

Our Lady of Entropy

A full-length play

By Drew Petriello

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CAST

WANDA VENISON: Female. Mid 30s. Black. Oldest sibling. Adopted at birth. An ER doctor at St. Cajetan's General Hospital in Philadelphia. Has trouble giving up control. Burning full of conviction. Very clear-eyed, but has a habit of hyper-fixating on problems she cannot find the answers to. Somewhat recently divorced. Hasn't visited her family in years.

QUENTIN DURGESS: Male. 50s-70s. A grand villain. A eugenicist from the early 1900s with a firm belief that he is going to usher in a new era for humanity. He was the founder of St. Cajetan's, where Wanda works, as well as St. Durgess' Research Hospital where the majority of the play takes place. Wears a bloody burlap sack with eye holes.

ZADIE PALATIAL: Female. 50s-70s. An experienced ER doctor. Wanda's mentor, once. She is horribly broken by her experiences in the ER, but has learned to manage it and keep professionalism at the forefront. Wears an owl mask.

BRODERICK FREDERICKSON: Male. 30s. Wanda's ex-husband. A philosopher and novelist. So he claims. He's just a failed academic. Has a nihilistic worldview and seems to get off on depressing people. Wears a Phantom of the Opera mask.

JAMES (SIZZLE) VENISON III: Male. Late 20s. Wanda's brother, the youngest child. Witty, charming, and addicted to opiates. He's OD'd and been to rehab several times. Although he still is taking opiates, he's doing so at a much lower level than before. Lives with his parents. Wears an Arlecchino mask.

MAISIE COOPER: Female. Early 30s. Wanda's sister, the middle child. Gifted with an imaginative mind, she mostly uses it to concoct outlandish conspiracy theories. A hyper-paranoid gun-nut, she self-published a book outlining her conspiracy ideas called: *We Sought the Panacea, but Embraced the Void: Hospitals and their Role in the Coming Pacification of Mankind*. Wears a Colombina mask.

PETRA VENISON: Female. 60s. Wanda's mother. A deeply religious woman, she's a Catholic with a personal relationship with God. This makes her a heretic, but she doesn't see herself that way. She believes she has a divine role to play and is concerned for the souls of her family. Wears a nun's habit.

JAMES VENISON II: Male. 60s. Wanda's father, Burgundy's brother. Owner of the Venison Hobby Vault. Obsessed with the Venison legacy and is exceedingly proud of the accomplishments of his family and himself. Really likes the idea of having his name on things. Insists on being called James II. Wears a Pantalone mask.

VIRGINIA VENISON: Female. 90s. Wanda's grandmother on her father's side. A kind woman who gave all her love to her family, only to realize that her love may never be returned. Wears an il Dottore mask.

GAIL VENISON-WINCHESTER: Female. 30s-40s. Wanda's cousin on her father's side. Burgundy's daughter. Married rich, but also inherited a substantial amount of wealth from one of her stepfathers. A savvy investor, she is quite risk-averse. She's on the board of a handful of companies. Enjoys scheming and sees business as a game. Never properly came to grips with her mother's suicide from when she was a teenager. Wears a Scaramouche mask.

BURGUNDY VENISON: Female. 40s. Wanda's aunt, Gail's mother, James II's sister. Committed suicide after a string of failed relationships. Always seeking the love of someone else, never able to give it to herself. She has so much love to give and always puts her all into romantic relationships. Wears a black fabric sack with eyeholes.

AMBROSIA (AMBER) GOSLING: Female. 17. Wanda's best friend from high school. Committed suicide due to an unstable home life and untreated depression. She had ambitions of being a poet and singer/songwriter. She feels deeply and is often quiet. Wears a white fabric sack with eyeholes.

THE CHILD: Male. 9. Is not played by an actor, but is rather a puppet operated by one or more of the Patients. Has a gray cloth sack with two eyeholes over his head. His throat is torn and bloody.

THE NURSE: Any gender. 20s-60s. Seems to do all the goddamn work around St. Durgess' Research Hospital. Always impeccably put together. Has a face mask over their mouth and nose.

THE PATIENTS: There are five patients which comprise the ensemble. Patients wear scrubs underneath a patient gown. They all wear surgeon masks with eyeholes cut in them over their eyes. All characters except for Wanda and the Nurse are played by the Patients. Each Patient is assigned a color. How the color manifests in costume design is open for discretion so long as the design decision is consistent across all patients. For instance, scrubs and gowns may be the same gray color, but the face masks are colored for each patient. Racially diverse casting is encouraged.

BLUE: Female. Plays PETRA, and GAIL.

RED: Male. Plays SIZZLE.

BROWN: Female. Plays DR. PALATIAL, MAISIE, and BURGUNDY.

GRAY: Male. Plays DR. DURGESS, BRODERICK, and JAMES II.

GREEN: Female. Plays VIRGINIA and AMBER.

SETTING

With few exceptions, the play takes place at various locations inside St. Durgess' Research Hospital.

Staging is abstract and representational throughout. The barest number of props and set pieces should be used to suggest the location of a scene. If desired, the name of the location can be projected.

There is a microphone on stage at all times. It is out of the way of the action.

THE MASK WALL: Masks hang on the back wall of the stage. Each one corresponds to a character/location in Saint Durgess' Research Hospital, which is displayed with the mask. When a Patient becomes one of the other characters, they remove the appropriate mask from the mask wall. The masks are arranged in the layout of the hospital and correspond as follows:

(mask type/character/location)

Bloody Burlap Sack/Dr. Durgess/Determination Ward

Owl/Dr. Palatial/Emergency Room

Colombina/Maisie/Radiology

Arlecchino/Sizzle/Pharmacy

Scaramouche/Gail/Luxury Suites

Pantalone/James II/Legacy Hall

Il Dottore/Virginia/Garden

Phantom/Broderick/Surgery

Masks not included on the wall:

Habit/Petra

White sack/Amber

Black sack/Burgundy

Gray sack/The Child

Masks on wall that correspond to a location, but no character:

Plague Doctor/Lab

Gas Mask/Lobby

Masks on wall that do not correspond to either a character or location:

Brighella
Zorro
Lion
Knight's Helmet

OTHER NOTES:

THE MECHANICS OF THE PATIENTS: When a Patient becomes another character, they remove the patient gown and replace it with a lab coat. They also remove their masks and replace it with the appropriate character's mask from the wall. The Patients (and Nurse) double as stage hands and are responsible for scene changes. Furthermore, they can step out of character as the needs of the production mandate.

MASKS: Some masks required are commedia del'arte masks, some are not. Regardless, all masks are to be half masks where the mouth is never covered. This may entail adjusting the traditional shape of the masks.

REALISM: Some events in this play would be difficult and not worth the effort to attempt in a naturalistic style. Do not be afraid of theatricality.

TRANSITIONS: To aid in the many rapid transitions, props and scenery should be kept to a minimum. It is recommended to keep blackouts to a minimum as well. There are many ways to go about this and here are a few of my suggestions: scene changes can be done by actors in full view of the audience and the transition can begin before a scene is properly over, perhaps being done in slow increments over the full course of a scene; the stage can be partitioned into halves or thirds so the scene can be set in the dark parts of the stage while another scene is playing out; one could even incorporate a revolving stage. **The audience should never feel like they're waiting for the next scene to be set. Transitions must maintain a rapid flow and pace.**

ACT I

VENISON SLIDING DOWN THE DRAIN

Wanda lays motionless in a bathtub, arm
dangling over the side. She wears scrubs. Beside
her hand rests an overturned and empty bottle
of Zolpidem. Generic for Ambien.

The Patients stir in the dark. They edge closer
to Wanda, encircling the bathtub.

Green picks up the pill bottle. Examines it.
Starts to tap it rhythmically against the bathtub.

GREEN

Sleeping pills are a coward's way to go.

BROWN

Gives you psychosis, this job.

RED

I don't think she's gone.

PATIENTS

Zolpidem. Generic for Ambien.

Brown and Blue make long, droning, harmonized
tones.

GRAY

She'll slide down the drain before she knows it.

PATIENTS

She'll slide down the drain before she knows it.

BROWN

Gives you psychosis, this job.

GREEN

Sleeping pills are a coward's way to go.

RED

She's not yet gone --
Behold... behold!
Wanda Venison stirs!

PATIENTS

Wanda Venison's still alive.

GREEN

It was a coward's way to go anyway.

PATIENTS

Wanda stirs!

Wanda groans, coughs weakly.

The Patients are silent.

Green taps the pill bottle against the bathtub
faster.

GREEN

Coward's way to go.

BROWN

Gives you psychosis, this job.

RED

She stirs, she stirs!

GRAY

She'll slide down the drain before she knows it.

BLUE

Zolpidem. Generic for Ambien.

RED

Her foot... her foot!
Such a shock, such a jolt!
A spasm in her foot!

Wanda's foot spasms.

GRAY

She'll slide down the drain if she's not careful.

BLUE

Zolpidem. Generic for --

(emits a single high tone)

GREEN

Coward's way to --

(emits a single low tone, harmonizing
with Blue)

BROWN

Gives you psychosis, this --

(emits a tone higher than Blue's, still in
harmony)

RED

Such a shock, such a jolt!
A spasm in her foot!

Wanda's foot spasms -- it bumps the bathtub's
water faucet.

Water runs.

RED

(repeating under the following)

A spasm in her foot
The water runs

GRAY

She'll slide down the drain! The drain! The drain!

(the final "drain" is extended into a single high pitched tone discordant with the other notes being sung)

The chanting, the notes, the pill bottle tapping reach a fever pitch.

GRAY

Venison sliding down the drain!

Gray lifts the tub, standing it on the faucet end. The Patients fall silent.

Wanda falls out of the tub. The Patients catch her.

Water runs. It is an all consuming sound.

The Patients tip Wanda back into the bathtub.

Gray turns the tub away from the audience, still keeping it upright.

The tub faces front. Wanda wears a patient's gown.

Wanda falls out of the tub. The Patients catch her.

The Patients lift Wanda over their heads.

The Nurse wheels on a hospital bed with arm and leg straps.

The the Patients carry her towards the hospital bed, stepping in rhythm and chanting:

PATIENTS

Down the drain
 Through the open vein
 Down the drain
 Through the open vein

The mask wall is now visible.

Gray becomes Dr. Durgess. He stays facing the mask wall.

The Patients place Wanda on her feet in front of the bed.

The running water is overwhelming.

The Patients tip Wanda back. She falls into bed.

The Patients strap her to the bed.

DETERMINATION WARD 1

Wanda sleeps, strapped to a hospital bed.

Green is also strapped to one. Dr. Durgess and the Nurse stand over her.

GREEN

Dr. Durgess, no...!

This wakes Wanda up. As she comes to her senses, she watches the following distantly, as though a dream, then with increasing lucid horror.

Dr. Durgess cuts Green's throat with a scalpel.

DR. DURGESS

Down the drain with that one. Nurse. Bring this patient to the morgue.

Wanda recognizes Dr. Durgess from somewhere, but... where? How? The name is familiar...

The Nurse starts to wheel Green away.

DR. DURGESS

Make a note for her file -- her removal from the gene pool was necessary for two reasons: first, her poor stock; second she was a danger to us all. She opened a window and let outside air into St. Durgess' Research Hospital. Animal.

The Nurse nods, finishes wheeling Green away.

Dr. Durgess turns his back on Wanda. He cleans the scalpel.

Wanda quietly tries to slip out of bed. It's at this point she realizes she's restrained.

Wanda coughs.

Dr. Durgess cuts himself with the scalpel. He looks at his hand.

DR. DURGESS

I've cleaned my instruments who knows how many times. This is the first I've ever cut myself. I suppose the experiment is already underway.

Wanda tries to say "What experiment?" but nothing comes out. She tries again, tries to make other sounds, but gets the same result.

DR. DURGESS

Yes, I'd considered that speech blockage may be a side effect of the operation. Where are my manners? I am Dr. Quentin Durgess, which I am sure you already knew, given that you work at the hospital I founded. And you are Wanda Venison, an emergency room doctor at St. Cajetan's General Hospital in Philadelphia. St. Cajetan's has strayed from their original research-oriented purpose, I'm afraid, as the lesser stock have overrun the place since my untimely passing. I am pleased to formally welcome you to St. Durgess' Research Hospital. Now, I know your kind are more easily emotionally disturbed, and I am reminding you of this fact before divulging information pertinent to the upcoming experimentation.

Wanda scowls at him.

DR. DURGESS

There is a certain... object I had the surgeon insert betwixt your vocal cords. I am intrigued to see the ways it integrates with the human body. I am especially excited to have obtained a sturdy negress for the experimentation, as if there is one advantage your race has over the white one, it is that your pain tolerance is significantly higher.

(sinister laugh)

Yes, I look so forward to the ways the --

Wanda coughs.

RED

(at microphone)

Owing to a genetic defect

Eugenicist Dr. Quentin Durgess suffers a sudden and fatal stroke

Wanda stares at the corpse of Dr. Durgess.

She tries to call for someone. Still can't speak.

She fights her restraints until she has a coughing fit.

One of her wrist restraints snaps.

She undoes the rest of her restraints, hops out of bed.

She flexes muscles, prods herself, slaps herself a couple of times. She is not convinced that this is reality, but is convinced that this *feels like* reality.

She takes the scalpel from the floor. Ponders the scalpel.

She places the blade against her wrist.

Holds it there.

Brings it up against her throat.

She takes a deep breath before lowering the blade.

Wanda spies the mask wall. Examines it.

She stalks out of the determination ward, scalpel raised like a dagger.

HALLWAY

Blue rocks on the ground.

Wanda enters, scalpel ready.

BLUE

You got any Oxy?

Wanda shakes her head “no”.

BLUE

The pharmacy’s out. C’mon, I need some Oxy.

Wanda shakes her head “no” again. She waves the scalpel in warning.

Blue lunges for Wanda.

BLUE

Give me some! I know you’ve got to have some!

Wanda skewers Blue in the palm with the scalpel.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

Back off! I don’t have any!

(beat)

Why are you saying that...? I want to say that... I'm trying to say that... you're saying the words I'm trying to say... what's going on in this -- ?

Blue pulls away. Wanda continues trying to talk, but nothing comes out.

BLUE
(blubbering)

Why you gotta be so mean?

Blue curls up fetal.

Wanda gazes at the scalpel.

She skulks offstage.

EMERGENCY ROOM 1

Green thrashes in her hospital bed, making it difficult for Dr. Palatial to get an intubator in her.

Red, also on a hospital bed, wails and rocks back and forth to cope with pain. The Nurse does what they can to comfort him. Gray holds his hand.

Wanda enters, scalpel up. Everyone is too preoccupied to notice her.

RED

I was... just... trying to shoo... the... the possum away and then there just -- there just...

DR. PALATIAL

There there... I promise you, I've performed this procedure thousands of times. Calm...

Wanda is surprised to recognize Dr. Palatial.

GRAY

It's going to be okay, hun-bun. You're doing great.

RED
THERE IS A BONE STICKING OUT OF MY LEG!

DR. PALATIAL
(finishing the intubation)
Good... it's all good, you're going to be okay.

There is a rare moment of peace in the ER.

Wanda waves at Dr. Palatial.

DR. PALATIAL
Wanda? Is that you? What are you doing here?

Wanda coughs.

Red clutches his chest. He takes a few ghastly breaths. His back arches, whole body tenses.

DR. PALATIAL
(giggling)
He's going into cardiac arrest... he's going into cardiac arrest!

Dr. Palatial doubles over with laughter.

The Nurse finds a defibrillator.

DR. PALATIAL
(on the tail end of her fit)
Sorry... sorry...

The Nurse shocks Red with the defibrillator pads. His body spasms.

Wanda places a hand on Dr. Palatial's shoulder.

DR. PALATIAL
Thank you.

The Nurse shocks Red again.

DR. PALATIAL

I warned you about becoming an ER doctor. You do it long enough and you start to develop psychosis. I'm sorry you witnessed that.

Wanda coughs again.

The Nurse shocks Red one more time.

BLUE

(at microphone)

Malfunction in the pads
Jagged, coarse, grinding up his nerves
Such a shock, such a jolt
You can't believe the smell
His brain, it boils in his skull

Red is dead.

Silence.

Dr. Palatial erupts into peals of laughter.

GRAY

Reggie...?

Wanda attempts to soothe Dr. Palatial with her touch, but she is lost in a manic fit of laughter.

The Nurse wheels Red offstage. Gray climbs onto the bed and hugs Red's corpse.

GRAY

Reggiiiiiiiiieeeee!

DR. PALATIAL

(laughing so hard she's hacking)

I told you, Wanda! When you were my... when you were my student...

(burst of giggles)

Hundred percent burnout rate in the profession!

(burst of witch-like cackles)

Gives you psychosis, this job! Gives you psychosis!

Dr. Palatial's laughs are wheezes. They become sobs. Wanda strokes Dr. Palatial's back.

DR. PALATIAL

It's just... death... in the strike of a match, everything changes...

(pulls herself together with a deep
breath)

Sometimes I imagine the afterlife is full of clouds and rainbows and bunnies.

(beat)

My brain is horribly broken. We all need delusions to get through the day, but you can't let them control you. That's, uh... that's the balance.

(beat)

I can't handle this hospital anymore. But, now that you're here... Wanda, I think we have chance to bring him down.

Wanda looks at her quizzically.

DR. PALATIAL

Dr. Durgess. The monster that runs this place. I've been working to undermine him, but I can't do it alone. Only you, Wanda, can... what's gotten into you?

Wanda is desperately trying to recount the events that have happened since she woke up, but again, she cannot speak.

DR. PALATIAL

Don't burst a vein, darling. I have a pad and pen here somewhere...

Wanda takes hold of Dr. Palatial's wrist. Wanda makes sure Dr. Palatial is looking into her eyes. Do you trust me?

Wanda brings up the scalpel blade. She holds Dr. Palatial's open hand.

Dr. Palatial eyes Wanda, uncertain.

Wanda softens. Again, with her eyes -- do you trust me?

Dr. Palatial nods.

Wanda gently sinks the scalpel blade into Dr. Palatial's hand.

DR. PALATIAL
(as Wanda)

Is it working? It's working!

Wanda withdraws the scalpel, she admires the blade.

DR. PALATIAL
Amazing! Now, how to deal with Dr. Durgess, that devil..

Wanda signals for Dr. Palatial to open up her hand.

She does.

Wanda gently stabs her palm.

