

Cold Rain

by Craig Houk

COLD RAIN

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COLD RAIN

For Scott.

Who enjoys my writing almost as much as I do.

He holds my heart.

COLD RAIN

CHARACTERS

LOLLY WEEKES A Witch (Ages 27, 34, 50, 57)

SHIRLEY WEEKES A Witch (Ages 31, 38, 54, 61)

CARLY WEEKES-REKOWSKI A Witch (Ages 22, 29, 38, 45, 52)

BRYSON REKOWSKI A Dandy (Age 16)

FISHER HICKMAN A Bully (Age 17)

JOHNNY REKOWSKI A Magician (Ages 16, 23)

DONNA PAGNOTTO A Fruit Fly (Age 16)

JOE REKOWSKI A Crooner (Ages 24, 47)

LYDIA PACHECO A Cop (Age 37, 44)

PRUDENCE PEELE A Counselor (Ageless)

NOTE: The roles of Lydia and Prudence should be played by the same actor.

SETTING

A Small Town in Western Pennsylvania just north of Pittsburgh

TIME

1959, 1966, 1975, 1982, 1989

NOTE: All scenes set in 1982 unfold chronologically over the span of just a few days.

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SCENE BREAKDOWN

Act 1-1	1959	Weekes Herb Shed	Western PA
Act 1-2	1975	Police Station	Western PA
Act 1-3	1982	Johnny's Bedroom	Western PA
Act 1-4	1982	Rekowski Kitchen	Western PA
Act 1-5	1982	Rekowski Backyard	Western PA
Act 1-6	1966	Rekowski Living Room	Western PA
Act 1-7	1982	Flat Rock	Western PA
Act 1-8	1982	Gene's Place/Lounge	Western PA
Act 1-9	1982	Flat Rock	Western PA
Act 2-1	1959	Tulagi Night Club	Colorado
Act 2-2	1982	Police Station	Western PA
Act 2-3	1966	Flat Rock	Western PA
Act 2-4	1975	A Chasm	Elsewhere
Act 2-5	1975	Johnny's Bedroom	Western PA
Act 2-6	1982	Rekowski Living Room	Western PA
Act 2-7	1982	Bryson's Bedroom	Western PA
Act 2-8	1982	Rekowski Living Room	Western PA
Act 2-9	1982	Police Station	Western PA
Act 2-10	1989	Weekes Dining/Living Room	Western PA

COLD RAIN

COLD RAIN received its world premiere production on Saturday, July 14, 2018, as part of the DC Capital Fringe Festival in Washington, DC and was awarded Best Drama and named one of Best of Festival. The play was produced and directed by Craig Houk and featured the following cast:

Desirée Chappelle as Carly Weekes-Rekowski

Elle Emerson as Lolly Weekes

Maura Claire Harford as Shirley Weekes

Grant Collins as Bryson Rekowski

Thomas Shuman as Fisher Hickman

Will Low as Johnny Rekowski

Stephanie Jo Clark as Donna Pagnotto

Blake Gouhari as Joe Rekowski

Lydia Kraniotis as Lydia Pacheco

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ACT 1

SCENE 1

1959. Nighttime. An Herb Shed just outside the Weekes home.

(LOLLY (27), CARLY (22), and SHIRLEY (31) stand around a table, casting a circle. Bowls of mandrake root, flower petals, betel nuts, and a bottle of red wine sit nearby. Three candles – white, black, and green – are surrounded by bay leaves. Incense burns. A stack of 45 RPM records rests beside a large pot boiling on a burner.)

LOLLY. *(As she lights the candles.)* Earth, Air, Fire, Water, and Spirit, I ask thee to free and heal our bodies from all negative forces.

LOLLY/CARLY/SHIRLEY. Blessed be! *(Carly mixes ingredients into the pot.)*

CARLY. Mystic moon, full and bright, give me what I wish tonight. A little love is all I need; I can do the rest indeed. Fetch no beast, make no trouble, send him to me on the double. The one I love will need a nudge into my arms, where he can't budge. And there he'll stay forevermore, for all of our remaining days.

SHIRLEY. For Aradia's sake, Carly. You conjuring a man or a garden snail?

LOLLY. Leave her be, Shirley.

SHIRLEY. Put a sock in it, Lolly. *(To Carly.)* You. Take those records and put them into the pot. *(To both.)* Then stand aside.

LOLLY. Shirley–

SHIRLEY. Now! *(A gust of wind forces Lolly back. Carly obeys. Shirley takes over.)* As I cast this mystic spell, bring this man three nights of hell. *(She extinguishes the white and green candles; the black candle remains lit.)* Candle black, black as night, bring him pangs of love tonight. Boils upon his skin will grow, vex him with a reddened glow. Pine and yen afflict him now, for three nights he'll wonder how.

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When three nights of ache have passed, bring him here, and make it fast.
When three nights of pain endured, the torment gone, the bond secured.
Blotches fade and drift away, bound by thirty and a day. (*The pot glows;
vapors rise. Shirley plucks hair from a man's comb and drops it in. She
tears a photo, burns half, and tosses the other half into the pot.
Meanwhile, Lolly steps aside, out of earshot.*)

LOLLY. Whilst this foul crone rattles on, moon above, please hear my
plea. Reverse this vex that's coming on, and send it from we witches
three.

SHIRLEY. Come here, Carly. (*Carly steps forward. Shirley strokes her
hair, then yanks a strand. Carly winces. The hair goes into the pot.
Nothing happens.*) Nuts. We need something more personal. More
charged. (*Shirley pulls a pin from her hair.*) Ready?

CARLY. (*Lightheaded, hand out, palm up.*) No... I just... I need a...
(*Shirley pricks her palm.*) Damn it, Shirley! (*Shirley guides Carly's
hand over the pot. Blood drips, vapors surge.*)

SHIRLEY. Give to Carly now this man's devotion, and by him may she
conceive one – no, two – offspring. And seal this pact with her health
and longevity. (*The glow intensifies. Shirley lifts the contents: the melted
records have formed a black orb.*) This circle is open, but my spell is
unbroken. (*To Carly, re: the orb.*) Take this to Flat Rock. Release it in
the deepest water, about nine yards out.

CARLY. Shirley–

SHIRLEY. Go.

CARLY. Two children? I didn't ask for two–

SHIRLEY. In case one of them doesn't turn out so good. Now go.
There's no time. (*Carly exits with the orb.*)

LOLLY. Have you lost your fucking mind?

SHIRLEY. Language, Lolly.

LOLLY. Thirty and a day?

SHIRLEY. Thirty years and one day. Then the spell breaks. (*Sound of a
car starting and pulling away.*)

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LOLLY. She'll be... fifty-two. What then?

SHIRLEY. The poor bastard will have had three decades with her. If he's miserable, he'll leave. If he still loves her, he'll stay.

