

MODERN MAN

A prehistoric fable

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Rebellious, visionary cavegirl Sparky must choose a mate at her coming-of-age ceremony—but her only option is Dig, a mean, lazy hunter. Sparky breaks from family traditions and chooses to mate with an outsider. But when the outsider proves to be a threat rather than a blessing, Dig must discover how to man up to save his family. A playful look at Stone Age humans dealing with the rapid evolution of language, morality, spirituality, and modern emotions.

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7 CHARACTERS: (4 Women, 3 Men)

DIG (20) a dim-witted hunter

DOOZY (48) grandmother and priestess

SPARKY (16) bright but stubborn granddaughter

ABLEY (32) Sparky's pragmatic mother

FUTZER (33) Sparky's inventive uncle

SCHMUCK (25) a mysterious stranger

DEER-SPIRIT, a supernatural vision

SET: A natural stone cave circa 10,000 B.C.E. Many surfaces are painted with primitive faces, like family portraits, staring forwards. Stage Right there's a doorway leading outside. A fire-pit dominates Center. Five sleeping nests, with animal furs thrown over straw, circle the perimeter. U.L. is Doozy's shrine of crude craft projects. U.R. Futzer's work area displays an impressive collection of tools made of stone, bone, wood, hemp rope, leather and baskets of woven reeds. Poles have been lashed together to create a table on which Abley prepares food near the fire-pit. If possible, a scrim can be lowered to obscure the cave (or the set can revolve on a turntable) while outdoor scenes take place in the rocky landscape outside/Downstage.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE: These characters are *extremely enthusiastic* humans who incorporate *broad body language* into their communication. The play is in 10 scenes in and around a cave, circa 10,000 B.C.E. Running time is approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

Scene 1: 10,000 B.C.E.—Outside

DARKNESS. A DRUMMER beats an energetic rhythm. (The DRUMMER is not a character but s/he accompanies the show with percussion throughout. They may be hidden or visible at the far side of the set.)

A tiny flicker of flame erupts on the stage floor Down Center. The flame illuminates a MAN’s face right next to it.

The flame grows into a small campfire. The growing illumination reveals that the man building the fire is definitely a CAVEMAN. He’s a young adult, filthy, mostly naked, and yes, he has a monobrow.

He grunts with pleasure at the success of his fire. For a few moments he gazes into the flames, marveling at them. We wonder what this thoughtful-looking caveman could possibly be thinking about.

Finally he reaches down and grabs something. It’s a little cone made of shell. He puts some leafy matter into the cone, puts the tip into his mouth, and burns the leafy stuff with a lit stick from the campfire. The little cone is a pipe called a chillum. The caveman is having a smoke.

He grunts with satisfaction, exhales and smokes again. He closes his eyes and smiles. He is high. His name, by the way, is DIG.

The dark stage is gradually engulfed in a TWINKLING EFFECT. Prismatic colors and shifting, primitive shapes are projected onto the rocky surfaces of the dark set. The images dance as DIG’s brain melts into a psychedelic swirl.

Another figure enters, roughly the size of a human, but randomly illuminated by flashes of dancing light patterns. We can discern the shape of a WOMAN—with antlers. The ANTLER-WOMAN dances slowly. DIG marvels at her and clumsily attempts to imitate her dancing. They acknowledge each other.

The DRUMMING diminishes. LIGHTS come up. The dazzling SPECIAL EFFECT dwindles away. We see the exterior of a rocky cave amid a landscape dotted with fanciful vegetation. The antler-woman-figure has suddenly transformed into a DEER—a perfectly normal animal, standing on all fours, calmly grazing on some grass.

Enter SPARKY, a worried-looking girl of 16, dressed in a brief animal skin, carrying a crude, earthen jar filled with water. She freezes when she sees DIG and the DEER. The DRUMMING stops.

SPARKY: *(startled)*

Dig!

(The DEER, startled, runs off.)

DIG:

Hey!

(DIG blocks her path.)

SPARKY: *(repulsed)*

NO!

DIG:

(he has trouble with language; his speech is labored)

Sparky... bring... water?

SPARKY: *(irritated)*

Yes. Dig... do nothing?

DIG:

Dig... hunter!

SPARKY:

Huh! Dig smoke Zowie all day. *(DIG reaches out to touch her.)* Stay away.

DIG:

Why... Sparky mad at Dig?

SPARKY:

Because Dig always mean! Forever, mean! Pull hair... pinch arms. Scare me. Make me scream!

DIG:

For fun.

SPARKY:

NO, *not* fun. *Never* fun! Stay away. Me punch you.

DIG:

Dig *like* Sparky punch.

SPARKY: *(changing her mind)*

No! Hurts hand! No more punches. Just stay away. Forever.

DIG:

What “forever”? What “forever” means?

SPARKY:

Leave me alone, Dig! We’re not little baby wolf cubs. Stop being like one. Ugh, you make me so mad!

(She tries to escape, but her path is suddenly blocked by another CAVEMAN, roughly 25 years old, his skin color and manner of dress indicating he’s from a different tribe. We’ll call him STRANGER for now. STRANGER wears a primitive mask to obscure his face. He freezes in an aggressive stance when he sees DIG and SPARKY. SPARKY yelps in fright. DRUMMING resumes.)

(DIG quickly picks up his spear. The STRANGER, unarmed, quickly looks around and picks up a rock with which to defend himself. The two MEN aggressively grunt and snarl at each other and begin to circle slowly around. DIG is stoned and unsteady. He finally throws his spear, but it’s a drunken throw and it misses STRANGER by a yard, clattering to the floor. The STRANGER realizes that DIG is no one to be afraid of. He laughs jeeringly at DIG, who is clearly embarrassed.)

(The STRANGER picks up the spear and threatens DIG. SPARKY sees her opportunity to escape and starts to go—but the STRANGER stops her. His body language makes it clear he is attracted to SPARKY. He starts to approach her. SPARKY steps back in fear.)

(DIG leaps forward and tackles the STRANGER. SPARKY maintains a safe distance from the struggle. DIG and the STRANGER wrestle, fighting to gain control over the spear. Finally, DIG wrests the spear from the STRANGER’s grip. DIG laughs triumphantly as he points the spear threateningly at the STRANGER. The DRUMMING pauses.)

(Blood is flowing down SPARKY’s thighs. DIG notices immediately.)

DIG:

Sparky! Blood!

SPARKY:

What?

DIG: *(points)*

See, blood! On legs!

(SPARKY looks down and screams. She stops and thinks for a moment. Then she screams again and panics.)

What’s wrong?

(Screaming, SPARKY exits hastily.)

Sparky!
DIG:

Sparky!
STRANGER:

Hey! You... Stay away!
DIG: *(threateningly to STRANGER)*

(DRUMMING begins again, quietly. DIG resumes threatening STRANGER with the spear, and the two begin circling again. DIG yells and advances. This frightens the STRANGER off. Satisfied, DIG decides to follow SPARKY and exits the other direction.)

(DIG re-enters a moment later, running to the shrub of cannabis. He kneels down and plucks the entire shrub from the ground. He sniffs and enjoys its intense fragrance. Very pleased, he exits again.)

(The STRANGER re-enters, looking for DIG. He looks down and notices the shrub is missing. As he considers the situation, a RIPPLING WAVE OF SPARKLING LIGHT washes across the stage accompanied by a percussive glissando. As the ripple crosses the STRANGER, his body vibrates subtly. We’re experiencing a moment of human evolution. DRUMMING intensifies.)

(The STRANGER suddenly stands a little taller. He takes off his mask. He kneels thoughtfully; looks around as if considering a strategic plan; and then nods. He rises and exits stealthily after DIG and SPARKY.)

(DRUMMING increases.)

Scene 2: Inside the Cave

(SCRIM RISES, revealing the clan’s well-lived-in home. Grandmother DOOZY, 48, dressed in a leather shift and strings of beads and bones, and holding a decorated staff, is U.L. near her shrine of sacred objects. Mellow inventor FUTZER, 33, repairs a tool U.R. Hardworking mother ABLEY, 32, prepares vegetables with a knife at the table next to the fire. SPARKY, very upset, enters with her bowl of water, which she immediately sets down on ABLEY’s work table Upstage.)

ABLEY:

Sparky! Not enough water. Get more.

SPARKY:

Mama, blood!

ABLEY:

Blood? Oh, Sparky, blood! Come here!

(ABLEY grabs a nearby sea-sponge and goes upstage to help clean up SPARKY. Grandma DOOZY, thrilled, dances forward and tosses a handful of dried herbs over SPARKY's head.)

SPARKY:

Gramma, stop!

DOOZY:

Sparky a woman now! *(Chanting)* Sparky a woman now!

DOOZY/ABLEY/FUTZER:

(FUTZER shakes a rattle in rhythm)

Sparky a woman now! Sparky a woman now! Sparky a woman now!

SPARKY:

Stop! Stop! Don't look!

ABLEY:

Sparky, Mama told you. Girls bleed.

SPARKY:

But... so... gross!

FUTZER:

“Gross”? “Gross”?? New word?

SPARKY:

Yes!

FUTZER:

What means “gross”?

SPARKY: *(screaming)*

DON'T LOOK! GIRL BLEED! SPARKY MAD! AAUGH!

FUTZER:

That’s too much for one word to mean.

ABLEY:

Futzer, turn around!

(FUTZER apologetically looks away.)

DOOZY:

Finally, *finally* magical day come! Thank you, Great Mother! Hear me, elders! *(She addresses the painted portraits on the walls.)* Gramma Grendy! Uncle Stubber! Aunt Mitzy, you silly old goat! Tonight family make *huuuge* party. Tonight Sparky become woman! Tonight, *Sparky choose mate!!*

(Silence. DOOZY clears her throat pointedly at FUTZER. FUTZER remembers his duty and shakes his rattle with mock enthusiasm.)

FUTZER:

Oh... Hooray!

