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Bell at the back of her throat

Courtney Meaker
University of Iowa

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BELL AT THE BACK OF HER THROAT

by
Courtney Meaker

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Fine Arts
degree in Theatre Arts (Playwriting) in the
Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

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Thesis Supervisors:
Art Borreca

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I'd like to acknowledge my cohort of genius playwrights – Charles Green and Eric Marlin – for inspiring me to constantly change how I write plays. This draft would not be where it is had it not been for Morgan Grambo (Production Dramaturg) and Bo Frazier (Director). I'd also like to acknowledge Prof. Kim Marra who loves classics and talked with me about Cassandra, queerness, and feminism at any given moment of the day.

PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Cass wakes up from a dream to find her hands are burnt having seen a vision of Greenville engulfed in flames. No one believes her, but smoke has started descending on the town. People are leaving, never to be heard from again. Meanwhile, the Director of Tourism is determined to keep tourists out of the town. *Bell at the Back of Her Throat* is an examination of patriarchy, witchcraft, and xenophobia through the Cassandra myth.

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PREFACE

I started at University of Iowa in the Fall of 2016, moving from Seattle after a fairly successful seven-year artistic stay. My first year here was defined by the election of Donald Trump. It was inescapable and, as of this writing in the Spring of 2019, still feels unreal. Because of this shift in environment, circumstances, and feelings of safety in America as a queer woman, I found my writing changing dramatically from where it had been in Seattle.

My plays are navigated by a few commonalities: queer characters, feminism/feminist questions, violence, humor, and sex. In Seattle, these plays, while often dark, were more focused on characters in odd situations. In Iowa, I shifted and deepened my work to focus more on questions and problems that ended up feeling more political as opposed to relational. The plays I've written while a graduate student range widely – a queer exploration of body-size politics through the vomiting of a Tiny Thin Woman living inside the protagonist; a queer dystopia taking place at surveillance posts of a dark civilization; a play advocating for the death of all cis white men who had abused women through the use of nursery rhymes and a screaming/singing banshee; an unconventional love story taking place after the end of the world on the Great Barrier Reef where two people make hats and drink tea; a queer comedic fairy tale about love and desire; a queer deconstruction of the American family (as popularized by sitcoms) from the perspective of a Southern woman returning home to bury her father; and my thesis, *Bell at the Back of Her Throat*.

Bell at the Back of Her Throat was initially inspired by three big things in the summer between my second and third year of grad school. The first: More and more women coming forward as part of the #MeToo movement to share their experiences of abuse at the hands of powerful men. Many of these women had been discussing this abuse for years but had been summarily dismissed or ignored. And, even in a post #MeToo world, there are still women who have to pass some ill-defined barrier of proof to be heard. (At my time in Iowa, there was even an incident involving an invited guest artist who had been accused of sexual harassment and coercing

undergrads into questionable situations. When students at Iowa complained about the invited guest's past, the response from those in power seemed to be, "But we know him, and the woman who made those accusations is not to be trusted because she didn't get tenure.") However, the biggest event that defined the initial idea happened before the confirmation of now Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh. Dr. Christine Blaisey Ford came forward that summer to denounce his nomination because of the rape and sexual assault she endured from him in their youth. Here was a woman who had all the credentials in the land and was still not being believed. The fact that a similar incident happened with Anita Hill years previously also stoked my rage. What do women have to do for their accusations to be believed?

While #MeToo percolated in the stew of my brain bucket, I was also thinking about Cassandra while I was working as a teaching artist at Horizon Theatre in Atlanta. One night after working with students I started talking (let's be real, ranting) with a fellow teaching artist about the myth of Cassandra and how her curse was to see the truth, to speak that truth to everyone, and the final turn of the screw: not to be believed. The other popular myth of our culture however, is the Boy Who Cried Wolf. The titular Boy makes up stories of seeing a wolf in the sheep meadow. When he sounds the alarm about seeing Wolves, the town believes him unquestioningly, even though they are pure fabrications. Why do we not believe Cassandra but we give the benefit of the doubt to Boy Who Cried Wolf? Why do we tell the story of Crying Wolf to our children and yet not warn them of Cassandra's lesson?

Lastly, I was reading a collection of short stories by Carmen Maria Machado: *Her Body and Other Parties*. The collection is feminist horror stories based on common touchstones (the girl with the green ribbon around her neck, *Law & Order: SVU*, etc.) to expose the darkness of patriarchy and power. In her story "Especially Heinous: 272 Views of Law & Order SVU," the female agent constantly finds bodies of abused and raped dead women. Eventually, these women start rising up into the agent's dreams with bells in their eyes begging for peace. The entire collection is

haunting and heart-wrenching and very much existed in the world I was trying to capture with *Bell* – the town of Greenville.

Greenville is a town like many in America. The citizens of Greenville believe themselves to be progressive. They believe themselves to be evolved. They want to protect a way of life that's precious to them and keep their citizenry guarded against outsiders (tourists) so that they can continue as they have always continued. They would likely be a town that says, "I don't see race," and "we're very liberal around here," etc. And yet, they burn people who don't follow the rules. This is the secret they hide at all cost with only a few select members being privy to it.

Two love/attention triangles vie for focus: Cass, Sean (Cass's best friend), and Bev (Cass's wife); and Sean, Cass (Sean's best friend), and the Director of Tourism (madly in love with Sean, charged with keeping tourists out of Greenville). Outside of these competing triads are two nine-year-old girls who believe they are witches that can protect the town from harm; a woman mourning the absence of her daughter; a husband who wants his wife to re-focus on their marriage instead of their missing daughter; a bible-loving father who wants to save his daughter from harm; and a therapist holding them all together.

The big picture questions happening under the surface of the play are: why don't we listen to women? Why do we not listen to marginalized women even more than white women? How does patriarchy and white supremacy continue to thrive despite its obvious danger and toxicity? My answer: insidious niceness. Insidious niceness solidified for me when I realized how white men often get away with bad behavior. It's easier to doubt the instincts you have about someone who is hurting you if that person is harming you with care and kindness. It's harder to believe a woman who says a man hurt her if that man is one who is likeable, sweet, and one who is genuinely cared about by others. The cycle of accusation and defense of the accusation is patently predictable: 1.) A woman accuses a man of sexual assault. 2.) A man denies it and calls the woman a liar. 3.) Other women come to the man's defense to say that they know him and he wouldn't act in that way because of what they know about him. 4.) The woman who accused that man is still speaking, but no one wants to believe her. Rinse. Repeat. Add a Supreme Court nomination. Add a

Presidential podium. Rationally, we know that otherwise nice people do bad things. But it's easier to surrender to the insidious niceness of a charming smile than to admit that maybe the person you love is a predator. The town of Greenville, led by Sean, is literally burning marginalized people who disobey the white supremacist/patriarchal order. Everyone (complicit and guilty) in the town has visions of the town burning and yet, no one believes the women who say this is happening. Partly, insidious niceness is to blame and partly, fears of Others (tourists and women's power).

The fear of outsiders and Others is a common one in the zeitgeist. Trump keeps talking about building a Wall and for some dumb reason there's still a debate about trans people using public restrooms. In *Bell* the unseen Others are the tourists. While we never see one over the course of the play, there's a threat of their invasion on the town and what it could mean for Greenville's way of life. "Are tourists real" is a question I've posed in the play and one we have returned to often in the rehearsal process. My answer has shifted over the course of the play. Are tourists a made up Wolf in the sheep meadow for Sean to point at? Or, are they actually people who could come and expose Greenville's tender underbelly? A little from column A, a little from column B. Sean knows that tourists bring the threat of ideas, but has anyone actually come to the town in his time as de facto Mayor? No. But the fear is what keeps patriarchy in power. Fear of the unknown. Fear of the people who don't believe in old-fashioned values. Fear of change. And most obviously, fear of women.

Fear of women is incredibly intriguing to me, especially the idea of witches and witchcraft. Women were accused of being witches at times when women literally had no power. And yet, the biggest fear of the patriarchy is that women could have power to destroy them. Intentionally, I've left a question open about magic in the play. Polly and Patricia believe they have power. They believe it will protect them, and heal and harm others. Hank is afraid that their magic is real using a common tool of the patriarchy – religion – as his weapon. Sean is convinced the magic is just a game, using another common tool of patriarchy – undervaluing women. But in the final moments, Polly confirms she knows she's not a witch. She

knows she doesn't have that kind of power, but she says it as the town burns down – an act she and Cass perform together. As the town burns, Polly rages: “I wish I really was a witch,” and Cass responds, “Me too.”

In the classical sense, the theatre (theatron) is the “seeing place.” Greek men (and seemingly a few sneaky women) came to the theatre to *see*, to learn something. Playwrights in Ancient Greece often warned their audience of dangers that they saw looming over Greece's head or on the horizon if they continued fighting costly wars and got too cocky. In that sense, and perhaps it's egotistical to say, but *Bell at the Back of Her Throat* is also meant to serve as a warning. Women are sick of being ignored and we will burn it all down if you don't change your ways. Niceness can no longer be cover for bad behavior. Silence is complicity and will have you burning alongside vicious perpetrators. Cass and Polly are coming for you. They will burn down your town. And with those match strikes, other towns burn, too. The smoke billows and will swallow Greenvilles all over the world. Or, at least, that's very much how I feel graduating in a terrifying time of a Trump presidency.

Let's burn it all down and make no apologies for it.

Courtney Meaker
April 18, 2019

BELL AT THE BACK OF HER THROAT

BY

COURTNEY MEAKER

C H A R A C T E R S

CASS* – female, mid-thirties, woman of color, married to Bev

BEV* – female, mid-thirties, any race/ethnicity, married to Cass

CAMILLE* – female, early-forties, woman of color, married to Roderick

DR. J – genderqueer, trans, non-binary, or masculine-of-center actor, any age, any race/ethnicity

POLLY* – female, nine years old, but shouldn't necessarily be played by an actual child, woman of color, Sean's daughter

PATRICIA* – female, nine years old, but shouldn't necessarily be played by an actual child, any race/ethnicity, Hank's daughter

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM (Lucy) – female, younger than Cass, white

SEAN – male, same age as Cass, white, Cass' best friend, Polly's father

HANK – male, older than Cass, any race/ethnicity, Patricia's father

RODERICK – male, same age as Camille, any race/ethnicity

N O T E S

Families are not carbon copies of each other. All roles that are *asterisked above are open to trans/non-binary actors with slight alterations to text if gender non-binary. All roles should be cast as diversely as possible including race and ethnicity, gender presentation, and body type.

Words or phrases in (parentheticals) are not spoken.

A slash / denotes an interruption by the next character.

Grammar, neat sentences, and coherent thought groupings are nice things. They don't really apply in this play. Line breaks denote a change in thought, a reforming idea, a thought's completion, or a waiting for a response from another character – not usually a full breath or pause.

For the most part, dialogue should move quickly with very few pauses between characters.

There are no blackouts. Scenes should follow quickly in and out of one other, as if breathing.

If possible, the founders festival and final town scene could be filled out by an ensemble (3-7 mostly male) that could also assist in transitions. If that is possible, smaller moments “around town” could be staged throughout to give the impression of a very active and full town. For example, a towns person on watch at the watch post, in session with Dr. J, meeting with Sean, sitting in the park, children playing, etc.

“Left”/“leave” is what’s happened to many of the girls and women in town. It’s got a different weight than “go”/“going”/“goes,” which have their normal meaning.

ACT ONE

PROLOGUE.

nighttime

*PATRICIA and POLLY in their separate houses
dreaming*

*they both wake at the same time
with a start
in dread*

*they run to each other in the night
clinging to flashlights*

*they find each other
embrace
their terror at their dreams turns into nervous laughter
genuine laughter
then cackles*

they set to work

ONE.

