

TESS: *I'm exhausted!* [*She throws herself face down on the daybed.*] I'm so tired!

MARGOT: [*thrilled to see her; muffled*] Mmmffff!

TESS: I'm so tired. Tired. Tired.

MARGOT: [*struggling to speak*] Mmmmmffff!

TESS: [*building in intensity*] It's just the endless noise. You know? Inside my head? *Sesame Street* and those horrible furry midgets that babble on hillocks and phones ringing: *It's Jen about the tennis schedule, it's Kate about the pre-school meeting, it's Helen about the mystery jars for the school fair*; it's faxes and dryers that beep and dishwashers and the kids fighting and talk radio and sometimes I just—I feel—I can't breathe—I can't get air—it's like I'm— [*Getting up and moving towards the hallway leading upstairs*] Anyway, I just want to go to my room and lie down. I swear I'll be as quiet as a mouse.

*She suddenly absorbs the sight of MARGOT, cuffed and gagged, the books chaotically spread over the floor, the sound of MOLLY singing offstage. Beat.*

I've come at a bad time. [*Beat.*] Oh dear. Look, it's fine. I mean—no value judgements. Everyone's into something, right? Really, Mum, it's okay. You're a grown woman and you want to have some fun and why shouldn't you? It's really not that pathetic and disgusting and ugly for women your age to have—to [*struggling with her repulsion*] engage intimately—to— Bryan and I find the missionary position challenging enough—in fact our favourite position is the sleeping position—but you're perfectly entitled to... Anyway, I'll just tootle upstairs.

MARGOT: Mmmffffff!—