LOLLY. She shouldn't be out there alone.

SHIRLEY. She has to be. Or it won't take. And I won't have you meddling with my magic. So, stay put.

LOLLY. Shirley—

SHIRLEY. Stay put. I mean it.

LOLLY. Well, I won't be able to rest till she's back with us. Safe. So, what do you suggest we do?

SHIRLEY. We go... roller-skating! *(With a flourish, Shirley pulls two pairs of skates from their hooks and exits. Lolly reluctantly follows. End of scene.)*

SCENE 2

1975. Evening. A Police Station.

(LYDIA (37) sits in a chair behind a table. She is speaking with an unseen detective. She's been drinking.)

LYDIA. Okay, look. It's not easy keeping track of two teenage girls when you're working all hours and don't have a man around to pick up the slack. You know what I'm saying? So no, I don't appreciate you suggesting I'm somehow responsible for what happened at Flat Rock. Tina and Rose are dead. That's the truth. And there ain't a damn thing I can do about it. But I sure as hell ain't taking the blame. They had no business being out there, and I sure as hell didn't give them permission to go. So, you can cut the shit with that line of questioning. And why do you keep dragging me back in here, huh? Every time I sit in this chair, talking to some detective or cop or whatever you are, I gotta relive the night my girls drowned. So, what. You keep saying it wasn't an accident. You keep saying someone did this to them. And you want justice. For who? For me? For two dead girls? Well, you can just go to hell with that nonsense. You're all useless. Every last one of you. Hell, I

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could do a better job. That's right. Drunk old Lydia Pacheco could do better than a bunch of dimwitted, degenerate dicks. *(She rises.)* Hey, listen. I'm pretty sure I'm gonna be sick. So, I'm gonna head out. Guess I'll see you at Marie and Leroy's wedding next weekend. *(End of scene.)*

SCENE 3

1982. Midafternoon. Johnny Rekowski's Bedroom.

(The room is packed with Hanna-Barbera and other cartoon collectibles. A television sits nearby. BRYSON (16) and FISHER (17) are heard off.)

BRYSON. *(Off, calling out.)* Anyone home?

FISHER. *(Off, hushed.)* Keep it down, man. *(They enter.)*

BRYSON. Why?

FISHER. Because I don't want anyone knowing I'm here.

BRYSON. You're embarrassed to be seen with me.

FISHER. Bullshit.

BRYSON. You parked half a mile away. We could've taken the main road.

FISHER. Give it a rest, okay?

BRYSON. I don't think anyone's home anyway. My mom's not back till four.

FISHER. What about the retard?

BRYSON. What?

FISHER. Your brother.

BRYSON. Johnny?

FISHER. Yeah. He's a retard, ain't he?

BRYSON. No, he's not.

FISHER. Come on. Dude's messed up in the head. How old is he and still living at home? I thought he was retarded.

BRYSON. He's not. Okay? So, drop it.

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FISHER. I'm outa here. *(He turns to go.)*

BRYSON. Hey! *(Fisher stops.)* I thought you wanted to play Atari.

FISHER. No. No, man. I got my own system. Just looking to borrow a couple games.

BRYSON. Right.

FISHER. You'll get them back.

BRYSON. Okay. Well, Johnny's got a whole trunk full. *(He moves to the trunk, undoing a latch.)* He's got, uh... Pac-Man, Asteroids, Space Invaders, Pitfall...

FISHER. *(At the window.)* Isn't that your dad's van?

BRYSON. His van? *(He joins Fisher.)*

FISHER. Yeah. Volkswagen. '73, maybe '74.

BRYSON. I guess.

FISHER. You said nobody was home.

BRYSON. I didn't know he was here. His motorcycle's gone. Maybe he's out for a ride.

FISHER. And your brother? You sure he ain't here? *(Fisher scans the room, picking through objects.)*

BRYSON. I don't think so. He might be in the cellar watching cartoons. Or the den. Doesn't matter anyway. Unless you're two-dimensional and in Technicolor, you're invisible to him. *(Fisher grabs a cap and drops it on Bryson's head.)*

FISHER. Why are you so scrawny? *(He squeezes Bryson's arm.)*

BRYSON. *(Pulling away.)* Hey! Fisher, don't. *(He tosses the cap aside.)*

FISHER. That's why everyone messes with you. Because you're all boney and shit. *(He grabs at Bryson's waist. Bryson pulls back again.)*

BRYSON. Fisher, please.

FISHER. You should learn to defend yourself.

BRYSON. I do alright.

FISHER. Not with words. With your body. Your arms. Hands. Legs... *(He reaches for Bryson's legs. Bryson clears further.)*

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BRYSON. Do you want the games or not?

FISHER. Why do you come?

BRYSON. What're you talking about?

FISHER. You think I don't see you up in the bleachers? Every match. Staring at me. Sometimes you're with that nerd girl. What's her name?

BRYSON. Donna.

FISHER. Yeah. You two together?

BRYSON. No. She's... just a friend.

FISHER. She ain't always there. But you are.

BRYSON. So? I watch you wrestle. What's your point?

FISHER. If you want, I could show you some moves.

BRYSON. No. I'm good. Not really my thing.

FISHER. Fine. So, you don't like to fight. You don't have to fight. But you need to know how to handle yourself if someone comes at you.

BRYSON. If someone comes at me, I'll run. I'm fast.

FISHER. What if they catch you?

BRYSON. They won't.

FISHER. What if they do?

BRYSON. I'm just gonna grab your games. *(He moves to the trunk.)* Bring them back as soon as you're done. Johnny'll freak if he finds out. *(He pops the lock. Fisher suddenly grabs him, slamming him down.)* No! What're you doing? Fisher, stop!

FISHER. Relax. I'm just gonna show you a couple moves.

BRYSON. I said no! *(They struggle. Fisher pins him.)* Ow!

FISHER. Stop moving. I'm gonna ease up... but don't try anything or I'll slam you again. You hear me?

BRYSON. Yeah.

FISHER. I'm fucking serious. Don't move. Do what I say.

BRYSON. Fine.

FISHER. Bryson—

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BRYSON. Fine! I said fine!

FISHER. Okay. Come up slow. *(They rise.)* Hands and knees. Palms flat. *(Bryson obeys.)* Good. Now sit back. *(Bryson does.)* Yeah, like that. *(They move into referee's position. The wrestling begins, awkward, clumsy, building in intensity. It ends with Fisher pinning Bryson. Their faces close. They kiss. Fisher jerks back, scrambling off. Silence.)*

BRYSON. Fisher... it's okay.

FISHER. *(Coldly, distracted.)* I was just showing you how to defend yourself.

BRYSON. I know but—

FISHER. I'm not gay.

BRYSON. I didn't say—

FISHER. *(He stands.)* I'm not queer! You got that?

BRYSON. *(He stands.)* Yeah.