*nighttime in Greenville
the DIRECTOR of TOURISM sits at a desk going over copy
for a tourism brochure
she bleeds into each of the other spaces around town*

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
visiting Greenville is like
drinking warm milk at 2am
do people still do that
have I ever done that
wait
is that comforting?
it's like
visiting Greenville is like

*CASS and BEV in their home
attempting "intimacy" or some facsimile thereof
it's awkward*

BEV
so
should we like
you know
we haven't in

CASS
I know

BEV
Dr. J says

CASS
I know what Dr. J says
I'm just tired

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
like taking your dog off leash
you're pretty confident it's not going to go
or run after a squirrel or something
or another dog
right

CASS
I'm going for a walk

BEV
I thought you were tired

CASS
I am
I just wanna walk

BEV
tell Sean hi

*CASS goes
BEV watches her go*

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
that's awful
ugh
no poetry
we have a lot of features in our town
a lot of scenic things

SEAN watches the border of the town

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
we have a water area
it's not really a lake or a pond even
but people fish there I guess
and trees
not like oaks or anything but um
and like some parks
they're just like normal parks
but the scenic things won't attack you here like in other places

*POLLY and PATRICIA in the woods
PATRICIA pulls out a dead rabbit
POLLY cuts one foot off
and then a second*

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
with amenities like a public library
a main street
endless forests
and an ever watchful border patrol
no no
not that last part
no that sounds interesting
um

*CASS waves at SEAN
SEAN waves back*

CASS
all clear?

SEAN
for now

CASS
got any beer?

SEAN
don't keep watch without it

*they both crack beers and sit in silence
sipping and watching*

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
Greenville is like
a tree
deep roots?
fuck
what the fuck does that mean

*Dr. J in their office
sipping whiskey
going over notes into a tape recorder*

DR. J
troubling relationship with daughter
seemingly getting worse
manifesting his devoutness
as something he can control onto daughter
who he can't
clearly has fear wife hurt his manliness
or faith
or both
unresolved since wife left
can't relate to daughter
constantly worried will leave like the mother
suggested a joint session with daughter to clarify relationship

*DR. J turns off the recorder
closes that file
chooses another file*

*sips whiskey
opens that file
starts another recording*

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
it's like waves undulating
peaceful pleasant
nothing to write home about
definitely too direct
um...
a town filled with nothing more than surface discoveries

*CAMILLE reading a children's book
she holds a stuffed bear
RODERICK watches her*

CAMILLE
goodnight spoon
goodnight little man in the moon
goodnight room
goodnight Haley
goodnight Bailey
goodnight Sarah
goodnight Syd
goodnight Narobi
goodnight Tavi
goodnight Yee
goodnight Kit
goodnight Gloria
goodnight Rachel
goodnight Mary
goodnight Hannah

*RODERICK comes up and gently tries to take the book
away
CAMILLE struggles slightly, jaw tight
then releases
RODERICK holds out his hand for the bear
CAMILLE squeezes it and then hands it over
RODERICK takes them both and locks them in a drawer
he goes
CAMILLE waits for him to clear and then attempts to pick
the lock*

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
a town without secrets
or a past
or a future
barely existing in the present
ugh no
that's not right

*POLLY and PATRICIA each holding rabbit's feet
freshly cut*

POLLY/PATRICIA
protect us from the things that seek to harm
protect us from the things that seek to harm
protect us from the things that seek to harm

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
for fuck's sake
there's nothing interesting about this town
okay
just just
don't waste your time

HANK on his porch shouting into the dark of his farm

HANK
Patricia!
way past your bedtime
where the hell are you
come home right now young lady
God's watching you
and knows all
...
please
please
come home

CAMILLE keeps picking the lock

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
stay out
if you know what's good for you
that sounds so daring
of course you'd want to come here
if I tell you not to do something
all you wanna do is

do it
ugh what children we

SEAN and CASS finish their beers
CASS gets up to go

CASS
thanks

SEAN
any time
for what it's worth she's trying
you know

CASS
I know

SEAN
what happened to make you guys

CASS
nothing
nothing
it just did
see ya tomorrow

SEAN
Cass?

CASS
yeah?

SEAN
nothing
I just love you

CASS
dork
and same

CASS walks home
SEAN goes back to watching the border

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
it's like
it's like

like coming home
yes
that's it
that's sure to keep them away

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM continues scribbling

TWO.

*morning
BEV comes out into the kitchen yawning*

BEV
Cass?
hey Cass?
where'd you
whatever

BEV turns on the coffee pot

BEV
I got coffee going
Cass?

*BEV picks up the newspaper from outside
returns it to the table
sits reading
CASS enters
looking angelic and wearing a bright, clean 1500 thread
count Egyptian cotton sheet
stands dramatically in front of BEV who hasn't noticed
finally*

CASS
hi

BEV
oh
there you are
what are you
...
you weren't in bed
did you see this article about tourism in Greenville
Sean thinks we're gonna have some soon
says it's imminent
might disrupt the founders' party
quoted and everything like a big shot
what are you wearing

CASS
I was
I am
I'm called

BEV
are you wearing a bed sheet?

CASS
yes

BEV
those are our nice sheets

CASS
I know

BEV
our guest sheets

CASS
I'm aware

BEV
it's fitted

CASS
so?

BEV
why are you wearing our nice fitted guest sheet like a toga

CASS
I I thought
it's not like a toga is it
I thought it might look more like
you know a Grecian soldier

BEV
a Grecian soldier?

CASS
yeah like a strong leader
like someone you might want to (listen to)

BEV
why?

CASS

I thought I
a costume might make me feel
but maybe it's too much
is it too much
you're looking at me like it's too much
is it too much?

BEV

depends on the effect you're trying to have I guess

CASS

do I look striking

BEV

you generally do most days

CASS

do you think you're listening to me more attentively in the sheet?

BEV

um
sure
I mean
it stands out

CASS

good then I think
I think this is the desired effect

BEV

okay then
sure
in a sheet
you weren't in bed

CASS

I know

BEV

Dr. J says we need to maintain our sleeping
like normal
together
the couch is not

CASS

I I

I'm

BEV

spit it out

enunciate

CASS

this is hard

it's not a game Bev

BEV

sorry

it's pre-coffee/ I'm just tired

CASS

Dr. J says you have to stop trying to

BEV

I know

okay

CASS

you need to listen

BEV

I'm listening

is this a therapy thing?

like a test?

are you testing me?

CASS

no

no

no why would you think that

BEV

well you are in costume

and I don't know maybe it was like a suggestion

like Dr. J'll tell me to try to

not react

or like to not get frustrated when I don't hear things the first time

and like maybe this is your emotional homework

to

I don't know do something crazy again

CASS
Bev

BEV
what

CASS
you used that word

BEV
not pejoratively

CASS
semantics

BEV
important semantics
semantics are important
language is important
context is

CASS
will you just
can you just
will you

BEV
okay okay sorry
but if this is a test
could you tell me cause I wanna do it right

CASS
Bev

BEV
okay
what did you want to say

CASS
the end is
the end is
coming?

BEV
is that a question

CASS
yes no I mean

BEV
cause it sounded like a question
a question you're posing to me
is the end coming

CASS
it's not
I mean
it is coming
it's not a question

BEV
very well
what's the end
what's coming
do you want coffee?

CASS
no

BEV
are you okay
you always want coffee

CASS
not today

BEV
so this is serious

CASS
yes

the coffee beeps

BEV
okay then
let me pour some coffee and then
then we'll sit here and talk about it

*BEV grabs two mugs out of reflex then puts one back
taking care to choose the exact mug she wants
CASS rights her sheet attire to make it extra striking*

*BEV pours
sits
sips*

BEV
okay
go ahead

CASS
I saw it
our town
last night I saw
our town is going to end
it's going to be lost
to be engulfed
I don't know how
but I saw flames
and
we all die

BEV sips

BEV
wow okay
that's
well
what a scary dream

CASS
I don't think it was a dream
I'm called
I was called to tell of what I saw

BEV
by?

CASS
what?

BEV
who called you?

CASS
God?

BEV
right right
god
you don't believe in god

CASS
that's a secret

BEV
we're alone

CASS
and I don't (believe in God)
I don't think
but something called me

BEV
right right
not god
okay but something
that's a really
um
I think it was dream babe
you have very vivid dreams
I mean you
you sleep walk
so like of course it felt real

CASS
this was different
look at my hands

*she looks
CASS's hands are burnt*

BEV
Cass
what'd you do that for?
when
are you okay

CASS
I didn't do it to my
I
I woke up like this

BEV
yes like a cartoon princess

CASS
it's true

BEV
no

CASS
yes I did

BEV
are you in pain?
do these hurt?

CASS
a little yes
a lot actually

BEV
okay well
then maybe

CASS
you have to listen to me

BEV
it's time to get ready for work

CASS
but what about my vision

BEV
your dream you mean

CASS
you don't believe me
how did my hands get this way

BEV
I don't know baby I don't know
but it's time to get dressed

CASS
but

BEV

I'm sure it'll heal

I've got ointment

how about we put the sheet away and you put on your real clothes

CASS

I don't know if I can go to work today

knowing we're all gonna die

I think I have to tell people

BEV

well

why don't we start with you going to work

take care of your students

little fresh faces and all

and we'll talk about it after you

after therapy

when we

come home later

I'll make us dinner

and we'll discuss it

and we'll figure out what to do

together

CASS

my hands hurt

BEV

Cass

please just do that for me

wait until later

I'll fix your hands

CASS

yes

yea okay

maybe you're right

BEV

sit here and I'll get the ointment

are you sure you don't want coffee

CASS

maybe a little

BEV
that's my lovely
mug?

CASS
the cracked one
BEV
it leaks

CASS
that's why I like it
it's like a race

*BEV goes to the mugs
CASS looks at her hands*

THREE.

DR. J sits with RODERICK

RODERICK
I feel like I've done something awful to her

DR. J
have you

RODERICK
she seems to think so

DR. J
what does she think you've done

RODERICK
she blames me for Han(nah)
for our daughter leaving

DR. J
little girls leave sometimes
it's not your fault

RODERICK
she really doesn't see it that way

DR. J
why is that

RODERICK
my position I guess
she thinks I
I know more
right
she I know why we're certain she's not
why our daughter's not coming back
why she didn't just runaway
like children do sometimes

DR. J
so
why does Camille think that you
that you might know or
that you might

RODERICK
because I feel guilty
even though I know
I know I'm not

DR. J
relationships are hard

RODERICK
yes

DR. J
have you tried not feeling guilty

RODERICK
yes

DR. J
and?

RODERICK
I felt the same

DR. J
so you don't feel

RODERICK
I feel like I don't want her to be angry
or sad
or worried
anymore

DR. J
right

RODERICK
or I mean it sucks
Han(nah)
our daughter
was a cute kid
but
we have two sons still here
worry about them

DR. J
how are they dealing with your daughter

RODERICK

fine
they hardly ask
I mean they did
who wouldn't
but they stopped
and now they
they just want their mother
their mother to care about them
the way she used to care
the way she cared about our daughter
and that's what I want too
I married Camille for a partner in this
I'm not supposed to
I can't take care of them like she does
or without her
and
I miss my wife
and I'm mad that she won't just
just
move on
and that she looks at me like like I'm a bad guy
because
because

DR. J

is it possible she's not looking at you like that
is it possible
is it possible that you're looking at yourself like that

RODERICK

why would I
no
I didn't do anything
she made her own decisions
that led to that path

DR. J

okay then
okay so why do you think Camille
why do you believe she thinks you're a bad guy

RODERICK

I asked for us to have one night
one night that wasn't interrupted by our daughter's presence in our bed
one night
so we could be together
like we were made to be
and Camille agreed
it was perfectly
a reasonable request
right

DR. J

and that was the night

RODERICK

she left
yes

DR. J

I see

RODERICK

I just wanted my bed back with my wife

DR. J

of course

RODERICK

but she looks at me like

DR. J

I see
well maybe
maybe after the founders' festival you'll both feel better
people like parties

RODERICK

I suppose

DR. J

you can't control how she feels

RODERICK

I know I know
but I wish I could

DR. J
what would you choose for her
if you could control it
if you could choose how she feels

pause.

RODERICK
I'd make her feel
feel for me like she used to
feel like our children are just
our children
but we
we're a team
we're a unit
I want her to need me again

DR. J
...
right
apologies
I think I asked the wrong
that question was not
let's work on what you can control

FOUR.

*CASS on the playground watching her students
POLLY and PATRICIA play near her*

POLLY
okay okay
you hide

PATRICIA
I don't want to hide

POLLY
but we're twins Patricia

PATRICIA
I know Polly
I just don't wanna hide

POLLY
the only way we can prove it is if we find each other with no clues

PATRICIA
I know I know

POLLY
so go hide
let's prove it

PATRICIA
I don't wanna hide with them around

PATRICIA and POLLY look out at the playground

POLLY
I'll find you
I'll protect you

PATRICIA
why don't you go hide

POLLY
I did
I did remember
yesterday

PATRICIA
but I found you
doesn't that mean we've already proven it

POLLY
that was just one time
we have to
have to see if we can do it again
close the circle
if I can do it/ too then

CASS
girls
girls can you please be a little softer

POLLY
softer?

