

Raggedy Gods (and Monsters)

or

The Swarm Theory

By Sean Coe

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Cast List

Edison- Male, Old as Dirt

Doll 1- Female, 20s-30s

Doll 2- Male, 20s-30s

Sarah- 10-12

Granny- 50s-60s

Setting

The Depression, somewhere in the Great Plains of the US.

Note About Casting: Doll 1- no taller than 5'4

Doll 2- 5'7 or under. They both play the couple at the end.

Dedication: To Ann and Moira who, in different ways, always ask "What's next?" Here you go.

I have been told I "score" my plays and this is probably true. Like a composer, I hear it all in my head. But, as in any collaborative effort, feel free to improvise and find your own rhythm for any scene.

Prologue

The sound of squeaky wheels. Something needs oil. Just as it's getting really annoying, the stage is lit and an old man is wheeled on. Ah, so that was where it was coming from. It doesn't seem to bother the old man at all, but his companion winces with every step. Mercifully it stops as the old man is put center stage. He looks a bit confused as he peers at the audience:

EDISON

(to companion)

So, what am I here to talk about?

His companion mumbles something fairly close to Edison's ear.

EDISON

I didn't catch that.

They try again.

EDISON

Oh, really. Say, what is all this? Is this for radio or are we being filmed-

His companion has slipped out. Yeah, he's gotta change into costume.

EDISON

(cagily, as if he's deciding how much to divulge)
Ladies and gentlemen ... I have been asked today to speak about my views of the afterlife. May I just diverge a little to talk about failure. Failure, Science, and Invention go hand in hand. They are partners in any act of discovery, creation or achievement. When I talk of failure, I do NOT mean defeat. They are related perhaps, but defeat is an admission, whereas failure is an obstacle. Obstacles as any great man will attest to, can be overcome.

(Pause)

Death is nature's failure. It is the body failing the personality that is contained within. The swarm of cells, each particle of that being, wishes to continue. But it is not allowed and must find another vessel. It is my belief that **if the units of life which compose an individual's memory hold together after that individual's 'death, it is not without**

possibility that these memory swarms could retain the powers they formerly possessed. If so, then that individual's memory, or personality, ought to be able to function as before.

Beat

I have been at work for some time on an apparatus that would make it possible for personalities which have left this environment to communicate with us. It is my hope, that by providing the right sort of instrument, they may communicate while they search for a new habitation. Thus, scientific methods will overcome, in some way, the sphere of death and give us proof of an afterlife far more substantial than the dubious means employed by so called psychic mediums. Faith and perseverance, not magic nor the supernatural.

Beat

Thank you.

He wheels himself off as the lights dim. Squeak, squeak, squeak.

Act 1

Scene 1: You're such a doll!

Lights go up on slim woman of fairly small stature sitting on a wooden bench with her back to the audience. She's wearing a simple but pretty dress, tapping her toe impatiently. The only thing that really catches our eye at first is her carrot red hair, Then the lights reveal an outhouse, currently in use. It looks like it is about to dissolve in shame. What's that smell! Oh my! Poor thing! How can she stand it?

WOMAN

All I'm sayin' is , we're off schedule.
Didya have to do it now?

MAN'S VOICE

Yes! Just give me a minute.

WOMAN

OK. Just know how you get about keepin'
a schedule. I mean I know you didn't mean to
Have an accident-

MAN's VOICE

-Will you quit harpin' on that. I
told you, I just lost control-

WOMAN

I know baby, it could've happened to anybody ...
Well not-

MAN'S VOICE

That's right anybody. Some things just take
Gettin' used to again. It'll come back to me.

WOMAN

Maybe. Or maybe we should try something else?

BEAT

MAN's VOICE

Like what?

WOMAN

Let me drive next time.

MAN'S VOICE

Oh for fucks sake!

WOMAN

At least consider it!

MAN'S VOICE

I'm not-goddamm this zipper! And no, I
WILL DRIVE. Fuck! Why is this so hard!

