



**Sample Pages from
The Support Group from Hell**

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CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE UNDEAD KIND

The Support Group from Hell
Beggar's Night
Bad Taste in Boys

THREE GHOULISH COMEDIES BY
Jeffrey Harr



The Support Group from Hell

Cast

5W+3M

DR. TAMMY	Counselor
WENDY	Teen girl
VLADIMIR	Teen boy, very well dressed in clothes from another era, speaks with a thick Transylvanian accent
WOLFGANG	Teen boy with an absurdly crazy beard
HECUBA	Teen girl in all black
LUCY	Teen girl, pale, in ripped jeans and T-shirt, spattered with blood
FRANK	Teen boy in plain T-shirt and blazer, a few long scars on his face with stitches
JANET	Teen girl in completely normal clothes and a Batman mask

Lights up on a semicircle of eight folding chairs, DR. TAMMY sitting center, a clipboard in her hand with a piece of paper and a pen attached. Everyone but WENDY is seated as DR. TAMMY takes attendance, about to start their session.

WENDY enters, not sure if she's in the right place.

WENDY: Oh... hi there. Um... is this the teen support group?

DR. TAMMY: *(overenthusiastic)* It sure is. Are you new to the group?

WENDY: *(very uncomfortable)* Um... yeah. I guess so. I'm Wendy.

WENDY eyes the group and starts fixating on LUCY and her blood-spattered clothes. Once LUCY notices, she starts to rise out of her seat, making subtle moaning sounds, until VLADIMIR grabs her, pulling her back down.

Totally weirded out, WENDY moves away from LUCY.

DR. TAMMY: (*looks over the paper on her clipboard*) Wendy... Wendy... nope, no Wendy. But that's no problem, it wouldn't be the first time they added someone to the group without telling me.

WENDY: I'm sorry. They told me to—

DR. TAMMY: (*gets up, goes to her*) No, no, no, kiddo, it's not your fault. They do this all the time. You are most welcome here. (*leads her to the empty chair*) Now, just have a seat, and we'll get started.

DR. TAMMY sits.

DR. TAMMY: Hello, everyone. Welcome to group. Wendy is with us tonight. A new member. Let's all say hi, shall we?

Suddenly, everyone (but LUCY, who only moans) chants in unison, with varying degrees of enthusiasm.

ALL: Hi, Wendy.

WENDY, a bit overwhelmed, smiles weakly and waves ever-so-slightly.

DR. TAMMY: As you all know, I... am Dr. Tammy.

ALL: Hi, Dr. Tammy.

DR. TAMMY: Dr. Tammy. Your counselor. Your friend. Now, as I recall, our goal for this session was to bring in a key issue. Something we feel is holding us back. Does everyone remember that?

There are weak nods all around, except, of course, for WENDY.

DR. TAMMY: Good. Now, who wants to start?

Everyone sort of shrugs, slinks down a bit. No one wants to go. LUCY moans.

DR. TAMMY: C'mon, now, people. No healing without dealing, right?

No one responds.

DR. TAMMY: C'mon, kids. Say it with me, *no healing without dealing.*

ALL: (*with next to no enthusiasm, LUCY sort of moaning along*) No healing without dealing.

DR. TAMMY: I'm sorry. I can't hear you!

ALL: (*louder*) No healing without dealing.

DR. TAMMY: Now, that's better, people. Geez. We are not making a good impression on Wendy, now are we? You see, Wendy, here, in this group, we believe that there is no HEAL-ing, without DEAL-ing. (*looks at WENDY like a crazy person*) Know what I'm sayin'?

WENDY: (*like she's afraid to say anything other than yes*) Um... yes. Yes, I do. You have to... deal... to... heal.

DR. TAMMY: (*ecstatic*) Wendy, you have just made my day, girlfriend. Bless you. Now, who's ready to deal, people?

FRANK: All right, I'll go first.

DR. TAMMY: Thank you, Frank. Let... us... DEAL.

FRANK: My key issue is with my dad. He's never there for me. Day and night, night and day, he's down in the basement... (*uses his fingers to make air quotes*) "working." It's ridiculous. I mean, when I was born, we spent a lot of time together. Now, it just doesn't seem like he cares anymore.

DR. TAMMY: Sounds like you don't value what your dad does for a living.