CASS
yes
softer
quieter

POLLY
but it's recess

CASS
then why don't you go play out there
you can be loud over there

*POLLY and PATRICIA look out at the playground
a beat
they turn back to each other
they try "softer"*

POLLY
if we can prove this
if we can
then they'll pay
we have to Patricia

PATRICIA
okay
okay

CASS
what are you playing?

POLLY/PATRICIA
nothing

CASS
it doesn't sound like nothing

POLLY
we're allowed to play
we're allowed to play whatever we want
it's recess

PATRICIA
Polly don't talk back to Miss Cass

POLLY
I wasn't talking back
I wasn't talking back
was I Miss Cass

CASS
you were a little Polly

POLLY
it's only cause I'm frustrated
god

CASS
why are you (frustrated)

POLLY
Patricia won't go hide!

PATRICIA (hurt)
Polly

POLLY
it's true

CASS
calm down Polly
if Patricia doesn't want to go hide then you can't make her
play something else

POLLY
but if she doesn't go hide
then we can't prove we're twins
which means we can't live together
and can't protect each other

CASS
I see
well if she doesn't want to play that
then maybe you guys should go play out there
there's always room on the jungle gym

*POLLY and PATRICIA look out at the playground
pause*

PATRICIA
we can't Miss Cass

CASS
can't what

PATRICIA
we can't play there

POLLY
don't Patricia
she won't understand

CASS
won't understand what

PATRICIA
the boys

CASS
oh
oh I see
well the boys will just have to get over it

POLLY
told you

PATRICIA
Miss Cass the boys
the boys don't like us

CASS

I understand that
but boys have to get used to sharing
go on
I'll watch you

POLLY

Miss Cass please don't make us do that
it's not that they don't like us
it's that they hate us

CASS

hate you?

PATRICIA

because we're

POLLY

Patricia
don't

CASS

why Patricia
answer me

PATRICIA

because we're witches
twin witches
we have powers
they're afraid of us

POLLY

should be
we'll kill 'em all

CASS

Polly
that language will get you into a lot of trouble
even if you're joking
what would your father say

POLLY

not joking
and I don't
I don't want to kill them
it's only cause

only cause we can see inside their brains Miss Cass
and they want to kill us first

CASS
you can see inside their brains

POLLY
yeah
we can see what they wanna do
what they're gonna do
like what happened to Hannah

CASS
Hannah left
I know that's hard to understand
but she

POLLY
it's bigger than Hannah

PATRICIA
you believe us right

CASS
why do they think you're witches?

PATRICIA
because

POLLY
no reason

CASS
Patricia tell me

PATRICIA
I can't
sworn to secrecy

CASS
to each other
so you can lift the secret if you both agree
right
Polly
come on Polly
tell me

POLLY
we made Justin sick

CASS
Justin has the chicken pox

POLLY
who do you think cursed him?

CASS
how

PATRICIA
we took some chicken feathers from my farm
spit on them
and put them in Justin's clothes during P.E.
and then he put them back on
and then he got sick

CASS
oh
girls I don't think that's what gave Justin chicken pox

POLLY
and we made Kyle break his leg

CASS
did you now
how'd you manage that one

POLLY
we took some of his hair and wrapped it around a large stick we found in the woods

CASS
you shouldn't play out there

POLLY
very big stick

PATRICIA
big as his leg

POLLY
and then we snapped it in two

CASS
very clever
why did you do those things

POLLY
cause they're mean
they never liked us
even before we knew we were witches
they were always mean
chasing us
shouting at us
wanting to hurt us

CASS
boys do that

PATRICIA
they shouldn't

CASS
I agree
they shouldn't
but it doesn't mean anything

POLLY
does too

PATRICIA
we knew
we knew what they were gonna do to us
we could see it
so this was the only way
had to get a couple of them
you know?
before they got us

POLLY
if we got Justin and Kyle out of the way
the other boys wouldn't know what to do until they got back
we're smarter than them
and now we have power

CASS
well
I don't think the boys really think you had anything to do with Kyle and Justin

POLLY
you're wrong

PATRICIA
don't talk back

POLLY
sorry Miss Cass
just
just look
look
will you look?
you'll see

*all three of them look out at the playground
at first CASS sees nothing
but then
she realizes
all the boys are staring at the girls
at all three of them*

CASS
girls...

POLLY
told you Miss Cass
they always watching us
waiting for their moment
they're trying to get us
we don't know what for
what they're gonna do
exactly
we get flashes of it though
in their eyes
in our dreams
that's why we gotta prove we're twins

PATRICIA
okay

POLLY
for protection
only way the spell will work
it's only half done

PATRICIA
okay

POLLY
do you have the rabbit's foot

PATRICIA
here

POLLY
mine too

*they hold out their rabbit's feet
CASS watches them
keeping one eye out on the boys*

PATRICIA
two from one body

POLLY
you will be united

PATRICIA/POLLY
close the circle
for protection

PATRICIA
okay
I'll go hide
count to twenty then come

CASS
don't
don't
stay right here

PATRICIA
but I gotta Miss Cass
I gotta
for protection

CASS
I said stay Patricia

PATRICIA runs off before CASS can stop her

POLLY
don't worry Miss Cass
we're twins
I'll find her

CASS
Polly

POLLY
we'll protect you too
we like you
what happened to your hands

CASS
I don't know

POLLY looks very closely at CASS's hands

POLLY
hm
looks like a curse
seen it before I think

CASS
where

POLLY
my mother

CASS
oh
Patricia should come back

POLLY
I'll go find her
we're twins

*POLLY runs off after PATRICIA
CASS looks out at the playground at the boys
she starts walking in the direction of the girls
putting herself between them and the boys
a standoff*

FIVE.

*BEV on watch at the border
light smoke on the horizon and in the air
she carries binoculars and looks out
a whole lot of nothing
she sets up a game of solitaire
a few moves in SEAN finds her*

SEAN
nothing?

BEV
so far

SEAN
you can move that ten over

BEV
thanks

SEAN
I've been pretty worried

BEV
yeah I read the article

SEAN
oh good
yeah so
not to be that guy but
just maybe be a little more watchful

BEV
right
so no solitaire

SEAN
I mean
if you wouldn't mind

BEV
it's my job my responsibility
there just hasn't been anything to look at it in a very long time

SEAN
but at any moment

BEV
I know

SEAN
the world comes crashing down faster than we expect

BEV
I know

SEAN
okay

BEV shuffles the cards and puts them away
SEAN looks out, watchful
BEV joins him

SEAN
sometimes I think I see them
tourists
in the trees
on the horizon

BEV
maybe I'm not looking hard enough
I never see anything
when we studied it in school
when we learned the mission
you start to think any day
any day this will be ripped away
and then I look out
and I see
but
gotta watch gotta protect
hearth and home

SEAN
blood and bone

BEV
she come here last night?
...
yeah she always comes here
did she

did she say anything

SEAN
like what

BEV
I don't know she
this morning she was talking about
nevermind it's dumb

SEAN
she mostly just likes the quiet
she doesn't really talk about what's bothering her you know
so like I don't have any insight if that's what you're looking for

BEV
insight is ten miles away from what I'm expecting

SEAN
all right then

BEV
I just hope she talks to you
cause I think
I think she's (losing it)
her hands are all
she burned them

SEAN
shit what

BEV
yeah last night some time
on the stove I think
in the gas

SEAN
what did she say is she okay

BEV
nothing that made sense
she didn't even seem concerned about it
more concerned about
whatever
I don't know what to do anymore

you know we haven't
sorry you're her friend too

SEAN
you can tell me
stays here promise
cross my heart hope to die

BEV (laughs)
we haven't had sex in like
a long time

SEAN
oh

BEV
too much
you're my boss

SEAN (laughing now too)
nah
I'm more like a buddy
don't worry about it
but
isn't that like a normal marriage thing though
I mean me and (Mary)
...
I guess that's different

BEV
so you think it's normal?
no sex
they should really tell you that
in the brochure or in the vows or before you sign you know
cause I don't know about you but like I have very a high
...
sorry
that's crossing a line

SEAN
you guys are coming to the founders' festival right

BEV
of course
you know if the tourists don't come and slaughter us all in our sleep

SEAN (small laugh)
they won't
you make sure of that
and you do a great job at it
but
there you go
the festival will be fun
dancing close
shimmy sweet
all that
you'll reset I promise
we're unveiling the new pamphlets

BEV
right
right the pamphlets

SEAN
she's doing an excellent job
the new director of tourism

BEV
I'm sure

SEAN
I know you really wanted the promotion but she's

BEV
right no I know
I'm a team player
and I like it here on watch
you know gives me time to think
and it makes me feel like I'm saving her
just her
you know
I mean the town too
but for me it's her
she's the town

SEAN
you and Cass will work it out
you always do

BEV
right

SEAN
stay watchful

SEAN goes
BEV watches for a bit
fuck it
decides to deal out a new hand of solitaire
she coughs
the smoke thickens

SIX.

*CASS and BEV at couples counseling
Dr. J takes notes*

CASS

it started as a deep rumble
like a deep yawp
that growled under the ground
like all those people who were buried before
like they were crying out beneath the soil
but then it became clear that it was all over the town
a seeping feeling a
but like a vVvVvVvVvVvVvVv
or like a eEeEeEeEeEe
and all over this town I just felt like
everything was rotting
rotting away because the smell came back deep
in the back of my throat and I
I couldn't breathe
and it's like this town is poisoned and cursed
and all manner of awful
and the only thing that can cure it
would be to get the town to listen
to wake them up to the smell because maybe
if they smell it too we can all put our heads together
to figure a way out
to clean it
you know like a bucket of bleach to the water supply or something
or just douse it all in lighter fluid and strike a match
you know
but right now I don't see a way
I think we're all gonna die here
in fire and ash
maybe a wave
maybe a rush of people coming like Sean says
conquerors conquistadors tourists
I don't fully remember all of it
but I have these burns on my hands and
I can still smell it
can still feel it
it was so
you feel something right?

BEV

no
I don't

CASS
you're not even trying

DR. J
Cass we talked about this
let Bev have her processing time
you don't like it when you're rushed
don't rush her

CASS
can you feel it Dr. J

DR. J
feel what

BEV
we agreed that you wouldn't talk about this here
we agreed that we would talk about it at home

CASS
I can't just not speak the truth

BEV
you could try not embarrassing yourself at every
you could try not being crazy

DR. J
Bev that doesn't sound like listening language
that sounds accusatory
this time is for both of you
Cass is allowed to bring up things that are affecting her too
let's try that again
Cass asked you a question
genuinely try to respond

pause
deep breath

BEV
what's the feeling?
I'm trying
really listening
I am

CASS

it's like all these little things
like I never noticed before but there are so many boys in the elementary school
like so many
but there aren't that many girls
and I never really noticed before just how many girls
leave/
and we never

BEV

you have so/
you've mentioned to me
many times
how many boys/ are in your class

DR. J

Bev you cut Cass off

CASS

but not like really understanding what that meant
that's what I mean
and they all seem to be watching

BEV

so the feeling is from all the boys

CASS

no it's just
it's these little things in this town
these little things that don't feel right

DR. J (bringing a voice of calm reason to the room)

do they not feel right because something doesn't feel right at home?

CASS

no
...no
maybe
I don't know

DR. J

because I have to say
as an observer
you've been feeling like something isn't right at home
but you haven't been able to articulate it fully
a lot of frustration has been mentioned about that since we started our sessions

so is it possible that this is just something else
something else for you to point at
to try to solve
losing a promotion can be very /strenuous

CASS
I didn't care about the promotion

BEV
I did

CASS
I can't control what Sean does

DR. J
wasn't there a similar unsettled feeling after you discussed IVF treatment
after you two decided that you didn't want

BEV
she decided
she decided she didn't want to do it

CASS
we agreed together

BEV
I would still try

CASS
we'd be terrible at it
we can barely remember to take the recycling out

BEV
recycling isn't a kid
a kid makes noise

DR. J (calming presence)
if my memory serves Bev you said you didn't want children either
have you changed your mind
that would be important information to share with your partner

BEV
...
no not really
I just
I feel like we

we have these bodies that create things
and choosing to disregard that responsibility feels
weighty
so I just
I don't know maybe it's worth revisiting

DR. J
Cass?