FISHER. And anyway, you made me do it. Always staring at me, coming on to me.

BRYSON. That's not true.

FISHER. We're not the same. You're a faggot! *(He shoves Bryson.)*

BRYSON. Hey! *(Shoves Fisher back.)*

FISHER. I tried to help you, and you baited me. You fucking baited me, man. And if you tell anyone, I will kick your ass. You hear me?

BRYSON. What's wrong / with you?

FISHER. / Do you hear me!?

BRYSON. Screw you!

FISHER. Screw you!

BRYSON. Get out! *(He grabs a baseball bat.)* Go! *(Fisher exits. Bryson breathes hard, then follows. The trunk creaks open. JOHNNY (23) emerges.)*

JOHNNY. Heavens to Murgatroyd. *(He climbs back inside, pulling the lid shut. End of Scene.)*

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SCENE 4

1982. Late afternoon. A short time after the previous scene. A kitchen in the Rekowski home.

(CARLY (45) carries a pot from the stove to a table set for three. She adds a salad and a loaf of bread.)

CARLY. Bryson! Johnny! Supper! *(She sits, starts fixing herself a plate.)* Bryson! Get down here! Where's your brother?

BRYSON. *(Off.)* I'll be down in a minute!

CARLY. Where's your brother?

BRYSON. *(Off.)* I don't know! *(Carly pokes at the pasta, takes a bite, grimaces, and spits it into her napkin. She drops it on the plate, dumps the food in the trash, returns with the empty plate, and pours herself wine. BRYSON (16) enters.)* Sorry. *(He grabs a soda, sits, and starts serving himself.)*

CARLY. I called you twice.

BRYSON. I was finishing some homework.

CARLY. Supper's getting cold.

BRYSON. I said I was sorry. What else do you want?

CARLY. Less attitude to start. *(They eat/drink.)* Did you walk home today?

BRYSON. Got a ride.

CARLY. From who?

BRYSON. You don't know him.

CARLY. Try me.

BRYSON. Fisher.

CARLY. The Hickman boy? Didn't he get suspended for selling pot brownies at a bake sale?

BRYSON. That was like three years ago. And a bunch of kids got in trouble for that.

CARLY. I don't want you hanging around with him.

BRYSON. We're not hanging around. He gave me a lift.

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CARLY. We'll fix your bike. I'll have your dad take a look. You see him today?

BRYSON. No. Didn't even know he was home.

CARLY. Came in late last night. Didn't say much. Went straight to bed. Still asleep when I left. I expect he's playing downtown tonight.

BRYSON. I'd like to go see him.

CARLY. No. You're too young. (*Disappointed, Bryson continues eating.*) You know what you should do, though? Go visit your Aunt Shirley.

BRYSON. Mom, no...

CARLY. She'd love that. Or at least give her a call.

BRYSON. No way. She's practically deaf, half blind, and last time she kept calling me "momma's suck-a-titty baby."

CARLY. She's... rough around the edges.

BRYSON. She's mean. And her house smells like cigars and cat piss.

CARLY. Alright. Forget it.

BRYSON. Can I go to Flat Rock with Donna? She asked.

CARLY. What? No. Absolutely not. I've told you, never go there. It's not safe.

BRYSON. (*Under his breath.*) That's such bullshit.

CARLY. What did you say?

BRYSON. I said it's not dangerous.

CARLY. Kids get hurt out there. And some of them have died. Gino Benedetti split his head open last month, he's still recovering. And Lydia Pacheco lost both her girls out there. They drowned. You want to end up like that?

BRYSON. I'll be careful.

CARLY. I said no. (*Bryson starts clearing dishes. Carly pours more wine. Bryson turns to Carly.*)

BRYSON. I'm going anyway.

CARLY. What is wrong with you? You are not going.

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BRYSON. Donna's picking me up. *(Carly stands.)*

CARLY. You are not allowed to go there. Do you hear me? I will not say it again.

BRYSON. Screw you. *(A dish flies from the sink and shatters. A gust of wind.)* You'll have to do better than that. *(Carly slowly sits, drinks.)*

CARLY. Just... go. Go to Flat Rock.

BRYSON. I'm gonna shower and pack a bag. Let me know when Donna gets here?

CARLY. Yeah. *(Bryson exits. Calling after him.)* And don't use all the hot water! *(A quiet moment before Carly rises, grabs a broom, and sweeps the broken dish. A knock at the door. DONNA (16) peers in.)* Come in, Donna. It's open. *(Donna enters.)*

DONNA. Hi Mrs. Rekowski.

CARLY. Call me Carly.

DONNA. You always say that, but it feels weird calling you by your first name.

CARLY. Mrs. Rekowski's fine, then. *(She continues sweeping.)*

DONNA. Oh, no. What happened?

CARLY. Nothing. Dropped a dish.

DONNA. Oh, geez. Here, let me help. *(She moves in.)*

CARLY. *(A little sharp.)* No, I've got it. *(Donna eases back.)*

DONNA. I'm a little early.

CARLY. Bryson just went up to shower. He'll be down in a bit.

DONNA. Oh. Okay. I can wait in the car.

CARLY. What? Don't be silly. Sit.

DONNA. You sure?

CARLY. Sit down. *(Donna sits.)* You hungry? There's leftovers.

DONNA. No thanks. I already ate.

CARLY. Probably for the best. My cooking tastes like shit.

DONNA. Oh, come on. That's not true. *(Carly grabs the dustpan.)*

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CARLY. No, it is. Doesn't matter, though. Those boys'll eat anything. How's your mom?

DONNA. She's good. Got her cosmetology license a while back. She's at McClain's now, over on Lawrence.

CARLY. Oh? That's great.

DONNA. Yeah, and my dad just made partner.

CARLY. *(Flatly.)* Wow. terrific.

DONNA. So... things are good. *(Carly finishes cleaning, pours more wine, a little tipsy now.)*

CARLY. Sounds like it. There's pop in the fridge if you want something.

DONNA. I'll just have water. Pop's not really good for you. I read somewhere—

CARLY. Glasses are in the cupboard. Ice in the freezer.

DONNA. Oh. Okay. Thanks. *(Donna moves to the cupboard.)*

CARLY. Donna...

DONNA. Mm hm?

CARLY. I told Bryson earlier... I don't like the idea of you two going out to Flat Rock. *(Donna gets a glass, moves to the freezer.)*

DONNA. Oh. Well, we can do something else. Maybe a movie. Tron just came out, or The Dark Crystal—

CARLY. No, that's not what I mean. I just... want you to be careful. *(Donna fills her glass.)*

DONNA. We're not gonna do anything stupid, Mrs. Rekowski.

CARLY. No... you don't seem the type. And you and Bryson... you've been friends a long time.

DONNA. Since we were little.

CARLY. Right. And now you're in high school, you're maturing, your bodies are changing...

