

SETTING: *Trees surround a clearing in the woods. Up left, wooden forms used to pour concrete walls indicate the corner of a basement that has been excavated. The wooden forms stand 2-3 feet above the stage floor.*

AT RISE: *Sunset on an early fall evening. IAN CROWELL is downstage right, crouched in front of a glowing campfire, warming his hands. A bottle of beer sits on the ground next to him. Next to the bottle rests a beer cooler. BRUCE HOLLINGSWORTH is upstage, holding a beer and peering over the wooden forms, studying the basement pit.*

IAN

It's the perfect night for a fire, isn't it?

(BRUCE remains silent. IAN sits back, picks up the beer next to him. It's empty.)

Want another beer?

(Nothing.)

Bruce!

BRUCE

What?

IAN

Another beer?

BRUCE

No thanks. I'm good.

(IAN opens the cooler next to him.)

IAN

There's only three left.

(He pulls one out.)

IAN (cont.)

Make that two.

(He opens it and takes a drink.)

Hope the girls get back soon. It's getting dark. God knows what's taking them so long.

(BRUCE remains silent. IAN turns to study him.)

What are you staring at?

BRUCE

The size of this hole. Your basement's gonna be huge, man.

IAN

Yeah?

BRUCE

I could fit a bowling alley down there.

IAN

C'mon...

BRUCE

I'm serious. Ten lanes easy! With room for a snack bar, shoe rental...

IAN

Bruce...

BRUCE

... a gift shop, restrooms...

IAN

Bruce! You are not putting a bowling alley in my basement.

BRUCE

Why not?

(He crosses downstage.)

Think about it, Ian – bowling is the ultimate social activity. What better way to meet your neighbors?

IAN

What neighbors? We're in the middle of the woods.

BRUCE

Exactly my point. A bowling alley will draw people in, create a community...

IAN

No, no, no, no, no! Liz and I are moving up here to get away from people, remember?

(He claps a hand on Bruce's shoulder.)

Sorry, buddy.

BRUCE

I love bowling.

IAN

I know.

BRUCE

I love everything about it. The sound of the ball thundering down the lane, shattering the pins like cracked ice. The smell of old shoes and lane wax. The taste of a hot, spicy chicken popper chased down by a cold Bud. The feel of that slick, smooth fourteen pounder in your hand, the finger holes just the right size and spacing...

(He holds an imaginary bowling ball in his hand and mimes the following action.)

One step... two... three, arm goes back, knee bends, arm forward, release... waiting... waiting... looking good... aaggghh! The dreaded seven-ten split!

(He notices IAN watching him and returns to reality.)

And then there's the people. Bowling is the great equalizer. Every shape, size, color, gender, age... they all come thru the door with the same intention – to roll a perfect game.

(Beat.)

These are the things that bring me peace. When Life falls to shit, I know I can always find solace in a bowling alley.

(He takes a pull on his beer.)

IAN

Has your Life fallen to shit?

BRUCE

Nah. I mean...y'know... nah. Everything's fine.

IAN

That wasn't very convincing. Business okay?

BRUCE

Never better. Got a new alley going up over in Milltown.

IAN

Wow. How many does that make now? Six?

BRUCE

Seven. Seven Kingpin Lanes.

IAN

That's great, Bruce! Really – congratulations.

(BRUCE shrugs.)

So... if business is okay... then... you're not sick, or anything?

BRUCE

No, no – I'm fine. I mean, as far as I know, everything's fine.

IAN

As far as you know?

BRUCE

I'm fine, Ian – physically fine.

IAN

Good, good...

BRUCE

Right as rain, as they say in jolly old England.

IAN

Do they really say that?

BRUCE
What?

IAN
The English. Do they really say “Right as rain?”

(BRUCE considers a moment then shrugs.)

BRUCE
I don’t know.

IAN
Huh.

(IAN turns his back to BRUCE and stares at the fire. Beat.)

How about you and Claire?

BRUCE
What about us?

IAN
Are you two “as right as rain?”

(BRUCE drains his beer and holds out the bottle.)

BRUCE
Can I get another?

IAN
Sure.

(IAN pulls another beer out of the cooler, opens it and hands it to BRUCE, who takes another drink.)

I take it things with you and Claire aren’t going well.

BRUCE
Well, they’re not going *badly*.

(Beat.)

IAN
But...?

But nothing. BRUCE

Okay. IAN

(Both men stare at the fire. Beat.)

We don't have sex any more. BRUCE

Ah. IAN

I mean, we have sex, obviously, just not as much as we used to. BRUCE

Oh, okay. IAN

(Beat.)

How often do you have it?

Six, maybe seven times. BRUCE

A month? IAN

No. BRUCE

A year? IAN

No! What? Get real, man! BRUCE

Then...? IAN

BRUCE
A week! Six or seven times a *week*.

IAN
Wait – what? Are you kidding me?

BRUCE
Would I kid about something like this?

IAN
You have sex six or seven times a week.

BRUCE
Only six or seven times a week.

IAN
You've been married... what? Eight years?

BRUCE
So?

IAN
So how many times a week did you used to have sex?

BRUCE
We used to do it two or three times a day – you do the math.

(Beat.)

IAN
Holy shit.

BRUCE
What's the big deal? How often do you and Liz have sex?

IAN
Not *that* often.

BRUCE
Oh.

(Beat.)

Are you guys doing okay?

IAN

Yeah! Sure! We're fine. We're great, actually. I mean, we're getting ready to build our dream house, so obviously we're doing great. Never better.

BRUCE

Then why aren't you having sex?

IAN

We *are* having sex – just not six or seven times a week.

BRUCE

Oh.

(Beat.)

IAN

Not even close.

BRUCE

Oh.

(Beat.)

BRUCE

'Nother beer?

IAN

Please.

(BRUCE opens the cooler and pulls one out.)

BRUCE

Here you go. Last one.

(He hands it to IAN. Suddenly we hear singing from a distance that gets closer and closer)

CLAIRE/LIZ (O.S.)

K – I

T-A-N-N

I-W-A spells Kitanniwa

Kitanniwa!

It's the only decent kind of ca-amp

Ca-amp!

CLAIRE/LIZ (O.S.) (cont.)

*The man who built it must have been a cha-amp
Cha-amp!*

*(LIZ and CLAIRE enter, still singing. LIZ carries a cloth bag
containing marshmallows and three flashlights. CLAIRE carries
a brand new marshmallow roasting fork. She conducts with it.)*

CLAIRE/LIZ

*K – I
T-A-N-N
I-W-A you see
It's the camp on a lake
Guaranteed to see a snake
It's Kittaniwa for me!*

LIZ

Woo-hoo!

(She high-fives CLAIRE.)

CLAIRE

That's right, sister! We still got it!

BRUCE

Still got what?

IAN

More beer, I hope.

CLAIRE

We still got all the words to our camp song from... what was it? Fourth grade?

LIZ

Third. We were eight.

CLAIRE

That's right. Eight years old at our first summer sleep-away camp.

LIZ

*(Singing)
Camp Kittaniwa for me!*

Camp what?
BRUCE

Kittaniwa.
LIZ

CLAIRE
It's where we met and became best friends forever and ever.

(They do a secret handshake to the following.)

LIZ/CLAIRE
K-I-T
T-A-N
I-W-A

(Beat.)

BRUCE
I went to Boy Scout camp once. Hated it. Didn't learn a thing.

IAN
Where's the beer?

LIZ
There is no beer.

IAN
Why not?

LIZ
Blue laws.

IAN
What?!

LIZ
This part of the state has blue laws.

IAN
You're kidding.

LIZ
Nope.