CASS
how did we get on this again

DR. J
it's clearly still an issue that needs to be addressed
and maybe
just maybe your fascination with the girls in your school
and the dreams
maybe it's a manifestation that needs to be addressed in your relationship
you haven't fulfilled a certain aspect of your relationship
your partner is not going to ascend to the next level in her career just yet
and so the town burns

CASS
no I
I know what I saw
what I felt

DR. J
whatever your dreams/ are trying to communicate

CASS
not a dream

BEV
Cass listen to Dr. J

DR. J
they're communicating a feeling
a feeling of loss
of loneliness
or something that you can't quite articulate

CASS
death destruction mayhem
I can articulate just fine

DR. J
our dreams are our minds processing the day
our fears and anxieties
our joys
I know that this feels real
but what I'm really concerned about are your hands
self-harm/ is not

CASS
I didn't

BEV
wouldn't be the first time

CASS
that was before
I'm better now
I didn't do this

DR. J
then how did it happen

CASS
I told you
I woke up in pain
my hands burning like the vision

DR. J
where did you wake up

CASS
I was in the kitchen

BEV
near the stove Dr. J

CASS
THE STOVE WASN'T ON

DR. J
but maybe it was
maybe your mind just couldn't see it
but maybe it was
our minds do that don't they
our minds sometimes don't let us see
don't let us see what could hurt us

because our minds are looking out for us
they want to keep us safe
they wait until we're ready
then they show us the truth so maybe the stove was on
doesn't that make more sense

BEV
how can I help her Dr. J

DR. J
there is love here
that's the good news
there is a lot of love in this room
of that I'm sure
but I don't know if you both understand how deep it goes
you must open your hearts to one another
your homework for the week is to make sure that you find ways to make the other
person feel special
every day
find new ways to communicate that
don't tell each other what they are
write down the ones you do and the ones you think are being done
and we'll share next week
we'll see where this miscommunication is beginning
what aren't we seeing
what are we seeing

BEV
is sex included in that

CASS
jesus

BEV
just want to be clear

DR. J
has physical intimacy stopped

BEV
oh yea

CASS
sorry I haven't felt like fucking someone who thinks I'm crazy

BEV
I never said

CASS
you just did not but two minutes ago

BEV
acting
acting crazy
that's what I meant
but I want to be close again
can't we just try please
we used to have the weirdest sex
it was so good
...
Dr. J?

DR. J
this sounds like a conversation that should continue
with your homework perhaps
I'm sorry to say unfortunately we're out of time
and I have another appointment coming in
but maybe we'll start there next week
and Cass
please go to the doctor for your burns

CASS
I'm not crazy by the way

DR. J
I didn't say you were

CASS
I know you didn't
but someone in here did

BEV
seriously you're not going to talk to me now
Cass come on I didn't say it like that
I only meant

*BEV and CASS continue arguing as they go
DR. J watches them
goes to tape recorder
turns it on*

DR. J

post session Bev and Cass

relationship on the brink

visions of death

tourist talk is more prominent in every session

even if veiled

the idea of invasion increases

invasion of a body

invasion of a town

likely having to do with Sean's tourist talk in the morning paper

tends to increase anxiety in all patients

turns off tape recorder

turns it back on

DR. J

research

the last tourist seen in Greenville

turns it off

SEVEN.

*HANK and PATRICIA outside DR. J's office
they both carry bibles
HANK reads his
his lips moving along
PATRICIA has hers open but does not read it
HANK notices*

HANK
read

...
and after I promise we'll go for ice cream

PATRICIA
I wasn't doing anything
I haven't done anything

HANK
then why does Mrs. McMillan tell me that Tommy is terrified of you

PATRICIA
I don't know
Tommy's scared of birds

HANK
you and Polly
you're conjuring some dark things in those woods
I'm sure of it

PATRICIA
no

HANK
it's either that or-

PATRICIA
I'm not crazy

HANK
why do you say-

PATRICIA
that's the only reason people go to Dr. J

HANK
sometimes they go because
because they don't know what to do
I came here after your mother (left)

...
and I find it
well I
I find it useful

PATRICIA
I find what I do with Polly useful

HANK
I will not argue about this Patricia
you're here
we're going to talk to Dr. J
read
would you rather recite?
you used to love that
you are so good at it
remember?
come on
tell me the passages

PATRICIA
daaaad

HANK
I know you know them
come on
for me

PATRICIA
first Chronicles 10:13 the beginnings of the downfall of Saul
second Chronicles 33:6 the evil forged through witchcraft
Deuteronomy 18 chapter 10 through 14

HANK
recite the whole passage
don't gimme that look
I know you know it

PATRICIA exhales dramatically

PATRICIA (very fast)

let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire
who practices divination or sorcery
interprets omens
engages in witchcraft
or casts spells
or who is a medium or spiritist
or who consults the dead
anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord
because of these same detestable practices
um
you
you must be um

HANK
what is it

PATRICIA
I don't remember

HANK
you must be blameless before the Lord your God

PATRICIA
right

HANK
are you blameless

PATRICIA
dad I told you
it's just a game

HANK
just a game
pretending to be an evil thing
that's just a game

PATRICIA
it's fun
it makes me
it makes me not feel
I don't feel

HANK
let's sit here
and read all the passages that mention witchcraft until Dr. J is ready

PATRICIA
uuuuuuuuuu

HANK
don't be so dramatic young lady
this is not punishment
this is for your education
for your soul
so you enter that room with an open and honest heart
like we talked about
agreed?

PATRICIA
agreed

HANK
start with Isaiah 47

*PATRICIA opens the bible
reads*

PATRICIA (overly subdued)
now then
listen
you lover of pleasure
lounging in your security and saying to yourself
'I am, and there is none besides me
I will never be a widow
or suffer the loss of children'

HANK
listen to the words
and a little livelier please
I taught you to read with gusto

PATRICIA (a little livelier; but only a little)
both of these will overtake you in a moment
on a single day:
loss of children and widowhood
they will come upon you in full measure
in spite of your many sorceries and all your potent spells

HANK
are you listening to it

PATRICIA
yes (no)

HANK
tragedy comes regardless of witchcraft
because witchcraft is from the devil
right?
right?

PATRICIA
right

HANK
good
and witchcraft will call down the wrath of god
continue

PATRICIA
you have trusted in your wickedness and have said
'no one sees me'

HANK
no one sees it
so it must not matter
continue

PATRICIA
your wisdom and knowledge mislead you
when you say to yourself
'I am and there is none besides me'

HANK
like it's just a game
you understand

PATRICIA
yes

HANK
continue

PATRICIA (really listening to the words now as she speaks)
disaster will come upon you
and you will not know how to conjure it away
a calamity will fall upon you
that you cannot ward off with a ransom
a catastrophe you cannot foresee will suddenly come upon you
keep on then with your magic spells
and with your many sorceries
which you have labored at since childhood
perhaps you will succeed
perhaps you will cause terror
....
cause terror

pause

HANK
very good
continue

PATRICIA
I hear it

HANK (really enthused)
good
very good
I'm so glad
continue

PATRICIA
dad I have to go

HANK
what

PATRICIA
I need to talk to Polly

HANK
no
no you don't
you need to stay right here
we have an appointment
we were getting somewhere
and then ice cream
remember you love ice cream

PATRICIA
I'm sorry dad
I love you
I do
but I have to go
Polly and I have work to do

HANK
what stop Patricia

*PATRICIA runs away
bible in hand*

HANK (shouting after her)
the devil hides in plain sight
it's not a game
come back

DR J comes out of the office

DR. J
sorry about the delay
just going over notes from our last session
where's

HANK
I think she's lost to me
to the devil

DR. J
...
okayyyyy
let's talk about that
shall we?
come on in

EIGHT.

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM on the phone
SEAN listens in
gesturing emphatically when the director misspeaks

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
Greenville Township
town bird, skylark
town slogan
uhhh
uh
pleasant is powerful
we have many pleasant and powerful attractions in Greenville
including a quilt museum displaying just about all forms of quilts you can imagine
if you can imagine quilts
and the old
no no no
the historic
the historic battlefield of Underhill's standoff with the British
but no British actually came
he just stood there in case they did
or at least that's what his journals state
he was kind of a crank
it's just a field
a big field
with the ruins of his house on it
he didn't maintain his property very well
also he thought the British were coming in the 1800s
like I said a bit of a crank
and then we have the
...
...
look
it's hard to be a director of tourism for a township that has no attractions okay
but
but
we have the best biscuits you've ever tasted at the only restaurant in town
and we're so hip and progressive
we even have queer people

SEAN gives a thumbs up

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
I can say that right?
that's not a bad term anymore

we're friends
me and the queer people
so it's not like

...

...

I don't mean it like that
I'm not

...

oh you are

SEAN gives another approving gesture

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

oh

fantastic

sure like I said I didn't mean

...

I will keep that in mind how it comes out

yes

and even though zero percent of our economy's wealth comes from tourism

SEAN disapproves

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

there's still hope

we can have a highway line up with us any day

any day now

gotta get those tourism dollars

you know

right right

well when will you publish this

about us

about Greenville

oh

oh sure

lots of towns to consider

well keep us informed

okay

thank you

good bye

...

I'm sorry Sean

SEAN

you did great

I don't think they'll pick us

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
but what if they do

SEAN
we'll handle it
we've dealt with worse

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
that's the most stressful it's been so far
I don't understand
why do
why do people advertise their home
actively seeking these people
it makes no sense
why doesn't every township just shutter doors
why do they allow
outsiders
invite it in
show off their towns' amenities
it's madness

SEAN
couldn't tell you what possesses them
quaint is in
always will be
always want to see what small towns they can ruin

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
I never realized before
well
just how much it takes to keep us
safe
and those people out

SEAN
don't sweat it
you're doing a great job

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
I'm still working on the pamphlets

SEAN
oh
I thought those would be done by now

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

I know
it's just
it's my first big job
and I just want them to be perfect
I promise I'll get them done before the festival
did you want to see them
what I have?

SEAN

not just now
I have faith in your ability to get it done
I wouldn't have promoted you if I didn't
I can look at them later if you like
I just have to run an errand before watch tonight
so if that's all you need

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

do you need company?

SEAN

sorry what?

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

do you need company
on watch
not your errands
I'd love to come by and um
well keep you company
on watch
I kind of miss it
the time
the time to be still with
with yourself but also
someone else
sometimes
you know
with the
right
energy
balance

SEAN

that's very nice of you
but you've got a job to do
I've got a job to do

we need that pamphlet
bland is beautiful
yeah?
isn't that what you said

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
pleasant is powerful

SEAN
very nice
either one
I like it
but some other time

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
sure
whatever
it's not a big
thanks for coming by
for that
for that call
I don't know what I would have done if you weren't here

SEAN
any time

SEAN starts to go

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
Sean?

SEAN
yes?

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
um
I stopped by the library today

SEAN
oh

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
yeah
Camille she's not
she's not doing so great
and she asked me about Hannah

SEAN

...

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

sorry

her daughter

she asked me about her daughter

no names

it's a weird transition to make

SEAN

yes

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

how do you do it

how do you look them in the eyes

when you know

SEAN

know what?

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

oh um

SEAN

I need you to handle this job

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

right

SEAN

so we were clear that discussions

discussions of this nature

only happen at certain times

yes

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

right

we were alone so I just thought

SEAN

I understand

mistakes happen

you're doing a great job

Camille will heal

yes

they always do
and it helps to look them in the eye actually
it helps
to understand cost
yes?
the weight of responsibility
yes?

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
yes
thank you

SEAN
why did she ask you
since you brought it up
why didn't she come to me

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
oh
um
I think because how I'm in a position now
to uh
to maybe
I don't know
she just wanted clarity
closure I guess

SEAN
what did you say?

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
uh
nothing really
cause um
I didn't really know how to
but I said
that there's a reason for everything and that
we can't know her mind or why she
but that Han(nah) her daughter
has left
and that we must continue on without her
the town will out
...
is that right?

SEAN
more or less

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
okay
if you have suggestions on how I could improve

SEAN
maybe in the future just direct them to me
until you have your footing

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
right
that makes sense

SEAN
listen
I think
you're doing a great job
you're the Director of Tourism
that's a big responsibility
much bigger than being Lucy
yes
you have a responsibility outside yourself now
and you're doing fabulously
keep up the good work

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
thank you Sean

SEAN goes
DIRECTOR OF TOURISM nods and revisits her pamphlets

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
Greenville
"pleasant is powerful"
I like it
I'm gonna keep that

NINE.

