

SPRING

Spring Scene 1

Dan meets a Neighbor on the Old Plank Road. Dan is spattered with blood that is not his own.

Neighbor: Hey there, Dan.

Dan: Hey.

Neighbor: How are you doing?

Dan: I'm doing just fine.

Neighbor: Fine day, isn't it?

Dan: Sure is.

Neighbor: Think we might finally get some rain?

Dan: Could be.

Neighbor: We could sure use some about now.

Dan: Yeah. You're right.

Neighbor: Seeds are just sitting there. Saw Miller's dog eating grass on Sunday.

Dan: ...

Neighbor: How's your Ma doing?

Dan: Real good.

Neighbor: She must be tending to those peach trees. This time of year.

Dan: That's right.

Neighbor: Should be a good year for peaches.

Dan: Oh.

Neighbor: Well, you make sure she saves a pie for me and mine.

Dan: I'll tell her.

Neighbor: Well, I'll be seeing you.

Dan: Yeah. You take care.

Neighbor: Thanks, Dan. You do the same. Nice running into you.

The Neighbor walks on.

Dan: The man who bought me never used me, the man who used me never saw me.

A dog howls.

Spring Scene 2

Lily is watching Chrysantha nursing her newborn baby.

Lily: I want a baby so bad.

Chrysantha: Well, you can have this one.

Lily: You know...my own.

Chrysantha: All this thing does is suck at my tittie and crap.

Lily: You're so gentle with him.

Chrysantha: You gotta be. He's only small. And I made a pinkie promise to him when he came out that I would never holler at him or whoop him. It's hard though. He just won't stop crying sometimes.

Lily: Why does he cry?

Chrysantha: I don't know. He's hungry. He crapped himself. He's scared.

Lily: Of what?

Chrysantha: All kinds of things I guess. He cries a lot when Daddy's home. Sometimes no reason.

Lily: Your Daddy still slap you?

Chrysantha: Now what you think?

Lily: *(an apology)* Yeah.

Chrysantha: You're lucky your Daddy's dead.

Lily: I know it.

Chrysantha: How's your Mama doing?

Lily: Hell if I know. Hell if she knows. She don't do nothing but sit in that room of hers with her bottle and rage. I can't let her out no more.

The baby is finished feeding.

Chrysantha: Lord, he's got a big mouth. Does this mouth look right to you?

Lily: He's gonna be a good singer. Can I hold him?

Chrysantha passes the baby to Lily and lights a cigarette.

Chrysantha: You want to go into town with me tomorrow?

Lily: What for?

Chrysantha: Tin Man's coming back next Friday and he wants me to get him some clothes, so I was gonna see if I can find something at Ray-Ann's.

Lily: I got a essay to do, but yeah, I'll walk with you. You gonna have a welcome home party?

Chrysantha: For Tin Man? He's only been gone six months.

Lily: He's your brother.

Chrysantha: Let them that set him up give him a party.

Lily: I didn't know fingers could be this small. *(To baby)* What are you going to do with these fingers, huh? You gonna be stingy? You gonna learn how to cook? How to gamble? How to hold somebody?

Chrysantha: He likes you.

The baby spits up, and Lily drops him on the floor. The baby cries. Chrysantha picks him up and tries to comfort him.

Chrysantha: Aw, Lily White, now look what you done. Shh, shh, hush, little man, it's gonna be all right. Hush now.

Lily: I want a baby so bad.

The baby continues to cry.

Spring Scene 3

Lily is speaking with Harvest on the Old Plank Road.

Harvest: But why me?

Lily: I made a sorta promise to myself.

Harvest: And what was that?

Lily: Well, I said that as soon as I graduated from school I would marry the first man I saw and bear his baby. Mrs. Wheelwright handed me my diploma, and then you shook my hand in

congratulations. Right up there on the assembly stage. So that makes you the first man I saw after I graduated.

Harvest: Oh, I see.

Lily: And I always have loved you anyway.

Harvest: Lily, it doesn't work that way. I can't marry you.

Lily: Why not?

Harvest: Well...for one thing, I'm already married.

Lily: I can wait a little.

Harvest: You're my student. You're thirteen years old.

Lily: *Was* your student. And fourteen.

Harvest: I don't love you.

Lily: I can wait on that too.

Harvest: Lily...

Lily: Mr. Harvest. You are the smartest, best looking, holiest, cleverest man I know. It would be an honor to carry your child. He would be a blessed child. I'm sure he will grow up one day to be president or a great scientist -

Harvest: Lily. Stop it now. It will not happen, so get it out of your mind this instant.

Lily: I can't. My mind is made up.

Harvest: But...what about boys your own age? You'd be much better off with someone your own age. Someone you can share your life with. You're just a... I'm old enough to be your father.

Lily: I don't love boys my own age. I love you. I have ever since the day you explained infinity.

She begins to sprinkle talcum powder between them.

Lily: I will love you until the brain washes.
I will love you until the kitchen sinks.
I will love you until the mail boxes.

Harvest: Enough. Lily, I don't want to talk about this ever again. Do you understand?

Lily: ...

Harvest: Do you understand?

Lily: I will love you until the mountain peaks and sees the salad dressing.

Harvest exits.

Spring Scene 4

Dan is in jail. He sings a song on a broken guitar.