WOMAN

Ya want me to come in there?!

MAN'S VOICE

No. I can do this myself.
(faint sound of someone zipping his pants)
There. Ok, give me a sec ...

WOMAN

I'm waitin'.

*The outhouse door slowly opens. Out steps Raggedy Andy in a
suit. Yeah, it doesn't fit very well.*

ANDY

TA-DA!!!!

BEAT

WOMAN

What was wrong with the overalls?

ANDY

I wouldn't be caught dead in just overalls!

WOMAN

Or whatever this is-

ANDY

We're in a rush, so I just put the suit on
over 'em. How do I look?

WOMAN

Like fuckin' Raggedy Andy going to a funeral.

ANDY

Yeah. But this was the only suit in the window.

WOMAN

The overalls looked fine. I mean. I'm still
Wearin' the dress.

She turns to the audience. Yup. The Raggedy Ann.

ANDY

You know how important it is for me to look sharp
when we do business.

(pause)

You look nice. Real pretty.

ANN

Yeah? Well, don't think I can take much
Credit. Pretty??????

BEAT

I LOOK LIKE FUCKIN' YOU!!!! WE'RE TWINS!

Lights out. End of scene

Scene 2: Birthday Prayer

The stage is dark. Gradually we hear what sounds like dozens of voices in prayer. Then hundreds, then thousands, reaching an almost deafening crescendo. Boom! Then there was one:

Child's Voice

-an' God bless momma in heaven an' daddy wherever the hell he is-that's what granny says. An' bless granny of course an' let me not be a burden an' earn my keep. Amen.

Beat

Now I got a favor to ask: can I get a present for my birthday? Beggars can't be choosers-that's what granny says-I'm not sure what that means but I think mebbe it means don't be picky. So, even if it's just a piece of candy that'd be fine. Or a kitten. OOOOHHHH PLEEEEEZZZZZZ let me have a kitten! I know I can't have a puppy-that's what granny says 'cause it won't earn its keep but a kitten will grow up to be a cat and cats eat mice and we got plenty of those so it would be earnin' its keep. That's what I'd tell granny. I'd RATHER have a kitten but a toy would be ok. A toy kitten! That'd be ok. Candy would be ok even though it's bad for my teeth-that's what granny says. Just somethin' for my birthday. Thank you God.

(Pause)

Oh! Sorry! Love you! Amen again.

End of scene.

Scene 3: Target Practice and That's One Tough Squirrel

A few minutes later. Andy is holding what looks like a toy machine gun with one hand, as he fiddles with his tie with another.

ANDY

You know what? I think I'm just gonna have to leave off the tie-

ANN

Let me see.

(she tries to tie)

Yeah, without fingers it's a little tough. Kinda Ugly anyway.

(tosses it)

One less thing to leave behind after the job.

ANDY

So, you ready?

ANN

I guess. I set up the bottles while you was changin'. Baby, have you looked at your gun?

ANDY

Looks funny don't it? It's all a bit different but Pretty sure I know what I'm doin'. Like ridin' a bike.

ANN

Been a long time since I rode a bike.

(pulls out a pistol)

Ok, so you first.

ANDY

Gotcha.

Andy let loose a stream of gunfire.

BEAT

ANDY

Shit. Did I hit anything?

ANN

Doesn't look like-oh wait I think you took out a squirrel. Yeah, poor little fucker just fell off that branch like a rock.

ANDY

Well, at least I hit somethin'-

ANN

Awww, he was just mindin' his own business-oh Shit! Look. Little devil's shruggin' it off.

ANDY

HUH?????

ANN

Tough little bastard!

ANDY

Must have just winged him.

ANN

(puzzled)

Mebbe. My turn.

ANDY

All right. Now don't feel bad if you miss. It's gonna take a little bit of practice-

ANN shoots.

PING! PING PING! PING!

ANN

(excited)

Four out of four!