DR. PALATIAL
(as Wanda)
He suffered a stroke. Instantly fatal. Just like that.

Wanda removes the scalpel.

DR. PALATIAL
Really? That's... I mean, I'm elated, but also that's... unsatisfying? He had such an iron hold over this hospital, you see, a dominant presence, a nemesis if I ever had one, and to be extinguished... just like that...

Wanda coughs.

Green starts to choke with the intubator on.

DR. PALATIAL
(giggles a little)
Oh my goodness... remove the intubator.

Wanda does.

Dr. Palatial peers into Green's mouth as she struggles to breathe.

DR. PALATIAL

We must perform a tracheotomy. Pass me the scalpel.

Wanda tenses.

DR. PALATIAL

Pass me the scalpel.

Wanda starts to panic. She draws away.

DR. PALATIAL

It's simply a routine tracheotomy.

(she tries to suppress an unwanted snigger)

Pass me the scalpel or she'll --

Wanda coughs.

RED

(at microphone)

A lighting fixture snaps

It falls upon the noble Palatial

She is dead and crushed, crushed and dead

Wanda goes to Dr. Palatial and confirms that she's dead. She shakes her, as if that'll do anything.

Green continues to choke and suffocate.

Wanda looks from the scalpel to the suffocating Green.

RED

It's just a routine tracheotomy, Wanda

What's the matter, Wanda?

You're sliding down the drain, Wanda
 Down the drain
 Through the open vein

Wanda fails to stop her hand from shaking. She
 edges closer to Green.

The Child appears.

Startled, Wanda coughs.

Green hacks a poppy flower into her hands.

GREEN

Ugh... nasty...

Green flops down, exhausted, but breathing
 normally. She lets the poppy fall.

The Child approaches Wanda.

Wanda seems to accept something. She offers
 the scalpel for him to take.

The Child reaches out for the scalpel --

Someone's coming. The Child vanishes, Wanda
 hides behind a hospital bed.

Petra enters, swinging a thurible. She stands
 beside Dr. Palatial's corpse.

PETRA

Our Father which art in heaven,
 Hallowed be Thy name.
 Thy kingdom come.
 Thy will be done in earth,
 as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread.
 And forgive us our debts,
 as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil:
 For Thine is the kingdom, and the power,
 and the glory, for ever.
 Amen.

Petra crosses herself, then exits.

Wanda flips over the hospital bed. She kicks it
 several times.

GREEN

Got something against Catholics?

Wanda ignores her. She goes to the mask wall
 and thinks over her next move.

She exits, scalpel at the ready.

RADIOLOGY 1

A messy desk and a curtain. There's a computer
 and PVC pipe bomb on the desk. Blue is behind
 the curtain. Maisie and the Nurse are nearby.

Maisie signals. The Nurse presses a button.
 Light flashes from behind the curtain.

BLUE

Do you really need this many x-rays? I think it's just a hairline fracture...

MAISIE

Shut up, spook.

Wanda enters. If she could groan, she would.

Maisie signals. The Nurse presses the button.
 Light flashes from behind the curtain.

Wanda knocks on the wall.

Maisie dives under the desk. She springs up with an AR-15 trained on Wanda. Wanda puts up her hands in a manner that suggests Maisie has done this exact thing before.

MAISIE

I'm not going down without a -- oh.

(beat)

Hello... sister... interesting of you to show up.

Wanda gestures for Maisie to put the gun down.

MAISIE

Say something only Wanda would say.

Wanda silently over-enunciates: "I can't speak."

MAISIE

Huh. How convenient. Something's wrong with this hospital. Can't trust anyone. That's why I rigged every single room with these pipe bombs.

(re: the one on the desk)

Just in case.

BLUE

Can I come out now?

MAISIE

You'll do as you're told! Yeah. You like doing what you're told. Fucking skill.

Wanda gestures: "Who's that?"

MAISIE

She's a CIA operative.

Wanda glares: "Really?"

MAISIE

Did you know that if you bombard an agent with x-rays, it's such a shock -- such a jolt -- their brainwashing wears off and they'll spill their guts?

Wanda motions for Maisie to let Blue out from behind the curtain.

MAISIE

You might be a decoy. I can't let the both of you team up on me.

Wanda storms to the curtain. She pulls it back and drags Blue out.

MAISIE

No sudden moves, decoy!

Wanda mouths to Blue: "Sorry about this," then stabs her in the meat of her arm.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

It's me. Wanda. You paranoid nutcase. I can't talk. This is how I talk now. I stabby stab with the scalpel and then words happen.

MAISIE

Okay.

She puts the AR-15 down.

MAISIE

Okay.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

This is why I don't visit you and the kids.

MAISIE

Did you pass the extra copies of my book along to your indoctrinated colleagues like I asked?

BLUE

(as Wanda)

Your *self-published* manifesto gave me a brain tumor. I need an x-ray on my throat. I'm told the surgeon stuck something in there.

MAISIE

Sure. Yeah. Step behind the curtain.

(quietly)

Unless that's what *they* want us to do...

Wanda removes the scalpel.

BLUE

Ow, hey... so what's up with my arm? Does the x-ray say anything or...

MAISIE

Stand over there, sheeple.

Blue wilts and does what she's told.

Wanda steps behind the curtain.

MAISIE

If there is something stuck in your throat, you're out of luck. No one can find the surgeon.

Maisie nods at the Nurse. The Nurse presses the button. Light from behind the curtain.

MAISIE

Something's very wrong at this hospital, and I don't just mean Durgess. Too obvious. No, something specifically with us. The whole goddamn Venison family.

Wanda steps out from behind the curtain.

Wanda gets ready to stab Blue in the shoulder with the scalpel.

BLUE

Hey, don't --

MAISIE

Let her.

Blue gives up. Wanda stabs her with the scalpel.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

I saw Mom administering last rites.

MAISIE

She's been doing that a lot lately.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

Cheerful. The whole family is here?

MAISIE

We're here, little brother is here --

SIZZLE

(appearing)

'Sup, sis!

MAISIE

-- mom, dad, grandma --

Blue briefly turns into Petra. James II and Virginia appear.

VIRGINIA

We miss you so much, dearie.

JAMES II

Do you have your own practice yet? What's taking so long?

PETRA

I pray for your soul nightly, darling.

MAISIE

-- also, cousin Gail.

Blue briefly becomes Gail.

GAIL

Can this wait? I'm in the middle of making big moves.

Gail becomes Blue as Wanda asserts her ability to speak.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

Good. Everyone's here. I can say goodbye.

MAISIE

I figured you'd turn up eventually 'cause your ex is here too.

The Patients hold up Broderick's mask.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

Broderick is here?

The Patients disperse.

MAISIE

(to the Nurse)

Could you fetch Wanda's x-ray?

The Nurse nods and exits.

MAISIE

I think I got too close to the truth in my book. This feels like a CIA experiment.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

Feels like the Freemasons to me.

MAISIE

Nah. I'm pretty familiar with their symbology and there isn't enough of it in St. Durgess.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

I'm getting some Knights' Templar vibes. Oh! No no, my mistake, this is a Rothschild joint. Actually, you know what? I think this might be full-blown Illuminati! Sound the alarminati!

MAISIE

Quit St. Cajetan's. The Doctors' Brigade Protocol could be enacted at any second.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

Your conspiracy rhetoric is just an excuse to make everything all about you, to make you the hero in a world where there is no grand plan for the bad things that happen.

Beat.

MAISIE

You haven't always been this mean.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

I'm going to kill myself. Before that, I need to let my family know how much they suck.

The Nurse enters with the x-ray sheet and delivers it to Maisie.

MAISIE

You might be Wanda after all.

BLUE

(as Wanda)

(off x-ray)

Is that a cube in my throat?

MAISIE

(shaking)

Cube... entropy cube...?

BLUE

(as Wanda)

Are you saying "entropy cube?" What's an entropy cube?

Maisie takes out the AR-15 again and aims it at Wanda.

MAISIE

Get that out of here!

BLUE

(as Wanda)

Maisie -- Mae-mae! Calm down, just stay calm!

MAISIE

Get out of here! I fucking knew it, I fucking knew it, you're so indoctrinated, you'll sell your own family down the drain!

BLUE

(as Wanda)

Maisie, calm --

Wanda coughs.

Maisie accidentally discharges her weapon.
Blue's head snaps back.

Wanda runs offstage.

MAISIE

I didn't mean... that wasn't... I didn't... I thought the safety was on! Stay the hell away from me, Wanda!

PHARMACY 1

Green is trying to buy a bottle of Oxy from Sizzle. Sizzle stands on the countertop. One of Green's hands is wrapped in a bandage made of leaves.

GREEN

That's outrageous!

SIZZLE

It's the last Oxy bottle in St. Durgess! I was told to sell it for --

GREEN

You will sell me that Oxy for a fair price. I have good insurance!

Wanda enters, out of breath.

SIZZLE

Gail says it's something about scarcity? In my experience you can practically find this shit growing on trees... I mean, I guess it *is* derived from poppy?

And I guess flowers are just tiny trees? Anyway, what I'm saying is: I'd like to just give it to you, but I don't want Gail to yell at me again for being a boil-brained buffoon.

Wanda waves, trying to get Sizzle's attention.

GREEN

That's ludicrous! I must speak with a superior.

SIZZLE

I mean, there *is* Dr. Durgess, but he's a real -- Wanda? Wanda! Oh my god, Wanda!

Sizzle hops off the countertop and embraces Wanda.

SIZZLE

Oh Wandawandawandawanda it's so good to see you!

GREEN

Here, I have a hundred and forty bucks in cash, which is still ridiculous, but my blender accident hurts so bad --

Wanda takes the Oxy bottle from Sizzle and gives the bottle to Green.

GREEN

Thank you.

Wanda grimaces apologetically before pressing the scalpel blade into Green's unbandaged palm.

GREEN

(as Wanda)

You can tell Gail to go fuck herself for price gouging.

SIZZLE

(completely nonplussed by this development)

Hey, you gave away the two thousand dollar bottle, not me.

GREEN

(as Wanda)

I'd love to catch up, but it's pressing that I get my throat tended to. Do you know where the surgeon is?

Green struggles, Wanda has to hold her in place.

GREEN

(as Wanda)

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, don't move around so much, you'll badly hurt yourself.

(as herself)

Get off of me!

SIZZLE

Dunno.

(to Green)

Hey, could I, uh, score a couple of those?

GREEN

Absolutely not, and could you please stop stabbing me?

Wanda looks at Sizzle with concern.

SIZZLE

Hey, I get plenty of lip from mom and dad about this.

Petra and James II appear, about to say something --

SIZZLE

(pointing at them)

Shut up!

They disappear.

SIZZLE

I'm doing a controlled withdrawals thing. Promise.

GREEN

(as Wanda)

I don't want to find you blue and not breathing again.

SIZZLE

That was one time.

(beat)

...that you were the one who found me.

GREEN

(as Wanda)

Sizzle...

(beat)

I'll catch up with you later. Be smart.

SIZZLE

You're not leaving me behind.

GREEN

(as Wanda)

You have a pharmacy to run.

SIZZLE

A pharmacy that's out of everything but, like, Zolpidem. It's a generic for --

GREEN

(as Wanda)

-- for Ambien, I know.

SIZZLE

I'm coming with. The pharmacy of St. Durgess is closed until further notice.

Wanda tries to keep it down, but she coughs.

Blue bursts onstage. She holds a script for a prescription in her hand.

BLUE

Quick... I... I need drugs! Hurry!

SIZZLE

I can look for whatever you need, but we're out of pretty much everything.

BLUE

What?! No! My psoriasis!

Blue dies.

GREEN
(as Wanda)

What.

Green shoves Wanda off of her.

GREEN
YOU PSYCHO PEOPLE! I AM GOING TO LODGE A COMPLAINT AND YOU'LL
BE SORRY!

Wanda tries to grab a hold of Green, but she
storms out, popping a pill of Oxy.

GREEN
Dr. Durgess is so going to stick electrodes in every one of your crevices! You'll beg to be
kicked into the open air!

Green exits.

SIZZLE
You can, uh, stab me with that if you need to speak. I'll sacrifice myself.

Wanda is touched, but shakes her head "no."

SIZZLE
You won't get an offer like that from anyone else.

Wanda pats Sizzle on the shoulder. They exit.

HALLWAY

Patients kneel before Brown.

BROWN
Lo, though the pharmacy hath closed, fear not for thy diabetic bodies... for behold!

Brown presents a needle.

PATIENTS
(cheering)

Insulin!

Wanda and Sizzle walk through the halls.

SIZZLE

Honestly, fucked up as St. Durgess is, I will take it over being imprisoned with mom and dad. Oh, sorry -- the Prophetess and James II.

Patients bow before Brown and praise her. She sagely nods while holding the needle aloft.

SIZZLE

I mean how many times can mom do the whole “lay on hands” prayer thing and try and Jesus away my addiction?

The Patients proceed to have an insulin injection orgy. As they are injected, they call out in pleasure and shout “Insulin!” a lot.

SIZZLE

And I don't know which is worse: now that James II himself has come to grips with my being a fuckup, he's stopped trying to get me to take over the family business. But now I gotta deal with this constant glare of disappointment, which... you know. I never wanted to run the Venison Hobby Vault anyway. Dad always orders the cheap glue and huffing it gave me a headache. Premium glue... now that's where its at.

(beat)

Don't look at me like that. I'm messing with you.

(beat)

Don't look at me like -- hey, do mind if we pop into the luxury suites?

Wanda frowns at Sizzle.

SIZZLE

I need to use the restroom. There's golden toilets in there. It'll be quick and we can say “hi” to Gail.

Wanda is displeased by this, but nods “ok” anyway.

SIZZLE

Cool, great! Yeah, let's say “hi!”

Sizzle's gone. Wanda sighs, then follows.

LUXURY SUITES 1

Green and Gray lounge on couches. The Nurse presents them wine which Gail shows off.

GAIL

From my personal stores, a vintage *petit verdot grand cru* from the Bordeaux region of France, bottled in the year nineteen eighty... a grand year...

(smells the wine)

Ah... yes... I can practically smell Ronald Reagan's election. As I said: a grand year.

Green and Gray chuckle.

The Nurse pours the glasses.

GAIL

I hope you will reconsider your investment in St. Durgess as a high class institution... specifically reconsider a *higher* investment...

Sizzle enters, followed by Wanda.

SIZZLE

Yo yo yo! Gail the gland! What's up?

GAIL

(to Green and Gray)

Pardon the interruption -- *salud!*

Gail hastens towards Sizzle and Wanda, keen to keep them away from her guests.

SIZZLE

Look who showed up!

Sizzle sweeps his arms dramatically, presenting Wanda.

Wanda waves halfheartedly.

GAIL

Get scarce. Weeds like you kill the atmosphere.

SIZZLE

(making jazz hands)

Hello? Wanda's here! Say "hello" to her!

After a pause, Gail waves.

SIZZLE

Just needed to use the restroom, then we'll leave you to your "atmosphere".

(as the Nurse passes by, he reaches out
for the wine bottle)

Ooh, complimentary wine? You shouldn't have...

Both Gail and Wanda swat his hand away.

GAIL

Make it quick.

SIZZLE

Thanks, cuz!

Sizzle exits.

Silence.

GAIL

How's things at... what's the name of it again... St. Cajun?

Wanda gestures to her throat and mouths "I
can't speak."

GAIL

Hm.

(an idea strikes her)

(to Green and Gray)

Gentlefolks, if I may have your attention once more... before you is a product of our
enterprising medical techniques -- her name is Lisa.

Wanda immediately sees where this is going. She
scowls.

GAIL

Lisa has won the game of life... except for the terrible accident which brought her to St. Durgess. See, the pilot of her private jet had been drinking -- like the weed he was -- and took a bit of a scenic dive near the scenic fjords of Norway. Her spine was all but dust. Now, your less innovative hospital would have said she'd never walk again, probably never eat again without assistance. But look at we've done with her! She is almost a hundred percent restored thanks to the innovative technologies St. Durgess is at the forefront of pioneering.

Green and Gray "ooh" and "aah" and clap.

GAIL

If she seems displeased... well, it is only because we were unable to provide the full amenities as dictated by her lifestyle, and it pains me that we could not. So, to avoid any such displeasure again, I suggest you --

Green and Gray are already brandishing checkbooks.

SIZZLE

(entering)

Gail, what gives?

GAIL

Dr. Venison! Decorum.

SIZZLE

The pharmacy is almost --

GAIL

(to Green and Gray)

Excuse me for a second.

SIZZLE

-- totally empty, so why on Earth --

GAIL

(quietly)

Now, Sizzle, you're upsetting my guests.

SIZZLE

-- are there crates full of medicine in the back of the luxury suites?

Wanda takes hold of Sizzle's wrist and steers him towards the exit.

GAIL

Never trust an addict. I should have known you'd scour my stores.

SIZZLE

So meds are "scarce" because you're hoarding them all, do I have that right?

GAIL

(performing somewhat for the benefit of
Green and Gray)

Filthy addict, give back what you stole!

SIZZLE

(for the benefit of Green and Gray)

Scammer alert! We've got a big ol' scammer over here!

Green and Gray titter between themselves.

Wanda shoves her hands into Sizzle's lab coat pockets.

She removes handfuls of morphine needles.

GAIL

Morphine. Classy.

Gail reaches for the needles to take them back, but Wanda keeps them away from her. She stares into Gail's eyes with piercing accusation.

Gray and Green tsk at Gail.

GAIL

I reserve the right to distribute the medicine as I see fit. It would hardly be fair for it all to go to waste in the veins of weeds instead of the upper echelons --

Maisie busts in with her AR-15 raised. Wanda drops the morphine needles.

GAIL

(frustrated chuckling)

Don't be alarmed, the hospital is *full* of practical jokers, isn't that right, Maisie?

MAISIE

Wanda, don't tell me you're hobnobbing with illuminati bootlickers.

SIZZLE

Mae-mae! We were just leaving the cabal to stew in their gold-plated filth.

MAISIE

Wanda, I have an urgent matter to ask about.

GAIL

(to Green and Gray)

We are experimenting with a live theatre program here at St. Durgess.

An unimpressed Green and Gray look at the audience.

Wanda gestures to Maisie -- "What is it?"

MAISIE

I need to know: the entropy cube. When it gets removed, will you destroy it?

Wanda looks at her like, "Really? This is why you're threatening us with an assault rifle?" She rolls her eyes and nods.

MAISIE

Because that device in you... it is a CIA creation.

