

HALOS // COMPANION PLAYBOOK

THUNDER GLOSS



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SCENE I :

Forgotten Garden

A man in an ill-fitting suit, the SPEAKER, enters stage right and walks to center stage. He clears his throat, and begins speaking in a stilted east-coast accent. He leans hard into the strange diction and syntax he produces- it seems as if he hasn't spoken to anyone in a long time.

SPEAKER

Once when I was young, a friend of mine told me this story- Miles was his name. He told me this story about a man he and his friend had met. They were up on the street around 3 or 4 am, cruising around on their bikes in the slick black air, moonlight occluded by streetlight occluded by tall, dark buildings. No one in their right mind is out on the street that late- but that's Miles. His friend Marky- the friend he was with- told him about this stretch of road out there on the outskirts, past the old warehouses, near the black bridge- a hill with a road that just goes on forever man, endless stretch, right headlong into that melting pitch of night. Miles said "right on" and they went to check it out, in search of

a rush to keep them awake while they waited for the sun to come back.

So they went, right? And they get there, and it's just like Marky said- even better, maybe. The hill was tall and the road leading down was lean, the inky darkness spewed generously over where the streetlights were all burnt out near the beginning of the hill's true valley. Neither of them were good enough riders to even attempt it, so they just watched it in awe and imagined all the ways they would splinter against the glistening black concrete should they make the mistake of attempting the ride.

They imagined, until they saw something that stopped their brains- a red glow, like the projected circle of a spotlight, jangling around mercilessly all over the place. It was big fat seconds before their brains registered where it was coming from- a man, not young, not old, absolutely ripping up the street, but easy, like it was nothing. As he got closer, they could see- he rode an old black bike and had a flashlight, turned on and shining deep red, looped into a carabiner on his belt. It bounced around with violence as he pedaled, revealing the otherwise unlit

abscesses of trash along the sides of the street, red streak by random streak. It was only once he got close enough where he noticed them, when they saw for real what he was wearing.

An old theatrical devil's costume, like silent movie stuff- a red poncho with triangles cut out of it, and a hood with horns. Red tights, red shoes, and of course, a long dirty red tail with a spade at the end. The whole getup was dirty, Miles told me, of course, but something about the state of that tail really set Miles off in a bad way. This guy must've noticed them when he was still in the blacked-out valley, because when he zoomed up, he zoomed right for them- they didn't have a chance to get away, not even a morsel of a chance, no way. When he had finished drifting effortlessly to the top, he dismounted and started walking himself and his bike towards Marky and Miles. He got up to talking distance and paused. His flashlight's beam radiated harshly downward now that it was hanging at his side, shining loudly like it was trying to burn a hole in the asphalt.

His voice, Miles said, was both raspy and mellifluous.

The SPEAKER does his best impression of this devil he's described. It's surprisingly different from his normal voice.

“What's you boys doing out here so late in the ink?
Here to catch some speed?”

His black pupils bounced around loosely like infertile seeds in plastic baggies.

Marky coughed up an answer. “Uh, no man. Just riding through.”

The SPEAKER speaks again, as the devil.

“Oh, really? You should watch this then. Maybe I can convince ya.”

In a brutal flash, he was back on the bike, pedaling hard down the hill, red light flailing and casting afterimage trails all over the street. Before long, he was in the dark again- but just before Miles or Marky could make a move, he was on his way back up, out of the darkness, pedaling still fast as hell. He was just picking up momentum, and from what Miles told

me, he picked it up like a hungry vacuum cleaner picks up change. He made it to the top of the hill again in a blink, and made a sharp turn to go back down again- another lap. Except this time, instead of pedaling, Miles swears on his life that he saw him stand up on his bike like it was a surfboard. He rode it like that, right into the darkness, all the way down that long hill, and on the way back up he made sure to flash Marky and Miles both a jagged, loose grin, still riding the bike in that fucked up way. He did this a few more times with different moves, sometimes changing his pose when he was beyond sight, beyond the limit of darkness, which gave the impression that he was just repositioned and replaced and set back on course, by someone or something that doesn't need to care about the limitations of timing or physics.