ANDY

(sulking)

Lucky. An' it don't count if the bottles don't Break!

ANN

Yes it does. What? Why didn't the bottles

Break?

ANDY
(more concerned about his aim)
Who knows? My turn-

ANN
Wait! Lemme see something'.

She goes to check the bottles.

ANDY
Hold on , where ya goin'-
(He watches her)
Just go ahead and set the bottles back up.

She walks back examining a bottle.

ANN
Take a look at this, will you?

ANDY
What-

ANN
Just look!

ANDY
(examining bottle)
Why's it sticky?

ANN
What does that look like to you?

ANDY
Ummmm ... chocolate? Shit. Check your bullets.

ANN
(already doing so)
I'M ON IT! Here goes nothing.
(she bites the bullet)

ANDY
What the Hell!!

ANN
(handing him a piece)

Go ahead.

He reluctantly tries a piece.

ANDY

Another one of ol' Scratch's tricks.

ANN

Candy bullets. Great. You really pissed-

ANDY

I know, I know, I know.

ANN

Lookee here. I fired 4 shots and ate 1. But I still got 6 in the chamber.

ANDY

Well, that'd be great ordinarily but-

Andy fires off a round in frustration. Examines his machine gun.

ANDY

FUCK! You know what? It don't matter. He can Play his little tricks, we'll figure it out on the fly like we always did. C'mon. Let's go do a job.

ANN

Looking LIKE THIS! WITH CANDY AMMO!!!???

ANDY

You an' me can bluff with the beat of 'em. We'll Show that old bastard. Can't nothin stop us! He Thinks he screwed us over but we got a second Chance and that's all that matters.

BEAT

ANN

(in spite of her doubts)
If I'm gonna run a fool's errand, can't think of Anyone I'd rather do it with. Let's go rob a bank.

They walk off arm in arm as the lights slowly fade. We hear the chatter of an angry squirrel.

End of scene

Scene 4: And You Thought We Forgot Your Birthday

Radio: We interrupt this program for a special bulletin. Gunfire was exchanged between security and two suspects ... disguised as ... Raggedy Ann and Andy, as they attempted to hold up the Willington Bank and Trust at approximately 11:00 am. No injuries were reported. The suspects were last seen jumping into the back of a pickup truck driven by a local farmer. It is unknown at this time if the farmer was an accomplice. We will update this report as the story develops and authorities are urging caution. Anyone having information to this crime or whereabouts of the suspects is asked to contact the Willington police. We now return you to your regularly scheduled program.

Night time with just a little moonlight illuminating a room with a small bed, loft, large stove and lots and lots of dolls. Dolls on the floor, dolls on shelves, all in various states of disrepair. Some appear to have been beheaded and are either holding their heads or sitting next to them. Some of the dolls have labels affixed on them with last names: Smith, Abbot, Gunderson, etc... In a small curio cabinet there are a few more dolls but these are different. They look old but in pristine condition, and if possible, even more creepy. Think about that: more creepy than headless, limbless dolls or life size Raggedy Anns.

A figure stirs under the sheets of the bed as a faraway bell chimes midnight. A girl of about 10 or so emerges and contemplates the darkness then, with a look to the heavens, exclaims:

SARAH

NO KITTEN?! BUT IT WAS MY BIRTHDAY!

(sighs)

Dang it! Shouldn't have got my hopes up.

She gets out of bed and walks to the curio cabinet.

SARAH

Guess it's like you said Momma: "Ya can hope springs eternal but ya gotta know the winter's here."

She leaves the room.

BEAT

BEAT

ANN's Voice

Pull or push?

ANDY's Voice

Huh?

ANN's Voice

Give me a boost to the window and I'll pull you through or mebbe I can push you up there.

ANDY's Voice

God damn it how I'm gonna do either with a busted leg!?

ANN's Voice

How bad is it now?

ANDY's Voice

It's like a flat tire, almost. I've been leaving a trail of stuffin' the last few miles.