SPARKY: *(relieved)*

Okay, blood stop. Sparky okay. Whew. Me thought blood not stop forever.

ABLEY:

You make family *ooga* happy today, Sparky! You make babies now! [“Ooga” = *very, really*]

SPARKY:

Nooooo! Mama, Sparky no make babies.

ABLEY:

All women make babies. How else family keep going?

SPARKY:

Sparky make *things*, Mama. Baskets. Bowls. Things to wear.

FUTZER:

“Clothes.”

SPARKY:

Yes, clothes. Uncle Futzer show me how make tools. And Sparky want make *big* things—like from sticks and mud.

DOOZY:

Well, girls no make babies from sticks and mud! Girls have sacred garden called “beetsy,” and—

SPARKY:

Yes, Gramma, girls have sacred garden called beetsy. Plant man-seeds when moon is big. Grow magic baby. Please stop! Makes me crazy!

DOOZY:

(points to the painted faces on the wall)

Ancestors watching!

FUTZER:

Sparky, everybody does family job. *(Points at ABLEY)* Boss Mama. *(Points at self)* Builder Man. *(Points at DOOZY)* Um... Old Lady.

DOOZY: *(correcting)*

“Priestess.”

FUTZER:

Priestess. Sorry. *(Points at SPARKY)* Baby-maker.

SPARKY:

Me make tools! Me make *huge things!*

ABLEY:

Family needs babies!

DOOZY:

Sparky mate tonight!

SPARKY:

What mate? What man Sparky choose for mate??

(DIG enters suddenly, breathless, carrying his spear and the shrub.)

DIG: *(reporting)*

Sparky make blood! Blood everywhere! Like... like river!

FUTZER:

Thanks, Dig. We know.

DIG:

Dig bury Sparky? Dig hole?

SPARKY:

No dig hole. Look! Sparky fine! Sparky... *(sighs)* Sparky a woman now.

ABLEY:

When girl become woman, girl make blood.

DIG:

From beetsy?

ABLEY:

From beetsy.

DIG:

Sparky... choose... mate now?

DOOZY:

Tonight!

DIG:

Woohoo! *(Dances a happy dance.)*

FUTZER:

Dig, family need meat for dinner. Go... kill animal. Big feast after ceremony.

DIG:

Okay. Bye, Sparky!

SPARKY:

Go away!

(DIG exits with spear and branch.)

ABLEY:

Sparky, Dig not bad. Dig strong. Dig make good man-seeds.

DOOZY:

Lots of man-seeds!

FUTZER:

Dig handsome man too.

(The WOMEN look at him quizzically.)

What? Okay, not *ooga* handsome. But... Why be so mean to Dig?

SPARKY:

Why—? Dig always mean to Sparky! Forever! And Dig smells like dead goat. Grunts like stupid animal. Me go find man from other tribe. Any man! Any man *ooga* better than Dig.

FUTZER:

Other man not know our ways! Other man speak different words!

ABLEY:

Family raised Dig to make good mate for Sparky. Dig has good body. Make strong children together. Children smart like mama.

(SPARKY sulks. ABLEY gestures to FUTZER that he should help resolve the problem. FUTZER gets an idea. From his work area he extracts a short ladder with 3 rungs, made of poles lashed together.)

FUTZER:

Look, Sparky. “Lottery.”

(He leans it against the wall and demonstrates how to climb. SPARKY tries the ladder. She likes it. She feels the joy of being able to reach high onto the wall, above the current coverage of wall paintings.)

SPARKY:

Lottery! For Sparky?

FUTZER:

And—look.

(He fetches a small earthen bowl of yellow liquid.)

Look! “Yellowy”!

SPARKY: *(enchanted)*

Yellowy...

(Thrilled, SPARKY goes up the ladder and uses a horse-tail brush to apply yellow paint on the cave wall. She’s delighted. She paints a wild group of wavy lines.)

SPARKY: *(continued)*

Sunshine! *(SPARKY hugs FUTZER, then looks at him.)* Sparky mate with Futzer!

FUTZER:

Haha, ooga funny.

ABLEY:

Futzer’s my brother. Your uncle! Woman choose outside from family.

SPARKY:

Why? Futzer smart. Futzer make man-seeds.

DOOZY:

Only stupid people mate with family.

SPARKY:

But Futzer need mate too!

DOOZY:

Boys no choose mates. Girls choose. Tonight Sparky choose Dig! Ancestors all watch. If no choose, Ancestors ooga angry!

SPARKY:

But—but—! Me not want—!

(Suddenly, an EARTHQUAKE! LOUD DRUMMING, and a LIGHT fixture with a shadowy gobo vibrates, creating an illusion of shaking. EVERYONE panics. After about five seconds, the earthquake stops.)

DOOZY:

See?? Angry Ancestors send kajiggler to warn family! Sparky choose mate or cave crash down!

FUTZER:

Mama, kajiggler not from Ancestors. Kajigglers always come. But now ooga strong.

DOOZY:

Yes! Ancestors make warning. Make huge animals fight under ground. Ground shake with anger!

FUTZER:

No, Mama. Family must leave cave *now*. Huge danger!

DOOZY:

No leave! Ancestors protect family!

FUTZER:

From big falling rocks?

DOOZY:

Doozy born here, in cave. Everybody born here in cave. Ancestors want Sparky choose mate! Sparky make baby—Ancestors happy—*bam!* No more kajigglers! Sparky, do job!

SPARKY:

No! No mate with stupid—stinky—DIG!

(DIG enters, breathless from running, still carrying spear and shrub.)

DIG:

Hey! Huge kajiggler!

FUTZER:

Yes, Dig, we know.

DIG:

Everybody okay?

ABLEY:

Dig not bring dead animal?

DIG:

No. Dig not...

ABLEY:

No meat, no feast! You only bring Zowie bush?

DIG:

Need Zowie for party.

FUTZER:

Not need huge branch!

DIG:

Some for party. Some for Dig.

SPARKY:

Dig smokes. Outside. Not hunting. Just smoking like forever!

DOOZY:

Zowie only for parties! Zowie help see Ancestors. Not for smoking all day!

ABLEY:

How make feast with no animal?

DIG: *(to SPARKY)*

Sparky choose mate tonight?

SPARKY:

No.

DIG:

See? No feast. No need meat. Juuuust Zowie.

(He loads his pipe, takes a burning stick from the fire, and has a deep smoke.)

ABLEY: *(resigned)*

So... tonight we eat pukka-nuts and green cabbage.

DIG:

Yuk! Me hate cabbage. *(Smokes again.)*

ABLEY: *(losing her patience)*

Then go kill something! Dig, save for party.

DIG: *(holding in the smoke)*

Stop yelling at Dig!! Zowie... *(exhaling)* help... Dig... hunt.

ABLEY:

No, Zowie make hunter lazy!

FUTZER:

Abley, please. No shout at Dig.

ABLEY:

Futzer not helping! Dig smoke too much! *(She holds up 3 fingers.)* Dig, how many fingers?

DIG: *(trying to focus his eyes)*

Uh... *one? Two? Two-two? Two-two-two?* *(ABLEY glares.)* Aw, crap-a-doodle-do! *(Sits.)*

FUTZER:

Abley, Dig not understand.

DIG:

Me understand! Me—not want—okay—uh...

SPARKY:

See, Mama? Dig can't even talk. Can't use fingers for counting. And... stinks like old poop. Walks like monkey. Lazy hunter. Mean to Sparky! *No Mate With Dig!*

DIG:

Dig... want Sparky for mate!

SPARKY:

Go away. Go mate with other girl from other tribe. From outside.

DIG:

No outside! Dig... want... Sparky.

SPARKY:

No, Dig just want make squish-squish. Dig want *any* woman. Dig want to squish hole in rocks!

DIG:

No! Ow! Dig want Sparky. Sparky make good mama for babies. Sparky... (*cannot think of a good word*)

FUTZER:

“Special.”

DIG:

Sparky *special!*

SPARKY:

Futzer, not helping!

ABLEY:

Dig like Sparky. Been close like brother forever!

SPARKY:

You SAID Sparky not mate with family. Now Dig is brother?

ABLEY:

Not brother! *Close like* brother! Ugh, sometimes words make me crazy!

FUTZER:

Sparky, Dig make good papa for babies. Do this—for family.

DIG:

Sparky, choose me!

SPARKY: (*utterly frustrated*)

Me need... to... go paint something. No good words to... to... augh, crap-a-doodle-do!! (*She stomps up her new ladder to reach beyond her current mural and aggressively paints yellow squiggles that represent her frustration. FUTZER silently urges ABLEY to say something.*)

ABLEY:

Sparky, every girl choose mate. *Every girl.* Like Gramma chose Grampa. Like I chose Luka.

SPARKY:

Because Papa was smart! Clean! Useful! Not mean like Dig. Why Papa not here?
(*Cries. ABLEY comforts her.*)

ABLEY:

Oh, Sparky. Your Papa’s gone.

SPARKY:

Maybe Papa come back!

FUTZER:

Sparky! Dead people not come back.

SPARKY:

Yes, they come back!

FUTZER:

What?

ABLEY:

Sparky, Papa is dead.

SPARKY:

Maybe not! Maybe he—maybe—ooh, need more words. Futzer, make new words!

FUTZER:

Sparky, *you* make words. Good words! You know how. Make new words. Go.

(The twinkling LIGHT-WAVE EFFECT ripples across the stage again. The characters ripple too as centuries pass by in a twinkling. DRUMS drift in underneath SPARKY’s voice.)

SPARKY:

Maybe dream. Maybe real. Me look... (*changes her mind, thinks of a better way to put it.*) *I was looking* in the river. I saw my face in the water. And in my eye, I saw something weird, like a flash of light. It looked like a person. And the person was ME... like I could see my whole self, right there in my eye. And I thought, maybe there’s a little-self living inside me. Maybe everybody has one. And maybe, when we have adventures and travel around in our dreams, that’s our little-self, going for a walk.

DIG:

What??

