

WHITE COP 1. — and you didn't *mean* to hit her that hard. (*Lights down on cops.*)

ROBERT. They just came right after me. This white girl, me and she had dated, and you know people 'round here don't like that too much.

GEORGIA. Mm-hmm.

ROBERT. And in my first trial I *knew* I was going to prison — I had eleven whites and one black on that jury.

GEORGIA. And do you think, seriously, now be honest, if the roles had been reversed, if it had been a black woman and a white man, it woulda been like that?

ROBERT. Right, 'cause let's go to another high-profile case.

GEORGIA. Oh, here we go —

ROBERT. Now within all y'all's hearts — now be honest — within your *heart*, do you really think O.J. committed that crime?

GEORGIA. (*Laughing.*) Well, but O.J., you know, I'm black and I *still* think he guilty, I'm sorry — I don't care what they say, if the DNA put you there, O.J., you guilty. (*Lights down on Robert and Georgia, up on Kerry and Sandra. Kerry is an eager nineteen-year-old trapped in a forty-five-year-old's body, white, with a Texas accent. Kerry is an "up-talker" — he ends many of his sentences with a question mark. Sandra is Kerry's wife, also Texan, very pregnant, very sweet, takes care of Kerry.*)

KERRY. Kerry Max Cook. (*Beat.*)

SANDRA. Sandra Cook.

START

KERRY. It actually started when I was in the ninth or tenth grade: Me and my friends would, you know, act like we were going to school and then run out the back door and start trying to find a car with the keys in it. And I had the misfortune that one of the cars that I stole, in my adventures to conquer the world, was the sheriff deputy's car and I, ah ... wrecked it — driver's ed I didn't take — and, make a long story short, the deputy beat me for it.

And that was pretty much it — after that, any robbery, any broken window, any cat up a tree, everything was just *my fault*, as far as the sheriff was concerned.

And then fast forwarding, I'm nineteen, and I'm at this apartment complex in Texas called the Embarcadero — there's a swimming pool there, it's where all the hip people hang out. And I was an attractive guy, I dressed real nice. It was the seventies you know, man: I bought my clothes from the hippest place, like the Gap, and

I had my hair styled real long, platform shoes and bell-bottoms. I looked tight. And I was walkin' towards the swimming pool, and there was this beautiful gorgeous girl, man. (*To Sandra.*) Not as pretty as you.

SANDRA. Go on.

KERRY. But really *gorgeous*, man — just nude and fondling herself, right there in the window. So I look up and I go, "Oh my god, man ... wow," cause I had lived a very sheltered, naive life, I'd never even been to a strip club before, and I'm seeing this total complete mature woman, and I'm goin' "okay, yeah, that's cool, man."

END

And so anyway, a couple days go by, and I'm back at the pool and there's this chick, layin' out there. To make a long story short, we started talking, told her I was a bartender in Dallas — 'course I was working at a gay bar, but I didn't tell her that — I'm just stretching everything as much as I can because I want to be all that plus a bag of potater chips. Anyway, we end up going back to her apartment ... we ... uh ... you know ... made out.

SANDRA. (*To audience.*) But not — all the way.

KERRY. Oh, no, no, no. I was in there for about maybe thirty, forty-five minutes, whatever, and I got cold feet because she was so aggressive, and I left.

And I didn't ever see or hear from her ever again until I'm arrested for her murder three months later, August of 1977. (*Sound of gavel. Lights up on Kerry's defense, prosecution and judge. They speak facing the audience.*)

KERRY'S DEFENSE. Since June 10, 1977, Tyler, Texas, has been screaming and crying for *someone* to answer to this crime —

KERRY'S PROSECUTION. (*Thick Texas accent.*) The state of Texas would object to that being far beyond the scope of this case —

KERRY'S JUDGE. I am going to sustain that objection. (*Courtroom freezes.*)

KERRY. They had found a fingerprint of mine on her doorframe.

SANDRA. And they had a fingerprint guy whose knowledge of fingerprints at that point was a six-month correspondence school — (*Courtroom back in action.*)

PROSECUTION. (*Overlapping.*) Lieutenant Doug Collins is an expert fingerprint technologist. He will testify that he found a fingerprint belonging to the defendant, Kerry Max Cook. It is as clear, Ladies and Gentlemen, as the day when you put your footprint on your birth certificate. That officer didn't have any reason to lie. He will narrow the time element of the leaving of those fingerprints —