FRANK: Well, I would, but he's never doing it. Shouldn't a doctor be in an office seeing patients? Of course he should. My dad's a doctor. Is he seeing patients? No. He's in the basement playing around with his toys.

HECUBA: His toys? Like what? What's he got down there?

FRANK: It's a lab. He's got all kinds of chemicals and beakers full of green liquid and who the hell knows what all of it is. It's not the stuff that bugs me—it's that he never comes up for air. One time, I got really mad and took off. I was gone for, like, several days before he even came looking for me.

WOLFGANG: Where'd you go?

FRANK: Oh, here and there. I started out in the woods. Met a cute little kid by this old well. Then I hung out with this old dude in his cottage for a couple days. No biggie. I mean, it's not like Dad had to come get me from the polar ice caps or anything, but still.

Everyone groans a bit, in sympathy, LUCY a bit more than the others.

VLADIMIR: (*pulls a cigarette out from behind his ear and a lighter from his coat pocket*) Nothing worse than an absentee parent, dude.

FRANK, seeing the lighter, totally flips out, getting out of his chair and grabbing VLADIMIR by the throat. HECUBA slaps the lighter out of VLADIMIR's hand.

HECUBA: What the hell, Vlad?! You KNOW he doesn't like fire!

LUCY moans, JANET springs into action, putting FRANK in a headlock, and DR. TAMMY rises to her feet.

DR. TAMMY: It's okay, Frank. The fire's gone. The fire's gone.

FRANK relaxes and JANET releases him from the headlock, patting him on the back before sitting back down.

FRANK: I'm good. I'm good. Thanks for the restraint, Batman.

JANET: *(in a low, raspy voice like Batman of the recent films)* No problem.

FRANK: Sorry, Vlad.

VLADIMIR: No, no, man. It's totally my bad. I've been trying to quit for a thousand years but it's just not happenin'.

At this point, WENDY looks as concerned as a person can be. She looks like she's afraid these people may kill her at any moment. She moves her chair back just a bit.

DR. TAMMY: Okay, now. Little bit of excitement there. Good for us. Now, Vladimir, since you brought it up, why don't you go next? Perhaps we could address your smoking?

VLADIMIR: No, Dr. Tammy. Compared to my drinking habit, the smoking's a joke.

DR. TAMMY: Drinking it is. How bad are we talking?

VLADIMIR: *(sarcastically)* Let's see. Is having to drink every day a problem?

WOLFGANG: Yeah, man. That's a problem. How long's it been?

VLADIMIR: Since I can remember. But the worst is the shame. It's like, something I have to do at night, ya know? In the dark. You find a dark alley by a bar any night of the week and you'll find me in it, drinking.

HECUBA: That's just sad, dude.

WENDY slowly raises her hand, hesitant to participate.

DR. TAMMY: Wendy! Yes! I'm so glad you feel comfortable enough to participate. It's cool that you raised your hand, but as you can see, we're all friends, here, and just jump right in there when we've got something to say. So, what's on your mind?

WENDY: I, um, just wanted to ask Vladimir if, um, he goes to the bars with his friends. Because, well, sometimes it's your friends that are part of the problem.

VLADIMIR: No, I never drink my friends, but I see your point.

WENDY seems confused for a second, but gets it together before responding.

WENDY: Oh. Well, drinking alone is a bad sign. I'm sorry.

VLADIMIR: It's not your fault. It's mine. My... curse.

DR. TAMMY: Vladimir, can I just say that I'm proud of you? As Dr. Phil would say—

Everyone but WENDY (and LUCY, who simply moans) chants in unison; they've done this before.

ALL: Dr. Phil be praised.

DR. TAMMY: —you can't change what you don't acknowledge. Now, we know that drinking problems can be genetic. Any serious drinkers in the family?

VLADIMIR: Are you kidding? My dad drinks like a college freshman at a kegger. About ten pints a night.

Everyone recoils, aware that that's a lot.

WENDY: I'm sorry... pints?

DR. TAMMY: Oh, of course, Wendy. Vlad's dad lived in the UK. Right, Vlad?

VLADIMIR: Yes, he did. Lifetimes ago. A bloody nightmare, I'm afraid. He drank so much there that they ran him out of the place.

HECUBA: He was kicked out of the country for drinking? Now that's a drinking problem!

