

**COCKROACHES**  
**WORLD PREMIERE**  
**By Emma Schillage Directed by Emerson Collins**  
**April 23-May 3, 2026**

I am INCREDIBLY excited to bring this brilliant, and funny, and dark Southern gothic play into the world for the first time with Revolution Stage Company. Emma Schillage won the Del Shores Foundation Writers Festival Best Play Award and has created something beautiful for us to all make together. Emma will be joining us later in the rehearsal process as well! This is going to be a fun adventure to figure out the unique journey of this piece, and we're looking for open, creative actors to bring it to life!

Emerson Collins, Director

**AUDITION NOTES**

Please memorize the auditions scenes. If that is not possible, be as familiar as you can with them. I may only see one scene in the initial audition. The callback scenes for each character are also attached so you can be familiar with it if I need to see more from you.

**\*\*Because it is not published, we are not posting the entire script, but if you would like to read it, email me and I will send it to you.**

[emersoncollins@hotmail.com](mailto:emersoncollins@hotmail.com)

**CHARACTER BREAKDOWN**

JENNIFER "JENNY" - 18; the eldest child; the caretaker; she is responsible and intelligent, but she isn't sure what her purpose is outside of taking care of her family.

CHARLOTTE "CHARLIE" - 15; sturdy, the middle child, the pot-stirrer, she is intuitive, yet deeply insecure; her love and intensity can quickly turn into violence (it's a defense mechanism.)

SAVINA "SISSY" - 12; small, thin, the youngest; the crybaby/peace-keeper; she is sensitive and joyful but somewhat disturbed; she feels everything with heightened intensity.

MR. SAM (M) – 35-48; the next-door neighbor

MOMMA (F) - 40; the human parts of her are fading

**NOTE ON CASTING**

-Charlie and Sissy are under the age of 18, but will be played by actors who are 18+.

**REHEARSAL SCHEDULE**

Six days a week, tentative schedule below. \*\*If all actors are available during some day time, we will consider some daytime rehearsals.\*\*

**WEEK ONE:**

3/24-27 - Tuesday-Friday 5-10pm  
3/28-29 - Sat-Sun 10-3 or 11-4 daytime only

**WEEK TWO:**

3/31-4/3 - Tues-Friday 5-10pm  
Sat 4/4 - 10-3 or 11-4 daytime only  
Sun 4/5 - EASTER OFF PROBABLY

**WEEK THREE:**

4/7-4/10 - Tues-Friday 5-10pm  
4/11-12 - Sat/Sun - 10-3 or 11-4 (leavening evenings for other shows/events)

**WEEK FOUR:**

4/14-4/17 - Tuesday-Friday 5-10pm

**WEEK FIVE:**

SATURDAY 4/18 – DAYTIME TECH 8-5  
SUNDAY 4/19 – TECH ALL DAY, TECH RUN  
MONDAY 4/20 – OFF  
TUESDAY 4/21 – DRESS RUN  
WEDNESDAY 4/22 – FINAL INVITED DRESS  
THURSDAY 4/23 – PREVIEW  
FRIDAY 4/24 – OPENING  
SATURDAY 4/25 – EVENING SHOW  
SUNDAY 4/26 – MATINEE

**WEEK SIX:**

THURSDAY 4/30 – Performance  
Friday 5/1 – Performance  
Saturday 5/2 – Performance  
Sunday 5/3 - CLOSING

# JENNY '14 Sc. 1

84

CHARLIE

No. I shouldn't.

JENNY

You shouldn't or you don't want any?

CHARLIE

I don't want any!

JENNY

Okay. Okay. Fine.

~~There is a measured silence between the two sisters as Jenny eats her dry cereal.~~

CHARLIE

What did you mean the other night?

JENNY

Hmm?

CHARLIE

When you said we owed Mr. Sam. What did you mean by that? He hasn't come by since, and...I'm just wondering what you meant by that.

JENNY

**START**

Why does he come here?

CHARLIE

To help out with Momma. I mean, they were practically engaged.

JENNY

Charlie.

CHARLIE

He wants to help us. He knows what it's like living with someone like Momma-and he cares about her. About us.

JENNY

Has he...? He hasn't-like...

CHARLIE

Jenny. No. He would never. He's not like that.

# JENNY 2/4 Sc. 1

85

JENNY

I'm sorry, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Why...?

JENNY

He will. He will hurt you.