Or maybe he was just really good at riding a bike fast in the dark.

When he got back to the top again, he was slightly winded, but prideful, hiding a big shit-eating grin underneath a medium shit-eating grin. His ageless face spoke again to them, without missing a beat.

“So what did you think? You like my tricks?”

“Yeah man, it was cool”, Miles tried to say flatly. He knew this guy’s type- a prideful weird who’ll make a mile out of an inch. Didn’t want to encourage that.

Again, as the devil:

“I’m glad. Lemme show you another.”

Marky and Miles were holding their bikes, but based on the physical display they’d just seen, knew they wouldn’t be able to jump on them in time for an unscathed escape. But also, strangely, Miles describes somehow not feeling like this guy was a threat- like he was on their team, or something unspoken like that. That’s the vibe this guy gave off, at least, so they didn’t right there try to take the risk of running. They just watched as he unlooped the flashlight from his belt.

First, he took a second to shine it over both of their faces. A crumpled disk of red flashed intrusively into the backs of their eyes, projected out from the obviously old light-piece. He took obviously more pleasure in this than he was letting on, even for how

little it actually lasted- maybe a second or two for each of them- and then he did it to himself, flicking it on and off under his chin like a lame camp counselor or older brother trying to scare you. The shadows made his real face look like a fake face, and his light-cut smile twisted upward like synthetic vines on a façade wall. He slows the clicking, and his smile recedes, his mask of a face now underlit fully by a steady red beam- he spoke with deep and frenetic attention. Miles said the air had stopped in place.

Again, as the devil. Darkly, and serious- more so than before.

“I’m the devil. I was born to this place. Watch.”

He passed the red light over from his face to his free hand, which the two now realized he had been holding up near his head in a kind of limp claw. That damned smile melted its way back onto his face, and as the redness of his beam drenched his ageless yet mottled palm, suddenly, in a way that Miles still struggles to describe... his hand just disappeared. Slowly, cleanly— it just faded out into the darkness behind him. Out-of-focus-like, like a movie, Miles told me. Miles felt terror, but before his brain was able to

really get going, he saw Marky grab at his stomach out of the corner of his eye. Miles turned his head to look, of course, and watched his friend grab helplessly at his stomach, unable to do anything but wordlessly groan and grope at the thing digging around inside.

But before Marky had a chance to really really freak, the guy's hand was on his wrist again, and his big shit-eater was back- this time seemingly feeding off of the phantom reaction to his trick that Marky was still having. It was a smile of pure love and joy, watching Marky get sick all over the already-wet pavement. Miles says that the guy's eyes looked like sunsets as he scanned the doubled-over boy. He looked up at Miles and spoke again, with a voice like fresh ash.

The more brutal weight has lifted since the last flash of this impression, but it still feels almost melodramatically serious- in line with the rest of the monologue, but still leading the darker edge.

“I’m the devil, y’know. I was born to this place!”

He said that last part with a laugh. In a laughing way, Miles says. He could feel his senses beginning to creep back, and could barely get the air in his lungs to respond. His voice warbled in a way he'd never heard himself speak before.

"Sure man."

The guy laughed and threw his leg over his bike, instantly setting himself back into that effortless motion again. He kept eye contact with Miles as he rode a few leaning circles in front of the pair, surveying them both like the mirror of a knife- Marky was just barely getting himself back and still half on the ground by then. After his little victory lap, he finally broke his perfect gaze, and tore down that long, lean road again- shot like a frictionless beam from a railgun into that thick dark. Like an arrow, or a train, or fire. All he left behind was afterimages from that jangling red spotlight, shining like a watcher's leer from his weird belt-looped torch. That and the deli sandwich puke he inspired from Marky's guts.

After a little while, Marky managed to collect himself. When they were sure that guy wasn't coming back,

Miles and Marky got on their bikes and rode home, back to their block, in silence. Lots to talk about, but not much to say.