DONNA. Oh. Okay. Well, Bryson and I are just friends, / Mrs. Rekowski.

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CARLY. / Relationships evolve, Donna. And you two are close. Always have been.

DONNA. I promise you we're just friends. And anyway, Bryson's... Well, he's...

CARLY. He's what?

DONNA. He's not really my type.

CARLY. What? What're you talking about? He's a very good-looking young man.

DONNA. Yeah, he is. But...

CARLY. But what? *(An awkward silence. Donna sits, sidestepping.)*

DONNA. So... how did you meet? You and Mr. Rekowski.

CARLY. What? Oh, come on. You don't want to hear about that. Nobody does.

DONNA. Of course, I do.

CARLY. Really?

DONNA. Yeah. I really want to know.

CARLY. *(Skeptical.)* Alright... Okay. Well, Mr. Rekowski and I met... what's it been now? Twenty-four years? October 2nd, 1959. Friday night. The Flamingo Roller Rink, over on Larimer in the east end. B.B. King played there once, did you know that?

DONNA. I didn't.

CARLY. He did. Big deal at the time. Anyway, Joe was on tour. The night before, he played Cleveland, and the next night he was supposed to be in New York at the Five Spot Café—

DONNA. In the Bowery.

CARLY. That's right. Except a hurricane was coming up the coast. Faster than expected. His flight got out of Cleveland, but they had to reroute to Pittsburgh. By then, New York was completely shut down. Back then, I was living with my sisters, not far from here. "Old maids, witches," people used to call us. It was Lolly who introduced me to Joe's music. She heard one of his songs on the radio while she was vacationing in Boulder—

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DONNA. Bryson said she went missing.

CARLY. Yeah... that's right. Long time ago. Just before Bryson was born.

DONNA. What happened?

CARLY. I think it's best we don't conjure up unhappy events. Anyway... Lolly loved that song. Couldn't get enough of it. She was... hypnotized by his voice. Went to seven different record stores – three of them in Denver – just to find it. Finally tracked it down at a place called Marty's Music Shack, if you can believe it. She bought every copy they had. Ten in all.

DONNA. Ten? What was she gonna do with ten records?

CARLY. One was for me. The other nine... she had plans for those. Turns out Marty – the guy who owned the place, of course – was a friend of Joe's. Told Lolly where he'd be playing that weekend. Even offered to take her. On one condition. That she go as his date.

DONNA. Seriously? She went out with a stranger to some dive just to hear Mr. Rekowski sing?

CARLY. Lolly could take care of herself. And it wasn't a dive. Joe was on the verge of something big: a hit single playing all over the radio, performing at the Tulagi – one of the best clubs around...

DONNA. That's so cool. But... I guess what I don't get is... if your sister was so into him, how'd you end up together?

CARLY. Lolly never had much interest in men.

DONNA. Oh.

CARLY. But when she heard Joe's voice on the radio... she knew. Knew he was meant for me. Still, she had to be sure. Had to meet him face to face. That's why she went with Marty. She did it for me.

DONNA. Wow. So, what happened... at the Tulagi?

CARLY. Joe was opening for a band called the Astronauts. And Lolly... well, she made a new dress just for that night. Lavender satin cocktail number with cream-colored polka dots. Gorgeous. She looked... She looked beautiful. I've got a picture somewhere...

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Anyway, Marty got a little grabby on the drive over; it took Lolly a while to get his hands off her hemline and back onto the wheel. So, by the time they got there, Joe was nearly done with his set. But she heard him. Live. *(Bryson enters.)*

BRYSON. Mom...

DONNA. Hi, Bryson.

BRYSON. *(To Donna.)* Hey. You ready?

DONNA. Your mom's in the middle of a really great story about how she and your dad met.

BRYSON. Yeah, I've heard Dad tell it a million times.

CARLY. Well, your dad's version isn't nearly as accurate as he thinks.

BRYSON. Have another glass, mom.

CARLY. You two go ahead. And Donna? Maybe we keep what I told you between us. What do you think?

DONNA. Sure. 'Course. *(To Bryson.)* I'll meet you outside. *(She exits.)*

BRYSON. I'm sorry, mom.

CARLY. Go. *(Bryson lingers.)* Go. She's waiting. And be careful.

BRYSON. I will.

CARLY. I mean it. I worry. *(Bryson starts off.)* And don't be late. *(He exits. Carly sits, drinks. End of Scene.)*

SCENE 5

1982. Just before sundown. A short time after the previous scene. The Rekowski backyard.

(JOHNNY (23) sits on a tree stump, absorbed in a handheld game.

FISHER (17) enters.)

FISHER. Hey, Johnny. How's it going?

JOHNNY. *(Barely looking up.)* Oh. Hey, dirt bag.

FISHER. Why you gotta be a dick, man? I'm trying to be nice. *(Johnny keeps playing.)* Your brother around?

JOHNNY. Who's asking?

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FISHER. Me. I need to talk to him.

JOHNNY. About what?

FISHER. I don't know. We were hanging out earlier and I... Look, I just need to see him.

JOHNNY. Try the house.

FISHER. Your mom's home.

JOHNNY. So?

FISHER. So, I don't want to deal with her.

JOHNNY. You afraid?

FISHER. What? No, I ain't afraid. I just don't want to talk to her. I need to talk to Bryson.

JOHNNY. He's gone.

FISHER. You said he was home.

JOHNNY. No, I didn't.

FISHER. Where'd he go?

JOHNNY. Flat Rock. About an hour ago.

FISHER. Goddam it. When's he back?

JOHNNY. Don't know.

FISHER. Shit. *(Fisher drops beside him, lights a cigarette. Johnny keeps playing.)*

JOHNNY. She's a witch, you know.

FISHER. What're you talking about?

JOHNNY. My mom. Puts curses on people. Cooks up these... diabolical mixtures in the middle of the night. That's why I'm the way I am.

FISHER. What do you mean?

JOHNNY. You think I'm retarded. But I'm not.

FISHER. I didn't say—

COLD RAIN

JOHNNY. I don't care what you think. I know the truth. I've seen a lot of shrinks, taken pills... none of it works. You can't fix a curse. Especially when you're not the one it was meant for.

FISHER. You serious right now? So... you're like this because she cast a spell on someone else and you somehow got caught up in it?

JOHNNY. Something like that.

FISHER. Alright. Who was she after?

JOHNNY. My dad.

FISHER. You're full of shit.

JOHNNY. *(Still playing.)* Think whatever you want.

FISHER. You actually believe this? Witches.

JOHNNY. They're as old as anything. My mom's one of them.

FISHER. Yeah, okay.

JOHNNY. You can't tell anyone.

