

## Transcription of *Myth of Father*

**Jodie:** We ain't got a second. Come on.

**Steve:** Be quiet! This is important. Step back a little bit.

**Jodie:** Tell me when you're ready because I'm not posing yet.

**Steve:** I'll tell you when, Sean.

**Sean:** Huh?

**Steve:** I'll tell you when. This is good. Hold on. That's very good. Quit laughing.

**Jodie:** Hurry up. I'm not laughing.

**Steve:** One step in, Wanoka.

**Laura:** Ah, he laughed! Paul...

**Steve:** Come on Paul.

**Wanoka:** Hurry up, Paul, this dog is heavy. I'm gonna drop him.

**Jodie:** Hurry up. I've gotta pee, too. Damn it.

**Steve:** Ok, you guys ready?

**Jodie:** Alright, here we go. Wait. Alright. Go ahead.

**Paul (narration):** This is a portrait of my family at a recent reunion. It's not your typical family photo, but my Uncle Steve here, is the photographer in the family. And he likes to pose us in bizarre ways. Over here we have Sean, my uncle. His dad, Harry, liked to water the grass so his yard would look green and healthy. He died a few years ago, and since then Sean's kinda become the new Harry. And that's Ann, Sean's wife. All the way over here we have Wanoka, who's Sean's mom. She's

the rebellious one, the total opposite of Sean and Harry. She holds our dog, Max.

That's me, Paul. I'm the observer in the family. Steve puts me behind the Harry J. Hill sign because I quietly hide in the shadows and take notes. Kind of like Steve himself. And that's my girlfriend, Laura. And here, in front row center, is Jodie, my dad. He's a transsexual. Er, I mean she's a transsexual. She hasn't had her sex change operation yet, but lives and works full time as a woman. But she gets annoyed with us when we use the wrong pronouns. But my dad? A she? That takes a little getting used to. But after all these years, my family and I are finally getting to know who my dad really is.

I was pretty freaked out when my dad told me that she was actually a transsexual woman. He told me while I was in New York, visiting. Dressed as a man, he took me to a crowded Irish pub where, nervously, he told me that he feels like a woman trapped inside of a man's body. I didn't know what to say. But dad thought I'd get up and walk out, and never speak to him again. We sat quietly for awhile and a few things started to make sense to me. Until then I'd forgotten about the time I found women's clothing in my dad's closet when I was a little boy. But I was also confused. Like, why didn't you come forward sooner? And should I refer to my dad as she? Later that night I asked my dad those questions. He said that he couldn't tell anyone until he was sure he was doing the right thing. And yes, he said I should refer to him as she from now on. I wondered how the rest of our family would react to this. And I became fascinated with the possibilities of a new relationship with my dad. Not only for me, but for the rest of our family as well. That night was the last time I saw my dad dressed as a man.

**Jodie:** Lip liner keeps the lips good when you get old. Lipstick goes all over your face. Let's fix this hair a little bit. Don't think there's gonna be any hope for it here today. Just too trashed. From work. It got wet this morning, then I was late... It's not doin nothin' but boink! right back down. Okay that's better anyway.

**Jodie:** I remember as far back as three years old.

**Paul:** Wow!

**Jodie:** These kind of things happening in my head. Waking up in the middle of the night and saying “geez, why...” I must have known the difference between boys and girls because I can remember waking up in the middle of the night and praying to God that when I woke up that I would be a girl. From as early as I can remember I...at some point in your life you know you...there comes a reality of who you are in terms of who you’re supposed to be in society. And we don’t make those decisions for ourselves. It’s something that happens in our brains, and how you’re brought up and those aren’t decisions that we make. It’s a natural thing. And when those things aren’t right or there’s a conflict there when you’re questioning those things...I would just rather identify with the female gender than the male gender. Because my mind says that I’m like this and my body says I’m like this, and I’m gonna do whatever I have to do to make this fit this, this and this match. Just like everybody who looks in the mirror everyday looks at themselves and says “ok, there’s nothin going on that says no no that’s not supposed to be there or oh I wish I looked like this.” Everything is happening, everything is working. It aint’ that way for me. I hated the way I looked. Hated it. I felt stupid, ugly, disgusting...

**Paul:** Well I thought you were a really handsome guy.

**Jodie:** Not confident. I was an okay looking guy and I’m an okay looking woman.

**Paul:** And people used to tell me, “Wow your dad is really handsome, really attractive.”

**Jodie:** Yeah, well, now you can say, “My dad is really beautiful!”

**Steve:** He’s very image conscious on the outside, wants to be pretty, but the inside he’s still got a lot of rough spots that I don’t think are very feminine. And you know, maybe she should go to charm school or something! It’s something you have to learn all over again.