CHARLIE

No.

JENNY

He will. He used to do the same thing to me.

CHARLIE

What do you mean 'the same thing'?

JENNY

I liked it at first. The attention. He took such an interest in me. He made me feel like I had all this power.

CHARLIE

Jenny. No.

JENNY

I remember feeling guilty. Like I was betraying Momma. Like I had convinced him to want me. Like I was stealing him away from her, and bringing this awful thing out of him. And what did it say about me that I was doing that to him? Making him love me like that? Momma didn't see it. Or she didn't want to see it. I thought I had fallen in love with him.

CHARLIE

Why are you saying this?

JENNY

And then, all of a sudden, he just stopped. Stopped touching me. Stopped taking an interest. I surprised him one night. Snuck out and surprised him at home. I remember he looked so guilty. It was towards the end of the summer and I told him I wanted to continue visiting while I was in college. I kissed him. But by then, he couldn't. He couldn't fucking get it up.

CHARLIE

Please.

JENNY

He said it was because I was leaving him. He couldn't stop imagining me with some 'college punk' who would take advantage of me and that disturbed him. I told him that wasn't true, and next thing I knew, we were fighting. I said some nasty things. I mean-I threatened him-and he got so frustrated, he just hit me right across the face. I was shocked and hurt and I knew. I knew his frustration had nothing to do with me leaving, and everything to do with my age.

CHARLIE

No.

JENNY

I was too old for him. And for a long time, I felt like it was all my fault.

CHARLIE

You're lying.

JENNY

I'm not.

CHARLIE

No. He isn't like that. Okay? You're doing the same thing I did with Momma. You are making him out to be some kind of monster, when all he wants, all he wanted was to protect you. I know how you are.

JENNY

Come on. You are too smart for that.

CHARLIE

No. I'm not the smart one, remember? I'm not smart and pretty like you. And that bothers you. It bothers you that he likes me, despite not being smart or pretty, right, Jenny?

JENNY

What? That isn't-that isn't at all what this is. I'm worried about you. I didn't think. I didn't think that me leaving would mean he would come after you. I'm sorry that he did, and I can't do anything about that.

CHARLIE

He didn't "come after me." He's silly and weird, but he is the only person who actually cares. And he wouldn't do that.

JENNY

He did.

CHARLIE

You're jealous.

JENNY

I'm not. I love you, Charlie. But I'm not. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I didn't take you with me. I'm sorry I didn't come back for you. I'm sorry I didn't call.

CHARLIE

You promised.

JENNY

I know.

CHARLIE

You're a liar.

JENNY

Not about that.

CHARLIE

What are you going to do?

JENNY

I don't know what to do. Not about Momma or you or Sissy, okay?

CHARLIE

You'll figure it out. You always do. And when you do, you tell me. Please. Please don't do anything without telling me.

~~Jenny nods.~~

CHARLIE

I'm serious. You don't control me. You don't have to fix everything. Please.

Jenny pushes the half eaten dry cereal in front of Charlie.

JENNY

Eat.

One day you'll be too old for him. And he won't want you anymore. One day, he'll act like you didn't mean anything to him and you are left with all of the ugly emotions that you've been surpressing around him for so long and you'll realize you hate him.

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END ©ckroaches

# JENNY 1/4 Sc. 2

48

JENNY

...?

SISSY

You just look like you don't roll around on the floor enough. You should roll around on the floor more.

JENNY

...thanks, Sissy. Maybe you should go to bed. Go lay in my room and get some sleep.

Jenny pushes Sissy towards her room. Jenny walks to Charlie's door and knocks loudly. Charlie swings the door open, ~~annoyed~~.

CHARLIE

What.

JENNY

What the hell is wrong with Sissy?

CHARLIE

What?

JENNY

She is acting insane. Calling herself a feminist-

CHARLIE

Nothing wrong with that, but, okay.

JENNY

She is dancing in the middle of the night, and obsessing over that damned monster.

CHARLIE

Shit. Shit shit shit. Yeah no umm, I think she is taking Momma's medication. After you left, Sissy would have these night terrors and Momma couldn't handle it, so she gave her some -

JENNY

Pill bottle pillows. Shit.

CHARLIE

She probably just took one for bed.

JENNY

Does she normally get all agitated like that?

**START**

CHARLIE

Like how?

