

YOUNG EMILY  
I don't need a telephone.

RONALD  
I thought /

YOUNG EMILY  
Who'd I call now? I've no family alive, no friends /

RONALD  
But you act as though you don't want friends; you act as though you like bein' this way.

YOUNG EMILY  
An' what way's that.

(Beat. RONALD drops the telephone.)

YOUNG EMILY (CONT'D)  
It's fine.

RONALD  
No, it's not.

YOUNG EMILY  
Say it.

RONALD  
Miserable. Like you like bein' miserable.

YOUNG EMILY  
An' why would anyone enjoy bein' miserable. How can you say I enjoy bein' miserable.

RONALD  
I'm not sayin' /

YOUNG EMILY  
Or to suggest it, or to even think that a person would enjoy bein' this way an' livin' like this.

RONALD  
Like what.

YOUNG EMILY  
Why don't you go take your telephone for a walk.

RONALD  
No, I don't think I want to.

YOUNG EMILY  
Well I want you to.

RONALD

Well you want a lot of things, I think, an' I get you what you want an' I do what you want an' I've been doin' what you want for nearly six years up here in these mountains. You want to sit in the quiet an' so I don't speak. You want to go days without eatin' and so I don't cook you food though I know it'll make you ill. You want to live in the middle—a godfordamned nowhere in your dead mother's house and I do. An' still you /

YOUNG EMILY

(Crying.)

Stop! Stop!

RONALD

An' still you treat me as you'd treat a dog. Emily, when we're makin' love /

YOUNG EMILY

Stop it!

RONALD

An' we're makin' love only when you want, an' you're cryin' the whole time, an' I ask you what your tears are for, an' you say "nothin', nothin'," it makes me want to die. Emily. Because here I am, an' I love nothin' or no one more than you, an' I know she don't feel as I do. My own wife don't love me, an' if she don't no one does. But you know what makes me cry at night, young Emily? Eh? That without me, no one would love you either. So here I am. An' you treat me like your dog if you want to; just know that I'll come back. Eh? So, what is it.

(The telephone rings. Beat. It rings again.)

YOUNG EMILY

Your phone's ringin'.

RONALD

No that's impossible.

YOUNG EMILY

D'you not hear it.

(It continues to ring.)

RONALD

It ain't hooked up to the hole in the wall.

(Ring.)

RONALD (CONT'D)

We don't even have on-a those holes in the wall.

(Ring.)

YOUNG EMILY

All the same; I'd answer it.

RONALD

I don't think I want to.

YOUNG EMILY

It'll just keep on goin' if you don't.

RONALD

Maybe it'll stop on it's own.

YOUNG EMILY

Maybe.

(Beat. Ring. YOUNG EMILY picks up the telephone and slowly gives it to RONALD.)

YOUNG EMILY (CONT'D)

I've a feeling it's for you.

RONALD

Perhaps it ain't.

(YOUNG EMILY holds it out to him. Ring. RONALD picks up.)

RONALD (CONT'D)

(Into the telephone.)

Ah, ya? Hello?

(He listens.)

RONALD (CONT'D)

(To YOUNG EMILY.)

There's no one talkin' in it.

(He listens. YOUNG EMILY resumes knitting.)

RONALD (CONT'D)

Must be broken--.

(He hears something!)

Ah...uh... .. Ummmmmm, I don't think so, I--. ...  
... That can't be, now, becau--. ... Alright.

(To YOUNG EMILY.)

Do you have a sister, a cousin?

YOUNG EMILY

My mother's dead with my brother, an' that's all the relations I have.

RONALD

Hm.

YOUNG EMILY

Why?

RONALD

The woman on the telephone... She sounds just like you.  
(He offers her the telephone.)  
It's for you.

YOUNG EMILY

(Stops knitting.)

On the telephone there?

RONALD

Yeah.

YOUNG EMILY

That's impossible.

RONALD

I know that.

(Beat. YOUNG EMILY takes the phone.)

YOUNG EMILY

Hello?

(She listens into the telephone. Small pause. She is blown away by what she hears.)

YOUNG EMILY (CONT'D)

This, ah, this isn't a joke? ... But how--. ... ..  
... ..

(She drops the telephone to the ground.)

RONALD

Who /

YOUNG EMILY

You need to leave here, Ronald.

RONALD

But /

YOUNG EMILY  
Really, you must go.

RONALD  
I won't /

YOUNG EMILY  
Please, now /

RONALD  
I won't be leavin' my wife and home unless I know the reason. Now, who was that on the telephone.

YOUNG EMILY  
'Twas nobody.

RONALD  
Awfully talkative for a nobody.

YOUNG EMILY  
Really.

RONALD  
Who was she? Did she say how she was able to make our telephone work?

YOUNG EMILY  
No, she didn't.

RONALD  
Well who was she then?

YOUNG EMILY  
Just get outta here and I'll tell you later.

RONALD  
A friend of yours.

(Small pause.)

RONALD (CONT'D)  
Emily /

YOUNG EMILY  
It was my daughter.

RONALD  
She sounded as old as you.

YOUNG EMILY  
Which isn't as strange as the fact that I don't have a daughter.