GAIL

(to Green and Gray)

It is a little much. I was against it, but my cousins insisted. Family is important here.

While no one is looking, Sizzle swipes one of the morphine needles and puts it in his pocket.

MAISIE

The entropy cube causes nothing but chaos. It shifts a little bit? Boom. Your gun misfires. Or chemtrails streak over your head. Or that's the signal for an alien invasion. Anything. Are you listening?

Wanda, who was staring into the middle distance, lost in thought, snaps back to the present. She nods and actually means it. She points to her throat, mimes ripping the cube out, then grinding it into powder with her fist.

MAISIE

(a long, relieved breath)

(lowering the barrel of her gun)

Thank you. You don't know how important this is. Terrible things, just... happening! No reason behind them. Can you imagine a crueller creation?

Wanda smiles politely.

Green and Gray stand.

GREEN

Thank you for the wine, Ms. Venison-Winchester.

They exit, leaving their glasses with Gail.

SIZZLE

Well well well...

GAIL

Out! You're all parasitic weeds and you know it. You want to take away what I've worked so hard for, but you know what? I won the game of life. You lost. You can be jealous about that all you want, but don't take it out on me!

Gail turns their back on them. She lights a cigarette.

MAISIE

Sizzle. Wanda. Let's go.

Wanda and Sizzle follow Maisie offstage.

Before Wanda exits, she looks back at Gail.
There are so many things she wants to say, but
can't. So she exits in disgust.

LAB 1

A clean medical laboratory.

Brown snores loudly on the ground. Petra has
her bible open and sings the hymn, "It Is Well
With My Soul." The Nurse tends to equipment.

PETRA

(singing)

Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say
It is well, it is well with my soul

Wanda and Sizzle enter.

SIZZLE

Surgeon! Toodle-oo, we're here for you! Oh... hey mom.

PETRA

(closing her bible)

The Lord told me to wait here, and this must be what for.

SIZZLE

Uh... what's with the sleeping lady?

PETRA

She cracked a window.

SIZZLE

Ah. Makes sense.

Wanda taps him on the shoulder. "Makes
sense?"

SIZZLE

Oh yeah, breathing too much outside air will kill you. A little can make you... well, listen to her. No one knows what it is.

PETRA

It is a test of the Lord's. Once this hospital is purged of sin, the pox from beyond will dissipate.

Wanda rolls her eyes.

SIZZLE

Have you seen the surgeon?

PETRA

I have not.

Wanda tugs on Sizzle's arm, urging to get away from their mom.

SIZZLE

Shoot. Wanda has the entropy cube stuck in her throat and it'd be great if we can get it out.

PETRA

Blessed be! The lack of a surgeon is a sign not to be so hasty to remove what agitates you. The entropy cube is a gift from God. Please don't deny His gifts.

Wanda grips Sizzle's arm tighter, though now it's not a prompting to leave, but an expression of rage.

SIZZLE

Hey, Wanda, you don't gotta say anything.

Wanda stabs Brown with the scalpel.

BROWN

(as Wanda)

(still asleep, but speaking normally)

Whatever you think I have going on is not a freaking blessing, *mother*.

Withdrawal symptoms start to grip Sizzle hard.

PETRA

You see His Divine Device now as a burden, but you don't see how nothing about what His Device does is coincidental. The mind of the Lord is inscrutable, but Wanda, I assure you, I assure you...

BROWN

(as Wanda)

Mom, stop, not this shit again.

SIZZLE

(fighting through intense withdrawals)

Hey hey, chill chill...

PETRA

I see the turmoil in your soul, have seen it since your father and I signed the adoption papers, but I am begging you... please... surrender yourself.

BROWN

(as Wanda)

You have got to be... Mom, please just please talk to me like a normal fucking human being for once.

PETRA

If you cannot bring yourself to surrender to the Lord, then surrender to the Greater Than. Understand that there is a plan. That His Divine Device... if you surrender to its gifts, its baffling, hurtful gifts, you will find what you are looking for. Shunning this gift will only bring you hurt and death. You will not wake from the operating table alive.

BROWN

(as Wanda)

Has it occurred to you that the real turmoil in my soul is people telling me there's meaning in the random suffering of it all? One of Maisie's pipe bombs could go off at any second --

PETRA

And it would still be a part of God's plan.

BROWN
(as Wanda)

Well then His plan sucks!

PETRA

We are small, yet cosmically important at the same time. Many find it impossible to reconcile these contradictions, but if you surrender to that contradiction, you will free yourself from the devil in you. His Divine Device could open up pathways hitherto unknown. It could even...

A pause.

BROWN
(as Wanda)

It could what? What fantastical nonsense are you clinging to?

PETRA
(whispering, near tears)

It could cure James of his affliction.

BROWN
(as Wanda)

Yeah. Because addiction just evaporates into the air. That's why twelve step works every time with no problems and no one ever relapses.

PETRA

Anything is possible under the guidance of the Lord.

Wanda coughs.

SIZZLE

Ooh!

Sizzle, whose hand was in his lab coat pocket, removes it much as if a bee had stung it.

Wanda leaves Brown, taking the scalpel, and goes to Sizzle. She reaches into his pocket, takes out the morphine needle.

SIZZLE

How did that get there? Huh, weird.

Sizzle tries to take it back, but Wanda keeps it away.

SIZZLE

Look, just... I need something to take the edge off the withdrawals, okay? Won't be much, promise -- it... it takes a bit to come down, you know that --

Wanda puts the needle in a pocket. "I'm keeping this."

PETRA

Oh, James...

SIZZLE

-- you gotta be gradual about it, you can't just -- you can't just kick me to the curb, it's... it's like fire ants in my skin, feel my skin, is it clammy? Fuck, feel my skin, you can feel my heart through my skin! It's beating funny, Wanda -- come on, please -- just give me the morphine -- just give me the fucking morphine!

Sizzle lunges at Wanda.

Wanda side-steps him.

PETRA

James!

SIZZLE

Please, Wanda, my head is going to split open --

Sizzle claws at Wanda's gown.

SIZZLE

-- my brain's boiling in my skull --

Sizzle knocks Wanda to the ground. He climbs on her.

SIZZLE

-- look, just give me the morphine --

He claws at her.

SIZZLE

-- my heart's going to explode you heartless bitch, you wouldn't let your own brother's heart explode you heartless fucking bitch come on --

Wanda stabs Sizzle in the forearm with the scalpel. He wails and releases her.

SIZZLE

Heartless bitch! Of course you're adopted, if you were actually family you wouldn't... you wouldn't...

Wanda stabs Brown with the scalpel.

BROWN

(as Wanda)

Leave me alone!

Sizzle curls up on the ground.

SIZZLE

(blubbing)

I'm sorry... I'm sorry! I'm so sorry Wanda! Please... I'm weak... I'm weak... I'm...

PETRA

(putting a hand on him)

Come, child. Leave her be. It is at the darkest point that the light can bloom within you, like a poppy growing in the toughest soil.

Petra ushers Sizzle away. He practically crawls.

Sizzle reaches behind him and grabs the air, begging for morphine. Petra gently brings him back.

SIZZLE

I'm weak... I'm sorry... I'm... I'm weak...

PETRA

Surrender, Wanda. To the Lord. Let Him guide you. Your pains... you will be amazed what will happen if you simply surrender.

Sizzle breaks into a run, exiting.

PETRA

James! James, heed me!

Petra follows him off.

Wanda releases Brown.

She paces.

She pushes lab equipment onto the ground.

The Nurse just stares at Wanda.

The Nurse starts to clean up.

Wanda exits.

HALLWAY

Wanda enters. No sign of Sizzle.

She looks at the mask wall. On the map, she picks out the surgery.

She thinks the direction she needs to go in is towards the audience.

She's about to step forward when James II enters.

JAMES II

Wanda! My beautiful baby girl! I knew you'd show up eventually!

James II claps a hand on Wanda's shoulder.

JAMES II

Come, I have something very exciting to show you.

Wanda indicates she needs to get going.

JAMES II

Nonsense. Nothing's more important than family.

James II pulls Wanda by the arm, almost dragging as they go offstage.

LEGACY HALL 1

Symbols of the Venison family's accomplishments are strewn about, from as important as Wanda's med school diploma to Sizzle's little league participation trophy. There are several boxes of materials yet to be displayed. A vast family tree leans against an oil drum that has a plaque on it reading: FIRST BARREL OF JAMES VENISON I.

Sizzle roots through boxes as Wanda and James II enter.

JAMES II

You never mentioned when you're going to open your own practice -- I can't wait to tell city council to go to Venison Family Medicine. What a legacy, what a mark to leave on --

James II stops dead in his tracks, seeing Sizzle who, in the midst of rifling through a box, goes completely still upon noticing his father.

SIZZLE

Heya, pops.

JAMES II

James III...!

Wanda puts a hand on James II's shoulder.
"Don't."

SIZZLE

I thought I'd, since the Pharmacy's closed and all, I thought I'd try my hand at putting together one of those model cars you sell at the store and --

JAMES II

Get out!

James II charges for Sizzle. Wanda can't keep him back.

SIZZLE

Model cars are rad! There's gotta be one around here somewhere...

JAMES II
(picking him up)

Out... out!

Wanda pushes between them.

SIZZLE

Hey pops, I...

JAMES II
(scoffing)

Show some respect.

SIZZLE

James II... you know, I already like, have a model car laying around, it's no big deal, I'm just... so, um, if you could spare some glue...

JAMES II

Oh... you're missing the glue? You're missing the glue?

SIZZLE

Yep.

JAMES II

Sure, I got some glue for you.

James II goes through a box.

SIZZLE

Hey, thanks James number two...

James II finds a tube of adhesive.

JAMES II

Now, this? This? This... wow... this... son... now, this... this? This is some very strong *strong* stuff, okay? Top of the line.

SIZZLE

(reaching out for it)

Oh wow, thank you.

JAMES II

Ah-ah-ah -- an adhesive like this must be appreciated.

(unscrews the cap)

(sniffs it)

Oh yeah. That's good stuff.

SIZZLE

(reaching for it)

Uh-huh...

JAMES II

No no... I've got an even better one.

SIZZLE

Don't need anything super fancy.

JAMES II

No no... Venisons deserve the best -- Wanda, I think there's another in that box over there, can you get it for me?

Wanda stares flatly at her father.

SIZZLE

Seriously, this'll be fine.

JAMES II

No no... this isn't good enough. Wanda, what's the stall for? It's in an orange tube and I think it's in that box over there...

Wanda makes a gesture. "Just give it to him."

JAMES II

This how you treat the guy who paid your tuition through medical school?

Wanda starts going through boxes, but keeps an eye on the both of them.

JAMES II

Have you been woodworking?

SIZZLE

What? No, why?

JAMES II

Let me see your hands, they look rough... man's hands... like you've worked them hard.

SIZZLE

(holding them out)

Really?

JAMES II

Mm-hm.

James II holds Sizzle's wrists in place. He squeezes adhesive onto one of Sizzle's open palms.

SIZZLE

Hey, hey... what are you doing?

JAMES II

Demonstrating... the strength... of the adhesive!

James II forces Sizzle's hands together.

Wanda pulls Sizzle away from James II.

SIZZLE

(trying and failing to pry them apart)

My hands... man, what the hell...?

JAMES II

You think you can get one over your old man? That I won't know what you really want this for? You're a disgrace to the Venison family name.

SIZZLE

My hands...

Wanda gets in her father's face.

SIZZLE

My hands...

JAMES II

Get out. Out!

James II throws the tube of adhesive at Sizzle.

Sizzle scurries for the exit, but he trips and falls. He struggles to push himself to his feet with his hands glued together.

JAMES II

Out!

Sizzle flees.

Wanda grabs James II by the shoulder and turns him around. She seethes. "How could you?"

JAMES II

Tough love is the only language that boy will understand! We've tried everything else, your mom and I. Everything. I'm sorry you had to see that, it's... when he got out of rehab for the fourth time... another mortgage to... I don't know what to do with him.

(beat)

Welcome to legacy hall! Wonderful, isn't it? All the Venison family accomplishments under one roof! Over there we have your sister's books, and we have the deed showing the PTA naming the preschool garden "James Venison II Garden" -- over there is... you know, Dr. Durgess has some funny ideas, but I think he respects me... do you think he'd name this one after me? This hospital? Just imagine... "Venison's Research Hospital..." or would it be "St. Venison's Research Hospital?" That has an amazing ring to it! Speaking of which...

(picks up a large old hand bell)

Back from when your grandfather was the lead in his church's bell choir...

James II rings the bell.

The Nurse wheels in Blue on a bed. She is playing her character from Radiology 1. She has a bullethole in her forehead and a nasty twitch in her hand.

Green enters behind them, playing her character from Luxury Suites 1. She eats venison cubes on toothpicks off a fancy plate with a sign reading: "Virginia Venison's Prize-Winning Venison".

JAMES II

Here's what I wanted to show you: my daughter, Wanda, is such a skilled physician that she can bring even the most dire cases back from the brink of death!

Wanda tugs on her father's sleeve and shakes her head vehemently.

James II whisks her over to Blue. Wanda tries to get away from the bed, but the Nurse stops her by presenting an array of medical instruments.

JAMES II

And all of this is why you should include the Venison name in your next fashion line, madam. Venison represents quality, excellence, American enterprise --

GREEN

(munching on venison)

Meat.

The Nurse forces forceps into Wanda's hands.

JAMES II

The Venison excellence goes so very deep, why that patient there? My other little girl, Maisie, has such excellent aim that she pulled off a perfect headshot that left the victim... living! Now... as you see, the patient is near death... it is up to Wanda to stabilize her! She will pull off this miracle before your very eyes!

Green grunts with interest, mouth full of venison.

JAMES II
(to Wanda)

You can do it.

Wanda sees how much this would mean to her father. She doesn't want to, but she turns her attention to Blue.

Wanda brings the forceps near the bullethole.

She stops.

The Child appears.

BRODERICK
(voice-over)
Everyone dies anyway. Why bother saving anyone?

Wanda looks for where the voice is coming from.

BRODERICK
(voice-over)
She'll be a vegetable if you save her. There's no point to this, Wah-way.

Out of spite, Wanda turns her attention to Blue. She brings the forceps near the bullethole again.

Wanda's hand shakes.

She looks up at the Child with a pleading expression.

The Child watches.

Wanda looks to the encouraging face of her father. Back to the Child.

Wanda chucks away the forceps. She forces herself past the Nurse.

JAMES II

What are you...?

(grabbing her by the shoulder, quiet)

No no, Venisons are not quitters.

Wanda glares at her father. She wrenches out of his grasp.

JAMES II

Wanda Venison...!

Wanda grabs the old hand bell and throws it in the oil drum, smashing it to pieces.

JAMES II

Our legacy!

James II runs to the oil drum as Wanda exits, flipping the double bird as she does.

JAMES II

(collecting the broken pieces)

Our legacy... our legacy...

Blue's hand continues to twitch.

Green continues to eat the venison.

James II continues to collect broken bell pieces, distraughtly muttering "our legacy" repeatedly.

Blue's hand stops twitching.

HALLWAY

Sizzle sits in the hallway.

He's pulled his hands apart. The skin on his palms is torn and bloody.

Wanda storms in.

She sits next to Sizzle.

SIZZLE

I take it dad was very proud of you.

Wanda scoffs.

SIZZLE

Hey. You can vent to me, you know. You don't have to worry about me keeping a secret -
- my brain is so boiled I won't remember what you say anyway.

Sizzle does his best to smile.

Wanda examines his palms. She makes a motion for bandages.

SIZZLE

Grandma's garden is like, right there. She's always got something. Hey, do you need to say anything? Offer still stands. From earlier.

(beat)

I'm sorry I did what I...

(beat)

Anyway, like, I'm going to need painkillers anyway so like... I mean, look at me. Give me the morphine. Scalpel me. Say what you need to say.

Wanda frowns.

Wanda takes out the needle. Checks the amount in the syringe.

She hesitates.

She closes her eyes and sticks the needle in his arm.

Sizzle sighs.

Wanda throws the needle away.

She gently slides the scalpel into the meat of his arm.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

I can't handle this family, I just can't! Dad -- sorry, James II -- mom, Maisie, Gail... we're related to psychopaths!

(as himself)

Mustn't forget my boiled brain.

(as Wanda)

You're not like them.

(as himself)

I mean, dad was right, I did just want the glue to get high.

(as Wanda)

Who glues their child's hands together? Who does that?

(as himself)

I'm sorry I'm such a fuckup. Thank you for sticking up for me... for... for keeping me honest.

(as Wanda)

The morphine is making you gross and sentimental.

(as himself)

You are too and you haven't even had any. What's your excuse?

(as Wanda)

Dad put me on display for some bigwig. To miraculously heal a patient Maisie shot. No matter what I did, she'd have been dead soon. But I didn't even try. I...

(beat)

I've been... depressed recently. No, no that's not... that's not quite true. Suicidally depressed. Work has been... well, imagine a bad day at work. Now, imagine work is an emergency room. And there's a really bad day at work.

Sizzle embraces Wanda as best he can. Wanda holds back tears.

GARDEN 1

Virginia eats a plum, admiring her garden, which the Nurse tends to.

There are a bevy of tall plants surrounding her, some bearing fruit. There are several kinds of fruit which should not be growing on the types of plants they are, nor from the same plant. There are many poppies.

It's peaceful.

Wanda and Sizzle enter. The room draws them into a reverent silence.

Virginia greets them with a smile. She takes a pair of garden sheers to a plant with large leaves. She cuts a pair of leaves off and brings them to Sizzle, which she uses to bandage his hands.

VIRGINIA

It really is good to see the both of you.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

You too.

(as himself)

Yeah, great to see you, Gram. And thanks for the... leaf band-aids. Leaf-aids...? Laid...?

(as Wanda)

Do you know where the surgeon is?

VIRGINIA

I do.

Beat.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

...and?

VIRGINIA

I was so looking forward to seeing you on my ninetieth birthday.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

I'm sorry. Really. It's not you, it's the others.

VIRGINIA

Family is all you have in the end. Hold us close.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

I don't mean to be pushy, but I really need to see the surgeon.

VIRGINIA

I was heartbroken when your mother told me about the divorce. And just after your grandfather passed...

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

It didn't work out.

VIRGINIA

Stick to your vows and accept where you are in life. You can't get out of it and trying to do so will make a mess.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

Please... grandma... mom's sent me letters about this on biblical stationary with cherubs humping the margins. I don't need to hear more.