JENNY

She was delirious. It was like she hadn't slept. She has some mighty strong feelings about the thirteen colonies.

CHARLIE

No way! She brought up the thirteen colonies?

JENNY

It was super weird.

CHARLIE

Nah, she's in American history this year. The thirteen colonies get her fired up. She hates the Nothern States man. I don't get it. I'm hoping the Civil War chapter will mellow her out a bit.

JENNY

She shouldn't be taking those.

CHARLIE

We all used to take them.

JENNY

I know, but...that wasn't okay. You should have called me.

CHARLIE

Okay, first of all, I have called you. Plenty of times, actually. And Momma wouldn't give them to us if they weren't safe.

JENNY

No. That's fucked, Charlie, and you know it.

CHARLIE

Oh stop pretending you care about Sissy.

JENNY

Excuse me?

CHARLIE

Sissy has always gotten on your nerves. You have literally never cared about her.

# JENNY 3/4 Sc. 2

50

JENNY

That isn't true!

CHARLIE

What do you even know about her?

JENNY

I took care of Sissy more than Momma and you combined. I changed her diapers, fed her bottles, bought medicine for her when she had that awful rash with my own money. I dressed her and played with her-

CHARLIE

Because you had to! She was a chore to you. And you resent her for it. Admit it. What have you and Sissy done together, just the two of you, since she was over the age of five?

JENNY

That isn't fair!

CHARLIE

And you left! You wanna talk about what's fucked? You just left and we didn't hear from you for months! Months! Just because you go to an IVY League school-

JENNY

I DON'T GO TO AN IVY LEAGUE SCHOOL!

CHARLIE

Oh my God? She admitted it! Did you hear that? MOMMA?! Wake up! Jenny finally admitted what she's been denying this whole fucking time! She isn't actually as good as she thinks.

JENNY

Shut up! You have always been so jealous of me!

CHARLIE

You'd like to believe that, wouldn't you? You aren't any better than the rest of us, Jennifer. You can work as hard as you'd like. At the end of the day, you are nothing but trash.

JENNY

I swear to God!

Jenny launches herself on top of Charlie, knocking her down, straddling her, and holding her hands above her head.

# JENNY 4/4 SC. 2

51

JENNY

Shut up I said. Shut your stupid fat face up.

END

CHARLIE

Mad I'm finally standing up to you? You can't do this to me any more. I weigh more than you, remember?!

Charlie shoves Jenny off of her, getting on top of her and holding her hands above her head.

JENNY

Get OFF of me! I can't breathe. Your thighs are crushing me.

CHARLIE

Open your eyes, Jenny.

JENNY

No!

CHARLIE

Open your eyes or I'll spit in your mouth.

JENNY

UGH!

Jenny spits at Charlie ~~instead.~~

CHARLIE

EWW!

~~Jenny gets in her face.~~

JENNY

God. Why?! I hate you for making me act like this. I don't act like this.

CHARLIE

Please! You always started it. You think you become all dignified once you go off to college and shit?

JENNY

I'm studying pre-law! I'm not supposed to act like this. Fuck. How am I supposed to represent people and I just fucking spit in your face?

Cockroaches

# CALLBACK #1 SAM/CHARLIE<sup>93</sup>/JENNY

CHARLIE

What is he doing here?

START

~~Charlie walks in, revealing herself. Mr. Sam,  
cool as a cucumber, hardly flinches.~~

1/4

MR. SAM

Charlie. Your sister invited me over. We were just talking about your mother.

JENNY

No, Charlie. Go outside, okay?

CHARLIE

No. I want to stay. You're talking about me. I should be present for it.

JENNY

Please. Please just listen to me. Just this once.

CHARLIE

What is he doing here?

JENNY

What did you hear?

CHARLIE

Does it matter? Answer the question.

JENNY

I wanted to talk to him. I wanted to tell him to stay away from you. I am trying to protect you. I don't want you to get hurt.

CHARLIE

*(to Mr. Sam)*

Is that true?

MR. SAM

Charlie, come on, I mean-I don't understand why your sister would be under the impression that I would hurt you-

CHARLIE

She told me you were together. Is that true?

MR. SAM

I...

# CALLBACK #1 SAM/CHARLIE/JENNY

2/4

While you were with Momma?

CHARLIE

It's far more complicated than that.

MR. SAM

And Momma knew.

CHARLIE

No. No.