FUTZER:

Good new words.

DIG:

Crap-a-doodle-do. Sparky just blah blah blah blah.

ABLEY:

What’s a little-self?

SPARKY:

It’s the part of you that goes traveling in your dreams. And it travels forever. Even when you die, your little-self keeps going.

ABLEY:

Sometimes Luka visits me in my dreams. Maybe that’s his little-self?

SPARKY:

Yes! Papa has a little-self. Everybody does.

FUTZER:

But that’s just a dream.

SPARKY:

You said new ideas come in dreams! *Good* ideas! Useful ones.

FUTZER:

Sometimes. But why is a little-self useful?

SPARKY:

Luka visits Mama in her dreams! His little-self comes because he knows she’s sad, and he wants to make her feel better. See, that’s useful. More useful than Ancestors shaking our cave with huge, angry animals under the ground.

DOOZY:

Don’t say more bad words about Ancestors. You should thank them for—

SPARKY:

I tried praying to them. They don’t listen to me.

DOOZY:

You’re not praying loud enough. Most of them are deaf! That’s why I have to yell! Look at their faces. Always watching!

SPARKY:

Those paintings have been there forever. You don't even know who they are. I'll get more paint. I'll cover them up.

DOOZY:

Don't even think that! *(To the Ancestors)* Don't listen to her, Mitzy! She's making a bad joke!

SPARKY:

If I'm going to pray, I'll close my eyes and send my little-self on a journey. And maybe I'll find Papa, and all the other little-selves. And we'll all join together, all the little-selves, and we'll be one... Huge Self.

DOOZY:

A Huge Self?

FUTZER:

You think Huge-Self will listen?

SPARKY:

Gramma talks to things she can't see. I can too!

DIG:

Crap-a-doodle-do! Huge-Self not real. You just don't want to mate with Dig.

SPARKY:

No!

(DIG tries to grab SPARKY. She resists. They struggle. FUTZER and ABLEY use gestures to agree not to interfere. SPARKY is clearly capable of defending herself. DOOZY likens the struggle to romance and smiles approvingly. SPARKY finally repels DIG and screams a primal yell.)

Aughhh! I hate this family!

ABLEY:

Sparky... Everyone has a job. Make babies, your job.

SPARKY:

But I'm not ready!

ABLEY *(reassuringly)*:

When you have a baby growing inside, *which will be SOON*, you'll understand. *(She affectionately taps her forehead against SPARKY's.)* You look ooga pretty.

SPARKY:

Thanks. I'll be right back. *(She runs out the door.)*

Scene 3: Outside the Cave

(LIGHTS transition to TWILIGHT; the full moon rises amid twinkling stars. SPARKY runs on and looks around, wondering what to do.)

SPARKY: *(addressing the sky)*

Huge-Self! Hellooo! Can you hear me? I've never talked to invisible things before. Maybe you can help. I have a *huge want* for tonight. I want to help my family. I don't want the cave to crash down on us. There must be something I can do besides make babies with Dig. There must be somebody better than Dig. Somebody that I can choose.

(The STRANGER we saw earlier enters. He's washed so now he looks clean. Rather than behave aggressively, he approaches politely and smiles warmly. Without his mask, SPARKY doesn't recognize him.)

STRANGER:

Choose?

SPARKY: *(warily)*

Stay away! ...You... speak words? Of course not, you're from some other clan. You're... you're clean! *(Sniffs him from a distance.)* Good smell.

(The STRANGER sweeps his hand down and plucks a bunch of flowers from the ground. He hands them to SPARKY, who giggles.)

What those for?

STRANGER:

Choose?

(The STRANGER offers his hands. SPARKY takes them in hers.)

SPARKY:

You look... good. Handsome. Strong. Oh! Maybe Huge-Self heard me! Did Huge-Self send you to mate with Sparky?

STRANGER: *(smiling)*

Choose!

SPARKY:

Okay! Come on! *(She takes his hand and they exit into the Cave.)*

Scene 4: Inside the Cave

(DOOZY, FUTZER, DIG and ABLEY are as before. SPARKY enters, pulling STRANGER behind her.)

FUTZER:
Sparky, who's this?

SPARKY:
You told me to choose a mate. Well, here he is.

ABLEY:
But he's just a stranger!

SPARKY:
I prayed to the Huge-Self to help me. And Huge-Self sent a better mate. It's... mojo-juju!

DOOZY:
What's "mojo-juju"?

SPARKY:
New word!

ABLEY:
What? Weird!

FUTZER: *(simultaneous with above)*
I like it.

DIG: *(simultaneous with above)*
Me no understand.

FUTZER:
Sparky, what's "mojo-juju" mean?

SPARKY:
When Huge-Self gives you a gift. Mojo-juju!

(SPARKY takes STRANGER'S hands in hers.)

STRANGER:
Choose!

FUTZER:

Hey! You know our words?

SPARKY:

He heard me say “choose” outside. He’s smart!

STRANGER: (*seductively*)

Choose!

DIG: (*leaping forward*)

Sparky, no choose bad stranger. Sparky choose Dig!

SPARKY: (*blocking DIG*)

Stay away!

FUTZER:

But Dig is nice too, and a hunter—

SPARKY:

You like Dig so much? *You* mate with him.

ABLEY:

Don’t you think you should—

SPARKY:

I prayed to the Huge-Self. I prayed for someone to choose besides Dig. And, moju-juju—here he is, the answer to my prayer! Look at him. Strong. Handsome. Smells good. Learns our words.

ABLEY:

Sparky, don’t!

SPARKY:

Mama, I’m a woman now. This is *my* party. I get to choose, right? You let Doozy believe what she believes! Let me believe what I believe!

STRANGER:

Choose?

SPARKY:

I choose... *HIM*.

(ABLEY and FUTZER shrug at each other, and nod to DOOZY. DRUMS begin; ABLEY and FUTZER shake their rattles. DIG sits in a funk. SPARKY puts one of her necklaces around STRANGER’s neck. He likes it.

STRANGER starts to move rhythmically and motions for SPARKY to join him. She mirrors his little dance. Everyone hums an ancient harmony.)

DOOZY:

Okay, let's put some zip into it, everyone. *(Raises her arms.)* Ah-hoo-ee-la! Mothers of the mothers of our mothers; and fathers of the fathers of our fathers; Gramma Grendy! Uncle Stubber! Aunt Mitzy, you scheming old biddy! One of our tribe rises up tonight, no longer a child but a woman! Now is her turn to bring new babies to our clan. Bless her belly with fertility! Bless us with... with... uh... *(she forgets the word)*

SPARKY:

“Mojo-juju!”

DOOZY:

Okay, yeah... *that!* Plant good man-seeds in her beetsy; to make babies smart and strong; to make family grow. Dig, put some more wood on the fire and let's dance!

(DRUMMING increases. DOOZY starts a line-dance; ABLEY, FUTZER, SPARKY and STRANGER join in. DIG is furious. He grabs the Zowie branch and flings it into the fire. The fire roars up and a gush of smoke fills the stage, making EVERYONE cough. The smoke engulfs the performers, and the PROJECTION of swirling colors and dancing, prehistoric images fills the stage with a dazzling hallucination.)

(BLACKOUT.)

Scene 5 – Same, The Next Morning

(Morning LIGHT. DRUMMING gives way to subdued JUNGLE NOISE. EVERYONE is asleep, hidden under their bedding. Snoring. Then DOOZY talks in her sleep.)

DOOZY: *(terrified)*

Forgive us, Ancestors! Forgive—Augh! It's hot! Aughhhhh!!

(Her scream wakes up ABLEY, who jumps out of Sparky's bed and goes to DOOZY, who's beside herself with panic.)

ABLEY:

Mama, wake up! Doozy! Doozy, wake up!

DOOZY:

Abley, they had me! They were ooga dooga angry! Twisting my arms and legs and pulling my hair! Especially my Aunt Mitzy! She always used to torture me.

ABLEY:

They're gone, Mama. You were dreaming. Maybe the Ancestors sent their little-selves with a message.

DOOZY:

Oh, I hope *you* don't believe that crap-a-doodle about Little-Selfs and Huge-Selfs. The Ancestors want to punish us! I saw lightning strike the ground. Ooga bright. Then the ground opened up, and I saw way down into a fiery pit. The Ancestors tried to push me down into the fire.

ABLEY:

Why?

DOOZY:

Because we screwed up the ritual! Stupid mojo-juju clippity-clap-trap... What happens when we not obey Ancestors? You think our garden grows if we don't do a huge ceremony? Or the sun rise and set if we don't ask it to? You think Sparky have good strong babies if we not pray to—

ABLEY:

Mama, you spend your whole life every day praying. Maybe you should take a break. Maybe sun and moon and plants will just do what they always do.

DOOZY:

Well, why don't you just kill me? My head hurts. Family made a bad party.

ABLEY:

Sparky did choose a mate, remember? That stranger?

DOOZY:

But we don't even know if they made squish-squish. Supposed to do it right here, by the fire, so everyone can bless it, and prove it happened! Are they in Sparky's bed?

ABLEY:

No. I slept there, with Sparky. Did the Stranger stay? I don't remember what happened.

DOOZY:

Too much smoke made everybody dizzy. Maybe Stranger left after seeing how crazy we are. Check your bed.

(ABLEY lifts her bedcover, but finds no one in her bed.)

ABLEY:

Nobody there.

(They hear muffled noise coming from FUTZER’s bed. ABLEY tiptoes over and lifts the bedding. She’s shocked to see DIG spooning and humping FUTZER.)

ABLEY:

Futzer!

DIG:

Futzer?? *(DIG jumps up, embarrassed.)* Why you in Dig’s bed?

FUTZER:

It’s *my* bed.

DIG:

Wow... me dream... make squish-squish with Sparky.

ABLEY:

Dig, why you sleep in Futzer’s bed?

FUTZER:

Zowie so strong... Dig must have thought I was his mate.