VIRGINIA

Wanda... sweetheart...

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

The last thing I want is to talk to that smug void of empathy ever again. Where's the surgeon?

(beat)

Please.

Virginia pulls aside some plants to reveal Broderick laying on an outdoor lounge chair. He has headphones on. He stares into the distance, vaping sagely.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

No... nope. Nope. Nope. Fuck this, how dare you?

(as himself)

Oh yeah, that's right! Broderick's the surgeon! Me and my boiled brain...

(as Wanda)

Is this a joke?

Virginia taps Broderick on the shoulder.

BRODERICK

(taking off a headphone)

Uh-huh?

VIRGINIA

You have a visitor.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

This isn't happening.

Broderick stretches. He sees Wanda.

BRODERICK

Well, Wah-way? Why'd you disturb my pondering time?

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

Dr. Durgess had you put the entropy cube in my throat.

BRODERICK

No.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

He said you did the operation.

BRODERICK

Yes.

Wanda glares into Broderick.

Virginia continues eating her plum.

BRODERICK

Pay more attention to your wording. Dr. Durgess didn't *have* me do it. I suggested it to him. And the experiments.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

You are the most gaping asshole to ever walk the earth.

BRODERICK

You always wanted to control me, Wah-way. It was stifling.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

Oh yeah, I'm real stifling, asking your failed doctoral candidate ass to get a real job and stop slobbering all over the place. Asking you not to cheat on me. Real big asks like that.

BRODERICK

When I learned you were coming here, I realized I had an opportunity to free you of this delusion you have about being in control. So I implanted the entropy cube.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

Sociopath.

BRODERICK

A sociopath doesn't care, Wah-way. I care. I wanted you to understand that you have no control. No control over events, over other people, not even over yourself.

SIZZLE

(as Wanda)

Take it out.

BRODERICK

You have no control over me.

Wanda removes the scalpel from Sizzle, who giggles at the sensation.

Wanda threatens Broderick with the scalpel.

BRODERICK

Wah-way., Wah-way... I do love delusional women, but you can't convince me to remove the entropy cube if you kill me.

Wanda throws the scalpel on the ground. She shoves Broderick.

BRODERICK

(laughing)

Oh, look who's trying to assert control.

Wanda shoves him again. He laughs.

Broderick dances among the plants.

BRODERICK

What's your mom always telling you to do... surrender, right? Well, don't surrender to God -- fuck God -- surrender to the Nothing.

Wanda keeps charging after Broderick, but he continues to evade her. She grows more distressed, he only more gleeful.

VIRGINIA

(with a mouthful of plum)

Peace... please... peace!

SIZZLE

Hey, come on you two... Wanda, forget this jagoff.

Wanda forces herself to cough.

BROWN

(at microphone)

One of lonely Virginia's plants wilts

SIZZLE

Whoa, Wanda, bad idea, bad idea!

BRODERICK
(cackling)

Ha-hah! Great! Just great!

Wanda forces another cough.

Virginia chokes on the plum.

Wanda runs to her. She gets Virginia in a position to start the Heimlich maneuver.

The Child appears.

Wanda stops. She lets Virginia go and backs away.

The Child picks up the scalpel.

Virginia struggles for air. Wanda is too freaked out to attempt even the most rudimentary of lifesaving procedures.

SIZZLE

Wanda? What gives? Help her!

The Child comes closer.

Wanda tries to wrap herself back around Virginia, but she's in a panic. She looks to Sizzle for support.

Sizzle gestures. "What am I supposed to do?"

Wanda shakes her head. She can't do it.

SIZZLE

Ah geez, ah goddammit.

Sizzle takes Wanda's place and proceeds perform the Heimlich maneuver on Virginia.

Wanda paces.

The Child nears her with the scalpel.

Virginia spits out plum chunks.

The Child disappears.

Sizzle holds onto Virginia to keep her from falling. The both of them are panting.

BRODERICK

You delusional little girl.

Wanda runs out of the garden.

SIZZLE

Wanda... hey!

Sizzle rushes to the exit, but he stops.

SIZZLE

What's wrong with you, man?

Broderick puts his headphones on.

Sizzle yanks them off his head.

SIZZLE

Seriously, what the hell? What even the actual...? I don't have the words, I can't find the words...

BRODERICK

(taking back his headphones)

I'm not surprised.

SIZZLE

She's suicidal, man.

Broderick pauses.

SIZZLE

Like, I can tell that there's something super bothering her but I don't know exactly what it is and like... I'm really worried about her, man, and like... why'd you have to go and do that? Put that thing in her? She's my sister, man. She's my goddamn sister.

(beat)

Also, you look stupid when you vape.

Sizzle exits.

VIRGINIA

I was really hoping.. you two would make it work...

BRODERICK

Mm.

Broderick puts his headphones back on. He takes a long drag of his vape.

VIRGINIA

Where did I go wrong?

BROWN

(at microphone)

(singing)

We're sliding down the drain, my friends
Become a spiral thing, my friends

HALLWAY

Sizzle attempts to comfort Wanda.

BROWN

We're sliding down the drain, my friends
Through rusted pipes to the sea, my friends

Broderick enters.

BROWN

Oh pipes please channel me to the sea
To the sea... to the sea

Broderick scoffs. He motions for Wanda and Sizzle to follow.

As they go for a long walk down the hall:

GREEN
(sharing microphone)

Sliding down, down, down

BROWN
Pray the pipes don't leak
One faulty bolt, one weakened length
I'll never see the sea
Fluid me
Leaking out of me

GREEN
What was the point of

Broderick, Wanda, and Sizzle have reached the OR. Petra lingers nearby.

BROWN AND GREEN
(harmonizing)

sliding down the drain

BROWN
if these damn pipes

Broderick goes in.

GREEN
won't get me to the sea?

Petra places a hand on Wanda's shoulder.

She whispers a prayer into Wanda's ear.

BROWN
to the sea

leaking out of me

GREEN

Petra silently pleads with Wanda not to go in.

one faulty bolt

BROWN

fluid me

GREEN

Wanda ignores her mother. She goes in.

one weakened length

BROWN

sliding down

GREEN

SURGERY 1

Wanda lays on an operating table.

The Nurse hooks her up to anesthesia.

Facing away, Broderick washes his hands.

Sliding down the drain
Through rusted pipes

BROWN AND GREEN

Broderick turns around. He's wearing Dr.
Durgess' bloody burlap sack.

Broderick stands over Wanda with a scalpel.

The Child appears.

BROWN AND GREEN

Leaking out of me
 Sliding down, sliding down
 To the sea, to the sea

Terror strikes Wanda. She struggles a little, but
 the anesthesia is already taking hold.

BROWN

(long high notes)
 Come down the drain with me!

GREEN

Never should have let you spiral away
 from me
 Never should have let you slide into the
 sea

BROWN AND GREEN

down
 the
 drain

It's only Wanda and the Child.

Darkness.

A series of voices. They start slow, grow more
 rapid, then begin to repeat and overlap:

VOICES

Stabilize her
 Took a whole bottle of sleeping pills
 Come on, get the pump
 She's still breathing
 No sign of slashed wrists
 Stabilize her
 Why was she in the bathtub?
 Come on, get the pump
 Zolpidem... generic for Ambien
 Stabilize her
 Water's overflowing
 Took a whole bottle of sleeping pills
 Zolpidem... generic for Ambien
 Stabilize her

The voices build to a climax, then stop abruptly.

A heart rate monitor.

It, too, comes to an abrupt stop.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

VENISON SLIDING DOWN THE DRAIN

A large drain plug.

A heart-rate monitor beats rhythmically. Lights flash in time with it.

Hands from beneath the drain plug push it up.

Two hooded figures crawl from the drain, sopping wet: Amber and Burgundy.

They lift a limp, hooded body from the drain.

The Nurse wheels in a hospital bed. The Child lays on it.

The heart-rate monitor and lights speed up.

Amber and Burgundy marionette the hooded body towards the hospital bed.

Burgundy places a scalpel in the body's hand.

Controlling the hooded body, Amber and Burgundy make it stab the child with the scalpel.

The Child squirms, but does not scream.

Lights, heart-rate monitor, speed up.

The puppeteered body stabs the Child repeatedly, viciously. Viscera splatters everywhere.

When she stabs for the final time and the Child stops moving, she leaves the scalpel sticking out of his chest.

Amber and Burgundy remove the hood from the puppeteered body.

It's Wanda. Her throat is bandaged.

The heart-rate monitor flatlines. The lights are steady.

Wanda experiences a couple confused beats, as though waking up from a deep sleep. She looks at her bloody hands. At the limp Child.

The horror of comprehension dawns on her. At first she shakes her head in denial, then she reaches for the Child, touching him gently, then shaking him as though to wake him up.

She steps back. What has she done?

The Child takes the scalpel out of his chest.

The Child leaps onto Wanda and stabs her repeatedly.

She falls limp -- Amber and Burgundy catch her.

They lower her onto a bed of flowers and vines.

All but Wanda disappear into the darkness.

GARDEN 2

Wanda screams and bolts upright, awaking from terrible dreams.

Sizzle is beside her. Petra is further off,
studying her bible. Virginia gardens.

SIZZLE

Bad dream? My goodness.

WANDA

I can speak... I can speak!

She leaps from the bed and grabs her brother in
excitement.

WANDA

It worked! It worked! I can speak!

Wanda unleashes a joyous peal of belly laughter.
Sizzle joins in her excitement and the two of
them dance.

Virginia, still gardening, smiles to herself.

SIZZLE

Praise the Lord Jesus hallelujah!

WANDA

Jesus ain't got shit to do with it. That was medical fucking science, baby!
(getting in Petra's face)

I survived! So much for your prophecy! Woo!

PETRA

(dispassionately)

You have meddled in God's plan. I tried to warn you. I pray the retribution for tampering
with His Divine Device is not great.

Virginia brings each of them a plum.

WANDA

Yeah, you've been giving me this retribution shit my whole life. Lightning didn't smite me
when I finger-blasted Becky in high school.

(singing and dancing)

Lightning didn't smiiiite me, lightning didn't smiiiite me...

Petra tenses but does not rise to the bait.

SIZZLE
Whoa, okay, okay...

VIRGINIA
Wanda... Petra...

WANDA
Sorry, I just... hoo! I mean... hoo! Man... man...
(beat)
Where is that dang entropy cube thing anyway?

BRODERICK
I put it somewhere where you won't do anything stupid with it.

Broderick emerges from behind plants. He's
vaping.

WANDA
What the hell is he doing here? Haven't we all suffered enough? Fine. Whatever. Where'd
you childproof the entropy cube?

Broderick shakes his head.

PETRA
(closing her bible)
There is trouble in your soul. I beg you confess. If not to the Lord, then to your mother.

VIRGINIA
Oh, you Venisons... please... respect the plum as it is meant to be enjoyed. In silence,
with family.

SIZZLE
Thanks, gram, but I'll pass. I had a... weird plum experience once.

WANDA
I love, L-O-V-E, *love it* when people think they know what's best for me.

BRODERICK
Babying your delusions was fun for a couple years. But now it's exhausting and I can feel
my brain getting smoother.

VIRGINIA

(placing plums into their hands)

This is no way to repair your marriage.

Wanda throws a plum at Broderick.

BRODERICK

Seems like I childproofed it for a good reason.

SIZZLE

Hey, what's the big deal? The entropy cube isn't in you anymore, you can relax.

WANDA

What if it gets rolled, huh? The hospital foundations could suddenly erode, oxygen tanks explode, my stitching open and drown me in my own blood...

SIZZLE

Wanda, hey, sis, you're catastrophizing.

PETRA

If the Lord demands it, so it shall be.

WANDA

I'm going to destroy the fucking thing.

BRODERICK

You can't just destroy the physical embodiment of chance.

PETRA

Don't do this. You will come to regret it.

SIZZLE

It's in the lab.

BRODERICK

(scoffs)

Of course.

WANDA

This is why you're the best, little brother. Pound it.

Wanda holds out a fist. Sizzle taps it, withering in the gazes of everyone else.

SIZZLE

Broderick wanted to study it.

WANDA

Seriously?

BRODERICK

Of course! Use your brain: the entropy cube isn't random. Not in a pure sense. Much randomness isn't noteworthy. Specks of dust are caught by the wind and skin cells get bumped off your arm and who cares? True chaos is insignificant most of the time. The cube is never insignificant. And then there's the matter of causality to consider --

WANDA

I'm leaving.

BRODERICK

-- does the cube *actually cause* anything to happen at all or does it happen to *merely correlate* to notably chaotic events? It calls into question the entire idea of free will!

The Nurse gives Wanda a doctor's coat. She puts it on.

WANDA

Sick. Can your analysis tell me how to destroy it?

BRODERICK

You can't.

PETRA

You mustn't.

SIZZLE

You'll probably have to go outside is my guess.

BRODERICK

Your perfectly logical brain has generated a perfectly logical conclusion.

WANDA

It's not a bad first step. Pound it.

They pound it.

SIZZLE

But we can't go outside. No one knows what's wrong with the air.

WANDA

Well... there was that patient passed out in the lab. She inhaled some outside air, right? I can order a blood test... yes, yes! POUND IT.

Wanda and Sizzle pound it again. He recoils,
Wanda having hit his knuckles too hard.

WANDA

(leaving)

Peace, bitches.

Broderick grabs her by the wrist.

BRODERICK

You'll do no such thing.

Wanda knees him in the groin. He crumples.

WANDA

Don't touch me.

Wanda exits.

LAB 2

The entropy cube is on a desk. It's just a regular six-sided die. The Nurse sterilizes equipment. Maisie points an AR-15 at it. She types a couple of notes into a computer.

She prods the cube with her rifle. It tips over.

BLUE

(at microphone)

BLUE SCREEN OF DEATH

GRAY
(popping in from offstage)

blue screen of death

(popping away)

Maisie swings her rifle around, trying to figure out what mayhem the cube caused.

BLUE
BLUE SCREEN OF DEATH

GRAY
(popping back in)

blue screen of death
blue screen of death
blue screen blue screen
blue screen of death

(popping away)

Maisie sees the blue screen of death on the computer and taps at the keys.

BLUE
THE DATA
'TIS UNSAVÉD
DEMOLISHÉD BY
BLUE SCREEN OF DEATH

GRAY
(popping back in)
(as low as he can go:)

blue
screen
of
deeeeeeaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaattttthhhhhh

Blue and Gray take a quick bow before exiting.

MAISIE
(chuckling)
Oh... they're good... you're good. I'm onto you. Scaly fucking reptiles.

Wanda enters.

Maisie points the gun at her on reflex, then immediately lowers the barrel.

WANDA

Cool. Have you seen a woozy sleepy patient around here?

MAISIE

Nuh-uh.

WANDA

What are you doing in the lab?

MAISIE

(grinning)

I've got 'em.

WANDA

...okay.

MAISIE

I have the key to their plans. Right here.

She points to the cube.

WANDA

Oh! Sweet!

Wanda goes to the cube and reaches out to pick it up --

Maisie swats her hand away.

WANDA

Hey! I'm going to destroy it, remember?

MAISIE

That's what they want you to do.

WANDA

Maisie.

MAISIE

The plan has changed. The entropy cube holds all of the answers to the grand satanic conspiracy which has gripped humanity hostage for generations... and I'm going to blow it wide open!

WANDA

Very funny. Now give me the --

Maisie aims the AR-15 at Wanda.

Wanda raises her hands.

MAISIE

You're being... awfully obstinate.

(studies her)

They got to you.

WANDA

Maisie, don't be such a --

Maisie picks up the cube. She keeps the gun trained on Wanda as she backs out of the room.

MAISIE

Don't follow me. You --

Maisie drops the cube.

The gun goes off.

The Nurse collapses, dead instantly.

Wanda runs to the Nurse.

WANDA

Maisie! Goddamn you!

MAISIE

Don't follow me! Shill.

Maisie picks up the cube and exits.

WANDA
WHY DO ALL OF US SUCK SO MUCH!?

LEGACY HALL 2

James II holds a box of things. There is another box by his feet.

He takes a few Rush CDs out of the box he holds. He chucks them into the FIRST BARREL OF JAMES VENISON I oil drum.

He takes a scribble charcoal drawing of hands out of the box. He shakes his head at it before tossing it into the oil drum.

Petra leads Sizzle to the entry way. Sizzle looks to his mother for reassurance. She gives it to him, nudges him forward.

James II takes out of the box a tie-dye binder that has a big childish “SECRET PLANS TO SAVE THE WORLD” label. He chucks it into the oil drum.

SIZZLE

Hey. So... um...

(beat)

Look I... aaaaah fuck, I’m not good at these sorts of things, you know? It’s just...

James II takes a little league participation trophy out of the box. He chucks it into the oil drum.

SIZZLE

Okay. Okay. Right. Okay. Right. The point of it is... okay, I really want to stress that I mean this, okay? I want you guys to believe me. Okay? Okay?

(beat)

Mom. Dad. I’m staying sober.

(beat)

I know you don't have much reason to believe me, but that's what's happening, guys. I'm staying sober. Hundred percent. Stone cold.

James II takes a child's chemistry set out of the box. He tosses it into the oil drum.

SIZZLE

I mean, like yeah, I complain a lot about... about living with you guys, but I mean... you put up with a lot from me. You know? Like, how many times have you caught me with a needle in my arm? I mean, that's gotta be traumatizing.

James II takes a Gameboy out of the box. He dumps it in the oil drum.

SIZZLE

And the stealing, I mean... I wouldn't put up with me! Really, I wouldn't... so, I know I complain a lot... a lot, a lot... but you gotta know that I really appreciate your sacrifices for me.

Sizzle looks back at Petra. She smiles at him.

James II takes an MIT acceptance letter envelope out of the box.

JAMES II

(tossing the letter into the oil drum)

That's nice.

SIZZLE

Here, hey, let me help you out.

Sizzle picks up the other box.

SIZZLE

Yeah, I know... Siz helping out with the chores, what a thought, what a thought.

He overturns the box and dumps its contents into the oil barrel.

James II puts down his box. He picks up a canister of gasoline and starts dousing the objects in the oil drum.

SIZZLE

(picking at the bottom of his box)

Hold up a sec, something's stuck here. You're not one to get rid of sentimental stuff. Proud of you, dad. James II. See? We're both growing!

Sizzle succeeds in freeing a stuck photograph.

James II strikes a match.

SIZZLE

(looking at the photograph)

Hey, hold up... is this...? This is my stuff.