ANN's Voice

I think the breeze's got most of it, tossin' to and fro. Lemme climb on your back.

ANDY's Voice

Jesus Christ!

ANN's Voice

Don't be a baby.

ANDY's Voice

How's a little bit like you gonna pull me up and in.

ANN's Voice

Seein' how much of you is blowin' in the wind right now, I think I'll be alright.

ANDY's Voice

Ok! Up you go.

Considerable groaning. Slowly, slowly, we see the carrot hair rise in the moonlight, then Ann opens the window to the room and slides through.

ANN

Whew! That wasn't too bad. Thank God these folk leave their windows open.

(looking around)

What the Hell!

ANDY's Voice

Little help here!

ANN

Oh! Sorry!

She goes to the window and hangs nearly half out.

ANN

Ok baby give me your hands. All right, I gotcha. Ready?

ANDY's Voice

Yeah! Hurry up, more of me just's driftin away!

ANN

One. Two. THREE!

She be small but mighty. With a huge tug, she pulls Andy through as they fall on top of each other, limbs entangling.

BEAT

ANN

Hey there, handsome.

ANDY

Howdy do.

(chuckles)

You always was a lot stronger than you looked.

ANN

(touching his face)

No matter what. I gotcha.

ANDY

I know it. Back atcha.

BEAT

BEAT

ANDY

(a headless doll catching his eye)
Jesus CHRIST!

He rolls away, taking it all in with a big WTF.

ANN

(wasn't quite ready for the moment to end)
Baby! Be careful.
(looks around)
Yeah, this is the place.

The sound of steps. They both panic then alternate with making a stand. Finally, at the same time, they flop in opposite corners, for all the world a couple of lifeless dolls. Not a peep. Okay, Andy winces and groans just a bit, but Ann instantly shushes him. Sarah enters with a cup of tea which she finishes and sets on the floor. She climbs into bed, peers around, and then rolls over.

Beat

Beat

Beat

Sarah sits up in bed and screams:

SARAH

NOT MORE DANG DOLLS!

A temper fit, rising to a tantrum, when Andy's voice cuts in:

ANDY

Who you callin' dolls, little girl?

End of Act 1

ACT 2

Scene 1: You don't know what you got 'till it gone.

A few minutes later. Sleep be damned ! This is an emergency! Sarah is holding a needle and thread and seems to be preparing for some type of medical procedure. Ann and Andy slowly enter the room with Ann supporting Andy. He has removed his suit and is now in just the overalls.

SARAH

So what seems to be the problem?

ANDY

Huh? What do you think-

ANN

(Playing along)

It's his leg, Doc. He's got a hole in his leg.

SARAH

Bring the patient over to the bed please.

Ann maneuvers Andy over to the bed and Sarah begins to examine the wound in her best professional matter. She sticks her finger in it.

ANDY

AAAAAAHH! JESUS CHRIST!!!

ANN

Baby!! Not in a front of a kid.

SARAH

It's ok. My granny could make a sailor blush.
That's what I heard a man say once.

(feeling his leg)

He's lost a lot of stuffin'.

ANN

Can you help him, Doc?

SARAH
 (gravely)
 I'll do my best.
 (for a moment a kid again)
 I wish momma was here. She'd patch you up
 like it was nothin'.

ANN
 (sensing the doubt)
 You can do it, honey. You got this.

Sarah considers the situation then springs into action. She grabs the most broken dolls and tears them open with a pair of scissors and begins removing their stuffing. She's pretty ruthless, flinging dolls aside as soon as they're empty.

SARAH
 All right, lemme see that hole.
 (a desperate look to ANN)
 You're probably gonna have to hold him.

ANN
 (To Andy)
 All right baby, look at me. Look right at me and
 nowhere else. I know it might not be the same, but
 imagine how I used to look. How we used to get
 lost sometimes just starin' at each other.

She pulls Andy to her and holds his face in her hands.