DOOZY:

Ha! A man tries to mate with another man? Haha, that’s funny. *(Laughs with ABLEY.)*

FUTZER:

It’s not *that* funny, Doozy.

ABLEY:

Haha—Wait. Dig, did you make squish-squish with Futzer?

FUTZER:

No.

DIG:

Maybe! Me ooga confused.

FUTZER:

Look, Mama, Dig didn’t do anything wrong. Two men snuggling... ooga... “okey-pokey.”

DOOZY:

Huh? Okey-Pokey?

ABLEY:

What’s that?

FUTZER:

New word. Means... huge... good.

DOOZY:

“Huge good??” Men snuggle men okey-pokey??

FUTZER:

Yes! Huge okey-pokey!!

ABLEY:

No, no, no, no, no!

FUTZER:

Why no?

ABLEY:

Because two men can’t make a baby!

DIG:

We can too!

FUTZER:

No, Dig. Snuggling doesn’t make babies! Snuggling just friendly.

DOOZY:

Aunt Mitzy is definitely not happy about this.

ABLEY:

Me too. Sparky! Wake up.

(ABLEY throws off SPARKY’s bedding.)

DIG:

Where Stranger?

(ABLEY points to DIG’s bed. DIG marches over and pulls up the cover.)

Get up!

(STRANGER rises, nervously.)

ABLEY:

Sparky, did you and the Stranger make squish-squish last night?

SPARKY:

I don't know what happened. Zowie smoke made everything crazy.

ABLEY:

Did anyone squish anything? Tell the truth! (*EVERYONE thinks about it a moment, wondering, not sure.*) Okay, no more Zowie at parties.

DOOZY:

No! Zowie ooga important!

FUTZER:

Abley, Zowie's okay. Zowie's important. We should smoke just small Zowie. Not burn a huge branch.

DIG:

Sparky, you want Stranger for mate?

SPARKY:

Yes. He's smart, I can teach him all our words.

(As STRANGER steps forward to speak, the “Evolutionary Ripple” flutters across the stage again.)

STRANGER: (*eloquently*)

Oh, but I can use words extremely well—I know all your words. (*EVERYONE is astonished.*) Don't be so surprised! Your words are ooga easy to learn, and I think up new words every day.

FUTZER:

How do you know our words?

STRANGER:

I've been listening at your door. Your family is ooga loud.

FUTZER:

Why didn't you talk last night?

STRANGER:

I only needed one word last night. Um—Listen, you're a terrific little tribe, and ooga smart. My tribe, oh man, they're about as stupid as twenty rocks. I can't stand them. Their language sounds like they're choking all the time. (*Gives a brief example of nonsensical “choking language.”*) Do you know, they sacrifice every fifth baby born? I mean, what's the point of throwing away a perfectly good baby, because you want to please your dead Ancestors? Oh, sorry, Doozy, I know you're really into the

whole Ancestors thing. You know, you’ve got *three* ripe ladies here! Maybe I should mate with *all three of you*, and really fill this cave with babies!

DOOZY:

Me, ripe? Ha! No more babies in *my* magic garden, thanks for asking.

FUTZER:

Abley, *you* could make more babies, right?

ABLEY:

I could. But this is Sparky’s choice. He’s Sparky’s mate, if she wants him.

STRANGER:

Think about it, Abley. You look could feed lots of babies with those bodacious tata’s!

ABLEY:

What does that mean?

FUTZER:

We don’t understand all your words.

STRANGER:

I’ll talk slower. Ooga slow. Y’all do say “ooga” a lot.

ABLEY:

You listened to us for... for how long? Why you not talk to us before now? Why do you hide?

STRANGER:

I just waited for the right moment. Sparky prayed for the Huge-Self to send mojo-juju. And here I am, the answer to her prayer.

SPARKY:

Huge-Self told you to come here?

STRANGER:

That’s right.

FUTZER:

No, Sparky. He came because he wants to join our family.

STRANGER:

Yes indeedy.

FUTZER:

You are ooga smart. Smarter than us, I think. You want something. I don't believe... we want... feel... *(at a loss for words)*

STRANGER:

You don't trust me.

FUTZER:

“Trust”?

STRANGER:

You don't know me—you think I might be a bad man. You don't trust.

ABLEY:

What's your name?

STRANGER:

Schmuck.

(EVERYONE laughs.)

What's so funny?

FUTZER:

Nothing... Just, funny word. Okay, sure. “Schmuck.”

(Another EARTHQUAKE rumbles and shakes for about five seconds. Everyone looks worried as dust filters down from above.)

Run, go out the door! Go, go! Out the door!

(FUTZER hustles everyone towards the door. The EARTHQUAKE ends.)

DOOZY:

It's another warning!

FUTZER:

It's worse than before. Gramma...

DOOZY:

Don't say it!

FUTZER:

We're moving out of this cave. Today.

DOOZY:

Oh no we're not.

SPARKY:

Where will we go?

DOOZY:

We're staying right here! Our family has lived in this cave since the beginning. Don't you understand?

FUTZER:

That won't matter if we're all dead!

SPARKY:

I have an idea. I dreamed... we didn't live in a cave. We lived in a huge... "hut."

FUTZER:

What's a "hut"?

(SPARKY picks up a burnt stick from the firepit and uses it to draw a hut on the cave wall. She draws with confidence and swiftness.)

SPARKY:

Like a huge table, with huge top, and tall legs. Look, like this... Lots of room underneath to live. Walls made from trees, and stones, and mud.

DOOZY: *(laughing)*

Why would we live in a huge table when we can live in a cave?

SPARKY:

I don't know. Caves are dark, and smoky; a huge table would have more light... No rocks to fall on us... I don't know. Stupid dream.

FUTZER:

Not stupid. Sparky, you're a smart girl. Keep drawing your dreams on the wall. We need a new place to live. It would take a lot of work to build, but I think we should start. Everyone can help. I know where we can build it.

SCHMUCK:

But the ceremony isn't over! I have to plant man-seeds in Sparky's beetsy!

FUTZER:

Oh—of course. When you're done, we'll go cut some tall poles, and put them against those high rocks to help them stay up. That way—hey, where are all the tools? My tools, they're gone!

(EVERYONE looks at SCHMUCK.)

SCHMUCK:

Don't look at *me*; I didn't take them.

FUTZER:

Dig?

DIG:

Me no take tools!

ABLEY:

Dig, people do mean things when they're angry. Why else would you throw a big branch of Zowie in the fire?

DIG:

Dig no take tools!

FUTZER:

Dig, you live here like family, but if family not trust you, Dig must go away. If you bring back tools, we'll let you stay. Okay? And we need meat for Sparky's feast. Go kill something and bring it back. For Sparky. Show us you're not angry. Understand?

(DIG, in a foul mood and glaring at EVERYONE, takes his spear and exits. Then he returns, pulls a burning twig from the fire, and exits again.)

ABLEY:

Sparky? You ready to mate with Schmuck?

SPARKY: *(encouraging herself)*

Clan needs babies. Do family job. *(Sniffs SCHMUCK again.)* How you smell so pretty?

SCHMUCK:

I washed in the river. And then I rolled around in that field of blue flowers that smell like honey. Then I rolled in some honey.

ABLEY:

Schmuck, you gonna talk all day?

SCHMUCK:

No, ma'am.

DOOZY:

(pulling SCHMUCK towards SPARKY's bed)

Then start squishing, come on.

(SPARKY and SCHMUCK go to her bed and cover themselves. DOOZY does an awkward dance and tosses some dried herbs into the air.)

DOOZY:

Get ready, Ancestors! Mitzy, I know you like to watch! Make a baby, woo! Make a baby, woo! Make a baby, woo....!

(ABLEY and FUTZER join DOOZY in “Make a Baby, woo” chant and ritual dance. DRUMS echo their rhythm as the LIGHTS change.)

Scene 6: Outside the Cave

(DRUMS continue. Frowning DIG lounges on a rock, smoking. The TWINKLING effect begins, but this time the colored images are harsh and jarring. DIG jumps up, upset, and angrily kicks at a shrub. Then he launches into a primitive anger-dance. The DEER-SPIRIT enters, dancing gracefully as before. DIG stops when he sees her, but then begins to copy her movements in his primitive style.)

(The DRUMMING diminishes as she begins to speak...)

DEER-SPIRIT:

Dig, you funny dancer.

DIG:

Deer can talk! Deer understand words?

DEER-SPIRIT:

Just as well as you.

DIG:

How deer stand up and talk?

DEER-SPIRIT:

I am deer *spirit*.

DIG:

What is “spirit”?

DEER-SPIRIT:

Spirit is the living thing you cannot see.

DIG:
Why me see you now?

DEER-SPIRIT:
Because you smoke too much.

DIG:
Because Zowie?

DEER-SPIRIT:
Zowie helps you see and hear the spirit of all things.

DIG:
Dig have spirit too?

DEER-SPIRIT:
Yes.

DIG:
Why you talk to Dig?

DEER-SPIRIT:
You need help. Family sent you away. Dig say goodbye to Sparky forever.

DIG:
What is “forever”?

DEER-SPIRIT:
You know what “forever” means. For all your days, and beyond.

DIG:
No! Dig *want* Sparky. Want squish-squish, want babies... want snuggling with Sparky... *(He tries to grasp the best words in the air with his hands, until finally...)* ...forever.

DEER-SPIRIT:
You are stuck.

DIG:
Stuck? Like, stuck in mud?

DEER-SPIRIT:
Yes, like mud. Only mud is inside you.

DIG:

Inside me! Like poop?

DEER-SPIRIT:

Sort of.

DIG:

So... mud inside... make Dig stupid?

DEER-SPIRIT:

Yes. If you clear away mud, you'll find a good man inside.

DIG:

Good man... *inside?* Hard to understand.