James II drops the match into the oil drum.

GREEN

(at microphone)

Strike of a match
all you've accomplished
turns to ash
Strike of a match
childhood memories
possessions flash
in a spiral of ash

SIZZLE

Dad! Holy shit! Dad! What are you doing!

Sizzle sticks his hand over the rim of the oil drum, going for an object in it, but he yanks it back, burned by the flames.

SIZZLE

(holding his hand)

Shit... god... shit! What the hell are you doing?

JAMES II

You're not my son.

SIZZLE

What?

JAMES II

You're not my son.

PETRA

When you have won the battle over the Devil's touch, you can return to heaven.

SIZZLE

Mom...?

JAMES II

No no, he's out. He's out for good. I mean what I said. Even if he becomes a canonized saint, he's still no Venison.

SIZZLE

You can't be serious. You're not disowning me. That's not what's happening.

PETRA

(unable to look at him)

Listen to your father.

SIZZLE

This is insane! I'm getting sober! For real! You guys can't do this!

JAMES II

The Venisons are a family of nothing short of excellence. I'm pruning some branches of the family tree.

James II watches the flames. Petra crosses herself.

Out of breath, Wanda arrives.

WANDA

Hey. Sizzle. Thank goodness. I need a favor.

(beat)

This isn't a good time. I can tell it's not a good time.

(beat)

Anyway, so Siz -- Maisie has the entropy cube and I need you to get it from her. Also, has anyone seen a woozy patient walking about?

SIZZLE

What makes you think I'll be able to change her mind?

PETRA

This obsession with His Divine Device will end in our doom. Please, no further.

JAMES II

He'd probably sell the entropy cube for his precious Oxy anyway.

Silence.

SIZZLE

I'm not your son. Okay. Fine. I haven't felt like it for a long time. You're not my Dad --
(shoves the photograph into James II's
chest)

-- you're not my Mom. Yeah, I've been a piece of work, but this? You guys? Come on!
(proudly puts his arm around Wanda's
shoulder)

But this? This is my sister! She's adopted, but we share more blood than you guys and I ever did!

WANDA

Not to rush, but is that a "yes" to the favor...?

SIZZLE

It is a yes! A yes, a yes, a million yesses to my eldest sister! I'll get the cube and meet you in grandma's garden -- capisce?

WANDA

Sounds good.

PETRA

I prayed for you, James Isaac Venison III, I prayed for you unendingly for years and years that you would have the will to throw off your affliction, but I can see now my prayers were useless because the Lord's Light was being wasted, absorbed by you, a vortex of darkness. Heed this warning, Wanda: if you follow this devil of opiates, you will surely bring doom not just upon yourself, but to all you hold dear.

Beat.

SIZZLE

Let's go.

Sizzle exits.

WANDA

Yeah, that last prophecy of doom went so well. Love how you keep moving the goalposts -- what a convenient prophecy! I'm looking for a patient, anyone seen her?

(beat)

Well. Y'all need to chill the fuck out.

Wanda follows after Sizzle.

RADIOLOGY 2

Radiology has been converted into a makeshift fort. The entropy cube rests on Maisie's desk.

Maisie clutches her AR-15. She speaks into a tape recorder.

MAISIE

We are about to commence... the first roll. There is a pattern to the actions of the entropy cube, patterns which, once discerned, will reveal truths about those who have manufactured this situation. *They* --

Maisie thinks she hears something.

Silence.

She eases a little, speaks lower into the tape recorder.

MAISIE

Things have escalated beyond my control. *They* goaded me into violence so they can claim I fired the first shots in this war. Commencing... the first roll.

She rolls the entropy cube.

GREEN

(at microphone)

From tangled, undermaintained, overstrained circuitry
A vital bulb in the x-ray booth blows
Pop, shatter, and such

MAISIE

A lightbulb. Clearly, the Illuminati is involved. This goes so much deeper than I could
have imagined.

A knock on the door.

Maisie swings her AR-15 in the direction of the
sound.

MAISIE

(whispering)

This could be it. I may have found out too much...

Another knock.

SIZZLE

(offstage)

Hey yo, Mae-mae! Open up! It's ya boi Sizzy-viz!

MAISIE

Sizzle, don't take one step closer.

SIZZLE

(offstage)

I'm coming in!

MAISIE

Don't -- !

Sizzle comes in. He makes a flashy entrance
pose.

SIZZLE

What? Aren't you happy to see me? I'm happy to see you.

(beat)

Okay, yeah yeah yeah, CIA is plying me with drugs, blah-de-blah -- I'm just here because I misplaced my copy of your book and was hoping you had another.

MAISIE

Self-publishing isn't cheap.

SIZZLE

I know, I know, I'm sorry, but your mind, sis... your mind! I would never have been able to make the connections between the um... uh, you know, *big pharma* and, uh, you know...

MAISIE

(putting her gun down)

Mm-hm.

SIZZLE

Yeah, "Seeking a Pantheon..." what a title.

MAISIE

We Sought the Panacea, but Embraced the Void: Hospitals and their Role in the Coming Pacification of Mankind.

SIZZLE

Evocative.

MAISIE

Sizzle... they're coming to get me.

SIZZLE

What makes you say that?

(going to her)

Mae-mae... talk to me, what's going on?

MAISIE

They're going to get me, they're going to get me!

SIZZLE

Hey hey... look, I know that you're into some dangerous stuff, yeah? But you see so much and sometimes you see too much. Like, you nearly ruined your wedding because --

MAISIE

Don't...

SIZZLE

-- because you didn't recognize one of the groomsmen and so like -- like, you huddled the bridesmaids together and made this big announcement, then one by one pulled guests aside, saying you were certain that this groomsman you didn't recognize... was a CIA assassin who put a bomb in the wedding cake.

(beat)

Yeah. Yeah. Who'd it turn out it was?

MAISIE

My husband's cousin, David.

SIZZLE

Your husband's cousin, David, who had liposuction like, a week before the wedding! No spook, just... cousin Dave!

Sizzle laughs. In spite of herself, Maisie cracks a smile.

MAISIE

...still think it's suspicious the way he kept sweating and looking at the cake...

SIZZLE

Whatever's going on, I don't think it's as bad as you think.

MAISIE

I appreciate you saying that, but... it is. I got too close to the truth in *We Sought the Panacea, but Embraced the Void* and they decided to use the Venisons as test subjects before rolling out their full plan.

Maisie gets agitated and starts to pace.

Sizzle palms the entropy cube while she's distracted.

MAISIE

It's been long obvious the mass medical infrastructure is in place... and, and plenty of whistleblowers who have all been suicided say the CIA finally found what they've been looking for since goddamn MK Ultra: mind control.

And they can do it easily with nanomachines injected into the blood stream. There's some dark ritual the powers that be want to enact and they need millions, billions of compliant people to make it work --

SIZZLE

Hey hey hey. It's all in "Panacea," right?

MAISIE

Right.

SIZZLE

I'll read all about it! Really, sounds fascinating. Do you have...?

Maisie finds a copy of her book. The cover is a poorly photoshopped image of a hospital with blood seeping out of the windows and a dark tornado cloud overhead. She gives it to Sizzle.

SIZZLE

Thanks. Hey... don't freak out. Everything will be chill. See you 'round St. Durgess.

Sizzle starts to leave.

MAISIE

What you won't get in there are my modified theories thanks to the entropy cube. I had initially believed that the manufactured crisis would be -- well, it's in the book -- but I suspect that the entropy cube is what...

(beat)

I left it here, where is...?

Maisie aims her AR-15 at Sizzle.

MAISIE

Hands up! Knees on the ground!

SIZZLE

(putting up his hands)

Whoa, Maisie, Mae-mae... hey --

MAISIE

Goddammit, you're one of *them*! I knew it! The opiates!

SIZZLE

No no no -- I'm just getting it for Wanda! I'm not CIA or Illuminati or whatever else --

MAISIE

On your knees!

SIZZLE

I... okay! Okay!

(he gets to his knees)

I'm sorry I swiped the cube, but it's not what you think it...

(nervous chuckling)

Your mind, sis, your *mind*!

Sizzle laughs nervously, laughter which becomes stilted half-sobs.

SIZZLE

Re... remember how... how one time we all went camping when we were teens and... and you and I went out for a hike and you saw like, you saw a bear and so we ran, we ran and wound up in this cave for like two hours and and you and I talked a lot, and and you told me about this teacher who kept hitting on you and you'd never told anyone else and and I -- I felt like a real brother to you, like I felt like I could actually -- actually help my sister when she was in trouble, you know, and I felt so special that that you'd tell me something like... and then dad found us in the cave as it was getting dark and we told him about the bear you saw and it turned out it was his friend Steve he was meeting up with and he had this big fuzzy coat that looked kind of bear-like and we all felt silly but it was nice, it was... um... yeah.

(beat)

Remember that?

Maisie lowers her weapon.

MAISIE

Just leave.

SIZZLE

Seriously? For real? Thank you thank you thank you so much...!

MAISIE

Leave.

SIZZLE

I...

MAISIE

Leave.

Sizzle scrambles to his feet. He starts to say something, but only manages a few strained, croaking sounds before deciding to simply exit.

Maisie just stands there.

MAISIE

Nurse!

The Nurse appears.

MAISIE

Barricade the door. We're going on full lockdown. Arm the detonators in the pipe bombs I've planted throughout St. Durgess. *Nothing* will get past me.

The Nurse nods.

MAISIE

(into the tape recorder)

You got all that? So much deeper than I thought. *Nothing* will get past me.

DETERMINATION WARD 2

Brown, playing the same character from Lab 1, is strapped into a hospital bed. Broderick stands over her and vapes.

Amber watches from the corner.

BROWN

Why are you doing this to me?

BRODERICK

You don't matter. You're an NPC in this game. Don't worry, I'm not going to hurt you.

Wanda enters.

WANDA

Has anyone here seen -- Broderick, what the hell are you doing?

BRODERICK

Science.

WANDA

I need to run a blood test on that patient. Let her go.

BRODERICK

You don't control me.

AMBER

So strange that strategic surges of blood
In my face and hands
Or any part of me
Should be what makes me want to be close to you.

WANDA

...Amber?

AMBER

A meekly moving tissue, malfunctioning multifariously
In the center of me
So strange the interplay of tissue and blood
Should be what makes me want to be close to you.

WANDA

Amber? Ambrosia Gosling? Oh my god... is... is that you?

AMBER

Caress and surge from my hips to my lips
The things that blood can do
From veins articulating the thought of you --

WANDA

Amber... but you're dead... how...?

AMBER

-- I'm on the verge of arterial collapse
So strange that cardiac dysfunction
Should be what makes me want to be close to you

BRODERICK

What's being dead like?

AMBER

(balks for a second)

How do simple cells know
Exactly where I want you to touch me?
How do they know
To flood the sites upon my skin
Most in need of you?

BRODERICK

Hey. Hey! What's it like being dead?

AMBER

(faltering)

If a pin were to prick my skin --

WANDA

Broderick! She slit her wrists in a bathtub at seventeen, she was my childhood best friend
and she...

AMBER

(struggling)

Surely a whole new you would --

WANDA

Why did you do it, Amber? Why? I never knew why!

Amber goes quiet.

Wanda reaches for her.

Amber runs out of the room.

BRODERICK

Well, Wanda. You win. You get the patient. That one is much more fascinating.

WANDA

Don't you lay a hand on her.

BRODERICK

Jesus Christ, you think I'm some sort of monster. She's dead! I can't pass up a conversation with a dead girl.

WANDA

Broderick.

BRODERICK

You don't. Control me.

Beat.

Broderick exits.

WANDA

Nurse?

The Nurse appears.

WANDA

Let's get this one's blood tested.

GARDEN 3

Gail smokes a cigarette. Stubs litter the ground.
She looks at the plants, holding a poppy.

Sizzle enters.

SIZZLE

Hey, Wanda! I got the -- oh. Hey, Gail. What, uh, what are you...?

GAIL

Plants are stupid. Who the fuck needs plants.

SIZZLE

Um... food? Need them for food? Clothes... uh...

GAIL

Fucking stupid.

Gail stubs out her cigarette with the poppy.
Lights another.

SIZZLE

Okay. Alright. You're brooding, cuz. What's up?

GAIL

My mother.

SIZZLE

Oh. Oh... oh Gail, I know it's been years, but losses like that never really go away.

GAIL

You misunderstand, idiot. She's here.

SIZZLE

Here.

GAIL

What I said.

SIZZLE

Like... here, here...? Are your brains a little boiled too?

GAIL

She is physically here. In this hospital. Walking around. Alive. Sort of.

SIZZLE

Auntie Burgundy is walking around St. Durgess?

Gail nods.

SIZZLE

Well, what happened? I imagine seeing... seeing someone close to you who you thought you lost... I mean, I can only imagine you'd be overjoyed... I mean, if Jerry were still alive, I'd be over the moon about it.

GAIL

Please don't compare my mother to your dead mutt.

SIZZLE

Poor Jerry... don't know what he smelled in the bleach to make him want to rip open the jug and slurp, slurp, slurp, but...

GAIL

Cigarette?

SIZZLE

Mm? Oh, no. God, no. That shit'll kill you.

Gail gives Sizzle a look.

SIZZLE

What?

Gail grunts her acknowledgement. She smokes.

SIZZLE

What happened? With your mom, I mean. Did you... talk to her?

GAIL

Depends on your definition of "talk."

Burgundy appears on the other side of the stage.

GAIL

She came by the luxury suites. She had this black sack over her head, but I knew it was her. Spooked my associates the hell out of the room. I started crying in a way I haven't since her funeral. I felt like a little fucking girl again, desperate for her mommy's approval. So I was fucking crying and blubbering about my accomplishments, about the companies I'm on the board of, the empire I built from nothing but my own sweat, and do you know all she had to say to that?

SIZZLE

Well... no.

GAIL

One word.

BURGUNDY

Disappointed.

SIZZLE

Oh. Wow.

Sizzle absentmindedly starts fiddling with the entropy cube.

GAIL

So obviously, I got pissed. Like a fucking teen again. Started screaming at her that --

(to Burgundy)

I built this all for you, goddammit! How can you say you're disappointed?

(returning)

I screamed and I cried and all she'd say...

BURGUNDY

Disappointed.

SIZZLE

That's not like her. Auntie Burgundy used to be so lively.

GAIL

You weren't around her when stepdad eighty eight billion, carry the four, broke her heart.

BURGUNDY

Disappointed.

GAIL

I had my tantrum, I retreated into a cocoon of sniveling fucking sobs... god. Huge moment of fucking weakness. And it's then that she... the word changes.

BURGUNDY

Love.

GAIL

Love.

BURGUNDY

Love.

GAIL

I love you too, mom.

BURGUNDY
(shakes her head)

Love.

GAIL

I love you too.

BURGUNDY
(shakes her head)

Love.

GAIL

And that's when I realized she wasn't talking about me.

SIZZLE

How do you mean?

GAIL

My mother, before her death, had seven divorces and boyfriends numbering in the low hundreds in her search for her soulmate. Before Mr. Perfect caused her to off herself.

BURGUNDY

Love.

GAIL

Dead, returned to the living... still craving a fucking soulmate. That's my mom.

SIZZLE

Jesus... that sucks. I'm sorry.

GAIL

And so I told her:

(to Burgundy)

There's this guy. Just your type: intelligent... but edgy... brooding... but decisive... his name is Broderick Frederickson.

BURGUNDY

Love!

SIZZLE

You didn't.

GAIL

Made her fucking day. She left to find him like that.
(snaps fingers)

Broderick appears.

Burgundy strokes his chest. He pulls her close
by the waist.

They kiss.

He leads her offstage.

GAIL

Bitch.

SIZZLE

Gail! That's your mother.

GAIL

Anyone who's a slave to their vices deserves to be trod over.
(stamps out her cigarette)

I'll show her. Disappointed. What the fuck could she be disappointed in? I'm not the woo-woo sort, but this is a sign. I only take sure bets, but I've been thinking small. I've got to go for a truly big score, take big fucking risks, move fast and break things on my way to the fucking moon.

SIZZLE

Neat.

Gail notices Sizzle has the entropy cube.

GAIL

What have you got that for?

SIZZLE

This? Oh.

(pockets it)

Wanda wants it.

I want it.

GAIL

Wanda wants it.

SIZZLE

Gail takes out a pill bottle.

GAIL

I have Oxy. I want it.

SIZZLE
(not looking at the bottle)

No.

GAIL

How long since you've had any?

SIZZLE

I promised Wanda I'd give it to her.

GAIL

Whole bottle. Hundred dollars easy on the street. It's yours.

SIZZLE

I said "no," Gail.

GAIL

We'll see what the withdrawals say.

SIZZLE

I'm sober! I'm getting sober.

GAIL
(snorts)

A whole four hours, wow, your willpower and discipline are inspiring.

SIZZLE

Fuck you.

Silence.

GAIL

Oxy. Derived from opium. Which itself is derived from poppy seeds. Huh. Plants. What do you know? Maybe not so useless.

SIZZLE

What the hell are you on about?

GAIL

You got me. I was brooding when you came in. Of course plants are useful. Some can be smokes. Some can make you feel good. As you said... clothes... food.

SIZZLE

...sure.

GAIL

Some are useful. Some are just weeds. Like people. Some people change the world, some leech off their hard work.

SIZZLE

Weeds serve a function in the ecosystem. They only become a problem and overrun the place if something in the ecosystem is out of whack. Like, I dunno, maybe there's not enough nitrogen in the soil or whatever.

GAIL

I guess what I'm saying, Sizzle, is: you are a weed. I am a mighty poppy seed. Don't you dare steal my sun.

SIZZLE

The hell is that supposed to mean?

Gail holds the bottle of Oxy. She stares at Sizzle.

LAB 3

Wanda and Brown wait. They are both bored. Wanda scans through sheets of data to pass the time.

WANDA

The mortality rate at this hospital is unconscionable. I cannot believe these numbers I'm looking at.

BROWN

It's better than the place I got my gallbladder stones removed.

WANDA

That's... worrisome.

The Nurse enters with a clipboard.

BROWN

Are those the results?

WANDA

Yes! Finally, we'll get to the bottom of what's lingering in the air surrounding this godforsaken place.

(taking the clipboard)

Thank you.

The Nurse nods and exits.

Wanda reads it.

Her blood runs cold.

WANDA

Do you take sleeping pills?

BROWN

Not once in my life.

WANDA

Zolpidem... generic for Ambien...