**Jodie:** Steve was a pain in my ass. I thought he’d be cool I thought he’d be an ally but he was constantly a pain in my ass and really still is.

**Steve:** It was a couple of years ago, a phone call. It was in October. And I remember he...ah, I guess we'll say SHE said that "I have something to tell you and you're going to be very very mad at me." And she said "Do you know what a transsexual is?" And I go "Yeah, you know you certainly see enough of Phil Donahue and Oprah and all this stuff so yeah, I have an idea." He goes "Well that's what I am. All my life I've known that I am a woman in a man's body." And I was just flabbergasted and I thought it was some kind of joke and I said, "Oh, come on."

**Jodie:** Well he wrote me this stupid letter. And he'd gone out and seen mom and they went and talked to some woman who didn't know what the hell she was talking about. "Oh, it has to do with childhood. Your dad did this. Your dad did that." Bullshit, bullshit, bullshit. You don't know nothin'. All those things I talked to him. And I mean I talked to him until I was blue in the face. Tried to make him understand what was going on. Not blamin' anybody. It had nothin' to do with dad. Nothin' to do with mom. None of this crap. It didn't have anything to do with any of it! On and on and on and on and on. You know, and he writes me this letter and it's, it's like everything I said to him went yyyyy [noise]. It's like I'm flapping my gums to the wall. You know, it was just so frustrating.

**Steve:** It's like a mystery. Uh, cause I didn't see anything. My mom says she didn't see anything. None of his friends have come forward. So he must've been a damn good, um, hider.

**Sean:** The first time he really talked to my mom and me about this and kinda shed a little light on what was going on, um, he wanted me to read a book. "Hey, what you need to do is ya need to, ya know, ya need to read this book." I don't even remember what the book was. I don't want to read a book. You know. I don't have any interest in it. You know. He asked me how I felt about it and I remember telling him, you know Bruce, if this is what makes you happy, if this is who you are, and you feel better about yourself now that you've made this change to me on the outside, it's all on the outside. I don't have to understand it. I don't want to understand it. I don't have an interest in it. I want him to be happy, is what I want.

**Wanoka:** Is a very nice looking female. Probably better looking than I am. That's a little disillusioning. You know. Yeah. I think she seems more

feminine than I do.

**Steve:** He did all the guy stuff. You know, he started off the in the very beginning. Interest in cars, automobiles. He was in rock bands. He had more women than I ever did. Went into the army. Married. Child. Just seemed to live the normal life.

**Jodie:** And I used to get involved in all these other projects. I used to get involved in my cars. And I used to get really involved in the music. And all these other things because those were the only things that I did that didn't make me think about this. Which I didn't think was healthy for a young man to be thinking about. I must've said something to somebody along the way that made everybody make me feel that this was so wrong. Of course I never asked dad. Maybe he caught me or something! All I know is I had to hide it for some reason and I just knew that that's what I was supposed to be. What was it got to the point where I couldn't live with anymore was this destroying my life. Or had destroyed my life. To the point where I was, you know, I had no intimate relationships with anybody. Including you, my own son. And my family, my mother, my dad, my brother. How could I? They didn't know who I was!

**Steve:** Psychologically I think she'll always be my brother. Physically, I guess, at one point she'll be my sister. And we have to think of this, we'll have to see her in those terms. Right now it's still the voice on the phone. When I talk to her on the phone it's just Bruce. And so much of her actions are still Bruce's actions.

**Paul (narration):** Somehow, Steve had gotten ahold of Jodie's transcripts from the first time I visited my dad for this project. And here they seem to enjoy poking fun at themselves.

**Steve:** I don't form too many habits. To this day, if somebody has a joint, I'll smoke it. If somebody has a line of stuff, I'll do a line once and awhile. I don't care. (laughter) If this was turned into a play, here you are reading it.

**Jodie:** Well I hope it has a little more dramatic flavor to it. "I'll do a line of stuff. I don't care." I mean the way you say it, I sound like a goofball!

**Steve:** You are a goofball!

**Jodie:** No fucking way!

**Steve:** Okay. Reading for the play of, who's gonna be, reading for the play of Jodie/Bruce.

**Jodie:** There's no Jodie/Bruce.

**Steve:** In Paul's new play. He's gonna turn this into a Broadway, off-Broadway play. "It's just partying. Have a good time. You go out and whoop it up. When it's time to do business, you get down to business. Ya know." (laughter) You better watch it because this is gonna end up in... this is gonna end up. "Well it's just, I was asking to be."

**Jodie:** I love voices that sound like that.

**Steve:** "Well it's just, it was making me the kind of person that my dad was. Very not happy. And everything I did. And I used to get involved in my car. And I used to get really involved in the music and all those other things. I thought, honestly, I thought I was sick all my life. I thought there was something wrong with me." That's good.