DEER-SPIRIT:

Dig strong? (*DIG grunts in agreement.*) Brave? (*Grunts again.*) Good hunter? (*Grunts "eh."*) Good mate? (*Shrugs and grunts "I dunno."*) Be good papa for babies? (*Grunts emphatically.*)

DIG:

Babies!! (*But then he becomes discouraged.*) No, no babies. Sparky hates Dig. Family hates Dig.

DEER-SPIRIT:

Why?

DIG:

Dig... stinks.

DEER-SPIRIT:

So... wash in the stream.

DIG:

"Dig walks like animal."

DEER-SPIRIT:

Stand up tall. Look up at the sky.

DIG:

"Dig mean."

DEER-SPIRIT:

You can change. Be *canada* instead. [*Can-AW-da = "kind."*]

DIG:

“Canada?” Me not understand. “Dig not understand words.”

DEER-SPIRIT:

You can learn words. But mud inside gets in the way.

DIG:

How Dig make inside-mud go away?

DEER-SPIRIT:

Why Dig smoke Zowie every day?

DIG:

Because... life... ooga hard... and sad.

DEER-SPIRIT:

Zowie is for ceremonies. Too strong to smoke every day.

DIG:

Huh. Only use to see spirit?

DEER-SPIRIT:

Only to see spirit. Stop thinking you are stupid. Stand tall.

(DIG slowly straightens his back and lifts his head.)

See? Now Dig stands up like a man.

DIG:

But how Dig make stupid Stranger go away?

DEER-SPIRIT:

Stranger not stupid. Dig must work hard to be smarter than Stranger.

DIG:

And... must bring dead animal home for feast.

DEER-SPIRIT:

You can take *me*, Dig. I'm a deer.

DIG:

But you have huge spirit!

DEER-SPIRIT:

Everything has huge spirit.

DIG:

Maybe we talk more? Later?

DEER-SPIRIT:

You can talk to spirit whenever you want.

DIG:

Smoke Zowie!

DEER-SPIRIT:

No need for Zowie. When I am dead, my spirit will stay with you. Spirits all around you, Dig. Forever. Take me!

(The DEER-SPIRIT drops to the ground, dead. DRUMS begin; TWINKLING effect ceases.)

DIG:

Deer! Why...? How...? Dig not understand.

(DIG hoists the dead deer onto his shoulders.)

Thank you! *(Exits. DRUMMING increases.)*

Scene 7: Inside the Cave

(FUTZER and ABLEY are working as usual, exhaustedly mumbling “Make a baby, woo!” DOOZY continues to hover near the bed where SPARKY and SCHMUCK are having sex beneath the cover. We hear grunting and SCHMUCK’s orgasm, which makes DOOZY cheer and applaud. Finally the cover is pulled back by SCHMUCK. DRUMMING ends.)

DOOZY:

Hooray! Did you plant lots of man-seeds in her beetsy?

SCHMUCK:

Undoubtedly.

DOOZY:

Ooh. Does that mean Yes?

SCHMUCK: *(gets up and stretches)*

Yes.

DOOZY:

Ooh! Lots of man-seeds makes lots of babies! *(To Ancestors)* Mitzy, did you catch all that? *(To SCHMUCK)* How did it feel? I mean, how many times did you do it?

ABLEY:

Doozy, leave them alone.

DOOZY:

I'm just so excited. I'm gonna go pray some more right now! Make a baby, woo!
Make a baby, woo!... *(She dances up to her shrine.)*

ABLEY: *(sits on SPARKY'S bed)*

Sparky, you okay?

(Miserable SPARKY turns away, wiping away a tear.)

Sparky! What's wrong?

SPARKY:

Nothing's wrong. I'm a woman now. I made my choice. I'll make a baby for the family. Everything's fine.

ABLEY:

Then why you upset—?

SCHMUCK: *(interrupting)*

Where's the food, Abley? A man needs to eat after working so hard!

ABLEY:

I'll... get you something.

(Enter DIG. He places the deer carcass on the table.)

FUTZER:

Dig, how you kill a deer so fast?

DIG:

Um... Dig good hunter! Maybe Sparky choose me now.

SCHMUCK:

Too late! I'm Sparky's mate. The better man won.

DIG:

You not better man!

SCHMUCK:

Ha. I'm better than you in every way. I'll show you. *(Holds up 5 fingers.)* How many fingers am I holding up?

DIG:

All of them!

FUTZER:

He can't count.

SCHMUCK:

I see. Okay, here's a ooga easy test for you, Dig.

DIG:

Test?

SCHMUCK:

Let's say the river runs right through the middle of the cave. And you have a little boat. And let's say that I'm a wolf. And Futzer is a goat. And here's a cabbage. *(He takes one off of Abley's table.)* You have three things: wolf, goat, cabbage. You have to carry them across the river. But your boat is ooga small. You can only carry one thing at a time. How do you do it?

DIG:

Uh... bring wolf. Like this.

(DIG pulls SCHMUCK across the cave.)

SCHMUCK:

Aw, too bad your goat just ate your cabbage.

FUTZER:

Baaaa! Yummy cabbage, nom nom.

DIG:

No!

(DIG drags SCHMUCK back and grabs the cabbage.)

Bring cabbage first!

(DIG runs across the cave with the cabbage.)

SCHMUCK:

Sorry. The wolf just ate your goat.

FUTZER: *(goat voice)*

Ohhh noooo!

(Defeated, DIG returns with the cabbage.)

DIG:
Bring... Does wolf eat cabbage?

SCHMUCK:
No.

DIG:
So... bring goat first!

(DIG drags FUTZER across the cave.)

SCHMUCK:
Then what?

DIG:
Wolf next.

(DIG pulls SCHMUCK across the cave.)

SCHMUCK:
Okay, now your cabbage?

(DIG thinks a moment but is stumped. He takes a few baby steps towards the cabbage.)

FUTZER: *(goat voice)*
Donnn't leeeeeave meeeee!

DIG:
Um... Hey goat, fight the wolf! Don't let him eat you!

(Runs and grabs cabbage.)

SCHMUCK:
Too late. Your goat is dead.

DIG:
Aw, crap-a-doodle-do! Stupid test means nothing! Talking crazy words no make Stranger better man.

FUTZER:
His name is Schmuck.

DIG:
Schmuck. Stupid name. *(Sniffs)* And he smell like flowers! *(Coughs in mild disgust.)*

SCHMUCK:

Look, Dig: I'm smart. I wash. I don't smoke Zowie all day.

DIG:

No more smoke Zowie. Me bring meat for family. Can Schmuck kill deer?

SCHMUCK:

I can easily prove I'm the better man. Futzer, I know what happened to your tools. Dig took them. Last night, after everyone went to sleep. I heard a noise so I pretended to sleep while I watched. I saw him put the tools in a basket and take them outside.

DIG:

No! Why you say? Me not take nothing! Why me take tools?

ABLEY:

Dig, are you angry?

DIG:

Yes! Dig want Sparky! But no, Sparky choose Stranger. Now say Dig take tools. Me no take tools! Why you listen to Stranger but not me?

ABLEY:

It's okay for Sparky to choose Schmuck. You can't be angry at her. She's made her choice.

FUTZER:

We can't *trust* you, Dig. Family must be kept safe.

DIG:

Dig help family be safe. What me do? Tell me, hardest thing to do. What help family? Tell me. Futzer? Stop cave from falling down?

FUTZER:

You can't stop the cave from falling.

DOOZY:

Of course he can! He can make a sacrifice to the Ancestors. When they're happy, no more kajigglers!

DIG:

What mean "sacrifice?"

SPARKY:

That's when you make a gift of something valuable.

DIG:

Me give Ancestors Zowie? Or spear?

DOOZY:

No, dufus. They don't want that crap-a-doodle. A proper sacrifice means giving them... your life.

DIG: (*considers*)

Dig sacrifice life, then family trust Dig?

SCHMUCK: (*laughing*)

Oh yes, Dig. Great idea! Go sacrifice yourself. Then we'll all trust you.

DIG:

Dig ready to sacrifice. Not Stranger.

SCHMUCK:

I can't kill myself. I'm Sparky's mate. I have to make babies with her.

DIG:

See? Stranger not ready! Dig ready!

FUTZER:

Dig, you don't know what you're talking about. Killing yourself doesn't prove anything.

DIG:

Me ready save family!

FUTZER:

But... what if sacrifice *doesn't* stop the rocks from cracking? What if Doozy is wrong?

DOOZY:

Me, wrong? This is what our family's believed forever!

ABLEY:

Mama, we can't let someone kill themselves just because you believe it makes the Ancestors happy.

DIG:

Me believe! *Me* make Ancestors happy!

FUTZER:

Stop it, Dig. You don't understand what you're saying. Your life is worth more than that.

DIG:

Dig’s life worth nothing! Dig should go die. Then... sacrifice save family. (*Goes towards door.*)

FUTZER:

Dig, stop!

SCHMUCK:

Goodbye Dig! The family will always remember your brave sacrifice!

(DIG pauses as he’s hit with a wave of crushing rejection, then turns and exits. SCHMUCK laughs.)

FUTZER:

Schmuck, don’t be mean. We need new tools. I’m gonna show you how to make an axe.

SCHMUCK:

I’ve got a better idea: I should plant more man-seeds in Sparky’s beetsy, don’t you think?

SPARKY:

No.

SCHMUCK:

What do you mean, No?

SPARKY:

You planted man-seeds already.

SCHMUCK:

Not enough, Sparky. It takes lots and lots.

SPARKY:

I said No.

SCHMUCK:

Well, if I say we’re gonna squish now, *I mean now*. Abley, bring me some food. (*ABLEY stares at him quizzically.*) Come on! Why doesn’t anyone listen to me?

ABLEY:

Why should we listen to you?

SCHMUCK:

Because... I think I should make the decisions now.

ABLEY:

You, make decisions for our family? Why you think you can be the boss?

SCHMUCK:

Obviously, because I’m the smartest man in the tribe.

ABLEY:

But that doesn’t mean you’re smarter than the women.

SCHMUCK:

Of course it does. I’m obviously the smartest person here!