MR. SAM

CHARLIE

Momma is smart. Just because I was too stupid to see it doesn't mean that Momma was. Why didn't Momma want you here? Why, all of a sudden, did you show up, huh?

MR. SAM

Charlie, I'm sorry. I have always been protective of you girls. It's beyond what you can understand.

CHARLIE

Momma loved you. She wanted to marry you. But you wanted Jenny. You always wanted her, right?

MR. SAM

Nothing is that simple, Charlotte.

CHARLIE

Please. Don't let me stand in the way. You two can have each other.

JENNY

WHAT? NO! That isn't what this is at all. You think I still-?

CHARLIE

Come on! Everyone is a liar. A stupid liar. Goddammit.

JENNY

Charlie, I know you don't believe me, but I don't want him for myself. I want him out of our lives, all of our lives.

CHARLIE

No! Because you've always played games with me. Always wanted me to know that you were capable of more than me. You complain, but you love being the golden child, Jenny. You love that you get to be our savior.

# CALLBACK #1 SAM/CHARLIE/JENNY

And you'll make sure we're all indebted to you by the end of it. And you just fucking left me here! With Momma. When you know how horrible she is, when you knew I would've done anything to come with you.

3/4

Mr. Sam takes a step towards Charlie.

CHARLIE

And YOU! You never cared either! You never found me beautiful or smart or interesting and I don't even know why I thought you would.

JENNY

Oh Charlie.

MR. SAM

I'm not a liar. Your sister and I have a complicated past, yes. But I am not some fake person. I am real and I see myself in you. That's what brought me here. You aren't some conquest. Sincerely, I have no intentions other than to offer help.

JENNY

STOP IT! I'm sick and tired of you manipulating everyone and everything. You don't get to talk.

CHARLIE

Oh, save it, Jenny.

JENNY

EVERYONE SHUT UP!

~~Jenny looks at Mr. Sam up and down, her own features setting themselves in a hard line. She~~ stares forward, at the sweatstains underneath Mr. Sam's armpits.

JENNY

You're really ugly. I don't think you were ever good looking. And it has nothing to do with your personality. You are just physically repulsive. In every way. I don't know why I ever let you do that to me.

MR. SAM

You always knew how to be mean, Jennifer. You've always known how to tear a person down.

# CALLBACK #1 SAM/CHARLIE/JENNY

4/4

JENNY

I'm not finished. You raped me. I was a child.

~~Mr. Sam shakes his head "no."~~

JENNY

You did. You raped me. I was a child. While I wore braces. In my school uniform. You're the most disgusting creature alive and I hope you know. I hope you know that every breath you take is a breath wasted!

Mr. Sam slaps Jenny in the face.

MR. SAM

Liar!

CHARLIE

Jenny!

MR. SAM

Charlie, I'm so-I didn't mean-I don't know what-

CHARLIE

No. No no no no no. Get away from her! Get away from the both of us!

MR. SAM

Shh. Shh. Hey, hey, hey. It's okay. Alright? We're all okay.

END

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Sissy appears in the doorway.

SISSY

What's going on?

CHARLIE

Get away from him, Sissy!

SISSY

What's wrong? What's wrong?

MR. SAM

It's okay. Hey. Everything is okay. We're all just worked up over your mother.

CHARLIE

Don't listen to him, Sissy.

JENNY

Sissy. He is the monster. Not Momma. It's him.

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Cockroaches

# CALLBACK #2 JENNY/SISSY/CHARLIE <sup>73</sup>

1/5

Momma! Stop! Let her go.

SISSY

The monster stops and turns to Sissy. Her beady eyes, unnerving.

I think you should go to bed.

SISSY

Sissy grabs the monster's hand. Momma sniffs at Sissy, burrowing her face in her hair.

I'll be right back.

SISSY

(calling to her sisters)

Sissy leads Momma back to the bedroom, leaving Charlie and Jenny absolutely stricken in the middle of the room. Jenny runs out the room, gagging.

*SCENE Transition: "I cannot make you understand. I cannot make anyone understand what is happening inside me. I cannot even explain it to myself." - FK*

All three sisters sit numbly in the living room.

START

So...

CHARLIE

Yeah.

JENNY

That's pretty fucked up.

CHARLIE

Yeah.

JENNY

I mean, Momma is the monster.

CHARLIE

Yeah.

JENNY

CALLBACK #2 JENNY/SISSY/CHARLIE <sup>74</sup>

2/5

Momma is-

CHARLIE

Yeah.