Isn't that fucked up?

Fade to blackout.

SCENE II :

Pink House, Black Room

We see a pink house on a hill, a splash of vibrant flesh against a bright and swirling gray sky. Two men walk up the hill path, one thin and one thick. The thin one wears a dark gray suit, and the thick one wears one in brown. The one in gray holds an old black leather sack held together by a drawstring, which swings in time with the pace of their strides. They walk up to the door, cautiously knock, and when they decide that no one is home, unlock the door with a small black key and take their time tucking in through the narrow front door. It begins to rain.

We see the men pass in through the door, finding themselves in a living room decorated in an older style, but completely torn up. The pink walls are the same shade as the exterior, probably the same paint- in fact, this pink is everywhere, a muted puce which only serves to date the long-abandoned domicile. Chairs and tables are broken and turned over, and decorative valuables from a barren china

cabinet have long been picked by pickers. This place is violent in its contented staleness- it has undoubtedly been ruined like this for years. The only thing out of place is a white plastic phone which sits neatly on the coffee table in front of the couch.

The men are overcome by a feeling of uncanniness- this home reminds them of the places where they themselves were reared, though clearly more ruined by time and abuse. MARKY, the one in dark gray, speaks to ROBERT, in brown. They both speak in stilted east-coast accents.

MARKY

This place sure is fucked up huh?

ROBERT

You can fucking say that again. Look at the state of it. Gives me a kind of a... bad feeling.

As they speak, MARKY and ROBERT are properly engaging in their own bit of superficial exploration, passively and automatically opening end-table drawers and

scanning the domestic debris for any sign of passed-over valuables.

MARKY

God damn. Hey, where did he tell us to leave the bag again?

ROBERT

(Wincing at MARKY's forgetfulness, but playing it off)
The back room, he said.

MARKY

You know where that is?

ROBERT

He said we'll know it when we find it.

MARKY

(Disbelievingly)

Uh huh.

ROBERT

I don't know, man.

MARKY begins to absent-mindedly drift toward the white phone, a kind of little beam

*cutting through the fog of old dust that clings
to the walls and particles of air.*

MARKY

You know anything about this place? Why he sent us here?

ROBERT

This is where he usually sends people for drops, apparently. I've never been, but I know some other guys who use this place pretty often, usually at night. You know.

MARKY

Yeah.

ROBERT

I uh... I heard once from one of them, it used to belong to an old psychic. Shit with those cards and crystal balls and shit. All set up in the attic, never touched.

MARKY

No shit! You think this place is haunted?

ROBERT

I don't believe in that. I'm christian, man.

MARKY

Christians don't believe in ghosts?

ROBERT

(Self-assuredly)

It's not in the bible.

MARKY

(MARKY reaches for the white phone and screams just as he, only briefly, touches it)

That's fucking stupi-AGHH!

ROBERT turns around quickly to see MARKY grasping his hand in pain, black bag dropped in shock onto the floor next to him. ROBERT engages aggressively.

ROBERT

What?? What's the matter??

MARKY

This fucking phone, man!! It's fucking... I touched it and it was fucking burning hot!

ROBERT steps over to the sitting area, immediately and effortlessly picking up the receiver and placing it on his ear, a brief act of showboaty tough guy-ness. He looks at MARKY in frustrated confusion, as if to say, 'What the fuck is wrong with you?'

ROBERT

What the fuck is wrong with you?

MARKY

(Wide-eyed)

Robert, I swear to god-

ROBERT

(Interrupting MARKY)

-Hey! What did I just fucking tell you?

MARKY

(Genuinely confused)

...What?

ROBERT just looks away from MARKY so as to compose himself, similar to how he winced earlier, although slightly more so. He maybe

pinches the bridge of his nose- he looks almost as if he stubbed his toe, or just ripped off an especially adhered band-aid. MARKY checks his hand, and finds nothing, and maybe rubs his palm where he touched the phone once more for good measure before dropping it again to his side. ROBERT exhales and picks up the slumped leather bag.