PATIENTS

(chanting)

Zolpidem. Generic for Ambien.

Zolpidem. Generic for Ambien.

The chant continues as:

WANDA

Nurse, there must be a mistake in the test. Nurse...!

The Child enters where Wanda expected the Nurse to appear. He wields a scalpel.

WANDA

No... no!

Wanda flees.

HALLWAY

The Patients are in the hallway. They continue the chant.

They watch Wanda as she runs in, panting.

BROWN

We're going down the drain!

PATIENTS

Drain!

Wanda screams.

Silence, save for Wanda's heavy breaths.

Wanda shuffles across the stage.

LUXURY SUITES 2

Broderick and Burgundy lay on a couch, post-coitus. Burgundy is wrapped around Broderick. He vapes.

BURGUNDY

Love.

BRODERICK

What's death like? Not many people get the chance to speak about the opportunity.

BURGUNDY

Light.

BRODERICK

Uh-huh. Light?

BURGUNDY

Light.

BRODERICK

Yeah, sure. I mean, it's pretty well-documented that the near-death experience of going into a tunnel, being embraced in light... it's all in the way the neurons in your brain fire before you die. The fact you say "light" tells me that after your dying hallucination, there was nothing at all. Just a trick of synapses.

BURGUNDY

Soulmates.

BRODERICK

Soulmates, much like the afterlife -- also nonexistent.

BURGUNDY

Soulmates.

BRODERICK

It's an illusion of the mind. All of it. Every bond we feel we have is a trick of chemistry to pass our genes along. But come on... soulmates? One person belonging to another person? Delusional. Almost seven billion people on the planet and the one person who is a perfect match for your soul -- which also doesn't exist because consciousness is a flimsy construct of the mind, it's delusions all the way down -- the one person who's a perfect match for your soul happens to live in your zipcode.

BURGUNDY

Soulmates?

Silence.

Broderick barks with laughter.

BURGUNDY

...soulmates?

BRODERICK

(rubbing Burgundy's head)

Delusional women are such fun.

Broderick vapes.

BURGUNDY

(standing up)

Love!

(pacing)

Love... love love... love... love!

BRODERICK

Yes yes, "love," we get it.

BURGUNDY

Sorry... sorry...

BRODERICK

What...?

BURGUNDY

Sorry... Gail... Gail!

Burgundy runs out of the room.

BRODERICK

...the hell?

GARDEN 4

Sizzle sits, utterly still, looking at the plants.

Wanda enters.

WANDA

Hey. So...

(beat)

So something really shitty happened before I came here. To St. Durgess. I... well, it caused me to... attempt suicide. I may have succeeded. For all I know this is an elaborate dream that only feels very real...

(beat)

I did it in a bathtub for some stupid reason. I guess I've always associated suicide with bathtubs, you know, 'cause auntie Burgundy slashed her wrists in a bathtub, that's how she went, and my best friend in high school, Amber... same thing: slit wrists. Bathtub. I didn't do that. I took Zolpidem. It's a sleeping pill, generic for Ambien. 'Course, that kind of renders the whole bathtub part of the equation pointless, doesn't it? You commit suicide in the bathtub almost as a courtesy. Sleeping pills aren't very gruesome.

(beat)

But that's the last thing I remember doing. Before arriving here. At this hospital.

(beat)

Sizzle?

It occurs to her that Sizzle hasn't spoken this entire time.

She finds a bottle of Oxy in his hand.

WANDA

No... no no no no no...

She checks his pulse.

Sizzle falls over.

WANDA

James!

Music.

The Nurse enters and removes Sizzle's mask.

She places it amongst the plants.

Wanda kneels beside the mask.

Sizzle's body disappears.

A funeral procession.

Virginia enters first, bawling silently.

She pays her respects at Sizzle's mask. Virginia fastens a poppy to it.

Virginia passes out plums to everyone else as they process.

Gail enters, smoking a cigarette. She coolly walks up to the mask. Nods at it. She lights a cigarette, holds it out for Wanda.

Wanda takes the cigarette.

Maisie stalks in with her AR-15, hypervigilant. She salutes Sizzle's mask before retreating into a corner. She takes an armful of plums from Virginia and digs in.

The Nurse brings a medical mannequin in a doctor's lab coat onstage. Blue, playing Gail, places her mask on the mannequin, then exits.

James II processes to the mask. He scoffs, shakes his head.

Petra enters, swinging a thurible with incense. She is walking as an act of will. She could burst into tears at any moment.

She comes to a stop before the mask.

The music fades out.

PETRA

Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.

(beat)

Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done in earth,
as it is in heaven.

(beat)

Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive --

WANDA

Shut up.

Silence.

Wanda throws down her cigarette. She grinds it
out with her foot. She faces her family.

No one says anything. They all look to Wanda,
Except Petra, who remains facing Sizzle's mask.

WANDA

I appreciate you gathering here to mourn the loss of my brother.

(beat)

I blame you for his death.

(points at Maisie)

I blame you.

(at Gail)

And you.

(at James II)

You.

(at Petra)

And you.

(sweeping her finger over them all)

All of you. For his death.

(she is about to launch into a tirade, but
catches the devastated look of her
grandmother)

I'm done here.

Wanda starts to exit.

James II grabs her by the wrist.

JAMES II

What the hell was that all about?

WANDA

Like you cared.

JAMES II

No no, you didn't have to live with him. There'll be a lot less pain now.

Wanda pulls out of James II's grip.

VIRGINIA

Please... not in a time of mourning.

Wanda chuckles humorlessly, wandering back into the center of the ring of Venisons.

WANDA

A time of mourning, huh? You're all glad he's dead.

VIRGINIA

That's not true.

WANDA

I loved my brother!

(beat)

He was better than all of us put together.

Blue, playing Petra, turns into Gail. The Nurse replaces where Petra was with the mannequin, placing Petra's headdress and thurible on it.

VIRGINIA

Dearie... Wanda...

WANDA

I'm sorry I'm doing this in front of you, grandma, but I can't... I can't...

(pacing)

I can't stand you! Any of you. Mom, your imagination is so narrow you can't fathom any solution that doesn't include the helping hand of His Holiness -- worked real well for Sizzle. Dad, you've spent god knows how much time working to preserve our family's legacy or whatever, whatever, whatever high-minded thing you're telling yourself today, but you know that all it is, is you like seeing your name on things.

JAMES II

That's quite enough.

WANDA

Gail's god is the golden cock of the Wall Street bull and I know that there is absolutely nothing I can say that will hurt you because you've already written me off as some sanctimonious shithead, but I need you to know, Gail, that you're an exploitative bitch who only cares about enriching herself... and Maisie... you drive me up the wall. You really are your mother's daughter -- the both of you are so convinced that your imaginations are reality it makes it impossible to talk to you without surrendering to your bugshit reality.

(beat)

You wonder why I don't return your voicemails.

GAIL

This has been fun.

Gail puts out her cigarette and tosses it into some plants.

GAIL

You'd kill on cable news. Now, if this is going to be the general tone of this soiree, I think it would be best to excuse myself and attend to some pressing business.

WANDA

Stay where you are.

GAIL

Do I require your permission to leave, Fraulein Mengele?

WANDA

Oooh, nazi comparison, love that for you! It's fun seeing how people react when they're told "no" for the first time in their pampered little lives.

GAIL

I worked for everything I have.

WANDA

Is there something about rich people that gives them amnesia about how they got rich? Your adoptive father gave you a million dollars, so unless... well, yeah, driving your mother to suicide was a lot of work, I guess you're right.

Gail lunges and claws at Wanda. James II restrains Gail.

GAIL

He was a useless, brain-boiled drug addict! He'd tell you so himself, so fucking get over it already!

JAMES II

This is unbecoming for the Venison name. Both of you.

WANDA

You don't know shit about grief -- all of us were more broken up about her than you were. You were living a dream princess life with your new daddy!

A sharp gasp, followed by sobs. Everyone pauses, looking to see where it's coming from: Virginia.

VIRGINIA

I'm sorry... our family... never been the same since... since Burgundy...

A pause filled with light sobs.

Gail lights another cigarette.

GAIL

She was my mother.

WANDA

I know.

GAIL

You of all people should know that people grieve differently.

WANDA

I know, I know, that was too far. I'm sorry.

JAMES II

You only ever saw James III's good side. You didn't have to live with him. Coming home from the Venison Hobby Vault, seeing him passed out on the couch with a needle in his arm, dreading it being the precursor to an overdose, wondering what precious possession he'd pawned to get the money... I would have been a fool not to recognize the endless patterns... that he was never going to amount to anything more. I gave up on him, Wanda. Your mother never gave up. Even if..

VIRGINIA

He was still your son. My grandson.

JAMES II

(quietly)

You didn't have to live with him.

Wanda suppresses a response.

MAISIE

Why'd you do it, Wanda?

Silence.

WANDA

Do... what now?

MAISIE

What I can't stop turning over and over in my head is shortly before he died, Sizzle came to radiology and stole the entropy cube, which I will remind everyone, is a crucial part of the sadistic, satanic, cabalistic, pedophilic CIA-Illuminati experimentation --

WANDA

Jesus Christ.

MAISIE

He stole it from me and when I caught him, he told me you told him to do it, Wanda.

WANDA

Yeah. To destroy it. What are you getting at?

MAISIE

Our brother was pliable, brain boiled by drugs... how could you? When did *they* get to you, huh?

WANDA

What are you getting at? Go on, spit it out, you lunatic.

MAISIE

I think it's mighty coincidental that our brother, who was put up to stealing the cube by you just... oh... *happens* to be offed shortly after finishing his mission.

WANDA

Say it. I fucking dare you.

MAISIE

You're not my sister.

WANDA

I'm more of a sister to you than you've ever been to me.

MAISIE

You never visit me and the kids.

WANDA

Has it occurred to you I might not care for the way you inundate my inbox every week with screeds on how being a doctor makes me a pawn of the system and I should quit?

MAISIE

You should.

WANDA

I'm not about to enter the home of someone who thinks I should stop saving lives.

GAIL

I was wondering how long it'd take you to pull the "saving lives" card. Not that you're going to be doing that anymore.

WANDA

What was that?

GAIL

You heard me.

(blows smoke in Wanda's direction)

You don't have the stomach for it anymore.

MAISIE

(sticking out her hand)

Give it back, Wanda.

WANDA

What back? The cube? I don't have it, he never gave it to me.

MAISIE

Wow, shit. They can teach you to lie with such a straight face.

WANDA

He didn't have it when I found him! Which means someone else must have it.

MAISIE

(aiming her AR-15)

Nice try.

WANDA

(putting up her hands)

Maisie, I am your sister!

JAMES II

Maisie, come on now, you're a Venison.

Gail spits out mirthless laughter.

VIRGINIA

(clutching her heart)

Oh my... oh my...

WANDA

Maisie. That gun has been accidentally discharging all day. Put it down.

MAISIE

He died of an *overdose*. For years, he plugged himself so full of chemicals it would have taken a massive amount to have done him in -- it had to have been foul play!

WANDA

Not by me!

MAISIE

You want that satanic cube more than anything else.

WANDA

I don't have it. Someone does and it's not me!

MAISIE

What did *they* -- ?

Maisie's gun goes off.

Sizzle's mask shatters.

WANDA

SOMEONE TAKE HER GUN AWAY!

MAISIE

I didn't... I didn't... I didn't mean to...

JAMES II

What a shot! I knew marksmanship ran in the family.

Virginia picks up pieces of Sizzle's mask.

WANDA

Maisie... Mae-mae. Put it down.

MAISIE

I didn't... I didn't...

Wanda takes Maisie's gun from her. She lays it on the ground.

Maisie retreats into the corner.

With the help of the Nurse, Brown, playing Maisie, exits, leaving behind a mannequin with her mask on it.

Gail goes to pick up the AR-15, but Wanda steps on it.

Beat.

But I want it.

GAIL

You can't have everything you want, Gail.

WANDA

Yes I can.

GAIL

Let her have it.

JAMES II

Dad.

WANDA

It's not like you're going to stop me anyway.

GAIL

Gail, why do you even want it? Be serious.

WANDA

I have some big things planned for this hospital.

GAIL

There's no way you need a gun for that.

WANDA

GAIL

Big changes tend to upset people. A gun is insurance against upset people.

WANDA

...what the hell do you want to do to this hospital?

Gail stands up straight. She looks Wanda up and down. Blows smoke in her face. Throws her cigarette into the plants.

GAIL

You'll do what I want.

Gail reaches into a pocket...

She feels around in it.

Her eyes widen.

James II becomes Broderick. He steps forward and every one else freezes.

BRODERICK

By a quirk of events, I have the entropy cube now. Ah... chance.

(holds the cube up)

You see, I was letting my mind wander in the Luxury Suites as I often find day dreaming conducive to deep thought. I was leaving when Gail came in. We collided with each other and... well, this is the beauty of it all:

the collision caused the cube to roll

which caused some pocket seams to come undone

which caused the cube to slip out

which landed squarely on my shoe without making a sound

I bent down as though to tie my shoes and pocketed it

Gail was annoyed, but did she notice?

(flourishes the cube)

Not until it's too late.

One through six, I win, seven or above you lose.

Broderick chuckles and throws the cube in the air. He catches it. He looks at it.

BRODERICK

What do you know? I win.

Broderick walks over to the plants.

BRODERICK

A friendly reminder that Maisie's rigged many of St. Durgess' rooms with PVC pipe bombs.

(picks up a pipe bomb hidden amongst
the plants, shows it off)

Gail's been throwing her cigarette butts around quite a bit. It'd be a shame if some stray embers got close...

(shrugs)

Strike of a match. C'est la vie.

Broderick becomes James II as time resumes.

GAIL

I have business to attend to.

Gail heads for the exit.

Burgundy appears in her path.

BURGUNDY

...love?

GAIL

Out of my way.

Burgundy grabs Gail by the arms.

GAIL

(breaking out)

I'm busy. Okay?

BURGUNDY

Love!

Burgundy embraces Gail. Gail is stiff.

BURGUNDY

Love.

JAMES II

Oh my god...!

VIRGINIA

Burgundy? Is that really you?

BURGUNDY

(extending the embrace to her mother)

Love.

VIRGINIA

(joining)

Burgundy... oh Burgundy... why did you leave us?

James II throws himself around her legs.

JAMES II

I missed you so much! You must stop by legacy hall, you must see all the things your family has accomplished. We did it all for you.

BURGUNDY

Love.

JAMES II

You must be so proud of Gail. All the amazing things she's done.

WANDA

(to herself)

Like horde all the medicine.

(beat)

Horde all the medicine...

GAIL

(pulling out of the hug)

I really must be going...

Wanda punches Gail in the jaw.

BURGUNDY

Love!

JAMES II

Contain your temper! It's unbecoming of a Venison!

Wanda beats Gail to the ground.

WANDA

You gave him the Oxy!

VIRGINIA

She wouldn't...!

GAIL

-- going... crazy...!

WANDA

You're the only person in this goddamn hospital who has any!

James II pulls her off Gail.

JAMES II

You can't blame the supplier, it's his own fault he succumbed to his weakness.

WANDA

You overdosed him! You must have shoved pills down his throat -- Maisie was right, it would have taken a lot of Oxy to kill him, you didn't just give it to him, you killed him!

BURGUNDY

...love?

VIRGINIA

She would never do that, please, please make peace --

Gail scrambles to the AR-15 and picks it up.

She takes aim at Wanda. James II lets her go and puts his hands in the air.

Silence.

GAIL

Never. Lay a hand on me.

Gail lowers the gun.

GAIL

Now that I have the attention of all the weeds in the room, here's what's going to --

The gun goes off.

Virginia collapses.

Beat.

GAIL

Fuck! No!

WANDA

(going to her)

What did you do? Goddamn you!

JAMES II

Ma!

BURGUNDY

Love!

GAIL

That wasn't me.

Wanda checks for a pulse.

She shakes her head.

The world dims. All but Wanda are suspended in time. Everyone else is vague, out of focus.

Wanda gasps for air.

The Child appears.

Wanda steadies with deep breaths. She faces the Child.

WANDA

Is this it?

(beat)

I've said all I need to.

The Child brandishes a scalpel.

Tension strikes Wanda. She lets it fall away.

WANDA

Time I let you do what you need to.

Wanda turns away from the Child. Closes her eyes.

WANDA

I'm ready.

The Child advances.

A hand grips Wanda's shoulder.

Wanda grimaces, anticipating a scalpel in her back.

It's the Nurse's hand. They come into view.

The Nurse pulls down their mask.

THE NURSE

Wanda. We have to go.

WANDA

What?

THE NURSE

(to the audience)

The pipe bomb is about to blow.

WANDA

Pipe bomb? What pipe bomb?

THE NURSE

We have to go.

The world reconstitutes itself and time is flung back into motion with an almost audible whiplash. The Child is gone.

Burgundy becomes Maisie.

JAMES II

Ma! No no...

GAIL

Maisie! You... you absolute shit-weed!

The Nurse pulls Wanda offstage.

JAMES II

There was so much more I wanted to show you...

MAISIE

The simulation theory... how could I have forgotten the simulation theory?

GAIL

This was your gun! What'd you do to it, huh?

Gray, playing James II, leaves his mask on the ground. He becomes Broderick and goes to the microphone.

GAIL

You always were jealous of me.

MAISIE

We must be in a simulation. *They* must have gathered our consciousnesses and forced us into this place. It's the only explanation -- nothing else makes sense!

BRODERICK

I mentioned a lit cigarette. Some explosives.

(pointing)

Just over there.

GAIL

You're a goddamn weed who thinks she's a mighty fucking poppy seed, you're just like your worthless fucking brother! No, worse.

BRODERICK

Embers... they move... they move...

GAIL

I'm the only one worth a goddamn in this family!

BRODERICK

Smoldering closer... closer... can't you see thin wisps of smoke?

GAIL

Will you all just shut up and obey me goddammit?!

MAISIE

You're laughing at us, but I've figured it out!

Gail becomes Petra.

BRODERICK

So close to the detonator

The thin width of clothing to skin

PETRA

What could I have done differently, Lord? I did everything you said... everything..

BRODERICK

Strike of a match:

An explosion.

BRODERICK

Detonation in the garden

"A massive blast which slaughters them all to the last..."