FISHER. Tell them what? That your mom's some psycho sorceress? Don't worry. I don't want anyone thinking I'm bat shit crazy like you. *(He studies Johnny, takes a last drag, flicks the cigarette out.)* I'm out. Catch you later, nut job. *(He starts off.)*

JOHNNY. I'll return the favor. *(Fisher stops.)* I'll keep your secret if you keep mine.

FISHER. What'd you say?

JOHNNY. I'll keep your secret if you keep mine.

FISHER. I ain't got no secret.

JOHNNY. I saw you. You and Bryson.

FISHER. Screw you. You saw nothing.

JOHNNY. Yeah, I did. You pinned him down... kissed him.

FISHER. You better shut your mouth, retard. I'm warning you.

JOHNNY. You two were getting pretty hot and heavy.

FISHER. One more word. One more and you're dead. You hear me?

COLD RAIN

JOHNNY. Faggot. *(Fisher grabs him by the collar, yanking him up. Johnny's game drops.)* She's watching. *(Fisher glances toward the house, then releases him.)*

FISHER. I'm not fucking around. *(He fumbles for a cigarette, can't get it out, throws the pack down.)* Goddam it! You're coming with me.

JOHNNY. Where?

FISHER. Flat Rock, you dumb shit.

JOHNNY. I gotta ask my mom.

FISHER. Screw your mom!

JOHNNY. I'm not supposed to go anywhere without her say-so.

FISHER. I don't want to hear another word about your mom! How old are you, man?

JOHNNY. Twenty-three and a half.

FISHER. Twenty-three and a— Dude, do you hear yourself? Your mom don't care where you go as long as you go. She's half passed out in there, sitting on her witch ass, drinking herself to death. Only person she cares about is herself. So, here's the deal: you walk to my car, or I drag you there. *(Johnny considers.)*

JOHNNY. How far is it? *(Fisher punches him. End of Scene.)*

SCENE 6

1966. Midday. The Rekowski living room.

(SHIRLEY (38) lounges in a recliner, cigar in hand, and beer nearby. CARLY (29), very pregnant, enters with deviled eggs and snacks. LOLLY (34) follows with iced tea and glasses.)

SHIRLEY. Oh, goody. My favorite. Deviled eggs. *(She heaps several onto a napkin. Lolly pours tea.)*

LOLLY. You keep eating like that, Shirley, you'll be the size of a hippopotamus.

SHIRLEY. Hippos are largely herbivorous, Lolly.

COLD RAIN

LOLLY. They're also enormous. *(Carly lowers herself carefully into a chair.)*

CARLY. Well, this hippo would rather not discuss it.

LOLLY. Sorry, Carly. *(She hands her a glass.)*

SHIRLEY. You settle on a name yet?

CARLY. I've got a couple.

SHIRLEY. Care to share?

LOLLY. Before you decide... Deanna Pagnotto is due right around the same time, and she's having a girl. She's naming her Donna.

CARLY. I know. And don't worry. That's not one of the options. If it's a girl, it'll be Ellison. If it's a boy, Bryson.

LOLLY. Ohhh. Bryson then. It'll undoubtedly be a boy. Though I do love Ellison.

CARLY. Joe doesn't like either name.

SHIRLEY. Who cares what Joe likes? He named your first boy and look what you got: Johnny. When I hear "Johnny," I think of that smug bastard hosts The Tonight Show. What a jackass he is. He won't last.

CARLY. He's named after Johnny Cash.

SHIRLEY. Oh. Well, I like Johnny Cash. That Everybody Loves a Nut album cracks me up.

CARLY. Anyway, if it is a boy—

LOLLY. It is.

CARLY. I'm naming him Bryson.

SHIRLEY. Well, that settles it.

LOLLY. How is Johnny? Still having trouble at school?

CARLY. We're thinking about pulling him out. If he's not talking back to his teachers and ending up in detention, he's coming home with a bloody lip from pissing off the wrong kid.

LOLLY. He's seven, for Aradia's sake.

CARLY. I don't know what else to do. He's out of control.

COLD RAIN

SHIRLEY. There's nothing wrong with that boy that a few good whacks on his backside wouldn't fix.

CARLY. I would never.

SHIRLEY. Little tough love goes a long way.

LOLLY. Well...

SHIRLEY. Well, what?

LOLLY. I can't help thinking this might be your doing, Shirley.

SHIRLEY. My doing?

LOLLY. That night. In the herb / shed.

SHIRLEY. Oh, for Aradia's / sake.

CARLY. / Leave it alone. There's no use dredging that up. What's done is done.

LOLLY. No. What's done can be undone. We were supposed to cast a simple love spell.

SHIRLEY. Please. A simple love spell wasn't gonna land Carly a husband.

LOLLY. Maybe not. But it would've been safer than the spell you did cast. And Carly wouldn't be in the mess she's in.

SHIRLEY. I helped Carly get what she wanted. Anything beyond that is out of my hands. She raised that child, not me. If her life's a mess, that's on her.

CARLY. Hold on just a damn minute. I wouldn't call my life a mess. And don't pat yourself on the back, Shirley. You didn't exactly give me what I asked for. Things didn't turn out the way I hoped, sure. But my life's alright. Johnny's a handful, no doubt. Rough with other kids, terrible with most adults. But with me... he's gentle. Sensitive. Maybe too sensitive. He feels everything. More than he knows what to do with. And sometimes that spills out the wrong way. And sometimes not at all. But he loves me. Or at least he trusts me. And that's enough.

LOLLY. I'm sorry, Shirley.

SHIRLEY. You've upset Carly, not me.

COLD RAIN

CARLY. I'm not upset. It's fine.

LOLLY. No. I'm sorry because... I did something I shouldn't have. I was worried about Carly. I panicked. I didn't really know what I was doing... but I did it. And I think I fucked everything up.

SHIRLEY. Language, Lolly.

CARLY. What do you mean? What did you do?

LOLLY. I... I tried a reverse spell. I cast one. Or at least I think I did.

CARLY. What? When?

LOLLY. That night. The night Shirley hijacked the / incantation.

SHIRLEY. I did not hijack the / incantation.

CARLY. / Enough! Both of you. What do you mean you cast a reverse spell?

LOLLY. I performed an incantation to try and counter Shirley's spell.

CARLY. The spell we cast to bring Joe to me?

LOLLY. Yes. And Johnny. And Bryson... or Ellison. I still prefer Ellison.

CARLY. What did you do, Lolly!?

LOLLY. I tried to stop it. That's all. And instead I made it worse. But I can fix it.

SHIRLEY. There's nothing to fix. You think you had any control over what we did that night? You don't have that kind of power.

CARLY. You seem pretty damn sure of yourself, Shirley. What if you're wrong?

SHIRLEY. Ha!

CARLY. I'm not looking to argue with you. I'm just saying, maybe Lolly's on to something here

SHIRLEY. She's not.

CARLY. Maybe between your spell and hers, something went wrong.