ROBERT

(Exasperatedly, but now attempting to calmly move on)

Alright, okay. Let's just drop this bag and leave. I wanna get out of here. Unless you wanna keep acting like a weird.

MARKY

Back this way?

MARKY gestures in the direction of an open doorway at the back of the room. ROBERT gestures like, 'Yeah, sure.' - a tired shrug of a feeling. They both cut out of the small living space and toward the back of the room to the doorway.

We see them move into a dark room, which is

significantly dirtier than what else they'd seen of the house. What looks like streaks of black ash or black mud coat the ruddy hardwood which used to support carpet-- now torn up. The light fixture has also been torn out, leaving only a reverse-sprig of wires poking out from the shitty popcorn ceiling. There are no windows, only the door the men entered from, and the smell of life reeking from a dark orange tent which sits patiently silent at the far end of the room.

MARKY

(Disbelief, speaking kind of to himself, kind of to ROBERT)

And what is this now? Are you fucking kidding me?

ROBERT

I don't fucking... Hello? Is someone in there?

A crumbling, soft VOICE pulses from the tent.

VOICE

Yes.

MARKY

Oh fuck, man.

ROBERT

(Half-shouting across the room to the VOICE)

Are you here to collect? Our guy told us we'd be dropping off alone.

VOICE

Yes.

MARKY

(Whispering to ROBERT)

He said there might be someone else. This might be him.

ROBERT

(Whispering to MARKY) Alright, well... *(To the VOICE)* how do you want us to do this?

VOICE

Come back in here.

A moment of pause. The men look at one another.

ROBERT

You want us to come in there with the bag?

VOICE

Just one. And the bag. There's a bag in here for you too.

They pause. After a moment, MARKY pipes up.

MARKY

Hey, why don't you just come out? Isn't that easier? Or just put yours at the door of your little thing there? Your little house?

The voice from the tent does not respond. ROBERT turns to MARKY and speaks firmly, but still in a hushed tone.

ROBERT

Listen, don't fucking patronize the guy. If he's connected to our employer, you don't wanna upset him, right? That comes back to me then. Just shut up and go inside that fucking shitty thing.

ROBERT forcefully passes the bag in his hands to MARKY, who does not take it.

MARKY

What? No fucking way man. I'm not doing that. Fuck that.

ROBERT

(With gravity)

I'm telling you to do it.

Without taking it, MARKY looks at the bag in pure frustration, his anger at this situation obviously rising to a boil. He is the more green of the two- he knows he has to do what ROBERT tells him to. After a beat of frustrated deliberation, he speaks up.

MARKY

I thought you were the man of god, huh? Tough guy? Nothing hurts the tough jesus guy?

That clearly sets ROBERT off. Hair-trigger. ROBERT pulls the bag back toward himself, just as violently.

ROBERT

Shut up man. You don't know what the fuck you're talking about.

ROBERT looks at the tent for a moment, then takes a few hesitant steps toward it. Once he's near the tent's opening, he hesitantly gets onto his knees so he can crawl in. He speaks in that same loud, teacherly tone as before, now simply attempting to project beyond the barrier of filthy tent cloth.

ROBERT

Alright, I'm coming in. You got your bag?

VOICE

Yes.

ROBERT, on his knees, turns back toward MARKY, points at him, and speaks.

ROBERT

Fuck you, Marky.

ROBERT gets on all fours and crawls into the

opening of the tent. MARKY steps cautiously toward the tent, craning his neck to see if he can get a peek into the dark crevasse. On his third step, MARKY jumps in fright when he hears ROBERT'S sudden blood-curdling screams.

ROBERT

(Full voiced, violent shouting. Death shouting.)

OH MY GOD! IT'S SO HOT! IT'S SO HOT! I'M BURNING!

MARKY

(Crying)

ROBERT! OH MAN! OH MY GOD!