*CAMILLE alone in a park
the smoke has gotten somewhat thicker
but not enough for Camille to care
she carries the stuffed bear
faintly in the distance RODERICK calls for her
she doesn't hear it
or doesn't want to hear it
she sits on a bench with the bear
POLLY jumps rope
CAMILLE watches her*

POLLY
one for the pump
two for the hump
three for the lump
four for the dump
five for the mumps
six for the

*she misses the jump
resets
sees CAMILLE*

CAMILLE
hi Polly

POLLY
hi Miss Camille

CAMILLE
what's this game you're playing

POLLY
I don't know
I just made it up
jump is hard to rhyme
and it doesn't seem to be doing what I want it to do

CAMILLE
what's that

POLLY
nothing (witchcraft)

CAMILLE
oh

POLLY
I'm sorry about Hannah

CAMILLE
thank you

POLLY
are you in pain

CAMILLE
yes

POLLY
Patricia and I figured out a way to stop that
want me to do it for you

CAMILLE
that's quite all right
I'm fine
these things just take time

POLLY
I'm serious Miss Camille
I can do it

CAMILLE
okay
sure
that'd be very nice

POLLY
okay
so first
you have to trust me
okay
this isn't going to hurt you
put your face in front of my face

*CAMILLE does
POLLY squeezes CAMILLE's face in her hands*

POLLY
look deep into my eyes
do you believe me
that this will heal you

CAMILLE
yes

POLLY lets go of her face

POLLY
good

*POLLY starts looking around for ingredients
she picks up things like grass, flowers, bugs, sticks, stray
candy, etc.*

POLLY
Hannah read the best
this is for her reading
she always talked too much in class
got in trouble for it a lot
this is for that
she came up with the best games
way better than me
this is for that

CAMILLE picks up something

CAMILLE
she was a great hugger
this is for that

POLLY
this is for her sweet tooth
and her sour tooth
this is for her curls
and her braids
I loved her hair
this is for

CAMILLE
for her smile
that's for her smile
and this is for her laugh
and for her delight at bells on Sunday

POLLY

this is for her adventures
this is for her feet
where she walked
where she climbed
where she skipped
this is for her hands
where she touched
where she clapped
where she thumb wrestled
her tongue
where she spoke
where she sat quietly
where she ate too much candy

CAMILLE

this is for her restlessness
she couldn't go through the night without needing
needing something
always came to me
crawled into my bed
wedged herself between me and him
and then tossed
tossed endlessly
but so much less than when she was alone
this is for that

POLLY

...

okay?

CAMILLE

okay

*RODERICK's shouting has grown in volume
it's harder to ignore now*

POLLY

don't worry I'll be done in a second

*POLLY puts all of the ingredients in her water bottle
stirs
pounds it
mashes it
rolls it around on the ground
stomps on it*

PATRICIA runs on holding her bible

PATRICIA
Polly!
I've been looking everywhere

POLLY
I'm helping Miss Camille
you wanna help

PATRICIA
what are we doing

POLLY
healing potion

PATRICIA
oh

POLLY
I think I did it right

PATRICIA
looks good
Miss Camille gimme your hand

the three put their hands on the bottle

POLLY
don't forget the bear
Hannah's bear
he should be a part of this too

*CAMILLE grabs the bear
puts her hand on the bottle*

POLLY/PATRICIA
poison or potion
this we make
to heal heart's ache

they hand it to CAMILLE

CAMILLE
it can be poison, too?

PATRICIA
only when you spit it at your enemies

POLLY
drink it
you'll feel better

*CAMILLE drinks it
coughs
coughs a little more
RODERICK's shouts are very close
the cough subsides*

CAMILLE
thank you girls
I guess I should go
I believe that's my name
being shouted
like a lost dog
you're both very sweet

*she hands them the water bottle
starts to go*

POLLY
Miss Camille?

CAMILLE
yes

POLLY
if you need another one
or if you want one
for whatever

PATRICIA
we'll make you another one
just ask

CAMILLE
thank you girls
don't wander too far away
stay close
no one wants
no one wants something to happen to you

*RODERICK has finally made it to the park
CAMILLE doesn't acknowledge him
continues in the direction she had already been walking
he starts to say something
thinks better of it
walks behind her
POLLY and PATRICIA watch them go*

PATRICIA
look
do you see that

POLLY
what

PATRICIA
smoke
out there

POLLY
it's getting thicker
isn't it

PATRICIA
I think so

POLLY
dad said it's nothing to worry about
says it's normal
burning from other towns
it's not coming here
not yet

PATRICIA
hm

POLLY
what?

PATRICIA
I wonder why it's normal
if it's normal wouldn't we have seen it before

POLLY
so what do you think it is

PATRICIA
not normal burning
not for the dead

POLLY
you don't think
not for the witches
they used to burn witches you know
you don't think we're in (danger)

PATRICIA
I don't think so
not that
it's something else
breathe it in

they both do

POLLY
it feels

PATRICIA
it feels better?
right?
it feels right

POLLY
yeah
that's weird

PATRICIA
I don't know what it means
but it means something

POLLY
we'll find out

*PATRICIA grabs POLLY's hand
then run off on a mission*

TEN.

*DR. J and SEAN in DR. J's office
midconversation*

DR. J
my findings

SEAN
I'm not really sure

DR. J
I just feel like having this confusion and frustration around

SEAN
but we don't know for sure
not for sure

DR. J
I'm relatively confident

SEAN
of the research you did today
just today
wouldn't it make more sense to look into this more deeply over time
you could have missed something
I understand that you're trying to help

DR. J
I am
I suppose
I suppose I could have missed something

SEAN
there you see
we don't want to confuse people
you see the smoke outside
so believe what you see with your own eyes
who's creating the smoke if not them
if not the tourists smoking out other towns

DR. J
wouldn't it calm people to know
that maybe
maybe they are safe
that they can relax a little

not live so much in a defensive stance

SEAN

we can't let our guard down
not for a second
that's when they'll come

DR. J

but if we can give them a little solace
a little hope that some of this fear
we could alleviate it somewhat
what a gift we could bring to Greenville

SEAN

if we did that
it will leave us unprotected
unsuspecting
you want to help people
I know you do
you do so every day
you're a beacon of our community
and I know you've had your struggles
who does the doctor talk to
when they can't talk to anyone
about their fears
and their relationships
and their side research projects
it's usually the bartender right
but I know that's not your route anymore
not anymore
you've conquered it
and still manage to support the town
that must be hard
bottling all that up
the burdens you shoulder
I couldn't do it
but you're much stronger than me Dr. J
much stronger
the rock of a community that constantly seeks help
that's you

DR. J

thank you Sean

SEAN

I appreciate you coming to me with this
we'll keep looking into it
I promise
now I have to go

DR. J

uh
one more thing Sean

SEAN

yes

DR. J

I just wanted to check in about
your health
you've stopped our meetings and I felt the need to
to reach back out
you were very nervous about giving the promotion to Lucy
I believe
very worried about how Cass would handle Bev's lack of career mobility
that she would blame you
that it would cause tension between you

SEAN

no longer worried
everyone's fine

DR. J

oh
good
I'm happy to resume our sessions
especially if it will give us some time to discuss other town matters

SEAN

of course doctor
I'll check my calendar
and get back to you
I'm needed on watch at the moment

DR. J

thank you for stopping by

SEAN

a pillar of our community
you always have our best interests at heart

DR. J
I appreciate you saying so

SEAN goes
DR. J pulls out the whiskey
pours
sips
thinks

ELEVEN.

*CASS and SEAN drink a six-pack
on watch
the smoke is thicker
they're laughing*

CASS
it's true
your little girl

SEAN
no

CASS
yeah
she thinks
she and Patricia

SEAN
it's insane

CASS
oh come on

SEAN
dare I say
crazy

CASS (laughing)
shut up

SEAN (good natured)
says the nutter butter

CASS (still laughing)
you're so mean

SEAN
okay what did they do

CASS
they think
they can do things
that they're responsible for Justin and Kyle
whoever else

SEAN

sure

makes total sense

I bet they're responsible for this fucking smoke too

which one did we piss off

what fire are they keeping secreted away to suffocate us all

CASS

can you imagine

it's nice they have each other

especially since the

the boys are so

you know

SEAN

no what

CASS

they're weird with girls this age

they stare

they stare at them

SEAN

stare

CASS

yeah

they stare very deeply at them

like they're hunting or something

SEAN

boys

CASS

for real

SEAN

I remember that age

staring at girls was a fun pastime

terrified they'd look right back at you

not quite sure what to do with your hands

or your mouth

I always felt like my mouth was open around you

like flies were buzzing in and out

CASS
you did not

SEAN
did
thought I was drooling all the time
didn't want you to catch me staring
so disappointed to learn you were never staring at me
only at Bev

CASS
you never stared at me Sean
you stared at Mary
couldn't shut up about Mary
always talking about her eyes
or nose
or
assets
hoping she'd notice you

SEAN
...

CASS
sorry
I thought we were

SEAN
it's okay
I did do that
I did do that too

they sit in silence

SEAN
Bev's worried about you
about that
your hands

CASS
they'll heal

SEAN
I'm worried too

CASS
don't I'm fine
they feel better already

SEAN
how'd you do it

CASS
I didn't
no one believes me but I didn't

SEAN
I do
if you say you didn't do it then you didn't
strange though
what do you remember happening

CASS
you won't believe me

SEAN
I just did didn't I

CASS
I had a vision Sean
I think there's something wrong here
wrong with our town

SEAN
don't blame it on the town
this town isn't different than any other
everyone wants to protect what's theirs
keep tourists out keep families safe
don't blame it on the town

CASS
Bev thinks it was a dream

SEAN
Bev thinks the sun shines out of you
it's just too bright sometimes
what did you see

CASS
fire ash
a town built on dead bodies that will swallow us

that ring out and reverberate
I just have an awful feeling
and seeing it smelling it
suffocating under it
I think it's safest to go

SEAN
I don't want you to leave

CASS
God no
that's not what I
I didn't mean that at all
not like that
no
but going
and then
coming back when it's safe
not leave
not leave Sean
...
Sean?

SEAN
it would break my heart
don't go for a short time
people always say that
but it just means the same thing
it stays permanent
no matter what people say
going becomes leaving

CASS
I was just thinking out loud

SEAN
promise me
promise me that you will tell me if that ugly idea enters back into your brain
don't put me in a position to just walk out on watch one night
expecting to see you at some point
only to find out you went somewhere
promise to tell me
to talk to me before you go

CASS
I promise

SEAN
good
my little ticker wouldn't be able to take that

...
I'm gonna
I'm gonna say something
and I don't want you to be mad
okay

CASS
okay

SEAN
visions have a way of catching

CASS
I don't (understand)

SEAN
I just mean
you and me
Bev
that's one thing
but you know just be careful
they have a way of infecting
of spreading
you know
and people get scared and then everyone thinks they see it
or whatever
the mind plays tricks

CASS
but what if it's true

SEAN
then we'll deal with it
that's what we do
what we've always done
Cass
I've been meaning to
to talk to you about something

CASS
okay
shoot

SEAN

you remember when my wife left
I thought
I thought if I was able to talk with her again
it would have made me feel better
it would have made me make sense of why
we created life together
the best little girl on the whole planet I'm positive
and her heart was so big
such a caring person
our last conversation was
wasn't even about anything
so I thought if I could have spoken to her
if I could have known her mind
changed it
I would have felt like everything was
right
and we would have gotten through it
but
it wouldn't have
not really
she wanted to leave
wanted to leave so badly she wouldn't even talk to me
you
you at least
you're talking to me
what made me feel better after she left
was you
always you
because you've been here
I don't know why people do the things they do
I really don't
I don't know how they're capable of such things
but
you

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM enters

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

Sean?
oh hi Cass

CASS
hey Lucy

SEAN

what are you doing here

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

you know

I was baking cookies

and I

um

I thought I'd go for a walk

uh

with my cookies and

I thought

well you know who I bet likes cookies

Sean

and um

well I just let my feet do the walkin'

SEAN

oh that's very nice

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

is that a beer

do you mind if I

I'm not interrupting anything right

I mean you two aren't exactly

you know

CASS

I was just about to go anyway

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

oh well/have a nice night

SEAN

no stay

please

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

yeah

you know three's company

four's a crowd

here

have a cookie

CASS

thanks

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
oh what happened to your hands

CASS
nothing
just an accident

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
I didn't know you were clumsy

CASS
yup
that's me
clumsy

SEAN
the clumsiest

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
do you want a cookie Sean

SEAN
yes
thank you

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
moist
chewy
delicious?