**Jodie:** I did. I thought there was something wrong with me. I thought I was sick. Did Paul ever tell you about his friends had a picture of you and me and him together. And all his friends thought I was his mom and you were his dad. God! Look at you! Look at your hair, Paul. Oh my god. You look like the wild man of Borneo.

**Steve:** Yeah, you look like an old woman. Or like, not an old woman but.

**Jodie:** I was wearing sports bras and real baggie shirts to try to cover up my breasts 'cause they were really starting to stick out. I wasn't ready to tell everybody yet. You're used to seeing me this way now, right?

**Steve:** Yeah.

**Jodie:** It doesn't even, you don't even flinch anymore now when you see me. It's just, I can tell you're a lot more comfortable with me than you

used to be.

**Paul (narration):** My dad and I have never been that close. My parents divorced when I was four and dad eventually moved to New York while I moved to Ohio with mom. I used to visit my dad during my summer breaks from school. He's a musician and he used to take me to the clubs, where I'd watch him play his bass. And he used to embarrass me by dedicating songs to me. We had lots of fun, but he was never there emotionally. He wasn't like any of my friends' dads. He never disciplined me and we rarely had any kind of heart-to-heart talks. I always thought that was because of our geographic distance. But now I think it had more to do with his gender disphoria, in that he felt that he had to hide all of his life. Nowadays the thought of my dad living as a woman is a little strange, but I need my dad in my life. And I'm thankful that she's found her true self. I still see my dad in makeup, and I still call her dad. But when we're out in public, I respectfully call her Jodie.

[song lyrics]

He'll look at me and smile. I'll understand. And in a little while, he'll take my hand. And though it seems absurd, I know we both won't say a word. Still I'm sure to meet a man one day, maybe Tuesday will be my good news day. We'll build a little home, just meant for two. From which I'll never, never roam. Who would want to? And so I must \_\_\_\_\_, I'm waiting for the man I love.

**Paul (narration):** My dad's mom lives in California and only sees Jodie once a year. Of all the family members, she's having the most difficult time adjusting to her son's transition. So much so that she's completely unwilling to talk to me about this on tape. Now my mom is also unwilling to talk to me about this on tape. She was shocked when I told her about Jodie. But ultimately she says she doesn't care, since they haven't been a part of each other's lives for a long time. My dad's mom loves Jodie dearly, but it's taking her a little more time to adjust. More time than what Jodie would like.

**Jodie:** Basically all mom said was well, you're my kid. I love you. I don't understand it.

**Steve:** When they're together, I think that Jodie could be more lenient.

She really gets upset when mom calls her he a lot. Uses the wrong pronouns. And she keeps correcting her but after awhile, I would just let it go. It's not that important amongst ourselves so much. It just seems like, I don't know, Jodie wants to make a point of it so much that it almost gets to the point where she's just badgering poor mom.

**Jodie:** That she's just gonna, I just'll ignore it and then if I ignore it it won't bother me. And I only have to deal with it once and awhile. And that's just not the way I want my life to be. If you've got a problem, let's talk about it. And, you know, let's thrash it out. I can't fix it but I can certainly listen.

**Steve:** She accepts it, if that's a hundred percent true or not. But she says, I accept it because I know there's nothing I can do about it. Jodie has to live her life. She says I don't have to like it.

**Jodie:** Mom is real friendly with all her neighbors. You know what kind of a person she is. Just very outgoing. So apparently when I was coming out she had gone around the neighborhood and blabbed to all the neighbors and stuff, you know, Bruce is coming.

**Steve:** My mom basically was panicked about how she was going to introduce her friends, her neighbors, to this person who they thought was her son.

**Jodie:** So I get there, the first night I get there mom says "Oh, you know Marilyn's been so anxious to see you." And I said well, did you say something? "No. I didn't say nothing." I said well, what are we gonna do? She says "well, I'm gonna try to make excuses for her not to come over." Which I think is bizarre. I mean, she's making her life hell. And mine. She's making my life hell.

**Steve:** She probably shoulders a lot of blame. She probably feels guilty. She probably feels she did something to make this come about.