SHIRLEY. Impossible.

CARLY. I'm pregnant, Shirley—

COLD RAIN

SHIRLEY. I hadn't noticed.

CARLY. I'm due any day. And I'm sorry... I love Johnny with all my heart. But I can't risk my second child ending up the same way.

SHIRLEY. There's nothing to be done! Magic isn't meant to fix things. It's meant to coax things into being, to nudge them in a desired direction. It's not an exact science. Now I'm telling you both. Leave it alone!

LOLLY. But there's—

SHIRLEY. I'm done talking about it. I'm leaving. *(She starts off.)*

CARLY. Shirley! *(Shirley turns back, grabs the deviled eggs.)*

SHIRLEY. I'm taking these. You want the dish back; you know where to find me. And don't expect me to clean it. *(She storms off. She re-enters.)* I'm out of beer at home.

CARLY. Help yourself to what's in the fridge. *(Shirley heads toward the kitchen.)*

SHIRLEY. I'll let myself out back. *(She exits. We hear the fridge open, bottles clatter. Off.)* Go with Bryson! Ellison's a stupid name! *(A door slams.)*

LOLLY. I need to make things right. I have to at least try.

CARLY. And risk making things worse? *(Regretful.)* I'm sorry.

LOLLY. No. Don't be. Look at what we've done, Shirley and me. Neither of us has ever had anything genuine to look forward to, so we've pinned it all on you.

CARLY. Lolly—

LOLLY. You're all that's left, Carly. Before us, Grandma Imogene was the last to carry what we have. And before her, Great-Great Grandma Millie. Shirley and me? We're not passing anything on. So, it falls to you. Now Johnny... he is who he is. We'll love him, support him, do what we can. But I don't think magic's gonna change him. But this one... *(She rests a hand on Carly's stomach.)* This one we can help. We need this child to carry the line forward. And maybe it's no coincidence the Pagnotto girl's due at the same time. Bryson and Donna. It's meant

COLD RAIN

to be. I feel it. So... I have a plan. A way to undo what Shirley did. (*Carly starts to interrupt.*) And you don't have to do anything. Except have this baby. A healthy, beautiful boy who grows up, finds his own way... and gives you something new to hope for. I'll take care of the rest. Tonight. (*End of Scene.*)

SCENE 7

1982. Dusk. Nearly concurrent with Scene 5. Flat Rock.

(Old police tape flutters. A rotted barricade leans nearby. BRYSON (16) and DONNA (16) enter with backpacks.)

DONNA. Do you think you'll always be that way?

BRYSON. What way?

DONNA. You know.

BRYSON. I don't know. Probably.

DONNA. I read this thing about how they tried to "fix" a guy. Made him lie in his own filth for days, showed him pictures of naked men, then pumped him full of drugs that made him sick. The whole time, they were calling him names: "dirty queer," "pansy," things like that. And when they couldn't be there themselves, they'd leave a tape running, looping those insults over and over, all to "purge him of his homosexual urges." Can you believe that?

BRYSON. That's... that's awful.

DONNA. I don't think it's something that can be fixed. I think it's just... part of evolution.

BRYSON. What're you talking about?

DONNA. Population control. Gay men can still have sex with women – they can reproduce if they want – they're just less likely to. And some won't at all. So... fewer babies. You've evolved. You're ahead of the curve.

BRYSON. And what about you?

DONNA. What about me, what?

COLD RAIN

BRYSON. You think you'll always be a total dweeb? *(Donna punches him lightly.)*

DONNA. Bite me.

BRYSON. I'm kidding

DONNA. It's true, though.

BRYSON. No, it's not. Donna, I'm sorry. I didn't mean it.

DONNA. I'm not upset. Just... thinking. Closest thing I've ever had to a boyfriend was Ted Caskey. And that's only because he accidentally put my retainer in his mouth during that one band trip.

BRYSON. Ack. I remember that. So gross.

DONNA. The fact that he didn't spit it out and rinse his mouth with bleach but instead just smiled and handed it back to me... That gave me a tiny bit of hope. My first almost, sort of kiss.

BRYSON. He caught me staring at his pubes once.

DONNA. He did not!

BRYSON. He thought I was looking at his dick.

DONNA. Did he say anything?

BRYSON. Yeah. "You staring at my dick, Bryson?"

DONNA. What'd you say?

BRYSON. I panicked. So, I blurted out, "No. I'm looking at your freakish pubes. Maybe dry off somewhere else."

DONNA. And that worked?

BRYSON. Yep. Grabbed his stuff and left. Never said a word after.

DONNA. Wow. Did you look at his dick, Bryson?

BRYSON. How could I not? It's huge.

DONNA. Bryson! *(He gestures exaggeratedly. She swats him, laughing.)* Stop it! You're such a pig! *(She punches Bryson playfully.)*

BRYSON. Quit hitting me. *(He nudges her back. They laugh.)*

DONNA. You know what's sad? Or maybe not... I don't know.

BRYSON. What?

COLD RAIN

DONNA. Sometimes I feel like I'm never gonna meet the right guy. Or fall in love. It doesn't make me sad. It's just... there. Like something I'll have to get used to. *(This lands with Bryson.)* We should swim. Before it gets too dark. *(Donna strips down to her bathing suit and heads toward the water without waiting for Bryson.)*

BRYSON. Hey!

DONNA. You coming?

BRYSON. What do you know about the Pacheco twins?

DONNA. The Pacheco twins?

BRYSON. Tina and Rose. My mom said they drowned out here.

DONNA. Yeah, I heard about that. A while back. They said it was an accident, but a lot of people don't believe it.

BRYSON. Really?

DONNA. There was this story going around that they weren't alone out here. Supposedly there was a boy with them. The police found clothes near a tree – mostly girls' stuff – but there was a tube sock and a pair of boy's underwear mixed in.

BRYSON. Geez.

DONNA. There're all kinds of weird stories about this place. They say people used to come out here for... rituals. "Workings," is what they called them. Cunning folk, hexenmeisters. They'd set a person in a chair, still as they could make them. Then circle close. Chanting low. Hands moving. Drawing things out... or calling something in. And some people think whatever they stirred up is still out here. In the trees. In the ground. Waiting. Listening. Looking for a place to settle. Maybe even a body to slip into. *(Silence. Bryson is mesmerized.)* Bwahahahaha!

BRYSON. *(Startled.)* Jesus, Donna. What the hell? You're so stupid. *(Johnny calls from off.)*

JOHNNY. Bryson! *(He stumbles in, breathing hard, face bloodied.)* Oh. There you are.

BRYSON. Johnny, what're you doing here? What happened to your face?

COLD RAIN

JOHNNY. Fisher punched me.

BRYSON. What? Why?

JOHNNY. He's a little peeved I saw the two of you messing around on my bedroom floor.

DONNA. Bryson—

BRYSON. You were there?