*DIRECTOR OF TOURISM stares at SEAN
who doesn't fully realize she's expecting him to respond to
these prompts
CASS does*

CASS
yes
yes to all those things Lucy

they sit in an uncomfortable silence

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
what were you all talking about
I didn't mean to interrupt

CASS secretly punches SEAN to try to make him talk

SEAN
town history

CASS gives him a "what the fuck" look

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
oh really
you know that's what I've been working on with the pamphlets
our history really is very fascinating
you know
before it was Greenville it used to be called something
what was it
it was a funny name
not very descriptive
and a little coarse
but that was before the war
and the riots
and burials just fascinating
what were you all discussing about our history

*SEAN secretly punches CASS to speak
your turn*

CASS
weather vanes

SEAN starts laughing and tries to hide it

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
oh I don't think I know anything about that
what about them

SEAN
yeah Cass tell her
all about them weather vanes

CASS
um
the weather vanes are
are
historic
and um
they point
in the direction of the
wind?

SEAN
very true

*they both start laughing
maybe they cough a little
DIRECTOR OF TOURISM doesn't get it*

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
I feel like I'm being
I'm being
uh put on a little

CASS
oh no
Lucy no
it's just an inside joke
I'm uh

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
I'm gonna go/

SEAN
/okay

CASS
I'm sorry Lucy
we're awful

SEAN
we didn't mean anything by it
we're kids with a magnifying glass
I'm sorry

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
quite all right
I shouldn't have (come here)
enjoy the cookies
I'm sorry I interrupted

CASS
Lucy

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
it's really quite all right
I should go finish the pamphlets anyway
I'll see you tomorrow

right Sean

SEAN
right

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
okay then

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM goes

CASS
well I feel like shit now

SEAN
don't
she shouldn't have come here

CASS (kind of amused)
you basically called her an ant

SEAN
did I

CASS
yes
you did
we're the kids with the magnifying glass
that makes her an ant

SEAN
fuck
I'm an asshole

CASS (laughing)
you are a such asshole

SEAN
I told her
I don't like company on watch

CASS
really now

SEAN
you're hardly company
you might as well not even be here

CASS
she clearly likes you

SEAN
yeah well
I'm her boss
kind of
and I
don't want to
plus she's not really my
I'm not really
I'm not into it

...
what about you and Bev
you gonna work through it

CASS
well
I can't cook

SEAN
I did know this

CASS
and we're not speaking
or rather
I'm not speaking to her
so she's trying to starve me out
cause she cooks
and she knows I can't
and she's hidden all the snacks that don't require cooking
all that remains is the olives

SEAN
you hate olives

CASS
yes and she's tightened the lids

SEAN
what

CASS
she tightens the lids so I'll have to ask her to open them
to eat a thing I hate

SEAN
that's genius

CASS
it's evil
and I'm still mad
so I figured I'm just gonna drink beer and that'll be that
and starve
whatever

SEAN
really

CASS
yup

SEAN
you should start talking to her again

CASS
I don't really want to
you make me feel like I'm not crazy
she makes me feel like I'm crazy all the time

SEAN
women

CASS
shut up

SEAN
well I mean
what I was gonna say before
I hope you guys can work it out
really I do
but if you can't
do you wanna
I don't know
move in with me and Polly
you know just for a while
Polly would love it
I would too
I don't know what to do with kids
especially little girl-like children

CASS

I don't know that seems
that feels
confusing?
that's not exactly the right word

SEAN

okay

CASS

thanks though
that's a sweet
it's nice to know I can go somewhere
if I have to
but I should
I shouldn't give up on

SEAN

it was just a thought
I mean cause
you're my best
my favorite person in the whole
and I just
I don't like it when you're hurting
and us together
could be a
you know a workable
cohabitation
yeah
nevermind

CASS

you're a dork

SEAN

I can't help that

CASS

you're my favorite person too
I should probably go

SEAN

yeah okay
thanks for hanging

CASS
have a good watch

SEAN
Cass

CASS
yeah

SEAN
you aren't crazy

CASS
thanks

*CASS goes
SEAN watches her go
SEAN eats a cookie, sips his beer
coughs
he doesn't watch for tourists
the smoke thickens*

TWELVE.

*POLLY and PATRICIA sit in darkness in the woods
PATRICIA holds her bible having just read from it*

PATRICIA
cause terror
cause it
that's what it says
that's what we have to do

POLLY
okay

PATRICIA
but first
we need to know who's to blame

POLLY
right
okay
gimme your shoes

*POLLY and PATRICIA both take off their shoes
POLLY pulls two needles from her shirt
they both tear off the edges of their clothing*

*DR. J visits the watch post
remnants remain of Sean and Cass' drinking
he's not there*

CAMILLE picks the lock on the drawer

DR. J
Sean?
Sean?

POLLY
don't we gotta have a name?

PATRICIA
when we know the name
we'll do it again
but this is for figuring out who it is

PATRICIA writes on one of the pieces of fabric

*DR. J watches for tourists
eats a cookie*

CAMILLE gets the book

POLLY
enemy
that's good

PATRICIA
did I spell it right

POLLY
I think so

PATRICIA
okay write it on the others

*they write enemy on the other pieces of fabric
PATRICIA and POLLY thread the needles
start sewing the fabric onto the soles of the shoes*

*DR. J coughs a little
this coughing turns into a coughing fit*

CAMILLE reads from the book

CAMILLE
goodnight Haley

POLLY
to discover the enemy

CAMILLE
goodnight Bailey

PATRICIA
to wound them first

CAMILLE
goodnight Sarah

POLLY
to see their mark

CAMILLE
goodnight Syd

PATRICIA
we will walk upon their name

CAMILLE
goodnight Narobi

POLLY
they will know pain

CAMILLE
goodnight Tavi

PATRICIA
and we will know them

CAMILLE
goodnight Yee

POLLY
we will cause terror

CAMILLE
goodnight Kit

PATRICIA
as only witches can

CAMILLE
goodnight Gloria

POLLY
to save the town

CAMILLE
goodnight Rachel

POLLY/PATRICIA
to save us from harm

CAMILLE
goodnight Mary

*they put on their shoes
they walk harshly on their feet
they jump up and down on the word
they nod
they run away*

CAMILLE
goodnight Hannah

*CAMILLE closes the book
hugs it to her chest
RODERICK watches CAMILLE*

*DR. J's coughing subsides
pulls out a gas mask
puts it on
watches for tourists
sees nothing
watches harder*

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INTERLUDE.

*the smoke is thick in Greenville
POLLY and PATRICIA run in
jumping hard on their shoes
giggling
laughing
CASS and BEV get ready for the party
the girls hop near them unseen
but also certain they're not the enemy
they run past CAMILLE unafraid to be seen by her
they hide when they see RODERICK
CAMILLE walks off in another direction
thinking deeply about recent events
carrying a flashlight and not dressed for the party
RODERICK looks where CAMILLE went
the girls jump very hard
no reaction from RODERICK
DIRECTOR OF TOURISM is dressed to the nines
she waves at SEAN
SEAN waves back and weakly smiles
the girls jump for DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
no reaction
DR. J thinks they see the girls but isn't quite sure
pulls out tape recorder
makes a note
HANK enters feverishly searching
the girls run away
he hears them giggle and runs after them*

*eventually
all the townspeople put on gas masks
except POLLY and PATRICIA*

THIRTEEN.

*the founders' festival at the watch post
the whole town is present
the smoke is thick
the town wears gas masks
moving them aside to sip cocktails and snack
except for HANK who abstains from alcohol
HANK remains watchful for Patricia throughout
but makes polite conversation
DIRECTOR OF TOURISM hands out her perfect pamphlets
SEAN attempts to get CASS and BEV to dance together
it works
they dance close for a bit
once the song's over they stand very far apart from each
other
DR. J mills and talks with RODERICK HANK BEV
always working
always trying to help
DR. J sneaks a drink from time-to-time
trying not to be seen imbibing
DIRECTOR OF TOURISM chats with RODERICK but keeps
her eye on SEAN
then stands politely near BEV
SEAN laughs and jokes with CASS
they stay in their own world for much of the party
lots of laughter and goofing off like children
RODERICK looks around for CAMILLE
she's late
POLLY and PATRICIA hide unseen
watching to see who might be the enemy
they have many suspects
eventually
it's time for the speech
all look to SEAN*

SEAN

wow

what a great turn out for our eighty-fifth founders' festival
and check out the beautiful pamphlets
made by our lovely new Director of Tourism
give her a hand

applause and audible cheers of agreement throughout

SEAN

we all love Greenville don't we
we do
we want to see it prosper
we want to see it flourish
we have a responsibility to evolve this hamlet
this enclave of safety
you all should be very proud of what you've accomplished here
all of you make that safety
that prosperity
possible
this festival is for you

more cheers

SEAN

now more than ever we must cling to those we love
we must grow our town

*DIRECTOR OF TOURISM stares at SEAN
he winks at her*

SEAN

tonight
go home
be close
remember what's important in life
in our town
you have an incredible responsibility to help us grow
your love helps us do that
and I hope it's a little fun too

*more cheers and raucous energy
even BEV and CASS have softened to each other
in the commotion CAMILLE enters
her hands and face covered in ashes
carrying her flashlight from before
definitely not dressed for this party*

SEAN

on this day of founding don't dwell on those who have left
instead rejoice for those who remain
for our safety
for our community
strong and virile/
stands our

CAMILLE

we're all being sucked into a pit
a dark dank pit
I've seen the pyres
I've seen the shoes
the shoes of these people
these children
who are gone
ashes all
where are they
where is Hannah?
why does no one ever talk about the girls after they've left
why does it stick on our tongues
in the back of our mouths
why are there so many shoes there

*RODERICK pulls at her to stop
it's not quite violent
not quite non-violent
SEAN raises his hands to regain the calm*

SEAN

it's all right everyone
it's all right
Camille's not wrong
we will have tourists again

*CAMILLE and CASS
gravitate toward one another*

SEAN

for too long our community has been wracked by fear
missing children
missing spouses
a smoke that suffocates us
caused by these outsiders
these tourist that want to destroy our home

*RODERICK has successfully contained CAMILLE
BEV goes to CASS and holds her*

SEAN

we are in this together
we must protect our town

POLLY and PATRICIA hiding

*they jump up and down on the soles of their shoes
trying to find the enemy
HANK sees them*

HANK
Patricia

*he runs for her
the girls take out water bottles
drink from them without swallowing
they spit it at HANK
and run off*

HANK
what the hell
Patricia
not very ladylike

CAMILLE
it's poisonous Hank they told me

RODERICK
shhhh Camille it's okay

HANK
witchcraft Sean
witchcraft
your little girl and mine
we must

SEAN
it's just a game Hank
not witchcraft
not the devil
a game
a game they play to pass the time
you'll be fine

HANK
but you said

SEAN
not now

*they all go
party's over*

FOURTEEN.

*POLLY and PATRICIA sleep in the woods
BEV and CASS sleep in different rooms of their home
DR. J sleeps in office
CAMILLE sleeps next to RODERICK
DIRECTOR OF TOURISM sleeps next to SEAN
HANK doesn't sleep
he reads his bible
his lips move*

*the entire town wakes up in a panic
breathing heavily
they look at their hands
burnt
RODERICK, SEAN immediately shake it off
returning to sleep
HANK continues to read his bible
CASS, BEV, DR. J, CAMILLE, POLLY, and PATRICIA cannot
shake it off*

CASS
did you

BEV
yeah
yeah

POLLY
Patricia

PATRICIA
it's coming

DR. J
holy shit

*DR. J pours whiskey
drinks*

CAMILLE
Roderick
Roderick
it happened again

RODERICK
go back to sleep Camille
it was just a dream

CAMILLE
I can't sleep anymore
you saw it too

RODERICK
no
I saw nothing
you are not a child
you must sleep through the night

CAMILLE
I saw the shoes

RODERICK
I don't know what you're talking about

*DR. J starts recorder
stares at hands*

DR. J
my hands are burnt
have I
rationally
rationality
but my hands

*stares at hands
lets the recording continue but says nothing*

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
Sean

SEAN
mmm yes

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
did you

SEAN
no
...
what?