**Jodie:** So I'd just gotten up, mom says to me "Marilyn's coming over right now." Well the little kids had made me a gift. Had made me a gift! That's how much they liked me from the first time. "They're coming over to bring you the gift. Go hide in the bathroom. I told them you were taking a shower." So I get up, like an idiot, and go into the bathroom and start

taking a shower. While Marilyn and the two kids are there. They leave me a gift. So I finally hear them, I'm staying the bathroom the whole time, and I finally hear them leave. The door shut. I walk out and here's this beautiful little basket that they had decorated and it said welcome to California. And it had all kinds of fruits in it and all this nice stuff. And I just flipped out. I said mom, you know, I mean here are these people... Do you realize what you've done here? I said to her. And she says "well, I just don't want people to know my business." But you made me a part of their life! You made it their business. If you didn't want them to know anything about your family, I shouldn't have met them from day one. And you're making me feel like you're ashamed of me. And you're taking the problems that you have and you're throwing them back on me. And I'm not gonna put up with it. I've overcome all those problems already and I'm not gonna put up with it. And if this is the way it's gonna be... And I'm blah, blah, I'm blabbering on and on. Hysterical. I mean just fucking out of my mind. Crying. I can hardly even talk. [sigh] So, she says "Oh, I didn't even realize how much it upset you." And I was like, Jesus Christ. What do you mean you didn't realize how much it upset me? You're my mother! You're telling me, you embarrass me. Go hide in the closet. That's what you're saying to me. But I know that's not the reason but that's what you're saying. That's what it looks like to me. That's the way it makes me feel. And I said if this is the way it's gonna be, I'm never coming back here again the rest of my life. I'm not coming back. This is done. In fact I'll get out of here today. I'm ready to go. I got her keys. I took off in the car. 'Cause I just couldn't... I didn't want to see her face. I was so upset.

**Steve:** And it was just such a... man. She knew it was bad but she couldn't help herself. And then I guess her and Jodie had a sort of a coming together after that. Because Jodie was just devastated by that mom could do such a thing. And I think it hit mom that yeah, how could I do such a thing, against my own flesh and blood. Shamed him so much. Make him feel like hide from the neighbors. Who are the neighbors to her? Who's more important? Her neighbors or her own flesh and blood. I think it hit her right then that wow, this is out of control.

**Paul (narration):** Jodie didn't start coming out to the family until just after her dad, Harry, died. She says that Harry's death just happened to coincide with her decision to live full-time as a woman. But Harry's death made it easier for Jodie.

**Jodie:** For me it was kinda phew. 'Cause I couldn't imagine telling him about this. Although I didn't, obviously didn't want him to die. I loved him. But man, it was great timing. Sure took a load off my chest in terms of this, that's for sure. Wherever he is, maybe he knows already now. I don't know. Who knows. I'm not afraid to face him now. But I sure as hell was then.

**Steve:** My dad expected a lot from my brother, and wanted him to be a little carbon copy of himself. And, to a degree, they were. They were buds. They hung around. They had the same interests. Cars. Making model cars. Going to car races. That was pretty much of their life centered around cars, for the most part. He denies this now and says that he didn't have a very close relationship with Harry at all. But as I remember, they had a very close relationship. But I guess Jodie was hiding things. She was in a different world. And obviously, we know now that she is very good at hiding. So, maybe she didn't have a good relationship with Harry at all.

**Wanoka:** He was very close to Bruce. That was his, obviously, the favorite son. Maybe it was because that was the first son. I don't know. And I don't think his dad would've accepted recent events. But mostly for a selfish reason. He would look at himself. But it was image. The same old thing. Everything was image. His cars. His family. How could someone that's so much into image accept a transsexual child? I don't think it's possible.

**Jodie:** He was a man that you just couldn't get inside his head. He just wouldn't let you there. He's just very non-emotional. And the only time he showed emotions is when you did something that he wanted you to do, you were good at it. So I guess I tried to do things that made him happy with me, I suppose.

**Wanoka:** Bruce did what was expected of him. So to speak. And to do something that wasn't expected of him would've been difficult with Harry. He would've made it very difficult. Because he was so stubborn and he'd win the arguments because he was the loudest. Which is a bullshit thing.

**Sean:** He was definitely more strict of a father with them than he was with

me. He disciplined them a lot more than he did me, for sure. And I think when I come along, he has told me that I don't want to be known as the asshole dad. That does nothing but discipline my kids. I want to have more of a personal relationship with me, than what he thought he had with them, with Bruce and Steve.

**Jodie:** He had something in there and I never knew who he was. And my life was going, I mean, the whole thing I was talking about earlier everybody said you're like your dad. And I used to hate it. I didn't want to be anything like him. And that was exactly what was happening to me. I was a miserable son of a bitch and I didn't let anybody know me. I just didn't want my life to be like that, Paul. It just was not healthy. It's just not healthy and it doesn't contribute to being a positive human being. I cannot say to this day that my dad, that I thought he was a positive human being. He was a good person. Sweet, kind, giving person. Of everything but of himself.

**Wanoka:** I know Sean, my son, Sean, was very upset because Bruce seemed so relieved when his dad died. He picked up on that immediately.