MARKY, for reasons unknown, has now become a helpless crying child when faced with this moment, nervously shifting his weight back and forth on his legs like a kid waiting for the bathroom. Both ROBERT'S constant brutal screaming and MARKY'S panicked sobbing alike create a bed of pain-noise that is impossible to break-- at least until ROBERT'S screaming subsides to choking, then cuts off abruptly. MARKY is shocked anew when this happens, and

immediately reacts by silencing his own cries to listen for any sign of his compatriot.

MARKY

(Delicately)

Robert?... Robert, are you there?

VOICE

Marky. You too.

MARKY

(Like a punished child)

...Yeah?

VOICE

Come back here Marky.

MARKY pauses for a moment, frowning hard as small translucent tears bead on his eyelashes. He is shifting his weight back and forth nervously again, gripping the bottom seam of his jacket in his hands thoughtlessly. His face is stuck in that hard frown. He is thinking.

MARKY

(Compulsively nodding)

...Okay.

MARKY walks slowly to the tent with his head down, looking like he's about to receive a punishment he's received before. He kneels down and crawls into the tent on his hands and knees. No sound except the rain, which is picking up outside.

Fade to blackout.

SCENE III :

Emulator's Song

A SPEAKER (different from Scene I's), clothed in all black, enters stage left, walks to center stage, and begins speaking. As she speaks, it becomes clear that this person is kind of a weird- if not through the content of her story, definitely through how she tells it.

SPEAKER

When I was in college, I loved this one cartoonist. I wanted to be a cartoonist myself, and I looked up to her so much. Once in an interview, she talked about doing this thing where she only drank spiced, malted vinegar while she was working- she said it kept her body properly sick and uncomfortable so that she could focus, not fall asleep in her chair, you know! I did the same thing, and no one in the art club would sit near me. They wouldn't sit near me before this, of course, but who's keeping track! Anyway, my mom had to tell me to stop because it was ruining my teeth, and I used to drink so much vinegar that I didn't have room for any of the real food she made me. It's like, "Mother, I'm trying to be a real artist here!", ha ha.

Anyway, I looked up to this cartoonist so much, just their like, lifestyle and attitude and other things, I actually, funnily enough, somehow ran into their ex-partner at their favorite farmer's market. We got to talking, and... we ended up dating for 6 months. We had sex 86 times, but, while it was happening... all I could imagine was drawing alongside the cartoonist, breathing in her pencil shavings, kissing her illustration tablet to clean it of all the little rub-marks left behind from her glorious cross-hatching. The cartoonist's ex... she loved me a lot. She wanted to marry me! But I knew it wouldn't work. I am already married to my art. I broke it off very messily and in public to make sure she wouldn't call me again.

During that time, I had been practicing... not an impression, per-se, but... becoming a deeper inhabitant of the cartoonist I so looked up to. It became much easier to do once I no longer had to hide my practicing because of the ex. I didn't have to hide my shrine, either. That was another great thing about dating the cartoonist's ex, aside from having sex for the first time— when they were out of the room, I could scour their house for little, y'know, love tchatchkis or whatever that came from the

cartoonist. It was hard enough having a shrine as it is, but the fact that it was mostly made up of stolen keepsakes? Buddy, that's a real risk! But I figured, y'know, this is all for my art. This is self-improvement. This cost, any cost, is worth it. My life's calling is sitting plainly in front of me, and who am I to deny fate? I am but a pen in fate's hand, and I write the name of my favorite cartoonist over and over whenever I have free time.

Well, I used to do that- not really anymore. This part- you'll never believe this. At a certain point, I became such a great inhabitant of my cartoonist that I decided to go and finally meet them, to show them, well, me. Us. It wasn't hard to find out where they were living- I asked our mutual ex (who would pretty much do anything to talk to me at this point) for their address. I had to lie to them about going to see them some night or whatever, but y'know.