Is what I should be saying, but not quite, not quite

There is an explosion and some are dead from force
 Those who aren't must contend with the rip in the wall
 Which harbors in the outside air, filled with --

PATIENTS

Zolpidem. Generic for Ambien

BRODERICK

If the blast doesn't get you
 Gas will
 Passing out quick
 Overdosing quick
 No one to save you

PATIENTS

In the strike of a match, everything changes

BRODERICK

There are two who survive the blast
 Burgundy is scorched and wailing
 But she lives
 Petra...
 ...how did she...?
 It doesn't matter
 kaboom
 rocks fall, every one dies

HALLWAY

The Nurse leads Wanda through the hallway by
 the hand.

It's an absolute mess. Random scenery pieces
 and props are strewn about. Broderick is still at
 the microphone.

Red and Green fight viciously, using the strewn
 scenery and props as impromptu weapons.

WANDA

Something's happened to them!

THE NURSE

(asserting her grip on Wanda)

It's too late.

BRODERICK

(holding up the entropy cube)

Chaos is king, reigning over this hospital dream

WANDA

(struggling to get away)

We have to go back! That's my family back there, that's my --

Another explosion. Brown catapults onstage
screaming, launched by the explosion.

BROWN

My leg... my leg!

THE NURSE

(going to Brown)

St. Durgess is falling apart. We have to start treating survivors.

BRODERICK

Chaos is king, reigning over this hospital dream

WANDA

My family... what's going on?!

Broderick places Dr. Durgess bloody burlap
sack over his head.

Blue stumbles onstage, clutching her bloody
head.

BLUE

so numb so numb sonumb sonumb sonumb sonumb

BRODERICK

Chaos is king, reigning over this hospital dream

THE NURSE

Get her legs, will you? Someone's overusing the entropy cube, that's what's going on.

Wanda and the Nurse pick up Brown. She howls in agony.

BRODERICK

hospital dream

Green thrusts a broken bit of metal rod from a hospital bed at Red, embedding it in his chest. Red is badly wounded, but continues to fight.

BLUE

doesn't make sense doesn't make sense

BRODERICK

hospital dream

THE NURSE

Quick! Air from outside has gotten in.

Wanda and the Nurse hustle Brown offstage.

Red strangles Green to death with a lab coat.

BRODERICK

hospital dream

EMERGENCY ROOM 2

The Nurse tends to Brown, who has a broken leg. Wanda stands to the side.

Amber watches from the corner.

THE NURSE

I need some help here. Wanda, you're an ER doctor.

WANDA

I am. I was. But I can't...

THE NURSE

Get over yourself.

Blue enters, holding her head.

THE NURSE

(to Brown)

This is going to hurt.

The Nurse sets her leg. Brown howls.

THE NURSE

(to Wanda, re: Blue)

That one needs your help. I can't do this all by myself.

The Nurse wraps a splint around Brown's leg.

WANDA

You got this handled. You don't need my help, I'll just get in your way.

The Nurse finishes up with Brown and moves her along, ushers Blue to the operating table, who is helped over by Wanda.

AMBER

The constant noise is like cymbals in my head
Each crash etches a cryptic symbol in my head

The Nurse looks into Blue's eyes with a flashlight.

AMBER

Cymbals crash, symbols etch
I can't see or hear for cymbals!
crash and crash and crash and crash

THE NURSE

Concussion.

AMBER

A marching band is crashing up my nervous system making me a nervous victim!
Oh god! The crashing cymbals in my head! Etching symbols in my head!

THE NURSE

Lay down, try not to move. We'll have to see if there's been further brain damage.

AMBER

I can't see or hear for cymbals!
I can't see or hear! Can't see --

THE NURSE

Quiet! Focus up in the ER.

Amber shrinks.

Red enters. The broken hospital bed rod still is
stuck in his chest.

RED

You should see... the other guy...

Red snickers.

Blood surges out of his mouth.

THE NURSE

(casting Blue aside)

Rest.

(to Red)

Over here.

Red flops down on the operating table. He has
trouble breathing.

THE NURSE

Wanda. This patient is dying. His lung is collapsed. I can't do this on my own.

The Nurse scrambles to get an oxygen mask
over Red.

WANDA

You're right -- you're low on supplies. I'm going to get what Gail stockpiled.

THE NURSE

I'll get me to bring me more supplies. This man is dying, get in here and do your job.

WANDA

I can't! I can't... I'll just... I'll end up killing him... please don't make me...

Time stops around Wanda. The stage darkens.

She hyperventilates.

WANDA

I can't... I can't... please... no more blood on my hands... I can't I can't I can't...

She forces herself to slow her breathing.

WANDA

I can't...

(deep breath)

Come on... I can't... come on, come on...

The Child appears at one end of the stage.
Broderick at the other.

BRODERICK

You're right, Wah-way. If you put your hands on that man, he's going to die.

Wanda stares at the Child.

BRODERICK

Why bother, huh? It's chaos, entropy, hon. What do you think the odds are? Are they in your favor? Are you sure they're in your favor? Walk away, Wah-way. Walk away.

Silence.

WANDA

(to the Child)

I'm sorry.

The Child reaches a hand out.

Wanda reaches for the hand... pulls back.

WANDA

I'm sorry.

Time whirs back into suffocating normal speed.
The Child and Broderick disappear. Light
returns. It's chaos in the emergency room.

THE NURSE

I'm losing him!

AMBER

When will the crashing end?
Will the cymbals ever cease their crashing crashing crashing?
Will the symbols ever cease their etching etching etching?

The Nurse struggles to remove the rod. Red is
losing the battle for air.

Wanda calmly finds a small tube and approaches
Red.

AMBER

Retching the noise onto the inner walls of my psyche
It's a full collapse to the tune of a never ending CRASH CRASH CRASH
I pray to god but all I hear is CRASH CRASH CRASH

WANDA

Amber, be quiet.

Wanda inserts the tube into Red's chest cavity,
between his ribs.

WANDA

Excess air is draining. We've got him stabilized. We'll have to operate further, but we've
bought time. Here, let me get that --

Wanda takes calipers from the Nurse.

She extracts the rod from Red.

WANDA

Prepare the patient with the head contusions. Assess for skull fracture.

THE NURSE

Yes, ma'am.

DETERMINATION WARD 3

Petra lays on the ground.

She stirs.

She comes to terms with being alive, that the ground is real, her injuries too. Her hands have blood stains on them that look like stigmata.

Petra kneels in prayer.

PETRA

Why did I survive, my Lord?

(beat)

Lord, I did everything you ever asked of me, and yet I must have strayed somewhere. Why did you spare me?

(beat)

Lord, there is much fear in my heart. Damnation... is that what my family deserves? Oh Lord, show me what I must do to make sure they pass into Heaven's Gate. Please Lord... show me, one so lowly, so faithful, show me...

Silence.

VOICE OF GOD

Petra Venison.

PETRA

I am here, my Lord, ever your servant.

VOICE OF GOD

You kneel, penitent in the determination ward
Of St. Durgess' hospital
A bead of virtue on a necklace of sin
And I have determined thee to be my ward.

PETRA

My Lord, I am not worthy, but I am yours to command.

VOICE OF GOD

There is a holy relic, a sword

PETRA

As you speak, so shall it be.

VOICE OF GOD

It has slid a little ways down the drain

Petra is confused.

A drain plug appears.

VOICE OF GOD

In the drain... feel my holy sword forged from angel fire
Wielded by Michael in the first days of creation

Petra clutches the drain plug chain.

PETRA

Yes, my Lord.

Petra pulls the plug.

She reaches into the drain and retrieves a giant
sword, which beams holy light.

Triumphant divine trumpets.

Petra raises the sword aloft.

PETRA

My Lord, anything for my Lord...

VOICE OF GOD

This angelic sword will compel confession of those stained with sin
 And will absorb their sins
 And cast their souls, unstained, into my Kingdom in the Heavens
 This is the means to save your family
 And to claim the Divine Device in the name of the Lord once more.

PETRA

Yes!

Angelic wings burst forth from Petra.

The light disappears, trumpets and wings too.
 Instead of the sword, Petra clutches an
 emergency fire axe. The fire alarm blares.

PETRA

(muttering)

Yes, my Lord, whatever you say, my Lord.

The fire axe becomes the sword, fire alarm
 becomes the divine trumpets. Holy light and
 wings return.

VOICE OF GOD

Go forth!

Gray enters.

PETRA

Confess, sinner! And thy soul shall be freed!

Petra points the sword at Gray. The sword
 glows.

Gray kneels and words burst out of him.

GRAY

I am a man most wretched, my temper ne'er was sated
 I broke my daughter's bones and strangled my own son until
 His brain was damaged due to oxygen most deprived
 My dog who pissed I ranneth o'er with my hummer grill
 How could this wretch of me be given rest amongst the saintly?

Petra places the flat of the sword on Gray's
 head.

PETRA

You are forgiven, my son.

Trumpets and lights surge...!

Reality asserts itself.

Petra removes the fire axe from Gray's skull. He
 flops over, dead.

The Divine World takes over.

Green appears.

PETRA

Confess, my daughter, and the kingdom of heaven shall open its gates for thee.

She points the sword at Green.

Green kneels and words spill out of her.

GREEN

So my sin: it was jealousy fierce
 To my sister who climbed to the top
 Of her business, outshining her peers
 O! her sex tape I leaked, her world did pop
 Can the Lord possibly forgive me?

Petra places the flat of the sword against
 Green's head.

PETRA

Thou art forgiven, my daughter.

Light, trumpets surge.

Dismal, grotesque reality.

Petra removes the axe from Green's skull. She flops over, dead.

Divinity returns.

Burgundy appears.

PETRA

Oh, sister of my husband, my sister... the weight of your soul is heavy on the scales of judgement. Confess and your torment will finally end.

Petra points the sword at Burgundy. Holy light blooms.

Burgundy splay her arms like Jesus on the cross. She rises into the air.

BURGUNDY

Oh, I am a sinner, a sinner I am:

The chronicles of my lustful ways could fill a hundred bibles and still require yet more parchment:

For I did lay with many men to quell deficiencies within myself

And little did I know it only spurred deficiency to grow and fester

Like a cancer tumor fastened to my very soul

The divine illusion is ripped away.

Burgundy is curled up fetal and weeping.

BURGUNDY

...love... love... love...

Divinity returns and Burgundy hovers again.

BURGUNDY

It is I, only I and the Lord who could have saved me from my defects
But woe, woe! I let myself fall into such despair and committed a sin more great than my
unquenchable lust:

I forsook the boundary of the living and the dead!

How can the Lord forgive me?

Petra raises the sword high.

PETRA

Thou art forgiven, Burgundy Venison! My sister, experience the ecstasy of faith!

Burgundy is spirited away in a climax of horns
and holy light.

Petra soars offstage.

All of the holiness disappears for the final time,
leaving this: Burgundy's headless body is
splayed like a crucifix on a hospital bed. Her
severed head rests atop an IV stand.

EMERGENCY ROOM 3

Wanda and the Nurse tend to Gray.

THE NURSE

We're losing him.

WANDA

Too much blood loss, I don't think there's anything to be --

Flatline.

WANDA

...done.

Silence.

The Nurse wheels the body away. Wanda drops bloody towels at her feet.

WANDA

Nothing to be done.

THE NURSE

He was losing too much blood.

WANDA

Nothing to be done.

Brown enters, supporting Blue's weight.

BROWN

She's in cardiac arrest!

WANDA

Nurse: defibrillators!

The Nurse comes back with the defibrillators.

Brown lays Blue down in front of Wanda.

Wanda charges the defibrillators.

WANDA

Clear!

Wanda presses the pads into Blue's chest. She convulses and gasps for air, but starts to slip back away.

Another charge.

WANDA

Clear!

With this one, Blue surges to life, panting heavily.

BROWN
(embracing her)

My love!

WANDA

Next!

As Brown leads Blue offstage, the Nurse wheels in Red. He's twitching and barely catching any air.

THE NURSE

This patient is in anaphylactic shock. Severe allergic reaction to a bee sting. We'll need to perform a tracheotomy.

WANDA

Tracheotomy?

THE NURSE

Yes ma'am.

Wanda hesitates. She takes a deep breath.

The Child appears, watching from the corner.
Wanda doesn't notice him.

WANDA

Scalpel.

The Nurse passes Wanda a scalpel.

Wanda turns the scalpel over in her hand.
Makes sure she has a solid grip on it.

WANDA

Apply the sedative.

The Nurse nods. She hooks Red up to an IV drip.

Red falls unconscious, hardly getting any air.

Wanda lowers the blade to just above Red's throat.

WANDA

I'm going to make the incision.

The Nurse nods.

Wanda presses the tip into Red's throat.

As she makes the incision, she adjusts her stance.

GREEN

(at microphone)

Bloody towel at your feet
Blood... so slick, so sweet
Bloody towel at your feet

Wanda slips. She loses control of the scalpel and ends up taking a slice out of Red's jugular.

WANDA

Oh my god... not again, no!

GREEN

The scalpel severs the jugular vein
A geyser of blood
So slick, so sweet
Bloody towel at your feet

Wanda slams her hand on Red's neck as if trying to stuff the blood back in.

WANDA

Not again, no!

THE NURSE

Wanda, what have you done? The tracheotomy...

WANDA

It's fine, it didn't happen, nothing happened, he's fine, he's...!

THE NURSE

(checking pulse)

Deceased.

Wanda howls and collapses to the ground.

Silence.

THE NURSE

You've cut your hands.

Beat.

WANDA

I've cut my hands.

THE NURSE

(searching for a bandage)

We need to patch you up.

Wanda gets to her feet. She moves as though underwater.

WANDA

Patch up... again...

She staggers towards the exit, scalpel still in hand.

THE NURSE

There's a large queue of patients. Dr. Venison, where are you going?

Wanda stumbles out the exit.

WANDA

Again... again... again again again...

THE NURSE
(to the Child, sharply)

Is this your doing?

The Child reaches for a scalpel. The Nurse keeps it out of reach.

The Child looks at the Nurse for a second, then exits.

The Nurse shakes their head.

LOBBY 1

The front door of St. Durgess. Leaves litter the ground.

Wanda enters, practically sleepwalking. She still holds the scalpel in her blood-soaked fingers.

She drops the scalpel.

Wanda picks leaves off the ground and bandages her hands with them.

Broderick enters, laughing. Several catheters dangle from his arm.

BRODERICK

You see what happened to me? Catheters! Stuck into my arm! Ha! Wonderful!

Broderick holds up the entropy cube.

BRODERICK

I could use some patching up too, by the by.

Wanda stares at him.

Then she lunges at Broderick, frenzied fingers reaching for the cube.

WANDA

Selfish fucker! Do you realize the pain you've caused rolling that fucking thing?

BRODERICK

What do you have against reality, Wah-way? And there is the matter of causality to consider --

WANDA

Grow up! *One thing* goes wrong for you in your precious little life and suddenly everything is meaningless and you've gotta make everyone miserable about it.

BRODERICK

I can know my own mind and that's it. The human skull locks our minds from each other, keeping me forever at a distance from other people and I, therefore, will always be apart and alone from everyone else.

WANDA

You *chose* to run your doctorate experiment in an unethical manner. You did that to yourself.

BRODERICK

(snapping)

If she hadn't been so sensitive about it, it would have been fine! Nothing unethical, the faculty are all a bunch of...! A small miscalculation and you're done for.

WANDA

Tiny miscalculation telling a freshman to act too drunk to consent at frat parties and tally every boy who tried to rape her.

BRODERICK

She had full power, she could have stopped the act and said "no" at any time --

WANDA

Predatory frat boys handle being told "no" *so* well.

BRODERICK

I couldn't know her mind. I was trying to know her mind. I miscalculated. We all miscalculate. Small things. And it all blows up in our faces. That's life. That's reality.

WANDA

The only reason you're allowed to fetishize chaos is because it can't actually hurt you.

BRODERICK

Chaos can hurt anyone. It's the only truly fair thing that exists.

WANDA

No PhD program will have you, but you could try for a thousand other jobs. Instead you play at being a novelist and philosophize on Reddit all day. Your trust fund can afford to let you wallow in a pool full of your own masturbatory nihilistic jizz blabbering about "chance, whoa, chaos, whoa, delusion, reality, whoooooa"! Do you realize what random freak chance has done to me? It's taken so many patients. It's taken my healing hands. It's taken my family. Chaos did that. You did that.

BRODERICK

I am free of delusion and for that, I am persecuted.

Broderick rolls the entropy cube.

GREEN

(at microphone)

Screws loosened from a blast
A lighting fixture swings down, dangling from a cord
Nearly striking Wanda's head

WANDA

Broderick, what are you doing?

Broderick rolls the entropy cube.

GREEN

Leak through the bandage
Coating Wanda's arm in blood so slick

WANDA

Cut it out cut it out cut it out!

Wanda stabs Broderick in the bicep with the scalpel. She stabs at him repeatedly. He protects himself with his arm.

WANDA

Fuck you fuck you fuck you fuck you fuck you!

Psycho...!

BRODERICK

Broderick slaps the scalpel out of her hand. He grabs her by the throat. She squirms and struggles.

You don't control me.

BRODERICK

He squeezes tight. She can't breathe.

Wanda kicks open the front door.

Broderick drops her and shuts the door.

You delusional little...

BRODERICK

Wanda shoves him through the front door.

She picks up the scalpel and runs, covering her mouth and nose with her lab coat.

Delusional bitch! Get back here!

BRODERICK

Broderick charges after her, picking up the entropy cube and covering his mouth too.

SURGERY 2

An operating table and an IV pole.

Amber shudders in a corner. The Child watches.

Wanda runs into the room. She picks up the IV pole and wields it like a staff.

Broderick barges in.

Get a way from me!

WANDA

Wanda swings the IV pole and strikes Broderick.

Entitled little shit!

WANDA

Broderick holds up the entropy cube.

Don't you do it. Don't you do it you selfish son of a bitch, don't you --

WANDA

Broderick rolls the cube.

A ligament in Broderick's leg tears
Down he goes

BROWN
(at microphone)

Shit, ah crap --

BRODERICK

That's some karma, right there.

WANDA

Wanda swings the IV pole at Broderick again. He grabs onto it. They tug on it, trying to wrench it out of the other's hands.

Broderick wrests it from Wanda and throws it to the side.

You son of a bitch.

WANDA

Broderick rolls the entropy cube.

BROWN

Power outage, high voltage, a surge of electric tonnage --
Flickering on some low lights
As a back up generator stirs to life

WANDA

You son of a bitch!

Wanda draws the scalpel.

Broderick rolls the entropy cube.

