

## **Another Awkward Silence**

By Jessica Schrock-Ringenberg  
(A spin and a nod to Jay Reiss' "Awkward Silence")

*(Setting: Dining room table and chairs. Menus. Jessica and Sue enter opposite sides of the stage.)*

**Jessica:** I am so excited. Today I'm going to see my best friend since childhood.

**Sue:** Today I get to see my soulmate!

**Jessica:** We've been through everything together.

**Sue:** Grade school.

**Jessica:** Junior high.

**Sue:** High school.

**Jessica and Sue:** JUNIOR COLLEGE!

**Jessica:** She's not just my best friend, she's more like my sister...

**Sue:** We haven't seen each other in years!

**Jessica:** It's been years, but we are so close that we always pick right up where we left off!

**Sue:** You know when you're with that person and it's just natural? We think the same things...

**Jessica:** Believe the same way...

**Sue:** Have the same values...

**Jessica:** Finish each other's sentences!

**Jessica and Sue:** It's scary how alike we are.

*(Jessica sits down first at table. Sue comes in moments later. There is a warm embrace!)*

**Sue:** JESSICA!

**Jessica:** SUE!

**Jessica and Sue:** Oh, I've missed you!

**Sue:** I remark on how good she looks!

**Jessica:** I tell her how she hasn't aged a year!

**Sue:** I tell her I love her outfit!

**Jessica and Sue:** Have you lost weight? (*Laughter*)

**Sue:** We laugh because it's just like old times.

**Jessica:** So much like old times, we still...

**Jessica and Sue:** ...finish each other's sentences.

**Sue:** We laugh!

**Jessica:** So much laughter!

**Sue:** I ask her about her job.

**Jessica:** I remark on how much her children have grown.

**Jessica and Sue:** We laugh at how much we are still so much alike.

**Jessica:** (*Looking at her watch*) We've already been here for two hours...

**Sue:** ...and it feels like only five minutes.

**Jessica:** I lean in and say something really witty and wise.

**Sue:** I lean and respond in a hushed tone.

**Jessica:** The conversation is turning serious.

**Sue:** I think how grateful I am to have someone just like me as a friend.

**Jessica:** We are feeling so comfortable again with each other and so I say, "How about the presidential election?"

**Sue:** I respond, "I know can you believe it."

**Jessica:** I remark on how important voting is.

**Sue:** Again, I agree with everything she says.

**Jessica:** We discuss the importance of values.

**Sue:** We completely agree on the need for healthy families, good economy and education.

**Jessica and Sue:** We are both opposed to war...

**Sue:** Then I say, Well you know how I vote...

*(Said at the same time.)* **Sue:** REPUBLICAN. **Jessica:** DEMOCRAT.

**Sue:** Awkward silence.

**Jessica:** I am embarrassed... and shocked.

**Sue:** I'm shocked and try to quickly move back to the topic of values.

**Jessica:** I think about how hard it is to listen to her talk values when I know what side she's on.

**Sue:** Suddenly I feel like she doubts that I truly have values.

**Jessica and Sue:** I feel judged.

*(Awkward silence)*

**Jessica:** Awkward silence.

**Sue:** Suddenly I don't feel safe in this conversation.

**Jessica:** I feel like I have to put up my guard.

**Sue:** This is not as much fun anymore.

*(Awkward silence)*

**Jessica and Sue:** Awkward silence.

**Jessica:** I try to say something funny.

**Sue:** I give a half-hearted laugh.

**Jessica:** I wonder how my soul-sister could be so wrong about things?

**Sue:** I wonder where she went wrong in her values?

**Jessica:** I can't believe how much she has changed.

**Jessica and Sue:** Can we even be friends anymore?

**Jessica:** I say I probably should let her go.

**Sue:** I agree.

*Jessica and Sue stand up and give each other half-hearted side hugs... and return to their original place opposite sides of the stage.*

**Jessica:** I leave in sadness wondering why things have to be this way.

**Sue:** I liked it better when we shared all of the same values, hopes and dreams. I wonder...

**Jessica:** I wonder...

**Jessica and Sue:** ...at what point did any of them change?

*(Both pause and then exit.)*