEST TAKES FOOTBALL FROM SOL AND BECOMES CENTER. MAN IS MEAN, GRUFF AND MUSCLED. SOL IS QUARTERBACK.

MAN

C'mon Ernest. We'll see who can take a hit. Or are you gonna scoot out-of-bounds before I can whop ya a coupla times?

SOL

He's out to kill me, Ernest. You're going to have to take him out to protect me and Mindy.

ERNEST

I can't. He's too strong.

SOL

Don't be scared. Just block him to the ground.

MINDY

Go Ernest! Go Sol! Go Team!

GIRL

Yeah, Yeah, Yea!

MAN

Let's hike the ball, Sissy-Boy.

SOL

He's calling me names. I have a headache.

ERNEST

Me too. I can take it though.

SOL

But you shouldn't.

GIRL

Bop, em, sock em, hit em in the rear.

ERNEST

I don't want anybody to get hurt.

SOL

She can't take care of herself. You must protect her.

ERNEST

I know her better than you, Sol.

MAN

It's time to crunch some bones. I want to tear some flesh.

SOL

There is a certain numbness that comes along when your flesh is being torn away by the mouthful.

ERNEST

You're on your own. I give up.

SOL

I'll win without you, then. I'm not getting called for delay of game.

MAN

Go! C'mon, guys!

ERNEST

I love you.

SOL

Hike!

THE FOOTBALL SAILS INTO SOL'S HANDS. MAN PUSHES ERNEST DOWN TO THE GROUND. SOL AND THE MAN RACE AROUND THE STAGE.

MAN

Come back here.

SOL

Can't eat me if you can't catch me.

MINDY

Ernest, Ernest, he's our man.
If you can't catch him, he can't
be your rack of lamb. Ernest,
Ernest, run, run, run. If we can't
find you, we'll eat canned ham.

MAN LUNGES FOR SOL. SOL SIDESTEPS WITH A FLOURISH.

MAN

Little girl, come here.

WOMAN

Below the belt hit! Fifty yard
penalty or one apology.

GIRL

Ernest, Ernest, that says it
best. We all love you 'cause
you pass the blood test! Hi
Ho and Yippe Yee Oh! Ernest
is the best.

WOMAN

Time out.

MAN

He ran out of time yesterday.

ERNEST

I bumped my head. I want a
Doctor.

SOL

Touchdown!

SOL TAKES THE FOOTBALL AND SPIKES IT INTO MAN'S CHEST. MINDY AND GIRL SHOUT, WOMAN BLOWS HER WHISTLE. SOL DANCES. ERNEST PICKS HIMSELF UP SLOWLY.

ERNEST

I know what happened. The bump on my head jarred it all back.

INSTANTLY, MAN, WOMAN AND GIRL EXIT BETWEEN BILLOWING BLUE SHEETS. SILENCE. STAGE BECOMES DARKER. MINDY AND SOL ARE SIDE-BY-SIDE. ERNEST FACES OFF.

SOL

Where are we?

MINDY

I want out.

SOL

Shut up.

MINDY

No, you shut up. You can't tell me what to do any more. I'm a liberated, modern woman.

SOL

You're foolish.

ERNEST

We shouldn't argue.

SOL

Tell me what's going on?

ERNEST

If you please would not shout.

MINDY

I want out!

SOL

I'm getting sick of your moaning!

ERNEST

Quiet, please.

MINDY

No! I want out, out, out!

MINDY RUNS AROUND THE STAGE.

SOL

I am sick of your girlish mooing.

MINDY BEGINS TO PULL AT THE BLUE SHEETS. THE SHEETS TEAR AND EXPOSE THE DARK.

ERNEST

Mindy, please.

SOL

Stop it, Mindy. Don't make me do it.

MINDY

Free! The world can see who I really am!

SOL

No! Please.

ERNEST

We need help. There is no need to die!

SOL

Stop it!

MINDY CONTINUES TO TEAR DOWN THE AZURE COTTON. SOL RACES TO THE GUN AND AIMS IT AT MINDY.

SOL

Come back here behind me where you belong.

ERNEST

Love life. Please. Before it's too late.

MINDY TUGS DOWN AN ENTIRE SECTION OF BLUE. THERE STANDING IN MOURNING OUTFITS ARE MAN, WOMAN AND GIRL. THEY ARE RIGID, HEADS DOWN AND STANDING IN FRONT OF A TOMBSTONE. THE TOMBSTONE HAS "ERNEST" CHISELED INTO THE STONE.

ERNEST

Mommie? Daddy? Sis?

SOL SHOOTS MINDY. SHE FALLS DEAD. ACTION STOPS. COUNT FIVE.

SOL

It was me. I am the murderer. I killed her and now she's dead.

ERNEST BEGINS TO WEEP.

ERNEST

I killed the both of you.

SOL

I'm alive, buddy. It's me
the police are gonna lock up.

ERNEST

It's you the police are gonna
carry out of here in a body
bag.

SOL

It was me all along.

ERNEST

You are me. Mindy is me.

SOL

How can we be you?

ERNEST

You are opposite ends of me.
You are all part. You are
my soul. She is my mind.

SOL

Naw. That's too easy.

ERNEST

This isn't easy at all.
Killing yourself can be hell.

SOL

I don't follow.

ERNEST

We're all dead. I killed myself
with that gun. Suicide. The
Doctor will probably come and
try to save me. But I remember
now. I used armor-piercing bullets.

SOL

Why are we all here together? What
is this place?

ERNEST

We are inside me. We all are
watching.

SOL

Watching what?

ERNEST

Watching my life flash before
my eyes. Time is up.

SOL

Hold on.

ERNEST

It's over.

SOL

Why is Mindy dead? Why did I
kill her?

ERNEST

I couldn't handle her. She wanted
out all my life. I lost my dolls,
my sexuality and my friends because
of her and you fighting. I was a
shell with a pink interior and a
blue surface. People don't like
what they see, so they change it.
Can't change it though.

SOL

Why'd you kill yourself?

ERNEST

I had to stop the pain.

SOL

You played Mindy and me against
each other.

ERNEST

All my life has been deception.
Only now can I rest in peace.

SOL

That's a bit corny.

ERNEST

I was a transvestite. Not a poet.

SOL

I didn't mean to hit her. I just
wanted to graze her leg. Then
she'd come limping back to me.

ERNEST

You meant to kill her. But it's all right. The most important thing is not who you want to be or who you should be. It's if you're happy being whatever you are.

SOL

Are you happy?

ERNEST

How should I know? I'm dead.

LIGHTS TO BLACK. AGAIN, FILM IS PROJECTED ON A FEW REMAINING SHEETS OF BLUE. WE HAVE AN EXTREME CLOSE-UP OF ERNEST'S FACE. AS THE CAMERA PULLS BACK, WE SEE BLOOD. BLOOD EVERYWHERE. BLOOD POOLED AT ERNEST'S EAR, SPATTERED ON THE WALLS, STAINING THE BEDSPREAD. AS THE CAMERA DOLLIES BACK, WE REVEAL ERNEST DRESSED IN A PINK DRESS. HE IS WEARING A RED WIG AND SILK STOCKINGS REST IN HIS LIMP HAND. FILM FADES TO BLACK.

CURTAIN