**Sean:** I could've beat him to an inch of his life. He'd come in and it was a party. Hey the old man's dead. Let's sit around and get high. So he's out in the living room, smoking pot. First of all, I guess I never knew my brothers to do drugs. I definitely don't do 'em. Didn't know that they did 'em. And there's definitely worse things than pot. But that was my, you know, it was like hey the old man's dead. Now we can have a party. Now we can do the things that we couldn't do before.

**Wanoka:** And actually, I'm relieved for Jodie. I'm relieved that she can do what she wants to do, now, without the fear of Harry being in the background. It's a shame that it couldn't have happened ten years earlier. But it couldn't have. I don't think it could've.

**Paul (narration):** I'm continuing to enjoy exploring my dad's new lifestyle. Jodie's apartment looks about the same as it used to when I used to visit as a kid. There's pictures of me laying around. Bass guitars. Stereos and sheet music. But now there's an added touch. A new feminine sensibility. And Jodie introduced me to a few of her new friends. They're transsexuals too. Since dad came out to me, we've become much

closer. We talk a lot more now than we used to. But I felt it was time that the rest of the family meet Jodie. Sean and Wanoka have only spoken to Jodie over the phone. And I wanted to share with the entire family all I've learned about Jodie and our family. So I assembled a rough cut of this project, with the hopes of showing it to everyone at a family reunion. But at first Jodie wasn't interested in visiting Sean and Wanoka.

**Paul:** It's going to take more time than what you may be willing to give them to understand what's going on.

**Jodie:** I can't make them understand something I don't understand, Paul. I don't understand it.

**Paul:** Well I guess 'understand' is the wrong word. 'Accept.'

**Jodie:** Accept. Should I even care though? Do you think I should care?

**Paul:** Well, yes!

**Jodie:** Why? Why do you think I should care?

**Paul:** Yes, if you want to be a part of their life. Because they're your family. Isn't Sean important enough to you?

**Jodie:** I don't know Sean. I never knew Sean. Sean was your friend.

**Paul:** And Wanoka.

**Jodie:** I never had a relationship with Wanoka. At all.

**Paul:** So it's safe to say that you really don't care.

**Jodie:** It's not that I don't care, I mean, should I even worry about it? Should I even extend the energy, is it that important to them? It doesn't seem like what you're saying that it is. They just think I'm some sort of freak.

**Paul:** They don't think you're a freak.

**Wanoka:** I sort of hope we can become closer, especially with Jodie through all this. I hope she can become closer with us here. But I know it's gonna be easier for her to become close to the people she's around every day in New York. But I hope she thinks we're important enough to you know make a trip occasionally, to see what's happening.

**Sean:** Everybody's all spread apart. I really really, like at Christmas time, what I really really liked was that everybody was together. The Family. You know, finally at last, the only time a year when everybody's together as a family. In a lot of situations that's the last time you talked, was since last Christmas! I miss that, and one of the things I'm looking forward to as far as this reunion is everybody being together again.

**Wanoka:** Everybody talking again will be very interesting. You know, to be together. It'll probably be the last time that we'll be together.

**Paul:** Why do you think that?

**Wanoka:** I think the kids, I think the boys have their own life in New York and I don't think they'll spend the money to come here that often. I don't think they're close to Sean and I. I think we're all on our own. And it bothers me.

**Paul:** Well the idea of this is to bring us all closer. To reverse that.

**Wanoka:** I don't think this family's capable. That's my feeling. I don't think that can happen. I really don't. We'll find out. It'll be interesting, it'll be nice.

**Paul:** It took a little convincing, but I was finally able to organize a family reunion at Wanoka's house. To help motivate them, I chose to have it over my birthday weekend.

**Steve:** Is this little reunion that you're gonna talk about, does that involve Wanoka, Sean, Jodie, Me, you...all in one room, breaking bread? That should be interesting.

**Wanoka:** Let's see if I spot Jodie first. There she is, there she is!

**Jodie:** Hi, man you look terrific!

**Wanoka:** You look better than I do that's a shame.

**Jodie:** I don't think so, you look so young! Hey Sean!

**Sean:** What's going on?

**Jodie:** What's up, how are you?

**Paul:** Hey!

**Jodie:** How you doin'?

**Paul:** Alright. Tired.

**Jodie:** Where's Steve-o?

**Wanoka:** Sittin' out in front of the garage when we left.

**Paul:** It was a little quiet at first, but then Jodie broke the ice and started asking Steve about his new girlfriend, and suddenly it seemed like old times again.

**Jodie:** You ever been in love?

**Steve:** Yeah.

**Jodie:** How do you feel when you're not with her, do you miss her?

**Steve:** C'mon, I've only known her a couple of months.

**Jodie:** So. But I mean, when you stay away from her for a couple of days

**Steve:** Yeah, I can stand that, that's no problem. She's makin' me read that book, by that goofy guy that's on TV about, "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus", you know, but I read it and it really does make sense, men just are different than women, they just think differently.