Anyway, when I got there, there was no one! It wasn't even a house. It was off in the old city, near the outskirts, past the old warehouses, not quite near the black bridge, but almost. A big, gray, square building that said "MUNICIPAL ASH DISPOSAL FACILITY". Which is like, what? I got really mad, of

course, but when I tried to call my ex, they didn't pick up. The phone didn't go through, even. "What happened to the begging?", I thought. This must've been why they broke up in the first place. Later on though, I tried to look the cartoonist up online again. I clicked on one of my bookmarks about them and I got 404'd- no results at all. All of their works were gone from my library too, except for the ones I'd hand-traced so that I could feel what it must've felt like to draw how they did. My shrine was still there, but it looked different than how I remembered it, somehow. My room smelled like vinegar. I went downstairs to see my mother. By this point, my mother refused to talk to me, so I screamed at her, yelling the cartoonist's name in her face until she just broke down crying. I went back to my room.

There is a long pause. The SPEAKER waits until the audience is properly uncomfortable with the silence. The SPEAKER then takes a letter out from her back pocket- Black envelope, red paper.

So, needless to say, I freaked out. I pretty much destroyed most of what I had of her's, including what was left of the stolen stuff-- I regret that one--

but I remembered something important. I had written her a letter- I was going to leave it with her after I'd left her house that afternoon. Despite my whirlwind, something told me that if I just read the letter to myself right now, I could calm down. I'll read it to you now.

She readies, then interrupts herself-

Ahem, uh, also- this is from my early college days, so it might be a little embarrassing, ha ha, but I uh, trust you guys. Okay, here we go.

She gets herself officially in a really raw, emotional state. This letter is to be performed, and fuck if she's not about to do that. The lighting in the theater changes, becomes more intense.

"When you're alone with yourself, all the time, the sky can become a ceiling. You can get so big you can suck up all the air in the room with one breath. I can remember the closed-in-ness of my giant self, straining against the walls of the room of the world. My whole smiling self filled up all of everything

around me, until there was no more space for anyone else to breathe. It was just me, neck wedged against the sky, sucking up the landscape. All alone on my mountain with a mouth full of clouds. What else do I remember?

An interrupted commute. You know the trains—waiting for what seems like hours, and all you have to entertain yourself is the sight of the endless maze of dark pipes above you, thick and dirty with the dead skin cells of commuters, and the mold that grows, showing time. Basking in the fantasy of massaging the knots out of old, ugly metal with your mind, until it's all straight and clean and perfect— if I had infinite time, I'd spend it cleaning the subways, washing every hidden inch and just getting it perfect again, maybe for the first time. Hell, I'd do it with my toothbrush if someone said I could, if it were even possible. I'd clean it with my tongue. Just so that when I look up, waiting fucking endlessly for trains that creep onto platforms like the slow push of blisters from skin, it's not a puzzle anymore. It's just the peace of endless lines, platinum and gleaming, that I broke myself on to earn. It'd be worth it if I could.

But the interruption. Someone threw themselves in front of a train. I didn't see it, it was too far down the platform and I was preoccupied with the ceiling anyway. I heard the yawp of bystanders and knew what had happened from the sound. Surprise, of course, mixed with an empathetic pang, but for something they've probably, likely, never felt-something they created themselves, as a watcher. You could hear the imagination in their yawps, for how it might feel. Not quite sympathy. Just wordless fear. I would have too, probably, if I'd seen it firsthand like them. I can't know.

I had somewhere to be, which I now fail to recall. Probably class. The collective panic ended the day for most of the people there, me included, I guess. It's the last thing I remember before now.

I feel real, but I know I'm not.

Did you ever live in the forest? Long fields of endless trees, no one in sight for miles and miles. Lush with the oil from leaves in the woods, some nights it gets so heavy that you just wanna drown in it. It's like candy for your whole body, your whole soul. There is bliss out there, and I've seen it. I've been inside it.

It got in my DNA. I know you can tell. I used to wash my face with the dew pulled right from the thick green grass in the morning, and get drunk from the fruit fermenting on the branch at night. Heavy, endless days to drown in. That place is lost now, though. Built a city right on top. We're standing now where I used to lie naked in the frost, dizzy with envy for the birds so cozy in their nests, and the bugs which filled the swollen, rotted hollow trees. It's all a part of me, but it's gone. Sometimes I feel like I'm the only proof that it ever existed.