JOHNNY. He came by looking for you.

BRYSON. And you told him you saw us?

JOHNNY. Yeah.

BRYSON. Why?

JOHNNY. I was bored.

DONNA. *(To Bryson.)* What / happened with you and Fisher?

BRYSON. / Bored? You were bored? Are you out of your / mind?

DONNA. / What does he mean / you two were messing around?

BRYSON. / How did you even get here?

JOHNNY. Fisher drove me.

BRYSON. He drove you!? Where is he? *(Johnny gestures toward the woods.)*

JOHNNY. Back there somewhere. When he tried to drag me out of the car, I kicked him square in the nads. He's winded. Didn't break his legs or gouge his eyes out, though. So, he can't be far.

FISHER. *(Off, shouting.)* Johnny! I'm gonna find you! And when I do, I'm gonna fuck you up! You hear me!? *(He cries out in pain.)*

JOHNNY. That'd be him now. *(End of Scene.)*

SCENE 8

1982. Dusk. Nearly concurrent with the previous scene. Gene's Place/Lounge. Downtown Pittsburgh.

(JOE (47) sits on a stool, singing RAIN ON and playing guitar – music and lyrics available on pages 69 - 76. Applause.)

COLD RAIN

JOE. Thank you. Much appreciated. I'm gonna take about fifteen, grab myself a beer or two, maybe have a smoke. You all should do the same. But don't wander too far; we got plenty more music coming your way. *(He steps offstage into a small dressing room. He takes a swig of a beer, studies himself in the mirror, runs a hand through his grizzled hair. He lights a half-smoked joint. A knock. He takes a quick drag, stubs it out, waves away the smoke, and opens the door. CARLY (45) stands there.)* Hey, baby.

CARLY. *(Topsy.)* Hi, Joe.

JOE. What're you doing here?

CARLY. Came to hear you sing. It's been a while.

JOE. *(Skeptical.)* Yeah... it has. You alright?

CARLY. 'Course, I'm alright. I just— it feels like we hardly see each other anymore. Even when you're home. And... I needed to get out of the house.

JOE. Okay. *(Carly snickers.)* What? What's so funny?

CARLY. Nothing. Just... Eddy's still covering the front door, wearing that same, old, beat-up Eagles shirt. His hair's hanging on by a thread, but he's still got it tied back like he's fooling somebody. Stan Davies... he saw me, passed wind, and just about launched himself off the stool. And Georgio Gulotta dumped a whole pitcher of beer on his poor wife. That woman's always pregnant, and she's gotta be at least my age if not older. *(She moves in close, playful, a little too much.)* They all dropped like dominoes when I walked in. Probably think I'll bring the whole place down on top of them.

JOE. You're laying it on a little thick, don't you think? *(Carly pulls back.)*

CARLY. You're disappointed I came.

JOE. I'm surprised, is all. *(He softens, gestures her in.)* Come here. *(She hesitates, then steps in. They kiss – familiar, warm, but not frequent.)* You been drinking?

CARLY. You asking as a man who smells like beer and weed?

COLD RAIN

JOE. Fair enough. *(They kiss again. She leans in, a little more insistent.)*

CARLY. I caught the end of your set. I love that song.

JOE. Yeah. What's it been. Twenty-five years? You'd think folks'd be sick of it by now. I know I am.

CARLY. It's a beautiful song. And your voice. It gets better with age. *(She starts to undo his shirt.)*

JOE. Hey.

CARLY. I mean it, Joe.

JOE. Alright, that's enough. *(He gently pulls away. A shift.)*

CARLY. Anyway... it's always been my favorite. I still have the record. The one Lolly bought for me.

JOE. What're you talking about? Why would Lolly have to buy you—

CARLY. Which reminds me... I've been looking all over the house for that picture of her. You know the one. Of her in that lavender satin cocktail dress with the cream-colored polka dots.

JOE. I don't remember any dress like that.

CARLY. 'Course you do. She wore it the night you met.

JOE. I met you and your sisters at the roller rink. None of you were wearing anything like that. *(An awkward beat.)*

CARLY. Right. Well, it doesn't matter anyway. My point is—

JOE. Wait. Hold on. Marty – my buddy from Denver – he came through the Tulagi once with a woman. Long time ago. Said she was a fan. Shit, I can't remember her / name.

CARLY. / I was wrong about the / dress.

JOE. / No. No... The dress. That's what's sticking in my head. I don't remember her face but I remember a / dress.

CARLY. / I'm sure it was just a / coincidence.

JOE. / Like the one you just described.

CARLY. *(Quietly, with a wave of her hand.)* Forget about it, Joe. *(A faint gust. Joe's head dips slightly, then lifts again, his gaze locking with hers.)* My point is... I had three boxes of Lolly's things stored in the

COLD RAIN

attic. When I checked earlier tonight... they were gone. So where are they?

JOE. We got rid of all that stuff a long time ago. Sold most of it. Donated what was left.

CARLY. When?

JOE. About nine years ago, I guess.

CARLY. I never agreed to that.

JOE. Well... it's done.

CARLY. You said "we," Joe. You and who else?

JOE. (*Quietly exasperated.*) Oh, for Christ's sake, Carly. Why can't you just leave it alone?

CARLY. You and who else?

JOE. Me and Shirley.

CARLY. You and Shirley?

JOE. We knew you'd never agree to it. So, I had the boys help me load up the van, and we brought everything over to her place.

CARLY. There were things I would've kept, Joe. Remembrances of her.

JOE. I'm sorry. And that's not all. Maybe you should sit down.

CARLY. I'll stand.

JOE. We had to wait five years after she disappeared before we could file.

CARLY. File what?

JOE. A petition. To have her declared dead.

CARLY. No.

JOE. We waited seven years, Carly.

CARLY. Why would you do that?

JOE. Lolly's will.

CARLY. Her will? What does that have to do with anything?

JOE. Once the state declares someone dead, their assets get divided among the – what do you call them – the beneficiaries.

COLD RAIN

CARLY. You did all of this? You and Shirley? Made all these decisions and didn't think to include me?

JOE. We thought it was best.

CARLY. Fuck you.

JOE. Carly—

CARLY. Fuck both of you.

JOE. We were desperate. We needed the money.

CARLY. For what? What was so important you had to kill my sister off for it?

JOE. Come on. We didn't kill Lolly. And it wasn't exactly pocket change; it got us caught up on our mortgage.

CARLY. I made that payment every month.

JOE. You made partial payments. What was going on, Carly? Either you were burning through money on God knows what, or we just didn't have enough coming in. Either way, you kept it from me. And we damn near lost the house.

CARLY. It's not what you think.

JOE. Then what is it?

CARLY. You have to trust me. I was doing what I had to... for us. For this family. *(Joe decides to let it go.)*

JOE. Somethings off.

