

SOMEWHERE  
by Marisela Treviño Orta

*About the play (from the playwright):*

With almost all the insects gone, the world is beginning to fall apart as crops fail and people struggle to hold on to their way of life. Cassandra and her brother Alexander are tracking the last monarch butterflies in the world as they head to the west coast. Their path intersects with a truffle farm where a small group of people are hunkering down for the on-coming collapse of society.

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*ALEXANDER—Male, 20s. An engineer once upon a time.*

*About the scene:*

Alexander and his sister, Cassandra, have been traveling by bike from town to town, following the last monarch butterflies and seeing the world turn to chaos and desperation. Here, he tells Cassandra about what he has seen.

ALEXANDER

...Do you remember my neighbor?

Henry.

The retiree. He used to be a traveling salesman. The last of a dying breed.

Last year he cut down the big oak tree in his back yard. Right before I went to Mom's I looked outside my kitchen window and he was just sitting on the stump. It was the middle of the night and he was just sitting there.

He was still there in the morning—as if he had stayed there the entire night. It was raining so I went out to check on him, to see if he was all right. I thought—I thought maybe he was feeling bad about cutting down the tree, but it was already dead. Some sort of disease—Oak Wilt, I think.

From a distance he had this peaceful, far off look on his face. But as I got closer I noticed his eyes were milky. Like cataracts. And then I saw it. His skin. Where his thighs met the tree stump. Where his hands rested on the bark. It was like he was being grafted onto the tree or the tree was grafting onto him. He wasn't in pain—at least I don't think he was. But he was becoming something else. He and the tree.

I saw it again on my way to Mom's house. There was an old woman sitting on a small boulder covered with lichen and it was spreading. Spreading onto her legs, spiraling outward from her knee to the rest of her leg. It was beautiful in its own way. And she was just sitting there. Still. Immovable.

I dunno what caused it. But whatever it is, I saw it in every city on my way to you. Just one or two people at first. Then more and more of the population.

That's why we have to keep moving. We can't stop or we'll end up like him. A dead thing.