I remember, once, climbing so high on my favorite tree that I could see over the horizon. I could see the sun rise, but I could also... feel it? Like I was spreading pure warmth over everything. I could feel myself heating the lake, warming eggs in nests, melting early spring ice and giving fuel to the little seeds germinating. All heaven seeds, every one. I was the sun, in that moment, and the joy I felt from giving life to the world, from contributing to the truest, most fundamental progression, was, and stays, unmatchable. Even if I was bumping my head on the ceiling of the sky, I was a part of it. I was it. When I first saw you, I felt a glimmer of that feeling. I could feel myself back up there on my tree, sense

memories of unbridled oneness with the world, with myself, the self that I love, and the parts of me that I know are gone. In you, I could feel what I needed to have to go on.”

She breaks from the letter. The lighting returns to her normal monologue lighting.

So, I expected her to like, throw her arms around me at this point, and I would like, carry her off somewhere nice? And we'd make love? But I also wrote another part of the letter for if the afternoon went bad. Here's that. Here we go.

She gets back into an emotional, raw character. The lighting switches back to intense letter-performance lighting.

“You can’t really know what it’s like. All you’ve ever known has been scum, and shit, and it’s why I didn’t really believe you when you told me you wanted more than that. You don’t even know what more is, and you wouldn’t, you can’t. Your trying isn’t enough. I need you to really do what you said you’d do, to unknot the knots, to scour the hidden corners. Helping me helps you, I don’t understand how you

can't see that. I know we want the same things, but it feels like I've gotten fucking nothing from you. I feel like you must not even care about me. You know what I've lost, and I would never say this to you so directly, but you know what I need not to always, always be feeling that.

Maybe I should be the one apologizing. Putting myself through all of this pain over you, hurting you back in turn. Expecting anything, despite knowing that you obviously can't begin to understand what it is to be responsible in the first place. I must be bringing you down with me.

If you need me to leave, I'll leave."

She breaks from the letter again. The lighting returns to monologue lighting.

So, that last bit would be like, so earnest and good that it would like, have the same effect as the good ending of the letter. Like it would save the afternoon, and we could still do my good planned thing later on. But y'know. I never got to deliver either part, so.

She takes a moment, and walks off stage. The house lights go up unceremoniously. The monologue is over.

Afterword / Notes on direction and casting

There are plenty of details left vague, purposefully, to allow for and to inspire flexible interpretation of the material, mostly in scenic art and stage direction. All I ask is that you reach deep inside yourself when making a choice. If you do that, you'll be doing appropriate justice to this silly material, and it will turn out great.

In terms of casting, there are gendered pronouns written in the text- I suggest highly that you disregard them when casting. Find the person that you feel best inhabits the weird and specific energy of the character themselves- the gender of the actor in question should not matter. My only ask is for you to use the same actor who leads Scene III to play the tented person in Scene II- and even that is up to you, really.

If you for some reason want to perform this, you can and you should! Just please record it if possible, in part or completely, and send a DM with photos or video to @thundergloss on Twitter or an email to thunderglossny@gmail.com so we can see it. You can ask us any questions about the work there as well.

Thanks for reading. I hope you like this stuff, and I hope you like the album as well.

Album Credits

Personnel:

Sara Kossin - Synthesizer

Maya Chun - Bass

Katherine Graci - Guitar + Voice

Bass on songs 1 and 2 by written and performed Alec Ciesla, who also wrote bass for songs 7 and 8.

Main vocal melody on song 6 written by Yasmine Shreiteh.

Drums on songs 4, 6, and 7 written and performed by James Yaiullo.

Other drums by Adam Parker.

Includes sound art samples throughout created by Adam Pichardo.

Recorded, mixed and produced by Katherine Graci at Spark Thrush Recording House in 2018/2019.

Mastered by Mac Porter.

Cover art and playbook by Katherine Graci.