FUTZER, SPARKY, DOOZY:

Uh-oh.

(THEY all slide a small step away from ABLEY.)

ABLEY:

Really! I’ve been running this cave for many, many years, and I promise you, I know *ooga-dooga* more smart stuff than you do.

SCHMUCK:

Is that so?

ABLEY:

Can you cut a fish so there’s not one bone left in it? Or pluck every feather off a dead bird? Have you ever made a knife? Or birthed a baby? Have you ever even *started a fire*?

SCHMUCK:

Just because I haven’t done something, doesn’t mean I can’t!

FUTZER:

You can’t say “not” three times like that.

SCHMUCK:

Oh yes I can!

ABLEY:

Listen, Schmuck, I have the final say on every decision around here. That’s something I have *earned*. Besides, why would you *ever* think that men would be better bosses than women?

SCHMUCK:

Because men are... we’re stronger.

ABLEY:

You think you're stronger than me? Show me. (*Assumes an aggressive stance.*)

SCHMUCK:

I'm not going to fight with a woman. Futzer, back me up here?

FUTZER:

Leave me out of this.

ABLEY: (*circling around SCHMUCK*)

I think Dig may be right. Schmuck knows a lot of words and not much else. Sparky, are you sure you want this man to be your mate?

SPARKY:

No. I don't like him, Mama. He was mean to me. He was rough. It hurt.

ABLEY:

Sparky! Why didn't you tell me? Are you okay?

SPARKY:

I'm fine, Mama. But I was wrong to choose Schmuck.

DOOZY:

For a smart man, he's a huge... idiot. Hey, "idiot." Is that a word?

ALL: (*variously*)

"Idiot!" Yeah! Good word! "Huge/Ooga/Stupid idiot!"

SCHMUCK:

I'm no idiot. Dig's the idiot. He probably can't even figure out how to sacrifice himself properly.

ABLEY:

Poor Dig.

FUTZER:

I wish he was still here. We need his help building the hut.

SCHMUCK:

You don't need him. He's useless.

SPARKY:

No he's not. He killed a deer.

DOOZY:

He brings Zowie for the ceremonies.

FUTZER:

He digs the holes that we poop in. Who'll dig our poop-holes now that Dig is gone? I guess that would be you, Schmuck. Everybody here has a job. Here's Dig's shovel. Now *you* can dig. Dig! What's the matter?

SCHMUCK:

I can't dig. It... hurts my back.

ABLEY:

Nothing's wrong with your back. You're just lazy!

SCHMUCK:

But leaders get to make everyone else do all the work.

ABLEY:

You have mud in your ears? You're not in charge. You have a job. So take that shovel and start digging us a new poop-hole.

(SCHMUCK sits and folds his arms in protest.)

FUTZER:

I'm gonna go find Dig.

ABLEY:

I hope you're not too late!

(FUTZER exits with shovel. The OTHERS turn towards SCHMUCK and glare.)

Scene 8: A Desert Cliff

(DRUM beats a slow march. DIG stands alone in the bright, hot sunshine.)

DIG: *(calling)*

Ancestors?? Huge-Self? Anybody? Hmph. Dig need Zowie to talk to spirits. *(He turns to go, then stops himself.)* No. No Zowie. Must make mud inside go away. *(He gets an idea. Furrows his brow in deep thought, squats a bit, and finally, blows a fart. Then shakes his head.)* That not help. *(Takes a deep breath and blows it out.)* Okay. Dig sacrifice to save family! *Everybody watch!* *(He peers into the canyon below.)* Nobody watch. How family know if Dig die? Hmph. Maybe Dig just go away.

Forever. Never come back. No, that no sacrifice. Me know if sacrifice. *Me know.*
(*Huge sigh. He prepares to jump.*)

FUTZER: (*calling from far offstage*)

Dig! ... Dig!

DIG:

I hear you! I knew it! Spirits can hear me!

(*Enter FUTZER breathless from running. He carries the shovel and a hunk of broccoli. DRUMMING stops.*)

FUTZER:

Dig! I found you!

DIG: (*massively disappointed*)

Oh. Hi Futzer. Tell everybody Dig jumped and died.

FUTZER:

Don't jump! Don't jump. You don't have to sacrifice yourself to save the family!

DIG:

But cave fall down if Dig not sacrifice—

FUTZER:

No! Sacrifice is stupid. You want to be smart?

DIG:

Dig not smart. Goat ate cabbage. Wolf ate goat. Wolf... wins. Dig useless. (*Pointing to broccoli*) What's that?

FUTZER:

I stopped by the garden. I thought you'd be hungry. Here.

DIG:

Me no like greens. Yuk.

FUTZER:

Eat it! Go on!

(*DIG reluctantly gnaws on the broccoli. It tastes terrible.*)

Dig, you're not from our family. You look different from us, but I know you are not so different inside.

DIG:

Inside?

FUTZER:

You learned our words. You learned how to dig, and hunt. You can learn more. You have to work at learning. You have to dig, inside. Deep inside you. Look, I brought a shovel.

DIG:

Use shovel to dig *inside*?

FUTZER:

No. I thought—you always dig. You like to dig.

DIG: (*takes shovel*)

Dig outside *and* inside. Dig away mud!

(Starts to enthusiastically dig in the sand.)

FUTZER:

That’s not mud...

DIG:

Mud *inside*. Deer-Antler-Lady explain. Long story. Dig must... (*Grows frustrated, sighs, then changes the subject as the Evolutionary Ripple EFFECT sweeps the stage again.*) Futzer? How... do people learn things?

FUTZER:

How? Umm... Inside your body (*thumps his chest with his fist twice*), there is a *tool*.

DIG:

But inside body, it is... gooey.

FUTZER:

Yes, gooey.

DIG:

There’s a gooey tool inside?

FUTZER:

Yes.

DIG:

Wow.

FUTZER:

There is a gooey tool inside your chest. This is where thinking is made. This is where we learn.

DIG:

(seriously thumps his chest twice)

I can feel it! I can feel learning! What you call the gooey tool?

FUTZER:

Thumper.

DIG:

I feel thumper. Learning. Learn I more.

FUTZER:

“Teach me more.” *(DIG tilts his head like a confused dog.)* Ahh, this is going to be fun.

DIG:

Futzer, explain “okey-pokey.”

FUTZER:

Oh.

DIG:

You want... man, not woman, for squish-squish?

FUTZER:

Yes.

DIG:

You... want to squish with Dig?

FUTZER:

(laughs, then considers)

Does Dig want... to squish... with Futzer?

DIG:

I ask you first.

FUTZER:

When we snuggled last night, it was a mistake. Crazy Zowie smoke mistake.

DIG:

You not like Dig?

FUTZER:

No, no. I like Dig. Ooga. For friend. But... you want woman for mate. Right? You want Sparky?

DIG:

Sparky choose Stranger.

FUTZER:

Listen: Schmuck is not a good man. Schmuck has to go. We need your help.

DIG:

No. Not going back. Sparky not want me. Sparky think Dig is animal.

FUTZER:

You *do* act like an animal. Animals can be cruel to each other. You understand "cruel?" (*DIG thinks, and nods.*) Sparky won't mate with a cruel man.

DIG:

I can be different from cruel. What word means that?

FUTZER:

You can invent one.

DIG:

Canada. I can be canada.

FUTZER:

Good.

DIG:

So, people can learn smart things, but animals can't? Why?

FUTZER:

People are better than animals. Look how different we are. We stand up on our legs; we talk; we plant food; we cook with fire. People are special.

DIG:

Why?

FUTZER:

I don't know why. Ask Doozy.

DIG:

No. *You* tell me, Futzer. You not like what Doozy says.

FUTZER:

The crazy stuff Doozy says is... wrong. Not wrong... Useless.

DIG:

You tell Doozy she is wrong!

FUTZER:

No. Dig... Life is... confusing. Scary. People believe things to make them feel better.

DIG:

“Believe” makes us feel better?

FUTZER:

Yes. Here. (*Thumps his chest twice.*)

DIG:

I thought this (*thumping*) was “learn.”

FUTZER:

Also “feel.” Both.

DIG:

Wow, thumper’s busy. So Doozy feel better when she believes crazy ideas?

FUTZER:

Yes, because she’s afraid.

DIG:

We protect her.

FUTZER:

No, she’s afraid of what will happen when she dies.

DIG:

When she dies, Doozy goes to be with her dead family! (*FUTZER shrugs.*) No? What happens when we die?

FUTZER:

We don’t know. That’s why people are scared of dying, like Doozy. So she talks to Ancestors. That makes her happy.

DIG:

But spirit keeps going!

FUTZER:

What’s “spirit?”

DIG:

New word I learned from deer. Ancestors are spirit. Little-self is spirit. When I die, my spirit keeps going.

FUTZER: (*struggling*)

Ah... Maybe not!

DIG:

Maybe not? When we die, there's just... nothing? Then why work so hard? Why make babies? Why learn things? Why not just smoke Zowie and toss man-seeds in the wind? Would be easier!

FUTZER:

I don't know. A voice tells us to have children. And try to make their lives better than ours.

DIG:

Whose voice?

FUTZER:

The voice is... a feeling. In here (*thumps chest*). If we don't build things, if we stop teaching our children... people will go back to being animals. That feeling inside tells us, *don't stop*.

DIG:

“Don't stop.” Voice is in here. Voice is spirit. (*Thumps chest. FUTZER nods.*) Now voice says... something else.

FUTZER:

What does the voice say?

DIG:

“Kick... Schmuck's... ass.”

FUTZER: (*nods and smiles*)

Let's go.

(*They exit.*)

Scene 9: Inside the Cave

(*DOOZY, ABLEY, and SPARKY are confronting SCHMUCK.*)

ABLEY:

You are not welcome in this clan.

SCHMUCK:

I'm not leaving! I'm Sparky's mate.