BROWN

A saline bag, improperly filled
Blows
Saline all over the floor
Slick liquid, slick liquid

Wanda advances toward's Broderick.

As she draws her arm back to stab with the
scalpel, Broderick rolls the cube.

BROWN

Wanda slips on saline
Slick liquid, slick liquid
Falls
Cracks her skull on the hard hospital ground
Strike of a match... snuffed

Broderick and the Child do a dance,
puppeteering Wanda's body like a marionette.
During the dance, Dr. Durgess' bloody burlap
sack is placed over Broderick's head.

AMBER

(singing, a dirge)

Oh... I wanted to feel
Safe in a coffin seal
I didn't count on the maggots and worms
Getting in, getting in

Broderick and the Child puppeteer her onto the operating table.

AMBER

Rooting around me, looting my body
Breaching my safe coffin seal

Broderick and the Child strap Wanda onto the operating table and gag her.

AMBER

I didn't count on the maggots and worms
This isn't rest
This isn't rest
This isn't --

Wanda wakes up. The dance ends, reality returns. Dr. Durgess' bloody burlap sack is gone from Broderick's head. She doesn't notice the Child watching off to the side.

Wanda grunts, trying to ask what happened, but she's gagged.

She offers a few weak struggles.

BRODERICK

Giving you your voice back was a miscalculation. You need to shut up for good.

Broderick brandishes the scalpel.

BRODERICK

You don't control me. You don't tell me what to do. No one tells me what to do.

Wanda squeals and thrashes against her restraints.

Broderick raises the scalpel.

He brings it down --

The blade stops just above Wanda, as though
he'd stabbed it into an invisible plank of wood.

Broderick glows.

BRODERICK

Lo... I feel the weight of my sins slough from me
I feel the burdens of my idleness and cruelty
Unshackle from me like a slave's chains

Broderick is bathed in white light. He is being
spirited away.

BRODERICK

Lo... I feel lighter, I feel...

The divine light is stripped away.

Petra has buried her fire axe in the back of
Broderick's skull.

Wanda screams through her gag.

PETRA

(mumbling)

Be free... in the kingdom of the Lord...

(angelic state fades in)

Wanda, I spake that thou would'st bring doom upon us all
But, my dear daughter, I offer you salvation for your sins
It is still possible to be one with the Lord.

Petra's angelic state fades out.

She ungags Wanda.

PETRA

Confess...

WANDA

Mom... please...

PETRA
(raising the axe)

Confess...!

WANDA

Mom!

PETRA

Confess!

WANDA

I confess!

As Wanda speaks, the Child picks up the scalpel and draws up beside her.

WANDA

Before I... came here... to St. Durgess'... I... there was a child -- I don't even remember his name -- ten years old, I think -- he was -- was brought into the ER suffering from -- from anaphylactic shock due to -- to severe peanut allergies -- he couldn't... could hardly breathe so -- so I needed to perform a routine -- a routine tracheotomy -- and I -- but this one... I've performed a tracheotomy -- I don't know how many times -- it's a routine -- a routine -- but this time -- this time... it was a routine...

(beat)

My hand slipped! There was...! Nothing...! Nothing I could have done! Just a -- a freak muscle spasm in my arm -- and my hand -- my hand -- my hand -- my hand -- my hand slipped and the scalpel tore open his jugular vein and there was blood and he -- and he...

(beat)

...this ten year old child whose name I can't remember who came in with routine problems died, right there... right there... in the strike of a match...

(beat)

As soon as I got home I attempted suicide. Took a whole bottle of Zolpidem. Generic for Ambien.

(beat)

I woke up here.

Wanda becomes fixated on the Child.

PETRA

For thy brave confession... thou hast purged thyself of that stain...

(becoming angelic)

Know, my daughter, that now the kingdom of heaven is open to thee

(reality returns)

(she raises the axe)

The kingdom of heaven is open to thee...

WANDA

Mom...? What are you doing? Mom! I confessed! What are you doing?

The Child raises his scalpel.

PETRA

(becoming angelic)

Thy purpose in the mortal plane has been served

Rest easy with the knowledge that thou... that thou...

(beat)

My Lord... what is this before me?

Petra still glows, but abyssal light and smoke plume from beneath the operating table. Devil hands reach out from under it.

PETRA

The Adversary's presence is here! My Lord, my Lord -- I have not the strength...!

Satanic laughter. The devil hands undo Wanda's restraints. Wanda cackles and hisses.

PETRA

No... Wanda! Thou devil child! Thou art an Antichrist, borne from within mine own home! Begone, Satan!

Demonic laughter continues as the devil hands lift Wanda out of the bed.

Reality returns. The light is normal, the devil hands are gone, Petra clutches her fire axe and cowers. Wanda sits on the edge of the operating table.

WANDA
(to the Child)

Why did you cut me free?

Petra shrieks and brings the axe down. Wanda just barely manages to avoid it.

PETRA

Devil child! Antichrist!

WANDA

Mom, stop...!

Petra swings the axe again.

PETRA

Antichrist!

Wanda picks up the entropy cube.

Her mother continues to swing at her and she avoids each swipe.

AMBER
(singing)

Now I see what I should have seen before
That coffin with a seal so safe which I dreamed for
Is little but a prison, a torture chamber
For I didn't count on the maggots and worms

Wanda takes the gas mask off the wall.

Petra stops swinging, having overexerted herself.
Wanda fastens the gas mask to her head.

AMBER

I would have screamed to be reborn
But my lungs were devoured and torn
By maggots and worms
Maggots and...

Wanda runs out.

PETRA

Antichrist! Wanda! Antichrist!

LOBBY 2

The front door of St. Durgess is wide open. The light of a setting sun spills through.

The Nurse stands in front of it, facing the outside.

Dead patients litter the floors of the hallway.

Wanda runs in.

It's quiet.

THE NURSE

(not turning)

There is a way to destroy the entropy cube
To destroy chance itself

(beat)

You won't like it.

WANDA

Tell me.

THE NURSE

(pointing outside)

Follow the sunset
You'll come to a pond
The Zolpidem gas which has brought a great sleep upon this hospital
The gas comes from the pond
You'll swim to the bottom of the pond
There is a drain plug
Open the drain
Slide down the drain
And then

(beat)

I promise you won't like what you find

Wanda stands beside the Nurse at the front door, looking outside with them.

WANDA

Thank you.

Wanda calmly walks through the door.

PETRA

Antichrist!

Petra charges in, wildly flailing with the axe.

PETRA

Wanda! Thou fiend! Thou know'st not what hellfire awaits thee for the devil's seduction!

(losing steam)

Thou art damned...!

(woozy)

Thou art...

Petra collapses to her knees at the Nurse's feet.

PETRA

...my Lord...

Petra collapses fully.

The Nurse closes the front door.

The Nurse takes in the death and dilapidation of St. Durgess' Research Hospital.

The Nurse puts their mask back on.

The Nurse calmly walks through the bodies and out of the hallway.

OUTSIDE

The sun is fading fast. The sunset glow comes from one side of the stage.

Wanda, gas mask on, walks out from the other side.

It becomes night.

A display of stars against the sky.

She takes in the stars.

Amber sings a song. She is backed up by a somber cello.

AMBER

Close your eyes

A single cello note.

The stars swirl slowly.

AMBER

Feel the life
Inside you
Fade
From view

Cello plays.

The stars spiral faster.

Wanda looks around her as she walks.

AMBER

A skin
Never meant for him
If only I'd told you
But I'm fading from view

The sky rapidly blooms into daytime set to a cello swell.

High morning, the soothing heat of the sun can be felt. The sky is a swaddling blue. Rolling green hills.

Wanda pauses. She takes in a deep, peaceful breath.

AMBER

Fading from view
 Fading from view
 I'm the sun setting
 I'm the priestess regretting
 And I'm fading from you

Cello fades out.

The business of a pristine day can be heard. Birds chirping. A slight buzz of a bee. Gentle winds.

Wanda sits on a hill.

She runs her fingers through the grass. She takes off her shoes, feels the grass in through her toes. She sheds her doctor's coat.

AMBER

Gape your eyes

A single cello note plays. Gentle piano arpeggios.

Wanda plucks a flower. It's a poppy.

Feel the light
 You yearned for
 Fade
 From view

AMBER

Sweeping cello.

Wanda sniffs the poppy through the gas mask.

The sky swirls from day to night, night to day,
 day to night...

A whim
 My beloved, forever sin
 If only I'd known you
 But I'm fading from view

AMBER

Cello swells along with the piano arpeggios. The
 sky stabilizes to a sunset glow from one end of
 the stage.

Wanda stands up.

She walks towards the sunset, cradling the
 poppy in her palms, leaving her shoes, her coat
 behind.

Fading from view
 Fading from view
 I'm the sun setting
 I'm the priestess regretting
 And I'm fading from you

AMBER

Wanda exits the sunset side of the stage.

The sunset creates a bloody gash of red and
 orange against a dark purple void, flecked with
 encroaching stars.

A pond.

Spare piano notes.

AMBER

Slack eyes
hold my
hand I
am fading am fading am fading from view

Cello and other instruments come to an
overpowering swell.

Wanda enters from the non-sunset side.

She approaches the pond.

AMBER

Fading from view
Fading from view
I'm the sun setting
I'm the priestess regretting
And I'm fading...!

As Wanda jumps into the pond, Amber falls in
too, bringing the song to an abrupt end as all
sound is replaced by a muted drone.

Wanda swims down. The drone becomes louder
and lower the deeper she goes.

An oversized drain plug.

Wanda swims down for it.

The deeper she goes, Wanda finds it a struggle
to push even deeper.

She strains, reaches out for the drain plug's
floating chain...

Kicks closer...

Just about there...

Air bubbles escape her gas mask. She floats up.

She thrashes and struggles. More air escapes.
She floats upward.

She kicks, but can't get much lower.

Amber embraces Wanda. Wanda embraces back.

They sink.

Wanda fastens the poppy to Amber's clothes

She silently says goodbye.

Wanda pushes off of Amber.

Wanda wraps around the oversized drain plug.

Amber waves.

Wanda heaves. The drain plug is removed with a
mighty pop.

PATIENTS

Down the drain...!

We're sliding down the drain!

VENISON SLIDING DOWN THE DRAIN

Wanda lays in a bathtub. She is in her patient
gown and gas mask. Her arm dangles over the
tub's edge.

There is an open pill bottle, knocked over on the
floor by her hand. The cap is near by.

Gas comes out of the pill bottle.

Wanda wakes up.

She takes in her surroundings.

As soon as she realizes she's in a bathtub, she leaps out of it, suddenly very awake.

Wanda notices the pill bottle.

She picks up the bottle and cap.

WANDA

Zolpidem... generic for Ambien...

Wanda caps the pill bottle.

Wanda places her hand on the gas mask.

Wanda slowly raises the gas mask from her face.

Wanda takes a few shallow breaths. She waits to see if anything happens.

Nothing does.

Wanda looks around the spare room. Looks into the tub. Looks up.

WANDA

Hey!

(beat)

Is anybody here?

Wanda takes out the entropy cube.

WANDA

How do I get rid of this? Huh?

(beat)

Nurse?

(beat)

How am I supposed to get rid of this?

She waits for a response that never comes.

She goes to the tub.

WANDA

(shouting)

Am I supposed to drop it down the drain?

(beat)

I think I'm supposed to drop it down the drain.

Wanda hesitates.

She holds the entropy cube out as far from her as she can.

She drops the cube.

She whips around, putting up her fists, expecting something to happen as the cube tumbles down the drain.

Wanda waits.

The entropy cube drops from the ceiling onto Wanda's head.

Wanda shrieks and flails her arms around.

She realizes what's happened.

She eyes the cube on the ground suspiciously.

She thinks, twisting the pill bottle in her hands as she does so.

WANDA

How am I supposed to...?

Wanda notices the pill bottle in her hands.

She holds it up. Stares at it. Then at the entropy cube on the ground. At the pill bottle.

WANDA

Would it dissolve if I put it in here?

(beat)

Probably not... I mean, it wasn't reacting to the gas before...

(beat)

But maybe? It's more concentrated?

The Child appears, unbeknownst to Wanda.

WANDA

Maybe...

(a horrible realization)

No...

The Child has a scalpel.

WANDA

No no no... that's so cruel.

(beat)

No...

(beat)

But...

The Child advances towards Wanda.

WANDA

Is the only way to be truly free of the maelstrom of chance that is our lot in life... death?
Is that it? After all this?

Wanda sees the Child.

WANDA

No... no!

She backs away. The Child continues to pursue her with the scalpel.

WANDA

How did you get here? Leave me alone!

Wanda trips over her feet. She lands on her
backside.

WANDA

Ah...! No, please... I'm sorry, I'm so sorry, for everything for... it was a freak accident, you have to believe me! I know intentions don't mean a thing, don't mean a fucking thing because the end result is you're dead and it's my doing but I really didn't... it was chance, just chance!

The Child looms closer.

Wanda scurries away on the ground.

She can't escape.

She raises her hands to protect her body from
the approaching scalpel.

WANDA

Please I... I want to live! I want to live... I know I can't change what happened, I know I tried to end it all, but I... I'm glad it didn't take, please, I want to live! To live! Please!

The Child stabs the blade, gently, into the flesh
of Wanda's palm.

WANDA

Ah...

(beat)

(as the Child)

Go home, Wanda.

Silence.

Another oversized drain plug appears.

WANDA

(as the Child)

Go home.

The Child falls towards Wanda.

Wanda catches the Child.

Wanda clutches the Child.

She notices how limp he is.

She checks for a pulse.

Frantically, she searches for any sign of life.

There is none.

Wanda cradles the Child.

Wanda carries the Child to the bathtub.

She lays him in it.

She takes the time to make sure he's comfortable.

Wanda holds the bottle of Zolpidem, generic for Ambien.

WANDA

I want to live.

(beat)

I want to live.

She places the bottle on the ground.

Wanda turns towards the drain plug.

She approaches.

WANDA

I want to live.

Smiling, she reaches for the plug.

WANDA

I want to --

Before she touches plug: darkness. A heart rate monitor flatlines.

VOICES

We've lost her

What happened? The stomach pump was going as planned.

The tube... it caused a puncture in her throat.

We've lost her

No. We haven't. Come on. If we act quick -- come on!

Are you sure this will work?

Quit chatting and help me!

We've lost her

Shut up

Come on. If we act quick -- come on!

A puncture in her throat

The stomach pump was going as planned

We've lost her

We've...

A blip on the heart rate monitor.

VOICES

We've got her back!

I thought we'd lost her

Don't celebrate yet

A puncture in her throat

The stomach pump was going as planned

I thought we'd lost her

If we act quick -- come on!

We've got her back!

Quit chatting and help me!

We've got her back!

The voices fade out as a heart beat on the heart rate monitor stabilizes.

ST. CAJETAN'S

Wanda wakes up in the ICU of St. Cajetan's Research Hospital.

The Nurse is nearby. There is a chair by her bed.

THE NURSE

Dr. Venison. You're back with us.

Wanda tries to speak and finds she can't.

THE NURSE

Rest up, don't strain yourself. We had to pump your stomach. You've been unconscious for a couple days now.

(beat)

All of us at St. Cajetan's were worried about you, Dr. Venison.

Wanda gestures to the bandage on her throat.

THE NURSE

Ah. Yes. A routine procedure didn't quite execute as planned. Your throat was punctured, permanently damaging your vocal cords. You may never speak again. I'm sorry.

Wanda nods. She begins to laugh wheezily before it starts to hurt and she stops.

SIZZLE

(offstage)

She awake yet?

THE NURSE

She's awake, Mr. Venison.

Sizzle enters. He isn't wearing his Arlecchino mask and is in street clothes. He's making an effort to look put together, but it's still quite scruffy.

SIZZLE

Wanda!

Sizzle embraces Wanda.

Wanda backs off, wincing.

SIZZLE

Ooh, sorry. Didn't mean to disturb the ol' war wound.

Wanda play punches Sizzle in the ribs.

SIZZLE

Oh! Yarr! She be a fighter through and through!

THE NURSE

I'll leave the two of you alone. I'll be back to check-in in ten minutes.

The Nurse exits.

SIZZLE

Of course you wake up when I step out to take a piss. I've been sleeping in that chair here since the hospital called. They said your downstairs neighbor dialed 911 when water overflowed from your bathtub into his unit. They said... well, you know what they said.

(beat)

Your throat looks a little... can you not...?

Wanda shakes her head.

SIZZLE

Ah. Um...

Sizzle takes out his phone and passes it to her.

SIZZLE

Type into this.

Wanda types on the phone. She passes it back to Sizzle.

SIZZLE

(snorts)

I am *not* looking good, but thank you for lying. It's...

(beat)

Again... okay, don't make fun of my poor sensitive boiled brain... but... I can't shake the feeling that... that I... I died? I died. It sounds crazy, but I've been carrying that feeling around for a couple of days and I can't tell you why or how but... I feel like I died.

(beat)

I didn't though. I think.

Sizzle passes the phone back to Wanda.

Wanda types.

The Child appears.

Wanda passes the phone back to Sizzle.

SIZZLE

They don't know. I told dad a pal from high school needed help demolishing his mom's hoarder stash and that it would take a week or so. They definitely think I'm out on a bender or something.

Wanda locks eyes with the Child.

SIZZLE

You know... the ol' boiled brain has been acting up. Like... this life shit? It's pretty hard. Shit happens. And we don't make it easy on each other, but we especially don't make it easy on ourselves, you know?

The Child walks towards Wanda.

SIZZLE

And we're deluded about random shit, all the time, our imaginations make us believe wild things about spirits and gods and destiny and... I had a thought. Dangerous, I know.

The Child gives Wanda a plum. She accepts.

SIZZLE

Like... delusions. We kind of need them in some way shape or form just to get through the day... while still recognizing that they are delusions.

The Child backs away and watches.

SIZZLE

And in a way, being self-conscious of our kinda bonkers coping mechanisms, being hyper aware of the functions our delusions play... isn't that in a way like what Zen Buddhists say nirvana's like? Living with no illusions. Living in the world as it is. Because you see your delusions, you recognize they are such, but you make the conscious choice to indulge in God or witchcraft or whatever because it means something to you. It makes you feel connected to the greater than. And I... I think that's beautiful, Wanda. I really do.

It's just Wanda and the Child.

Wanda makes a gesture of thanks with the plum.

The Child holds out the entropy cube.

Wanda nods.

The Child disappears.

Wanda is alone.

THE END