CARLY. What do you mean?

JOE. You showing up here. You never come here. And now this Lolly business. I thought we didn't talk about her.

CARLY. She's been on my mind.

JOE. Something had to bring it on. *(A rotary phone rings. Joe crosses and answers.)* I'll be out in a minute, Eddy... What...? Slow down. What're you talking about...? Who's out there...? She said what...? Jesus Christ... Okay... Yeah. Yeah. We're coming now. *(He hangs up.)*

CARLY. What's wrong?

JOE. Angie Benedetti's out front.

COLD RAIN

CARLY. Angie?

JOE. Gino's mom.

CARLY. I know who she is, Joe. Why is she here?

JOE. She says she saw that Fisher kid tearing down the street with Johnny in the passenger seat. Took out her mailbox on the way.

CARLY. When?

JOE. What the hell's Fisher doing with Johnny?

CARLY. I have no idea.

JOE. I swear to Christ if he lays a hand on my boy... I swear I will break his fucking neck.

CARLY. Joe—

JOE. Call Bryson. Tell him to stay inside and lock the doors. *(He moves to go.)*

CARLY. Joe. Joe!

JOE. What?

CARLY. Bryson's not home.

JOE. What do you mean he's not home? Where is he?

CARLY. I told him not to go.

JOE. Where is he?

CARLY. With Donna. At Flat Rock.

JOE. Jesus Christ. What the hell were you thinking? Why would you let him go down there?

CARLY. He's sixteen, Joe.

JOE. And that makes him invincible? Alright. Listen. You get in your car, go to Flat Rock. Find Bryson and Donna and bring them straight home. I'm taking the bike; I'll find Johnny.

CARLY. I'm calling the police.

JOE. And say what? That your sixteen-year-old's off swimming with a girl and your twenty-three-year-old's out joyriding with some punk? It's pointless. Let's go. *(End of scene.)*

COLD RAIN

SCENE 9

1982. Night. Nearly concurrent with the previous scene. Flat Rock.

(The area is deserted. Only Bryson and Donna's belongings remain. A blinding white light floods the stage, then snaps out. Darkness. DONNA (16) appears and calls out.)

DONNA. Bryson! Bryson! *(JOHNNY (23) enters from the darkness.)*

JOHNNY. I think he's dead. I think they're both dead.

DONNA. Shut up. *(Calling out again.)* Bryson!

JOHNNY. What was that?

DONNA. What?

JOHNNY. That light.

DONNA. *(Short.)* I don't know. *(Calling again.)* Bryson!

JOHNNY. I saw a woman—

DONNA. Shut up! *(BRYSON (16) emerges from the water.)* Oh, my / God.

JOHNNY. / Holy crap.

DONNA. Bryson! *(Donna helps Bryson on to the rock.)* Look at me. Are you okay?

BRYSON. Yeah... yeah, I'm fine. Where's Fisher?

JOHNNY. Fisher sleeps with the fishes.

BRYSON. No. No. We have to find him.

JOHNNY. Do we?

BRYSON. Yeah. He's an asshole, but we can't just leave him out here.

DONNA. I hate to agree with your brother, but I think he's dead.

BRYSON. Maybe he ran off.

DONNA. You both went in. You're the only one who came out.

JOHNNY. Maybe if Fisher came out sooner, we wouldn't be in this mess.

DONNA. *(To Johnny.)* Get away from me. *(He steps back. Headlights sweep across the stage.)*

COLD RAIN

JOHNNY. Looks like we've got company.

DONNA. Crap. Don't panic. We didn't do anything wrong. Still... grab your stuff. Let's go. *(They start gathering their things.)*

CARLY. *(Off.)* Bryson! Donna!

JOHNNY. That's mom. *(Calling out.)* We're over here!

DONNA. You idiot—

CARLY. *(Off.)* Johnny?

JOHNNY. Yeah! Over here!

CARLY. *(Off.)* Don't move!

DONNA. My car's this way. Come on. *(She starts off.)*

BRYSON. Donna, wait. We have to tell someone.

DONNA. Your mom's gonna lose it.

BRYSON. Someone's dead. "Lose it" doesn't even cover it. *(CARLY (45) enters. She's frantic as she grabs Bryson and Johnny.)*

CARLY. Bryson! Johnny! Are you both okay? *(To Johnny.)* What happened to your face?

JOHNNY. I'm recovering from a nose job.

CARLY. Fisher did this? *(Johnny nods.)* Jesus. *(To Donna.)* You alright?

DONNA. I'm fine.

CARLY. *(To Bryson.)* And you?

BRYSON. I'm okay.

CARLY. Good. Because I'm about to kill all three of you.

JOHNNY. I think one death's enough for today.

DONNA. Johnny!

CARLY. *(To Johnny.)* What did you say?

DONNA. I'm gonna go. *(She moves.)*

CARLY. Donna Pagnotto! Not another inch. *(Donna freezes. To all.)* What's going on? What happened?

BRYSON. It was an accident.

COLD RAIN

CARLY. What was? Where's Fisher? Johnny, where's Fisher?

JOHNNY. He's dead.

CARLY. What do you mean, dead? How? *(To Bryson.)* What happened?

BRYSON. I don't know. He came at me... we fought... and then we both went in the water.

DONNA. They were under a long time.

CARLY. *(Composing herself.)* Okay. Alright. Here's what we're gonna do. All three of you are getting in the car with me—

DONNA. But my car—

CARLY. All three of you. *(To Donna.)* We'll come back for it. *(To all.)* And we're going straight to the police station.

DONNA. But Mrs.—

CARLY. Enough. I'll call your parents when we get there.

BRYSON. Can't we leave Donna out of it?

CARLY. I told you not to come here. I told you it wasn't safe.

JOHNNY. Mom...

CARLY. *(Sharply.)* What!?

JOHNNY. Aunt Lolly was here. *(A low wind begins. Distant thunder.)*

CARLY. Not now, Johnny.

JOHNNY. I'm serious. I saw her... by the trees. Actually... above them.

DONNA. I saw something too. A flash of light. And she was just... there. Hovering. Then she was gone.

CARLY. Bryson?

BRYSON. I didn't see anything.

CARLY. Okay. That stays between us. *(Donna and Bryson nod.)* Not a word to the police. *(Pointedly to Johnny.)* Do you understand?

JOHNNY. So, we pretend it didn't happen?

CARLY. Exactly.

COLD RAIN

JOHNNY. I'm pretty good at pretending.

CARLY. Normally not one of your better traits. *(Looking to the sky.)*
Come on. Rain's coming. *(Thunder rolls. Wind rises as they move off. A flash of lightning. Lolly appears. She is silhouetted, suspended, or half-seen. Rain begins to pour. End of Act 1.)*

***THE PLAY IS NOT OVER!! TO FIND OUT HOW IT ENDS—
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