SPARKY:

Not any more. *(Retrieves the necklace from around SCHMUCK's neck.)*

SCHMUCK:

But you chose me! The Huge-Self sent me because you prayed! You gotta believe the Huge-Self did the right thing!

SPARKY:

I don't know what to believe! You hurt me. I don't care how smart you are. I do *not* choose you! Go back to your old clan.

SCHMUCK:

I can't go back.

DOOZY:

Because you pissed them off, just like you did us?

SCHMUCK:

They're a bunch of crazy idiots. I knew I was smarter than them, so I tried to be their boss. They tried to kill me! I barely escaped!

ABLEY:

We don't care where you go. Just go.

SCHMUCK:

(fortifying himself as far away from the door as possible)

No! I won't leave. You can't make me.

ABLEY:

Oh yes we can!

(They tackle him. SCHMUCK struggles to push them off. FUTZER and DIG enter.)

FUTZER:

What's going on here?

(DOOZY, ABLEY, and SPARKY step away from SCHMUCK and DIG leaps towards him.)

SCHMUCK:

Look, Dig's home! Aw, did you screw up your sacrifice? What a shame.

(DIG grabs SCHMUCK and starts to strong-arm him towards the door.)

So you're gonna prove you're a better man by throwing me out? All that proves is that you're a big, stupid animal.

(DIG lets him go.)

DIG:

Dig not animal! Dig smart! Look!

(DIG drags FUTZER across the cave.)

I cross river with goat. Then bring wolf.

(DIG drags SCHMUCK across next. Then he drags FUTZER back to the starting point.)

Then bring goat back with me, so wolf no eat goat. Ha-HA! Then bring cabbage.

(Throws the cabbage to SCHMUCK, who catches it.)

Wolf not eat cabbage.

(Drags FUTZER back across.)

Then bring goat. Ha!

SCHMUCK:

Futzer must have explained it.

DIG:

No! Dig smart now!

SCHMUCK:

But what about the tools? Why did he take them? You can't trust him!

DIG:

You lie, Schmuck. Look: I bring deer for family. I sacrifice life for family.

SCHMUCK:

Then why aren't you dead?

DIG:

I was *ready* to sacrifice. Me: ready! You: blah blah blah. A good man does more than just talk. I will find missing tools. Abley, you need help cutting up deer?

ABLEY:

I can do it.

DIG: (*goes to table*)

I can help. (*He picks up the knife, but pauses with knife aloft, and thinks.*) Wait. Deer has spirit.

DOOZY:

What's that? What's "spirit?"

DIG:

New word. All things have life, have spirit. Deer gave its life to us. (*Speaks to the sky.*) Spirit of deer, thank you. Your life gives us life! Your spirit becomes *our* spirit—and part of the Huge-Self. Thank you! (*He looks around at the family, who stare at him in awe.*) What everybody looking at?

SPARKY:

Dig, what happened to you?

DIG:

Me talk to deer. No more Zowie. Clear away mud inside. Futzer explain gooey thumper inside chest. (*Thumps chest twice.*) Here! Now I know how to be a man. Sparky, you want a better mate than Schmuck?

SPARKY:

No, Dig. I'm ooga confused.

DIG:

Why confused?

SPARKY:

I thought praying to the Huge-Self would help me. It didn't. So maybe Huge-Self not listening.

FUTZER:

Sparky, you shouldn't—

DIG: (*with a huge effort*)

Futzer, I can say it. Sparky, Ancestors and Huge-Self, inside us. Here. Not out there. So maybe they not—they *won't*—talk back. We *believe* they hear us, because it makes us feel better. But they don't make us safe from danger.

Crap-a-doodle-do. SPARKY: (*shocked*)

Ha! I say that too. DIG: (*laughs*)

You invented it. SPARKY:

“Crap-a-doodle-do”? DIG:

Yeah, Dig. You said it first. You invent words. SPARKY:

Sparky. I will wash. I will learn new things. I will be a good man. You want me to... DIG:
smell like flowers?

NO! I don't like you, Dig. I don't have to choose you. SPARKY:

You don't like *old* Dig. Old Dig was an animal. New Dig is *canada*. DIG:

What does that mean? SPARKY:

I changed because I want to be a good man. Outside *and* inside. So I can be papa for DIG:
your babies.

Too late again, Dig. I already planted my man-seeds. That will be *my* baby. Sparky, I SCHMUCK:
didn't mean to hurt you. I'm a good man inside. I can be *canada* too!

You scare me, Schmuck. SPARKY:

Abley, you must be lonely. *We* could make babies! Lots of them! SCHMUCK: (*with growing desperation*)

I may be lonely. And I may be sad. And yes, this family needs babies. But I would ABLEY:
never mate with a useless dufus like you.

SCHMUCK:

Futzer? You like... men? Maybe you like *me*?

FUTZER:

You want squish-squish with men?

SCHMUCK:

Not really. But I could learn.

FUTZER:

I ooga doubt that.

SCHMUCK:

Doozy?

DOOZY:

Let me think about it. (*Chokes.*) Ugh, I just threw up a little in my mouth.

SCHMUCK:

I could help take care of your garden.

FUTZER:

You know of our garden?

SCHMUCK:

Of course, how do you think I stay alive? So much grows there, you don't even see when some is gone. Besides, I feel really smart when I eat greens from your garden.

DOOZY:

Eating greens doesn't make you smart.

FUTZER:

Yes, it does. You've been eating from our garden for a long time?

SCHMUCK:

Years. When I eat greens, I feel like a huge fog is lifting and I can think clearly. I could see how different it made me from the rest of my old tribe. I found the garden before I knew where your cave was. I hid and I watched you. Futzer, I saw you planting seeds. And Dig bringing water. Once I even protected the garden from a thief.

FUTZER:

A thief?

SCHMUCK:

Yeah, one day a man came and started pulling the plants out of the ground. So I jumped up, tried to scare him away. But he wouldn't go, and he attacked me. So I hit him. With a rock.

SPARKY:

You—you killed him?

SCHMUCK:

Yes indeed, I saved the garden!

ABLEY:

Did the man have black hair, and a gap in his teeth, and a big scar across this eyebrow?

SCHMUCK:

Yeah! Wow, how did you know that?

*(ABLEY puts her hand to her mouth—she's overwhelmed with grief.
SPARKY goes to comfort her.)*

FUTZER:

You killed Luka. He was Abley's mate. Sparky's papa.

SCHMUCK:

He was from your tribe? Well, I didn't know that! I hadn't found your cave yet. I didn't know him. He didn't look like you. I thought he was a thief!

DIG:

You stole from our garden. And Luka tried to stop you. So you killed him! And you buried him in the ground, so we couldn't find him?

FUTZER:

Is that what happened?

SCHMUCK:

Yes! But I was trying to save the garden! I would never have hurt him if I'd known he was from your tribe.

DIG:

But you didn't tell us. Even after you started watching us. You saw how sad Abley was when Luka never came home.

SCHMUCK:

I thought—I thought—

FUTZER:

What?

SCHMUCK:

I thought when you saw how smart I am, you'd want me to be your boss, and Sparky's mate. Or Abley's. But no, stupid Dig had to make me look like a bad man.

DOOZY:

Dig didn't do that. *You* did.

SCHMUCK:

He couldn't even find the missing tools!

DIG:

I found the tools. Was easy! You didn't bury them ooga deep.

SCHMUCK:

I didn't have time to bury them deep—

DIG:

Aha! Schmuck says he took the tools!

ABLEY:

Get out of here. I can't even look at you.

SCHMUCK:

Sparky, you chose me! We have to make a baby. Come with me! Now!

SPARKY:

No! You killed my papa!

DIG:

Stay away from her!

(SCHMUCK grabs SPARKY, wrapping his arms around her from behind. She yells, and he covers her mouth with her hand.)

Let go of her!

SCHMUCK:

No! Sparky's going to come with me! We'll start our own clan!

(SPARKY bites his hand. He yelps in pain and lets go of her; she quickly moves away from him.)

SPARKY:

Don't ever touch me again!

ABLEY:

Get out!

SCHMUCK:

I—I don't have anywhere to go! I—

(DIG points his spear at SCHMUCK.)

DIG:

Schmuck not listening. You don't belong here. You're a mean, stupid... *ass-butt*. Hey Futzer, is that a word?

FUTZER:

It is now.

DIG:

Go, ass-butt. *Go!!*

(SCHMUCK taunts DIG to throw his weapon, jumping nimbly as DIG takes aim. DIG throws his spear at SCHMUCK, but it misses.)

SCHMUCK:

Ha! You are such a useless idiot!

(SCHMUCK reaches for the fallen spear, but DIG roars and grabs SCHMUCK by the neck. He is about to choke SCHMUCK, but then he freezes.)

DIG:

Should I kill him?

FUTZER & ABLEY:
No!

DOOZY & SPARKY: (*simultaneous*)
Yes!

DIG:

An animal would kill him.

DOOZY:

Sometimes animals know best.

DIG:

Animals are cruel. I'm not cruel. Futzer? What does a good man do?

FUTZER:

A good man doesn't kill other men.

SPARKY:

But, Futzer, he might come back and kill us!

FUTZER:

Dig, you understand better than me. You knew the ways of animals before you learned to be a good man. Animals aren't just cruel. They make good rules too. You must choose. Listen to the voice inside.

DIG:

Voice say... not kill. (*He lets go of SCHMUCK.*) Go. Away from cave, away from us. If I see you anywhere, I will kill you. Forever.

SCHMUCK: (*defeated, goes to the door*)

I still have your tools. Only I know where they are. Do you think I'm giving them back? They're mine now. I have knives, and axes.

DIG:

Hey Schmuck! I just gave you your life! Now you tell my family you come back to kill them? Something wrong inside your thumper! I make a new word: "schmuck" means "stupid ass-butt."

SCHMUCK:

Dig, you'll always be a stupid, grunting animal, just pretending to be smart.

SPARKY:

You're the animal, Schmuck.

ABLEY:

Get out of here.