VLADIMIR: I know, right?

DR. TAMMY: I don't know how anyone else feels, but I think somebody needs a hug. (to VLADIMIR) Now, get over here and let the big mama bear get her claws on ya.

She stands and holds her arms out, awaiting a hug. Reluctantly, VLADIMIR walks over and hugs her.

After it goes on long enough to become awkward, VLADIMIR pulls his head away, then takes a nice, long look at DR. TAMMY's neck before going in for the bite.

DR. TAMMY doesn't notice as HECUBA jumps out of her seat, grabs VLADIMIR, and pulls him away.

HECUBA: (ushers him back to his chair) Okay, okay, big guy. Let's just have a seat.

DR. TAMMY: (sits back down) Okay, then. Who's next?

WOLFGANG: Well, I guess I'll go, 'cause I can kinda relate to Vlad. I'm a bit of a night owl, too. Problem is, I'll, like, go to bed and when I wake up, it'll be, like, a couple days later.

Everyone oohs.

WOLFGANG: And I'll be, like, in the woods.

Everyone ahs.

WOLFGANG: And, I'll be, like, naked.

Everyone oohs.

WOLFGANG: And bloody.

Everyone ews.

WOLFGANG: It's pretty messed up. And you wanna know the bizarre part of it?

Everyone looks at him funny, as if this could get any more bizarre.

WOLFGANG: When I wake up, I can't remember a thing that happened.

VLADIMIR: Sounds like you're partying pretty hard.

HECUBA: Sounds like narcolepsy. Well, um, except for the blood. I don't think that's normal.

DR. TAMMY: She's right, Wolfgang. As Dr. Phil likes to say—

ALL: Dr. Phil be praised—

DR. TAMMY: If what is happening isn't normal, admit it.

JANET: (*in the Batman voice*) I, too, am out quite a bit at night. I'll keep an eye out for you, Wolfgang. But know this: As the Dark Knight, if this substance you're covered in is, indeed, blood, you may not want to see me. (*steps up on her chair, hunkers down*) From my perch above this city, I see all. And I will do my duty. I will dispense justice. I am the Batman.

WOLFGANG: (*a little weirded out*) Um, thanks, Batman.

JANET: And, of course, the fact that you're naked. There's that, too. Public indecency. The people of Gotham are good people. Decent people. They don't need to be seeing that.

JANET sits back down.

HECUBA: Got that right.

Suddenly, LUCY moans.

DR. TAMMY: Yes, Lucy? Go right ahead.

LUCY: (*since "brains" is the only word she uses, she should inflect it in different ways to indicate a change in meaning*) Brains. Braaaaaaiiiiiins. Brains.

DR. TAMMY: Ah, yes, Lucy. Good point. We should remember not to discriminate against those who are covered in blood. Thanks for reminding us.

Everyone but WENDY, who has no idea what is happening, apologizes to LUCY.

LUCY: Braaaaaaiins.

DR. TAMMY: Oh, you're welcome, dear. Now, let's see. Who else? Hecuba? What have you got for us tonight?

HECUBA: Well, it's my mom. It's stupid, really. Not a big thing, but still.

DR. TAMMY: Go ahead, dear. No issue is too small to share.

HECUBA: So, I keep my broom in the hall closet, right? You know, so it's right there when I need it. The other day, I go in there to grab my coat, and I can't find my broom. I start panicking, ya know, 'cause I love that broom. It's old, I know, but it's worn in, right? Besides, it's my first freaking broom! I look around in there and what do I see in the corner of the closet? A Swiffer! My MOTHER

replaced my FAVORITE BROOM with a FREAKING SWIFFER!
Now, what in the hell am I supposed to do with a freaking Swiffer?

WOLFGANG: Well, that depends. Is it one of the dry ones, that's just a duster or is it one of those wet ones you can use on tile and wood floors and stuff?

HECUBA: *(stares at him with a death glare)* You're hysterical, Wolfgang. It's the kind that with a wave of my hand I could shove right up your—

DR. TAMMY: Whoa, there. Wolfgang's sorry, aren't you, Wolfgang? We all know how much you love your broom.

WOLFGANG: Sorry, Hecuba. I was just messing with you.

WENDY: My mom does that too.

Everyone looks at her, surprised she's said something.

WENDY: You know... makes me clean.