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
nothing
nothing
that was great

SEAN
glad you enjoyed yourself

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
I always love the festival
and that's quite a way to end it
this year
for me
you know

SEAN
mmhmm

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
I love you

SEAN
I love you too

DR. J
my hands

HANK
amen

*HANK closes his bible
stands
all over Greenville smoke billows*

FIFTEEN.

SEAN and CASS at SEAN's home

CASS
it's not just me

SEAN
I told you
it has a way of spreading
and we have other concerns

CASS
but it's not just me now
if it was just me
but it's Bev and Camille
and Dr. J
and Larry and Eric
and Charles
Susan Shonda
Yael Beth-

SEAN
it's in the air
Camille caused a panic
that's all
it got into everyone's dreams
I told you

CASS
Sean
your hands

SEAN
are filthy I know
and also busy with other tasks at the moment Cass

*DIRECTOR OF TOURISM comes out in SEAN's shirt
no pants*

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
oh sorry
I didn't realize anyone was here

CASS
sorry Lucy

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

I'll just

I'll be

she starts to go

CASS

wait

Lucy did you have a vision last night

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM

what

what does that

I

no

CASS

you didn't?

you're sure

let me see your (hands)

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM (hiding hands)

yes

I'm sure

I didn't

SEAN

see

it's not everyone

you haven't eaten Cass

right

CASS

I ate last night

at the festival and /your (hands)

SEAN

after not eating for a while

right

so

that's all

this will pass

and we have to begin arming ourselves

tourists are coming

they're coming

there can be no division

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
he's right Cass

CASS
where's Polly did you find her

SEAN
no I didn't
they're out looking for her
she'll come home
she always does

CASS
she hasn't (left)?

SEAN
she hasn't
I know it

RODERICK knocks enters

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
okay I'm going to go put on pants

RODERICK
sorry

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
quite all right
I should have known how in demand Sean would be today

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM goes

RODERICK
Hank found the girls

CASS
oh thank goodness

RODERICK
Polly ran off again
but he's got Patricia

SEAN
good that's good
Cass, Polly likes you would you go

CASS
you want me to find her

SEAN
she'll listen to you
tell her to come home
drag her here if you have to
she's not safe out there
please

CASS
okay
but we need to talk about the visions
and our hands /look at our hands

RODERICK
visions
hmf

SEAN
Roderick
don't

CASS
you don't believe us

RODERICK
whatever you wanna call them
we have two sons you know
two sons who need a mother
and Camille
she just doesn't care
won't stop talking about ashes and smoke and shoes
and our daughter
our daughter who was stupid enough to

CASS
Hannah wasn't-

SEAN
you don't mean that Roderick
you're still grieving

RODERICK

no I don't (mean it)

and I miss her too

I really do

but

our daughter was a tornado in a jar

what did Camille think was gonna (happen)

she let our daughter

and now she's carrying around a stuffed bear like it's her

it's not her

and her sons

her sons need her

and all she talks about are her fucking dreams

and her daughter

and I'm sick of feeling like it's my fault

CASS

how tragic

that must

be

for

you

RODERICK

she has responsibilities

that's all I'm saying

SEAN

enough

is Bev at her post

CASS

the smoke is billowing Sean

it's not safe to be outside

SEAN

we've got masks

the wind will change

and all the more reason for you to find Polly

I don't want her out in this

we must stay watchful

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM returns fully dressed

SEAN
take her with you if you want
she can help

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
sorry what

SEAN
help Cass find my daughter

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
of
of course

CASS
can I have the room with Sean for a minute please
alone

*DIRECTOR OF TOURISM and RODERICK look at Sean
he nods
they go*

CASS
okay I'm happy if you're happy
but Lucy

SEAN
not now please

CASS
she's clearly lying
she saw something too
her hands
and yours
how can you ignore that

SEAN
are you jealous

CASS
what
no
did you hear what I said

SEAN
I did
I did hear
and I just gotta ask cause it seems

CASS
no Sean
not jealous
concerned
concerned that she's lying
that she's
that you

SEAN
at least she wants me

CASS
what's that supposed to mean

SEAN
nothing
okay
I just
it doesn't change anything
Lucy
it doesn't change things
I just needed to
...
my offer still stands

CASS
your offer

SEAN
live with me

CASS
Sean I
SEAN
it's not working with Bev
it works with me
you said it yourself
I don't make you feel crazy

CASS

...

Sean

SEAN

okay then

I know that you think you saw something

I know that it's important to you

I know

but we can't talk about it right now

we have more important things to deal with

like my daughter being out there

like this smoke from these other fucking towns that can't get their shit together

like tourists breaching the border

but we will talk about it

okay

I promise

CASS

yeah okay

SEAN

please find my daughter

I don't know what I'd do if

CASS

okay I'll find her

SEAN

you're amazing you know that

CASS

yeah

SEAN

I love you

CASS

same

SIXTEEN.

*HANK carries PATRICIA into room
it's not forceful
he's actually fairly subdued*

PATRICIA
it's just a game
dad I promise
it's just a game

he sets her down

HANK
I have a rash Patricia
I have a rash I didn't have before
because you and Polly spit poison at me
a poison potion you made
the devil's in you
but I'll save you
I promise
stay in this chair
please
do not move

*PATRICIA does so
HANK kisses her forehead*

HANK
thank you for listening

PATRICIA
where's Polly

*he goes to his bag
he starts pulling out bottles crosses*

PATRICIA
dad please answer me

HANK
be quiet
be still
this won't take long
this is for your soul
this is not punishment

PATRICIA
it's not real dad
it's not real
it's a game

HANK
you don't believe that

PATRICIA
I do
I do
I swear

HANK
no empty swears
you do believe you have power
and my rash proves that you do
but
I believe too
we'll see who's belief is stronger

PATRICIA
dad please

HANK
I refuse to have two women in my life
I refuse to let your soul
if you have to leave
fine
but your soul will be with God
of that I'm sure
I love you Patricia
I really do

PATRICIA
dad?

HANK
quiet now

*he picks up his bible
a cross and bottle
he begins*

SEVENTEEN.

*BEV CAMILLE DR. J at the watch post
they wear masks
the smoke thick*

DR. J
come with us

BEV
I can't

CAMILLE
it's not safe for us here
it's not safe for any of us
those pyres

BEV
I can't go without Cass
and she won't go without Sean
and Sean can't just abandon the town
he wouldn't
she might think otherwise
she might think she could convince him but
I know better
so
there we are

CAMILLE
reason with her

BEV
how well has that worked out for me Dr. J
you've watched us

DR. J
it's worth a shot
if you tell her about the tourists
you've never seen them either
it's a town built on lies

BEV
I don't know if I believe that
I'm sorry
I just don't know

CAMILLE

fine
but believe your hands
believe what you saw
what she saw
talk to her

DR. J

she has to listen to you

BEV

you remember our last homework assignment
showing care and love in little ways
keep a list
I put her snacks in her favorite places of the house
places I knew she'd sit
to read or write
or I don't know
think about going to the doctor for her hands without actually going to the doctor
she wasn't speaking to me
so I didn't cook for her
cause I like it when she asks
I like cooking for her
but I wanted her to ask
I wanted her to speak to me
to need me
she wouldn't do it
but I knew she'd go to her chair
and the swing on the porch
and the corner of the kitchen
our nook
and I put her snacks there
ruffled potato chips
chocolate truffles
fucking combos you know
like the pretzel with cheese in it
disgusting but she loves it
so she'd have something she liked
so she'd have something in her belly
I checked this morning
they're all still there
she was so mad she didn't want to be anywhere in our house
even in her favorite places
anywhere near me
I don't think she'll come with
not without Sean

not with me alone
I got a mask I'll stay here

CAMILLE
you should abduct her if you have to
I wish I'd done
with Hannah
go together on our own terms

DR. J
Bev
tell her about the things you do for her
the things she doesn't see
she really doesn't see them
but I know she wants to
sometimes it's just hard to see it
if you don't know where to look

BEV
she won't hear it

DR. J
then maybe you've gotta look out for yourself

BEV
I won't squeal about your crossing
but I can't promise another post won't see
get going and stay in the trees
out of sight
or you might be mistaken for tourists

CAMILLE
we'll have to risk it

DR. J
thank you Bev

*CAMILLE and DR. J walk out past the watch post
BEV readjusts her masks as she watches them go
a beat
she sees something happen*

BEV
what the (fuck)
what's
holy shit

holy
shit
shit shit
shit shit
shit shit shit
shit

makes a decision
goes back into town

EIGHTEEN.

*POLLY in the woods
smoke is thick
the sky is red
she's holding the rabbit's foot*

POLLY
protect us from things that seek to harm

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM and CASS shout for her

POLLY
protect us from the things that seek to harm
protect us from the things that seek to harm

they come into the clearing

POLLY
stay back

CASS
Polly we're worried about you
the smoke

POLLY
smoke won't hurt me
it's for me
where's Patricia

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
she's safe
with her father

POLLY
it didn't work

CASS
what didn't work

POLLY
we're twins Miss Cass
I know it
why didn't it work
we found each other without clues
it should work we should be

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
your father wants you at home
it's not safe out here

POLLY
Miss Cass we gotta go get her

CASS
we can't take her away from her father

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
you have to come now
Sean needs you

POLLY
Miss Cass
we have to destroy it
we have to destroy the town
burn it all down
that's what the smoke's from
we have to
you've seen it
you've seen it too
I know you have
that's why your hands are
why all our hands are
why my mother's hands

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
come on now
before we all choke

POLLY
we gotta get Patricia first
you'll help me right

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
enough

*DIRECTOR OF TOURISM grabs POLLY
starts to drag her*

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
we go now/
back to Sean
this is nonsense

POLLY
let go of me

*CASS gets POLLY free
POLLY grabs a stick*

CASS
Lucy
that's not necessary
she just wants to see her friend
she's scared

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
tourists are coming
Sean says
we have to protect ourselves
and he needs his daughter to be safe

CASS
Lucy stop

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
I'm the Director of Tourism
I have a responsibility greater than Lucy
give me the girl

CASS
no

*POLLY runs at DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
she grabs her hair
gets a few strands free
starts wrapping it around the stick
frantic*

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
what the fuck Polly

POLLY holds the stick out like a weapon against her

POLLY
I have power
you know it
come any closer to me and Miss Cass and I will break your leg
all I have to do is break this stick
I got your hair
a little blood came out too

Patricia and I did it to Kyle
we'll do it to you
give me your hand Miss Cass

CASS
Polly

POLLY
please

CASS holds onto POLLY's hand

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
this is insane

CASS
insane huh

POLLY
don't believe me
come closer
come at me again
I dare you
we spit at Patricia's father
he's gonna get sick
gave Justin the chicken pox
we sewed enemy in the soles of our shoes
so we could know him
destroy him
or her
feeling any tinglings in your back
we jumped very hard on the name
so we might know it
is it you
we'll soon find out
you can't keep secrets from witches

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
I don't like games

POLLY
me neither
not a game
you believe me don't you
back up Miss Lucy

CASS
you should go

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
I'm not going back without her

CASS
I'll bring her back to Sean
I promise
she just wants to see Patricia

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
after she burns down the town
yes I heard you little queen bee
that's some dangerous talk right there

CASS
the ravings of a little girl
pay them no mind
she just doesn't know you yet
and she wants her friend

POLLY
I'll do it
I'll break your leg in two
and we'll go
without you
stick you here
in the smoke
where you belong
smoke is made to hurt you
not us

CASS
we'll catch up
okay
I'll bring her right along after
we'll just stop by Hank's

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
if you're not back in an hour I'm telling Sean

CASS
telling him what

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
that you abducted his daughter

CASS
okay
have fun with that
he won't believe you
Lucy what's the matter with

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
not Lucy

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM goes

POLLY
you believe me don't you
that's what it means

CASS
I do
I do believe you

POLLY
Patricia first

CASS
yes and your father
and Bev

POLLY
thank you Miss Cass

CASS
hand me the stick

POLLY
it doesn't work
I was fibbing
if it worked Patricia and I wouldn't be separated
we'd still be here together
it only works when we're together

*POLLY drops the stick
starts walking toward PATRICIA*

NINETEEN.