JENNY

A fucking cockroach.

CHARLIE

I mean-what do we do? She can't- I mean she can't function, right? She's not-can she last like that? What can we do?

JENNY

Nothing. There is nothing to do.

SISSY

What do you mean?

JENNY

She's dying. She has been since she came home from the hospital. It was slow at first, but now-you notice it, too.

SISSY

How do you mean she's dying?

CHARLIE

She can't eat. She can't drink. She can hardly breathe. I mean, she eats. She eats a lot, but-it's like she's starving. Like nothing will ever be enough. That's why there's no food in the fridge. That's why Max-

SISSY

No. Fuck. No. She ate-? God, Sissy, I'm sorry. I didn't-

CHARLIE

It was quick. Swallowed him whole. No blood. Never anything left. It's like she's some bottomless pit.

SISSY

Jesus Christ.

JENNY

# CALLBACK #2 JENNY/ISSY/CHARLIE<sup>75</sup>

SISSY

She fights me, forgets who I am, tries to hurt me. It's like her body is shutting down. Everyday she becomes less and less herself and more and more that thing. Momma's a monster and she's dying, and we have no choice but to live with it until she dies.

3/5

CHARLIE

Did you try raid?

JENNY

Charlie.

CHARLIE

What? I'm serious. What are we supposed to do? Ignore it?

SISSY

You already have been. It shouldn't be that difficult for you.

JENNY

Sissy, I'm-we're sorry, okay? We didn't know.

CHARLIE

It's like a cruel joke.

~~Jenny and Sissy look to Charlie.~~

CHARLIE

It's my fault. I didn't know the stories would become...that thing.

JENNY

What stories? What?

SISSY

After you left, Momma got so much worse.

CHARLIE

It didn't matter what we did. If we were too loud, too upset, too curious, she'd-

SISSY

Hurt us.

CHARLIE

It was the normal, you know? Poking us, little smacks, the occasional spanking. Then, it was like something switched. She started using a belt. Putting hot sauce on Sissy's tongue. Hot oil on-

# CALLBACK#2 JENNY/ISSY/CHARLIE<sup>76</sup>

SISSY

We'd get welts all over. And if we said anything, talked back at all-she'd beat one of us and make the other watch before switching over.

4/5

CHARLIE

She threw Sissy across the room.

SISSY

I flew, Jenny. I swear. It was like she had this strength she'd never had before.

CHARLIE

I didn't mean anything by it, but before we'd go to bed, I'd tell these stories. About Momma. I was just trying to be funny, calling her a monster, and I'd describe her like-

SISSY

Like that.

CHARLIE

They just made us feel better. I made her that thing. I didn't mean to-

JENNY

No. There has to be some reasonable explanation, right?

CHARLIE

Nothing about this is reasonable! This isn't something you can fix, okay?

JENNY

We have to tell someone.

SISSY

You can't tell anyone. They won't believe us.

JENNY

Why the hell not? She's here. She's that thing.

CHARLIE

Sissy is right. They won't be able to see it like we can.

JENNY

What? We're all crazy? Suffering from the same delusion?

CHARLIE

Sissy, how long have you seen Momma like that?

CALLBACK#2 JENNY/SISSY/CHARLIE <sup>77</sup>  
SIS

SISSY

Since the day after she came home.

CHARLIE

Six days ago. Jenny, how many times have you been in Momma's room to help her since then?

JENNY

...

CHARLIE

Exactly. Jenny, you're eighteen. You can't legally take care of us. And Sissy and I can't go live with our Dads. If we tell someone-anyone-we'll end up in foster care. Momma already has a couple of strikes with CPS.

JENNY

So what does that mean?

CHARLIE

It means it's our problem now. No one else's. Momma wants to die. And we should let her.

SISSY

What happens to us then?

CHARLIE

I don't know. But we'll have some time.

JENNY

No, I don't accept that. We have to do something now. We have to do something. Right?

END

*SCENE transition: " They had so much to worry about at present that they had lost sight of any thought for the future." -FK*

Jenny lays out blankets on the floor. Sissy helps Jenny by adding pillows. Charlie stands and watches with her arms crossed over her chest. She steals a pillow from Sissy and whacks Sissy with it, square in the face.

SISSY

OW! CHARLIE!

JENNY

What happened?

Cockroaches