Everyone keeps staring at her as if she's speaking a foreign language.

WENDY: With... a Swiffer.

WENDY's starting to get more uncomfortable as she notices they're staring.

WENDY: When... I... um... don't want to.

Still staring.

FRANK: Awk-ward.

DR. TAMMY: *(right on the heels of FRANK's line)* So, Wendy. About that. Is that something you'd like to talk about? Your mom?

WENDY: Um... sure. Actually, she's the reason I'm here. She made me come here. Well, that's not why I'm here, because of her. I'm here because... *(pauses)* there's this boy.

Everyone ews.

WENDY: My boyfriend. Well, I was dating him for a pretty long time, ya know, about a month, and then, one day, out of the blue, he breaks up with me.

Everyone ohs.

JANET: *(as straight as can be)* My girlfriend fell in love with the district attorney who later became Two-Face after the Joker blew her to smithereens.

Everyone stops. Stares at JANET like, "Where in the hell did that just come from?"

VLADIMIR: *That sucks.*

DR. TAMMY: Thank you, Batman. I'm sure that makes Wendy feel a little better, by comparison. Wendy? You were saying?

WENDY: It's not so much that he broke up with me; it's the way he did it. By text.

Everyone oohs.

WENDY: *(stands, starts to pace around the stage as she talks)* Yeah. He said that it was fun and all, ya know, but that he's gotta be free. That I was just... tying him down.

Everyone ews.

WENDY: But me? I say... I say... that he's a JERK!

LUCY raises her fist in the air and moans, approvingly.

FRANK: You go, girl.

WENDY: I hate him. He's dead to me.

VLADIMIR: Do you want him to be dead? 'Cause...

DR. TAMMY: Vladimir... thank you, but no.

VLADIMIR: Just trying to help.

WENDY: Dead? Dead? No. I want him... to suffer.

HECUBA: Ooh, now you're talking. If you've got a hair sample and the eye of a newt, I can totally make that happen.

DR. TAMMY: Hecuba, please. A little too supportive.

HECUBA shrugs.

DR. TAMMY: So, Wendy. Clearly, you've been hurt by this boy. And that's terrible. But you're here. Talking about it. Deeeaaaling with it. And that is something to be very, very proud of.

WENDY: Doesn't feel like it.

DR. TAMMY: (*gets up, goes over to WENDY and ushers her back into her chair*) I know, dear. Breakups are never easy. Why, when I was your age, there was a boy who broke my heart. (*leaves WENDY, strolls downstage, center stage, increasingly melodramatic*) His name: Fernando. His game: breaking... my... heart. Oh, sure, there was the passion. The... endless nights of...

FRANK: (*stands*) We get the picture, Dr. Tammy. Thanks so much.

DR. TAMMY: (*comes back to reality*) Oh, I'm sorry, kids. Just got a little too much in my head, there, for a second.

VLADIMIR: (*to WENDY*) Yeah... she does this every once and a while. We try to let her go, but sometimes, she goes a smidge too far.

DR. TAMMY: (*sits back down*) Anyway, Wendy. The point is, we've all been there. And we've all survived it. And I have a feeling that you will too. Right, group?

Everyone gives some form of support, like, "Oh, sure," or "Totally," except for LUCY, who moans, in a supportive way.

WENDY: (*genuinely touched*) Wow. Um... thanks, guys. I really appreciate the support. Ya know, I gotta say, I was very nervous about coming here, but... I dunno... you all have been so nice and, I just—

DR. TAMMY: (*ecstatic*) You have made my day, Wendy! Oh, it's just the best thing in the world when we help someone, isn't it? Just the best. Now, since we're running out of time, I think it only proper to ask you, now that you've accepted us, what sort of monster you are. For the record, you know, because I didn't get your paperwork ahead of time.

WENDY: (*genuinely confused*) Mon... ster?

DR. TAMMY: Oh, I'm sorry. Some find the term *monster* pejorative. Um... let's see... creature, entity, paranormal figure?

WENDY: I... I still have no idea what you're talking about.

DR. TAMMY: Are you a demon, or some sort of wraith, ooh, or maybe a reincarnated spirit seeking vengeance from the wrongs done to her in a previous life?

WENDY: (*to VLADIMIR*) Is this part of the therapy? 'Cause I am totally lost here.



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