**Jodie:** No question. I know that when a man get's his penis hard you can do whatever you want him to do.

**Steve:** What's that?

**Jodie:** Once your dick get's hard...

**Wanoka:** And your head get's soft you're in love!

**Jodie:** Well no, once your dick get's hard you can get him to do whatever you want him to do. Right guys?

**Wanoka:** Is that true?

**Jodie:** Duh...They're all sittin around, Duh...

**Wanoka:** C'mon, is that true?

**Paul:** What's the question you're asking? I don't understand.

**Wanoka:** Bruce says, "with a man..."

**Jodie:** When Laura gets your penis hard she has total control of you, that's what I'm saying. You'll do anything she wants. Cause you want to get your weasel, your rocks off.

**Steve:** Wait a minute, we're assume that that's happened.

**Wanoka:** That was cold.

**Paul:** I don't know, that's a hard one to answer. I don't know.

**Jodie:** Bullshit.

**Steve:** It's not just about that, it's also about friendship, love, and sex.

**Jodie:** Sure there's some friendship involved but I know when a man is initially attracted to you it's because his penis tells him he's attracted.

**Paul:** Let's get the female side on this one, what do you think?

**Jodie:** I'm givin' you the female side.

**Paul:** No I want to hear what they think.

**Ann:** About what?

**Jodie:** Don't you think I'm right? You know, when a guy comes up to you...

**Ann:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, you're right.

**Jodie:** His penis says, "wow, she's really attractive!" His little weasels takin over there.

**Steve:** Jodie has the inside track there.

**Jodie:** I've been around it for nine years now.

**Steve:** No, you've seen the perspective from both sides.

**Jodie:** Yeah.

**Jodie:** One of the things that bothers me about my mother is that here's a woman that's got the capabilities of helpin me, she says how much she loves me and everything. "I'll do anything to make you happy", she says to me. So give me some money, help me. Help me do this, help me make my life happy, do something for me. She won't do it. "Well I can't do it." "Why?" "I just can't do it." It's her problem it's not mine, she's not thinking about me, it's her problem. So instead of getting it fixed, talking to somebody to at least trying to understand why you have this problem. Cause you're telling me that you love me and you'll do anything for me but, you won't do it! And why? Because you don't want to. It doesn't make any sense to me.

**Wanoka:** Is it because...

**Jodie:** She doesn't have to give me the money or loan it...I don't even

care if she gives it to me, I want her to offer it to me that's what I want. It really hurts my feelings. She helped Steve go through school. She never did anything for me. That's what drives me crazy.

**Wanoka:** She doesn't want you to have the surgery. She's not gonna help.

**Jodie:** She doesn't want me to have the surgery, no.

**Wanoka:** The thing I object to the most about the Hill's, is their first reaction is "why did you do this to me." and that was awful true with your dad.

**Jodie:** Yeah.

**Wanoka:** It has nothing to do with you.

**Jodie:** I always felt like, because of Dad in those kinds of situations was, "Oh what's dad gonna think?" Instead of taking care of Bruce, I'm worrying about what Harry thinks. But what it did to me as a child growing up with him is, I'm worrying about what Sean's going to think if I go showing up at the house as Jodie, that's wrong. No question he was a different father to you. He went through some tough times but man-o-man, he was not the same than he was when Steve and I was with him. Don't you think, Steve?

**Steve:** I guess. Well, he was more mellow for sure. Cause I think Wanoka broke his spirit after a while.

**Wanoka:** I certainly put a test to it.

**Jodie:** Wanoka, unlike my mom, she used to take all his crap and you didn't take it. That's what I thought was so cool.

**Wanoka:** I tested him quite a bit. I had my own problems I didn't want to deal with his too.

**Steve:** Dad would say, "We're not gonna have a goddamned dog around here, we're not gonna." And sure enough there'd be a dog there. And I'd

say, “Dad what happened?” “Well what could I do?”

**Wanoka:** One day I came home with a pup and he said “where’d you get that?” And I said, “Lithopolis.” Well a person can’t have what they want all the time. It has to be a compromise, it’s not fair for it to be otherwise.

**Jodie:** Birthday! Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday dear Paul Hill, Happy birthday to you.

**Steve:** Extreme close-up! Paul knows how to pose. Okay, just blank faces, okay?

**Grocer:** Hi!

**Wanoka:** I want some good sweet corn, and a couple of nice tomatoes.

**Steve:** The secret to good grilling is to sear the outsides very quickly over a very hot fire. These look like T-bones. Can you get up a little bit higher Wanoka?