Dan: Went to bed on Sunday, on Monday I was chained
Barton Brown killed a man and for it I was named
Going to find that Barton Brown and shoot him down

Now I'm running for my life and running from the law
I'm running after Barton and wondering what he did it for
Going to run that Barton Brown right outta this here town

I seek him in the churches and in the village square
I seek him in the grave yard and through the county fair
I'm going take that Barton Brown and cut him down

His mama says he's gone down state
His papa says I came too late
When I find that Barton Brown I'll break his crown

The police follow on my trail
Gotta get Barton and I won't fail
I'll find that Barton Brown and shoot that man down

I'm gonna keep after him until I find him
So if you see him, kindly remind him
I'm gonna find that Barton Brown and lay him in the ground

Spring Scene 5

Harvest and his wife, Mae, are at home washing dishes after dinner.

Mae: I just think Bill should be made aware of what's going on.

Harvest: Mae, it'll pass.

Mae: How do you know?

Harvest: Things like this always do. A child's fancy.

Mae: Peeing on our front doorstep is not a child's fancy. It's deranged.

Harvest: Let me talk to her again. She's mad at me I suppose.

Mae: She's mad at you. Because you're not a molester?

Harvest: Because I won't talk to her.

Mae: Because you won't screw every hussy that asks?

Harvest: She's confused. She doesn't have much of a family as I can tell. She's probably just looking for an adult presence in her life, one that she can trust.

Mae: I swear I'll twist her inside out if I see her again.

Harvest: Mae. Let me deal with it. There's no need to get Bill involved. There's no reason for you to be so upset. She's just a kid. She's harmless. She's just a little confused...and a little captivated.

Mae: You actually like this, don't you?

Harvest: What are you talking about?

Mae: This idolatry. This infatuation. This danger. You like it.

Harvest: I'm not going to respond to that.

Fleance, their son, age 7, enters with a shoebox-sized package.

Fleance: Papa. Someone left you a package on the doorstep. Can I open it for you?

Mae: Fleance, let go of that, right now.

Harvest: Give it to me, son.

Fleance: But I want to open it for you.

Harvest: Fley, give it to me. I'm sorry, but you can't open it.

Fleance: But I never get a package.

Mae: Give it to me!

Mae grabs it out of his hands. Frightened, Fleance runs to Harvest.

Harvest: Mae, calm down!

Fleance: Why is Mama so mad?

Harvest: She's not mad at you.

Mae: It's heavy.

Harvest: Let me see it.

Mae: It smells.

Harvest: Give it to me.

Mae: Throw it away. Martin.

Harvest: Give it to me and I'll throw it away.

Mae: I think it's moving.

Fleance: Papa? I'm scared.

Harvest: It's all right, son. Mae. Give me the package.

She hands the package to Harvest.

Harvest: Fleance, did you see who delivered this package?

Fleance: I think so.

Harvest: What does that mean, you think so?

Mae: Who was it, honey?

Fleance: Some girl.

Mae: Martin!

Harvest: Mae. *(To Fleance)* Did she say anything to you?

Fleance: What do you mean?

Mae: Fleance, did she say anything? Yes or no?

Fleance: No. I guess she just knocked on the door cause when I went to open it, I found the package and I saw a girl running down the path.

Mae: You are never to open the door by yourself again, do you hear me?

Fleance: I'm sorry.

Mae: NEVER!

Fleance: I said I was sorry.

Fleance begins to cry.

Mae: I'm calling Bill.

Harvest: Mae, don't. Fleance, stop crying.

Fleance: *(crying)* Mama shouted at me.

Mae: I'm sorry honey, now do as your father says and stop crying. *(To Harvest)* What on earth do you think is in that thing?

Harvest: Just calm down, please. I'm sure it's nothing. Fley, please stop. Mama didn't mean to shout.

Mae: That's right honey, I didn't. I'm sorry. You just have to remember to listen to grown-ups.

Fleance: *(crying)* You're not supposed to shout.

Mae: I know, sweetie. And I apologized. I can't turn back the clock.

Fleance: *(crying)* But I never get a package.

Mae: All right, Fleance, I have to talk to Papa right now. Okay? Then I'm going to get you your very own package. Okay? I love you.

Fleance: *(trying to stop crying)* Okay.

Mae: Good boy

Harvest: Thatta boy.

Mae: How did we get so lucky to have such a good boy?

Fleance: I don't know.

The package moves, startling everyone.

Mae: Martin, what in God's name is in there?

Harvest: I don't know.

Fleance: Papa, don't open it.

Mae: Don't open it in here.

Harvest: I'm not. I'm going to take it outside.

Mae: I'm calling Bill. Martin, I'm calling Bill.

Harvest: Mae. Let me see what it is, and then I'll call Bill. Okay?

Mae: I can't have this in my home.

Harvest: I'll call Bill, okay?

Mae: Yes.

Fleance: Who's Bill, Papa?

Harvest: Sheriff Eidleblute, son.

Fleance: Did that girl do something bad?

Mae: Oh yes.

Harvest: We don't know yet, Fley. We've just got to be a little more careful about everything.

The package moves again, startling everyone again.

Mae: Martin! Please get rid of it. This minute.

Harvest: I'm taking it outside now. Just wait here. I'll be right back.

Harvest exits with the package.

Fleance: What do you think it is, Mama?

Mae: Sinful, Fleance. Whatever it is, it's sinful.