(SCHMUCK glares, defeated, and exits.)

DOOZY:

What a schmuck.

ABLEY:

I hate that schmuck.

DIG:

I should have killed him. Why does being a good man feel stupid?

FUTZER:

Not stupid. Canada. Ooga canada! Being a good man not always easy.

DIG:

Sparky, I feel bad for you. About your papa.

SPARKY:

Thanks.

DIG:

But his little-self will visit you in your dreams, right?

SPARKY:

I don't know. I don't know what to believe.

DIG:

Sparky, when I was mean... when I put rocks in your bed. And spiders. Or burned your hair... I did because I like you. I was stupid. I'm sorry. Right, "sorry"? I won't hurt you... forever. I promise. Is that a good word? "Promise?"

SPARKY: (*nods*)

I was wrong to choose Schmuck. I didn't know what a good man you were, inside. You would make a good papa for babies.

DIG:

What?

SPARKY:

I choose you, Dig.

DIG:

You want Dig for mate?

SPARKY:

If you promise to wash.

DIG:

Woo-hoo! Yes! Dig ooga happy now! I mean—I'm ooga happy. We do say "ooga" too much. How about—"verily." Yeah, I am so *verily* happy.

(DIG and SPARKY hug. EVERYONE is pleased. DIG sloppily kisses SPARKY on the mouth.)

SPARKY:

Ew, what's that?

DIG:

I learned from wolf cubs. I call it a "smack."

SPARKY:

Well it's gross! I said you could be my mate. I didn't say you could eat my face.

DIG:

I have such big feeling in my thumper! Must make new word for it. I feel... huge... happy... *globe*.

SPARKY:

“Globe?”

FUTZER:

What's “globe?”

DIG:

Globe is huge happy in chest. In thumper.

DOOZY:

Well, that's the stupidest word I've ever heard.

DIG: (*hugs DOOZY*)

Oh come on, Doozy. I want you to feel globe!

DOOZY:

Put me down! I don't want anybody's globe. Now leave me alone. If the two of you are going to mate, we need a proper ceremony.

DIG:

Ceremony! Yes! I was thinking of a new beat for our dance. Something like:

(HE claps out a modern beat. DRUMS begin. EVERYONE starts to join in—except DOOZY.)

And I thought up a new song, goes like:

(DIG sings a fresh, wordless song. It repeats. EVERYONE joins in, and it instantly develops a harmony, like the way “Rose, Rose, Rose Red” becomes a round. EVERYONE keeps harmonizing as DIG sings a lyric. DOOZY glowers.)

Dig... Dug... Down... Deep...
Found his little-self asleep.
Washed away the mud inside.
Dig woke up, eyes open wide.

Promised Sparky he could maybe
Be the papa of her baby.
Promised to protect his clan.
Learned to be a better man.

(ALL join in a repeat of the first half. Then DIG repeats the second half solo again to a rousing ending.)

Aw, don't be mad, Doozy.

DOOZY:

Just throw away all our traditions, just like that? I can't turn my back on my parents, and their parents. Aunt Mitzy's gonna kick my ass! We've made them ooga-dooga angry.

FUTZER:

Mama, you're making yourself crazy.

DOOZY:

They'll punish me! All of us! And it's all your fault! All of you!

ABLEY:

Mama, please calm down. Everything's going to be fine.

(EARTHQUAKE. A really big one. LOUD DRUMMING. Trembling, EVERYONE rushes for the door, except for DOOZY, who stubbornly shakes her fist.)

DOOZY:

I knew it! I knew it! Aughhhhhh—!

(BLACKOUT. LOUD, SICKENING CRASHES.)

Scene 10: Outside the Cave

(LIGHTS UP: SUNSET. RUMBLING continues. Enter SPARKY, FUTZER, and ABLEY, trembling. The EARTHQUAKE and DRUMMING finally end.)

ABLEY:

Doozy, where's Doozy?

FUTZER:

And Dig? DIG! Where are you?

ABLEY:

Mama, where are you? Can you hear me?

SPARKY:

They must be inside.

FUTZER:

Doozy! Dig! If you can hear me, say something! Everyone, dig! Move the rocks!

(They try to move the boulders. As they struggle, DIG appears from the rubble, carrying DOOZY, who's barely conscious.)

Dig!

ABLEY:

Mama! Are you all right?

(DIG sets DOOZY down. He rubs one of her hands tenderly.)

Doozy, are you okay?

DOOZY:

No thanks to you. Crazy family. Dig saved me.

FUTZER:

It's mojo-juju.

SPARKY:

Mojo-juju? Futzer! You prayed to the Huge-Self?

ABLEY:

I thought you didn't believe in mojo-juju.

FUTZER:

Mojo-juju means something different. It's not a gift from invisible spirits. It's when good things happen for no reason.

DOOZY:

There was a perfectly good reason!

FUTZER:

No, Mama. Angry Ancestors didn't send a kajiggler just to prove you were right. Sometimes kajigglers just happen. Praying to invisible spirits won't protect you from falling rocks.

DOOZY:

Then you should have let me die. Nobody believes in the Old Ways. Nobody needs me. Dig, throw me back under the rocks.

SPARKY:

Gramma, why do you want to die?

DOOZY:

Because... I miss my family. I want to see them again.

ABLEY:

You've got plenty of family right here.

DOOZY:

But when we sing the old songs, they're all around me. My mother, and my grandmother. Even Mitzi and I had fun adventures. I miss them every day. I looked at their faces on the wall, every day. Now that the cave is gone, we'll forget them all.

SPARKY:

When we make a new home, I'll paint their faces on the wall. And you can tell me all their names.

DOOZY:

You will?

SPARKY:

And your face too, Gramma. All our faces. For our children to look at. Now I understand why.

FUTZER:

We'll keep singing the old songs, Doozy. We won't forget them.

DOOZY:

Dig can sing some new songs too. He has a nice voice. I need some Zowie.

DIG:

I'll get my pipe. But... you don't need Zowie to see and hear spirits. They're always listening.

SPARKY:

Then I will keep praying to the Huge-Self. And... to the Ancestors, too.

ABLEY:

Me too.

FUTZER:

Me too.

DIG:

And I’m going to thank them. Every day. For everything.

ABLEY:

But we lost everything. All our tools, and animal skins, and meat...

FUTZER:

We can make more tools. We’ll build a—a—what do you call it, Sparky?

SPARKY:

A “hut.” Can you build a really tall lottery, Futzer? I want to build something really tall.

FUTZER:

Me too! We’ll build it as tall as we can reach! All the way up to the stars.

ABLEY:

Good thing we still have our garden for food.

DIG:

And a good hunter for meat.

SPARKY:

I’ll make more baskets. And bowls. And I’ll make babies. It’s my job. I think I hear that little voice. What does it say?

DIG/FUTZER/ABLEY:

“Don’t stop.”

DIG:

Let’s make a fire, before it gets dark.

(SCHMUCK enters sheepishly. He carries the missing basket of tools.)

SCHMUCK:

Here, these are for you.

DIG:

Get away from us.

SCHMUCK:

I brought your tools. The tools I stole. *(He sets down the basket.)* If I hadn’t taken them, they’d have been lost in the cave, right?

DIG:

Shut up, ass-butt.

SCHMUCK:

Yeah, you're right, I *am* an ass-butt. I'm sorry your cave collapsed. I'm sorry Doozy is dead.

DOOZY:

I'm still alive!

SCHMUCK:

I'm sorry I killed Luka. I'm sorry I hurt you. All of you. Especially Sparky.

DIG:

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry." You are... useless. Worse than useless. (*Picks up a large stone and approaches aggressively.*)

SCHMUCK:

Don't kill me! Please!

DIG:

Why not? You killed a man. You might kill us all.

SCHMUCK:

My old tribe was so violent... Violence was how they solved everything. I didn't mean to kill Luka! I wish I hadn't!

DIG:

Empty words! Show you are a man by doing things! A man should be brave, and strong, and *canada*, and full of *globe*. You're not any of those things.

SCHMUCK:

Please let me stay!

DIG:

Why?

SCHMUCK:

A small family needs people to help. I can help. You need smart people! Everybody in my old clan hurt and killed each other and they didn't care—about anything. That was all I knew. That's why I like your family. I can learn how to be a good person. I need to understand *how* to be good. Do you understand what I'm saying, Dig? (*DIG nods 'yes' but he's still angry.*) You can teach me how to... globe.

DIG:

Now your turn to learn to be a man. I will teach.

(DIG thumps his chest twice. SCHMUCK does it in response. EVERYONE looks at one another, and gradually they nod in agreement. The sky darkens now that the sun has set. Twinkling stars appear. Subdued DRUMMING begins. DIG kneels to rub sticks together for a campfire.)

ABLEY:

And who is the boss of this family?

SCHMUCK:

You are, Abley. I promise, I'll do whatever you say.

ABLEY:

Gather some firewood.

SCHMUCK:

Yes, ma'am. I think the best firewood is over by the—

DIG:

And shut your mouth. Blah blah blah! Just listen. Don't talk. What's wrong, Sparky?

SPARKY:

I'm afraid.

DIG:

Of what?

SPARKY:

Everything. Sometimes I think... the more things I understand, the more I worry about everything.

DIG:

Sparky, don't worry. I'm here. We're going to be fine.

FUTZER:

Better than fine. “Mojo-juju.”

DIG: *(nods)*

Verily... mojo-juju.

(The fledgling spark bursts into flame. DRUMMING continues. ALL hum their first ceremonial song. SCHMUCK adds his kindling to the fire; the flames grow higher. DIG takes out his pipe and prepares to smoke.)

ABLEY:

Dig... save Zowie for ceremony.

DIG:

This IS ceremony.

(DIG smokes, then passes the pipe to DOOZY. TWINKLING EFFECT begins. The clan's harmony increases in volume. DEER-SPIRIT enters and dances with the family. BLACKOUT.)

(LIGHTS UP FOR BOWS.)