**Wanoka:** I’m awful close here I don’t want to catch my blouse on fire.

**Steve:** Relax.

**Wanoka:** Balance me, Sean.

**Steve:** Relax, you’re smiling.

**Jodie:** I can’t help it.

**Steve:** I cooked out the other day and I swear the meat wasn’t as good as this.

**Jodie:** I guess I’m ready for one of those taters. Let me have one Sean.

**ON TV:** **[JODIE]** The way you say it I sound like a goofball! **[STEVE]** You are a goofball! **[JODIE]** No fucking way! **[STEVE]** Reading for the play of Jodie/Bruce. **[STEVE]** There’s no Jodie/Bruce!

**Jodie:** What a schnozola, huh? Big dents from my glasses on it and everything else.

**ON TV: [JODIE]** You're used to seeing me now, right? You don't even flinch now do you? I can tell you're a lot more comfortable now than you used to be.

**Steve:** This looks like a documentary on me!

**Jodie:** Double chin happenin' there, man!

**ON TV: [JODIE]** So I get up like an idiot and go into the bathroom and start taking a shower, while Marilyn and the two kids were there. So I hear them I'm standing there in the bathroom the whole time and I finally hear them leave. I walk out and here's this beautiful little basket that they had decorated and it had 'welcome to california' and it had all these fruits in it and all this nice stuff, and I just flipped out. I said 'mom, you know' I'm bluh, bluh, blabbering on hysterical, just fucking out of my mind crying I could hardly talk, and I said 'if this is the way it's going to be I'm never coming back here again the rest of my life. This is done, I'll get out of here today. I grabbed the keys and took off in the car.

**Jodie:** Really upset me man, It really hurt my feelings. It hurt so much when she did that.

**Steve:** I'm sure.

**ON TV:** I shouldn't have been driving...boo hoo...

**Jodie:** I'm driving all over the road, I can't see, boo hoo...

**Paul (narration):** I took this opportunity to share with the family one of my dad's closest friends that I met while I was in New York. Chris here, was born male and when she turned 40 she decided to have an operation to become female. She took hormone shots, had breast implants, and changed her name to Crystal. But she found it difficult to function in society as a female, and now lives an ambiguous lifestyle, and goes by the new name, Chris.

**Chris:** Our hearts and our lungs and everything that's pumping, the batteries that are working this microphone, where are our batteries? We don't have to recharge, the heart just keeps beating and this miracle, I'm not so sure anymore that we should cut it open just because we can. And I wonder if there are ways that we can work through the transgender issues without surgery, and I don't have the answer for that.

**Jodie:** When I look at you, and you and I have discussed this, it makes me scared about myself thinking, well here's my friend Crystal who I just love to death, and now she's not sure if what she was doing was the right thing so I'm thinking to myself, this is what I intend to do, am I doing the right thing for myself and I have no other answer but to say "yes", I am going to do the right thing for me. The whole thing for me was to be the person that I am. And I understand when you talked about you got tired of being a transsexual. I don't want to be a transsexual but I am. I am this. Can't help it.

**Chris:** Well, yes you can. That's the bad part You can! You can stop right now.

**Jodie:** If I go back to living as Bruce I'm still going to be a transsexual.

**Chris:** Why?

**Jodie:** Because it's not about the way I look or anything it's about what my mind is telling me what I am, this is what I am, this is the result of my mind...

**Chris:** My mind was telling me that I was a female, and I tried to be...

**Jodie:** Your mind was saying to you that you need to live this way.

**Chris:** Right.

**Jodie:** And if somebody's gonna look at me and say are you a boy or a girl, I'd rather be on the girl side, right?

**Chris:** Right.

**Jodie:** Me too.

**Chris:** She said that when I was going through this, I mean, now I'm coming around, not even sure what I'm doing, but I'm scaring her because I'm not looking like the Crystal she knew. And she said 'now I know what my mom feels like'.

**Jodie:** And my son, and my brother. It's hard for me, I mean I only know her as a girl.

**Chris:** And yet I'm the same person underneath.

**Jodie:** Absolutely you're exactly the same person you haven't changed one bit. And I'm getting used to you. I think it's being used to the way somebody is.

**Chris:** Well I was having trouble with myself too.

**Jodie:** So it's different. It's coming at it from a different way. So you know, when I say these things I know how...I mean I went through these things with her. You know, 'wow this is really different'. And she's still the same. It's weird to take when you get used to somebody being one way, all this sudden they're a different way. So I understand a little bit better than I used to.

**Wanoka:** It doesn't seem as traumatic to me maybe it's because I read about it or something, I don't know.

**Jodie:** Well I felt like that after you all saw me that you're going to realize that it's not as big of a deal as...

**Wanoka:** I'm not as shocked as I thought I might be.

**Paul:** What about your mom and Steve?

**Jodie:** I'm sorry for the pain I caused the people in my family they're obviously going through stuff because of me, and I'm willing to do everything within my power to help everybody.