SARAH
 I ain't never really done this by myself. Sure
 not on a doll like-

ANN
 We trust you. Don't we baby ?

BEAT
 BEAT

ANDY
 (His eyes never leave Ann's)
 Like she says. Just fix me up.

SARAH
 She'll whup me, but I could give ya some of
 Granny's Likker. I tasted it once and couldn't feel
 my mouth for days.

ANDY
(a little chuckle)
No thanks.

SARAH
OK. Here goes ...

With a distinctly un surgeon like manner, Sarah starts filling the leg back up. The material is mostly the same but the occasional old newspaper gets tucked in as well. Andy winces but doesn't scream and gradually falls into Ann's arms.

SARAH
That oughta do it.
(grabs needle and thread)
Ok, I'm gonna need you to take your oer'alls off.

ANDY
HUH! Why?

SARAH
I gotta stitch the hole up. Can't do that with them on, 'less you want them stuck on you. Might be a little more tear that the oer'alls is hidin'.

ANN
I'll help ya pull them off.

ANDY
NO!

ANN
What's the matter? Oh Christ, baby-this is no time to be shy!

ANDY
(Firmly and a little desperate)
No! I'll do it. Just give me a sec.

BEAT

ANDY
Can y'all turn your backs.

Ann shrugs and turns. Sarah is hesitant but Andy glares and she slowly turns.

ANN
(suppressing giggles)
You always were funny about this-

ANDY
Hold on-

Andy pulls his overalls off. He looks down where something should be and is despondent, then quickly wraps the overalls around his waist.

ANDY
(trying to hide his dejection)
All right. You can turn around now.

ANN
Oh, for Gods 'sake, baby-

SARAH
He's fine.

She begins to stich.

SARAH
(Innocently)
Is this because you ain't got no balls or pee pee?

ANDY
(Mortified? Outraged? Both?)
WHAT! Listen you-

Damn those mittens. They just don't tie good. As he stands up, the overalls slide off. Yup. No genitalia. Sarah is non plussed. Ann is calm. Andy is racked with shame.

SARAH
Umm ... I though y'all would know.
(sincerely)
Mr. Andy, dolls don't have no what do you call
'em parts.

ANN
(goes to him)
Lord! Baby-

ANDY

(Rolling into a ball of disgust and shame)
Leave me be! Both of you!

SARAH

(Trying to make conversation. Awkward)
I DID see a pee pee once-my daddy's. Oh it wasn't like he was trying to show it to me, but once we was in his truck and he had to stop by the side of the road 'cause he said the coffee had gone right through him-

ANDY

Oh for shit's-

ANN

Not in front-

SARAH

-so he jumped on out-

ANN

-the CHILD!

SARAH

-turned his back an' I thought I heard water so I looked an' it looked like somebody turned on a hose, and then it just kinda dribbled and as he was turnin' back and buttonin' up I saw it. He was lookin' down still and it kinda looked like a root-

ANN

Honey, could ya finish stichin-

ANDY

No, just leave me alone for a while.

SARAH

But I gotta finish-

Without a word, Ann pulls off her dress, throwing it aside in a flourish.

ANN

TA-DA!

SILENCE. Sarah shrugs.

ANN

So ya see, I don't have nothin' either. No-

(to Sarah)

-honey, cover your ears.

(A command)

Do it, young lady-

Sarah does

ANN

No twat and ... no boobs either. Sorry, I know ya really liked those.

ANDY

(sitting up now)

I did. I do.

BEAT

ANN

So?

ANDY

Ol' Scratch did a number.

ANN

(Next to him)

It's still me, baby.

BEAT

Andy kisses her.

ANDY

Sure is.

SARAH

Can I uncover my ears?

ANN

Yeah, honey. Go ahead.

Sarah begins to stitch. Ann and Andy begin to kiss again. Ann almost casually flicks away Andy's overalls. Lights dim.

End of scene.