*BEV packs two bags
she runs around the house
remembering things she wants to include
canned food
clothes
jar of olives
she goes to the mugs
she pulls two down
her favorite and CASS's
she stops
she grabs a photo
CASS and POLLY enter
coughing*

POLLY
we have to get Patricia

CASS
we will
but it's not safe to be out in this too long
we need to catch our breath

POLLY
I told you the smoke won't hurt us
only them

CASS finally sees BEV

BEV
hi

CASS
hey
why aren't you on the watch
Sean said

BEV
I packed you a bag
us both a bag
we have to go

CASS
go where

BEV
don't know

CASS
what's going on

BEV
I'll explain on the way
let's go

CASS
why

BEV
because we have to try to make it passed the border
and it might take us a while to find a way
come on

CASS
go be tourists
take things from other towns

BEV
for a time
vagabonds conquistadors
until we find a place to be
come with me
you were right
we can't stay here
we'll die here
I don't want to go without you

CASS
I don't want to go without you

BEV
good

POLLY
what about Patricia

shit

POLLY
what about me Miss Cass
you can't go without me and Patricia and dad

CASS
you're right
you're right
we'll find them

BEV
no
no not right
Cass you don't know what I saw

CASS
okay okay
tell me

BEV
Dr. J and Camille tried to get out
they tried
and they were surrounded
by our neighbors
by men in our neighborhood
by Camille's fucking husband
captured and hooded
and taken away
we have to go
it's not safe here
we have to look out for ourselves
we can't wait

CASS
I don't want to go without Sean
or the girls

BEV
you don't believe me
you don't believe

CASS
I do believe you
all the more reason to talk to Sean
I told him
I promised him

BEV
but what if he's
...

CASS
say it go on
what if he's a part of that
no
he wouldn't be
just wait
just wait and we'll all go
together
he'll know what to do

BEV
no
we have to be selfish
please let me be selfish for you
I want to be selfish for you

CASS
that's not how it works

BEV
why not

CASS
it just isn't

BEV
please
come with me
I don't want to go without you

CASS
then don't
stay
I love you
please please don't leave me

*BEV kisses CASS
CASS reciprocates
BEV pulls away staring into CASS' eyes
CASS breaks eye contact
a decision made*

BEV
west
I'm heading west
if you get out come find me

*BEV goes
leaving the bag she packed for CASS*

POLLY
she gave a you clue
that's cheating
Patricia and I find each other without clues
let's go find her

CASS
let's sit here a minute
I need a minute

POLLY
we don't have time
what if that happened to Patricia
come on Miss Cass we have to go
we don't have time

CASS
yes we do
I just need a minute

*POLLY and CASS sit for a minute
POLLY stays watchful
restless
CASS regains herself
she stands
she goes to the bag BEV packed for her
she looks inside it
smiles
closes it up
straps it on*

CASS
okay

*SEAN runs in
POLLY runs to him*

POLLY
dad

POLLY and SEAN hug

SEAN
there you are
jesus
I thought
nevermind
you're both safe
that's all that matters

CASS
we're safe
for now
but we have to

SEAN sees the bag CASS wears

SEAN
you going somewhere

CASS
to find you/
we have to go
it's not safe

SEAN
I didn't think you'd abandon me
and after I asked you begged you
told you what it would mean to me

CASS
we were going to find you

POLLY
and Patricia

CASS
yes and Patricia
and once we found you
we were gonna go
we should all go
it's not going to get better here/
Bev said

SEAN
but it'd be better some place else
some place without a home
in the smoke

I never thought it would be you
I never thought you'd betray me like this

CASS
Sean that's not what's happening
listen to me
Bev said she saw
she saw members of our town
grab and hood Dr. J and Camille
I don't know what's going on
but it's not safe for us
or you or Polly or Patricia
we have to go

SEAN
I had to see it with my own eyes
she said you were going to do something like this

CASS
who Lucy?
you would believe Lucy over me
fuck you Sean
fuck you

SEAN
what do you expect me to think
you're raving right now
how can I believe anything that's coming out of your mouth

CASS
I'm not (crazy)
you never say
you know I'm not

SEAN
I'm sorry
okay
sorry
she just said these awful things
and I didn't believe her
I didn't
not at first
she's jealous you know
of us
of what we have
so I didn't believe it

I didn't think
but then here you are
packed
heading out to god knows where
talking about things that don't make sense
I don't know what's happened to you
were you even gonna say goodbye
Polly let's go

CASS
Sean
I didn't do anything
I didn't
listen to me
Bev said she saw

SEAN
I heard you the first time

CASS
okay
that's why I wasn't gonna go without you

POLLY
we weren't dad
I promise

CASS
we were going to find you
and Patricia
and we were gonna go together
find Bev on the road and then
we'd be free of this place
I promise
I wasn't going to abandon you

SEAN
I believe you
you'd never do that
you'd never do that to me

CASS
never Sean
never

a family embrace

SEAN

I'm sorry
I'm sorry I said that thing
that's awful
Lucy just
she gets into my head

CASS

it's okay
it's okay
but we have to go
it's not safe

SEAN

no we don't
we don't have to go anywhere now
Cass I've wanted to tell you for so long
to let you be apart of it with me
we have to do things to survive
to protect our town
and you can help us
you can be part of it now
now that you know
come with me
I'll take you to the hill
we'll say goodbye to your wife
Roderick's wife
Hank's daughter/

POLLY

/where's Patricia

SEAN

and the town therapist
we'll start anew
there'll be no secrets anymore
you'll be apart of it
with me
like I've always wanted

POLLY

dad

SEAN

from suffering and strife we rise
we evolve

it hurts at first
growth is uncomfortable
but once you get passed that
you understand
some things are more important
some things are worth the cost

CASS
is that what happened to Mary, Sean
she was a price you paid

POLLY
mom

SEAN
it was hard Cass
I didn't want to do it
but she couldn't see reason
how important it was to stay
in order to have a healthy and happy hamlet
we must stay
when one person goes of their own volition
ten follow
and they come back with all sorts of complicated ideas
things that would never work here
and then ten more go
and ten new come
new people that won't understand
but when they don't come back
and no one comes in
when they don't come back and the town feels that weight
that cost
they know
they know there's nothing for them out there
there's only this
you and me and Polly
that's what's important

CASS
what do you do to them

SEAN
I'd like you to come with me
to see it for yourself
stand by me
you'll see

we'll say goodbye to your wife
we'll move forward together

POLLY
dad what about Patricia

SEAN
I'm sorry Polly
I know that Hank's daughter was your friend
but she's leaving
Hank couldn't get through to her
so she's leaving

POLLY
no she can't

SEAN
you're too young yet
but one day
you will understand
and you will be on the hill with us
you can make new friends

POLLY
no
no
not Patricia

POLLY runs for it

SEAN
dammit Polly
she won't get far
got eyes everywhere
they'll keep her safe

CASS
why women
why girls

SEAN
not just women
okay
that's not fair
that's not fair to me
Dr. J Hugh Barny

not just women
okay
there's just a restlessness that takes over
it's not our fault
if people would just stay then we wouldn't have to
but we can't have divisiveness
we can't afford it

CASS
right
right

SEAN
you believe me
this is the way
it will all be better now

CASS
right

SEAN
you love me and I love you
and we'll do it together
come with me now
and you'll see

CASS
you've taken
you've taken countless people
children
your wife
what's
what's wrong with you
and you think
you think I'm going to go with you
help you

SEAN
you think so little of me
you think I enjoy

CASS
I don't think little of you
I think the world of you
that's why I'm confused
there's something rotten in the soil here

there's something that has seeped in
this isn't you

SEAN

no
not here
out there
Greenville is our home
it must be protected

CASS

not like this
not

SEAN

you're not listening
I'm doing what has to be done
I take no pleasure in it
I know
I know it's a lot
but I really think it'd be better
that you'd feel better
not exactly closure
but a new beginning
if you said goodbye to your wife

CASS

I can't
I won't
I won't Sean
please
I can't believe
give me Bev back
don't make me say goodbye

SEAN

it doesn't work that way

CASS

I don't care
you say you love me
give her back

SEAN

always about your wife
I'm the one who has been there Cass

for every fight you've had
every indiscretion
who is always there to take your side
I toasted at your wedding for fuck sake
I'm the one
what about me
your wife is leaving
she's not coming back
let her go
let her name die

CASS

I wasn't gonna go without you and I still won't
let's go
you and me and Polly
and you can free Dr. J and Camille and Patricia and Bev
they won't come back
you can just let them go
you want us to be together
fine
I want that too
just let them go and we'll be together
okay
we just need out of Greenville
it's rotten here
it's just gonna get into our blood here
and you don't have to do
whatever it is you do to them
it's not you
it's not who you are
I know who you are
you wouldn't do this

SEAN

if you don't want to come
fine
stay here
right here
in this house
okay
if you don't stay here I can't protect you
we'll work through our shit later
but just
stay here
okay
I can't help if you don't stay

trust me
if you ever did
trust me that I am doing what I can for you
for Polly
for this town
please
will you trust me
you're my best friend
trust me please

CASS
of course Sean

SEAN
good
bag?

CASS
what

SEAN
give me your bag if you're not going anywhere
you won't need it

CASS hands him the bag

SEAN
we'll rebuild this
what's broken between us
I know we will
we're stronger than all this
if we're together
and maybe it'll be easier now
without
without other things getting in the way
I love you Cass
I always have
I know you don't feel exactly the same
but I know you love me
and maybe one day you will love me the way
...
you'll understand
I do it for you
I love you Cass

CASS
same

SEAN
good that's good

SEAN goes with the bag
CASS watches him go

beat

CASS alone
panic
frustration
she screams silently
collapse

POLLY runs back in

POLLY
I got away Miss Cass
I did
the smoke's so thick out
lost 'em real fast
they couldn't grab me
Miss Cass we have to go
get up

CASS
everything's ruined

POLLY
get up

CASS
I can't I have to stay

POLLY
that is so stupid
you're not stupid
no we have to go
get
up

CASS
just go Polly
leave me alone

POLLY
no
get up

CASS
if I stay then
we'll work it out
we'll fix it
I can help him
he's not
he wouldn't

POLLY
you know that's a lie
you told us never to lie

CASS
no
Sean wouldn't do
he wouldn't hurt us
he needs us to help him out of this

POLLY
dad is doing terrible things
he hurt Patricia
if he hurt Patricia he'd hurt me
or you
he would
I feel it in my stomach
come on
get up

CASS gets up

CASS
what are we supposed to do now
what can we even

POLLY
what we do
that's what we do
what they think we do anyway

CASS
Polly

POLLY
for Patricia
and Miss Bev
come on

*CASS looks around
final look at her home*

CASS
I'm so sorry Sean

they surrender to the smoke

TWENTY.

*the sky is blood red
four pyres – three tall, one small
burn to nothing
a pile of shoes in varying sizes sits near it
SEAN stands in the ashes
DIRECTOR OF TOURISM by his side
RODERICK and HANK watch
they hold drinks to toast
as bodies burn behind them
silent*

RODERICK
we'll catch them Sean

HANK
don't worry

SEAN
I know
we will
we'll get them back
we evolve
our town grows
and from the ashes we rise
we always rise
we cannot let these elements destroy us
we are stronger together
while other towns may perish
ours will prosper
we must stay watchful
no one new in
no one old out
as it has been done since founding
gotta protect
hearth and home
blood and bone
for the good of our town

they drink

HANK
amen

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
to Sean

they raise their glasses again

ALL
to Sean

they drink

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM sees something in the distance

DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
Sean?
do you see
do you see what I'm
is that

SEAN
no no
they wouldn't
they wouldn't
not to me
they wouldn't do that to me

*HANK, RODERICK, SEAN and DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
look out in horror*

lights fade dimly on them

*away from the ceremony
POLLY and CASS pour lines of liquid behind where they
move*

*they try to get some of the liquid on everything they walk
by – Hannah's bear, coffee cups, the six pack at the watch
post, the tape recorder at Dr. J's – signifiers of places in
town*

*POLLY holds a box of matches
she struggles to ignite one
she tries another
and another
no luck*

*CASS takes the matchbox from POLLY
CASS ignites a match*

*they stare at it
they set the town ablaze*

they watch it burn

POLLY
I wish I really was a witch

CASS
me too

they hold hands as the town burns

END OF PLAY.