**Chris:** I have tremendous regrets for who I've hurt in my family. It's funny, when you go through stuff and you do come through stuff, it actually makes your relationship stronger than they might have been or they were, but it's amazing how things can change, and I can't imagine what it's like for you, because to me it would be overwhelming! I have trouble with myself!

**Jodie:** What was so cool about him is when I told him and right away the next time I talked to him after that he told me that he was on the web and got all kinds of information and you found out stuff. In other words here's a person who loves me enough to actually exert some energy to try to understand well why is this happening, let me understand this. And my mother on the other hand, somebody who's been around me all my life, totally refuses to do anything.

**Paul:** This was obviously a barrier for us to get to know each other, and of course also the geographic distance between us. But this was even more of a factor in that. So this was like, gee, now is a great chance for me to finally get to know my dad. So that's why we're doing the film because it's become a tool to aid in that. Cause I think it's important to know your family.

**Jodie:** We'll you and I will be the first.

**Paul:** First what?

**Jodie:** To get to know each other. Here's a good example of my mom. Finally, after all this time she finally sent me something with my name spelled right. She would put down Jodie, but first it was J-O-D-I, then J-O-D-Y. Then J-O-D-I, then J-O-D-Y. Mom, it's J-O-D-I-E. "oh, okay." J-O-D-I, the next thing that comes.

**Chris:** And I promise you; later, in your journey, whatever happens you'll look back and you'll say, it wasn't that important a thing. In a way you're like a baby. Because you really are defining who you are. When I was in the hospital bed, they brought in a person who I'm still friends with, who was waking up from the surgery. I had the surgery a week before. And she's moaning, she's coming out of anesthesia, and I think to myself, "What do we have to go through just to be who we are." She's in pain. It

was the weirdest experience witnessing what I went through. You know when you're waking up out of anesthesia after something like that, you don't have that overview, you're in your head and you're groggy. But I got a chance to see what I looked like. And it made me think, "oh my God, what we have to go through just to be happy with our bodies." And it is overwhelming and amazing what we go through what we do, and what we put our families through just to be secure in ourselves. And I hate to say this but I'm still not sure it is the answer. But I don't mean to say it isn't the answer. Isn't that funny.

**Jodie:** Nobody in their right mind would ever do this if they didn't have some motivation that wasn't so deep and...I mean, I don't want this to be this way, it just is.

**Paul:** that's it!

**Jodie:** That's it? Yeah, it was good. But I can't stand watching myself though.

**Wanoka:** I don't know anybody that likes to look at themselves.

**Jodie:** I look horrible.

**Steve:** Yeah it was insightful, and I think once it's all come together once it's edited. What I think works the best is the scene where we're both talking about the same scene with mom and you go back and forth and, I think once that kind of editing happens, interjected with photographs and music, I think it'll be really good.

**Sean:** When you get into these big, long conversations that drag out...

**Wanoka:** You lose people?

**Sean:** Yeah. I get bored. But when he keeps jumping back and forth it keeps your interest.

**Steve:** Portrait time!

**Jodie:** Take a picture of my dental work?

**Steve:** Okay, everybody right here, relaxed face. That's good. Okay, Jodie you come front center now, Paul I want you laying down on the ground so just your head comes up. I know it's wet but you'll have to change afterwards. Okay, everybody just keep it front and center. Back up a little bit Sean. Paul, you're screwin' up!

**Wanoka:** Well I'll say goodbye again.

**Jodie:** Okay kids, love you.

**Wanoka:** Bye, Jodie.

**Sean:** One of you guys can ride with us if you want to.

**Wanoka:** Take care of yourself.

**Jodie:** I will. If mom doesn't come out for Christmas maybe we'll try to come back here, it depends on how many days I get.

**Paul:** Okay, I'll call you. Bye.

**Jodie:** Bye Annie. Give you a hug again.

**Laura:** Bye Jodie.

**Jodie:** By Laura. Take care. See ya Sean. Take care.

**Sean:** Bye.

**Jodie (on phone):** I want you to know everything that's going on, Paul. I need for you especially to understand me. Now that I know you better now I'm thinking that it was wrong for me to separate myself from you. I want my relationship with you to be much different than it was with my own dad. I want us to be not only father and son but also friends.

**Paul (narration):** Overall it was a great weekend. Hopefully it was a start of a new relationship amongst our family. But Jodie hasn't seen Sean or Wanoka since the reunion. Jodie is still trying to save money for

her sex change operation. As for me, I'm enjoying my renewed relationship with my dad. She's no longer this ambiguous parent living in New York. But more real to me now, as a woman and my dad.