

SAMPLE EXCERPTS FOR *DUPLICITY*

BY

OASIS

EXCERPT 1

“When I turn thirteen,” Tuesday said, “I promise to get us out of this shit hole. We’re gonna go to New Jersey and find Dad.” She plopped down on a filthy mattress shoved in the corner of their room.

“Don’t sit down so hard.” Parrish Clovis fanned the air. “Don’t do that; you make all the stink come out.”

“Should be used to it by now.”

“I hold my breath until I fall to sleep.” He looked at her with unguarded eyes and then sat beside her, careful not to disturb the odor.

EXCERPT 2

Parrish awoke naked on his neighbor’s lawn. He was stretched out beside a mountain of Rottweiler shit. He absolutely had no idea of how he’d managed to be spooning with dog shit. He scrunched up his stubbed face at the tangy smell. He distinctly remembered climbing into bed last night and screwing his wife into a frenzy. This change of location, he couldn’t explain. In fact, a lot of absurd and peculiar things had occurred lately that he couldn’t explain.

EXCERPT 3

“Well oh *fuckin*g well,” Tuesday said, “the perfect brother ain’t so perfect after all. I don’t feel like that big of a fuck-up anymore. I never thought I’d live to see this day.” She handed Parrish the *Home News Tribune*. “This is a goddamn change.”

“I haven’t done anything,” Parrish said.

“It’s usually me getting picked up from the slammer after a mischievous night. This morning it’s you. Ah, that means you did something.”

Parrish unfolded the newspaper and came down with a migraine.

MOTION-PICTURE MOGUL

BRUTALLY ASSAULTS

MOVIE-STAR SPOUSE

Beneath the bold headline was a red-carpet picture of himself and Hana.

EXCERPT 4

Parrish and Tuesday went to the receptionist’s window. The receptionist was a charcoal complexioned beauty, all of twenty-one. She had that college-student-internship glow. She split her mouth into a smile that was as bright as a 100-watt bulb.

“Hey Parrish,” Sade, the receptionist, said, “I missed you. They all missed you ‘round here, too.” She thumbed through an appointment book, looking at Parrish over the top of her rimless frames. “Don’t know how to return a phone call no more, huh?”

Tuesday and Parrish traded a look. Parrish shrugged. “Is . . . Ms. —”

“I’m fixin’ your favorite tonight,” Sade said. “Why don’t you stop by?”

Tuesday read Parrish’s confused facial expression.

Parrish leaned against the counter to keep his balance. He felt . . . sick. “Do we know one another?”

“Boy, stop playin’.” Sade shifted her gaze from Tuesday to Parrish as if he were really joking. “Parrish, what —”

“Goddammit, lady!” Parrish stuck his head in the window. “Don’t speak to me like we’re acquainted. I don’t know you.” Parrish jabbed the point of his finger at her, punctuating his words. “I-want-to-know-where-you-know-me-from?”

Her brows pointed inward. “Who the fuck you talking to like that?” She shot to her feet, hands on her hips. “Now, I done told you I was sorry for the way I got ghetto at the clinic; I even gave your ass some time to cool out. But you ain’t about to come up in here disrespecting me, pretending you don’t know me in front of your sister. I don’t

know what the hell is up with you, but come out your mouth at me sideways again and we can tear this motherfucker up. Fuck you and this job.”

With her tangled prose and dirty mouth, Parrish ruled out college and intern material.

Tuesday scowled. “Bitch, you can get what you’re looking for. I’m irritable and in the mood. All he asked you was a simple fucking question.”

Sade stared at Tuesday as if she were a used tampon; she looked at Parrish even harder. “We been fuckin’ for a year now. You had me abort my baby two weeks ago because of your precious *Hana*. Does that explain how I know your triflin’ ass?”

Tuesday stared at Parrish with stunned disbelief.