Scene 2: Tea time

AHHH. Look. Isn't this cute. Ann and Andy are sitting at a dining table set up for four to have tea. Little cups and saucers and what looks like biscuits. All that's missing is the tea. We hear the kettle blow and Sarah brings it over and pours two cups.

SARAH

Y'all can still drink and eat right?

ANN

Well we had a little candy before we come, so I think so.

ANDY

(Eyeing the biscuits suspiciously)
What are these?

SARAH

Biscuits.

ANDY

How long ago you make 'em?

SARAH

Ummmmmm-

ANDY

Yeah, I think I'll pass-

ANN

Baby, don't be rude-
(sees Andy picking at his stitches)
Stop that!

ANDY

Damn, but it itches!

SARAH

(giggling)
Be good, Mr. Andy. Don't play with ya stitches!

BEAT

SARAH
 (shyly)
 If ya don't mind me askin', how long y'all
 been dolls?

ANDY
 (alert)
 Why ya wanna know? What makes ya think we was
 Anything else?

ANN
 'cause I think most dolls, least in
 my experience, don't talk, walk or-
 (takes a sip)
 drink tea. Hmmm. What kinda tea is this?

SARAH
 Sassafras.

ANN
 (puzzled to Andy)
 Taste the tea. Go ahead.

He does and shoots her a worried look

ANN
 (to Sarah)
 So, honey who lives here with you?

SARAH
 Just me and Granny.

ANN
 An' your granny repairs ... or ... makes dolls?

SARAH
 Well Granny jest fixes 'em up. Or she used to.
 Now she just uses 'em sometimes for work.

ANDY
 (Barely interested, looking around)
 What kind of work is that?

BEAT

SARAH
 (Tenses for a second)
 I dunno exact. Now my momma, she fixed and made

dolls.

Sarah walks over to her bed and reaches under the covers pulling out a cloth doll. It has what appears to be blonde, human hair, obsidian eyes, and a red cloth mouth, furnished with a blue dress, probably fashioned from a window curtain, and a glass, beaded necklace. Never washed since made and well loved.

SARAH

My momma made this doll right 'fore she died-

ANN

Oh we're so-

SARAH

(shaking off the sympathy)

It's ok. Least I got ... I call her Betty she ain't a special doll , not like y'all or The Tom doll. It talks too but-

ANDY

(suddenly interested)

Wait? What? There's 'nother one of us?

SARAH

Yeah, sort of. I mean, it can talk if ya pull-

ANDY

Bullshit!

ANN

BABY!

ANDY

Which one is it? C'mon which one?

SARAH

(feeling a sudden change in the air)

That big one in the middle of the cabinet.

Andy walks over to the curio cabinet. He stares at the dolls with a grim fascination.

ANDY

Baby, you ever play with dolls when you was a Kid?

ANN
Yeah, sure I did.

ANDY
Not like any of these, I bet.

The moonlight drifts over to the curio cabinet acting as a spotlight for the dolls.

ANDY
(opening the cabinet and grabbing a doll)
C'mere, look at this.

ANN
(Coming to the cabinet)
My grandma had one of those. It's called a
grief doll.

ANDY
A what? Why ... oh. Oh shit.

ANN
That's human hair. Probably belonged to
who died-

ANDY
Ugh! Jesus Christ!

He nearly drops it!

SARAH
Please be careful Mr. Andy!

ANDY
I'm putting it back!

SARAH
What's wrong with human hair?

ANDY
On humans, nothin'.
(grabs the Tom doll)
Why you call this Tom? Looks like a girl to me.

SARAH
Somebody granny knew.

Andy looks at the doll dubiously when Ann gestures for him to let her look at it. Her mittens find the string. With a deep breath she pulls it and a voice equal parts innocent and creepy starts. It sounds from another time and another universe:

***Now I lay me down to sleep
I pray the Lord my soul to keep
If I shall die before I wake
I pray the Lord my soul to take***

BEAT
BEAT

ANN and ANDY
WHAT THE HELL!!

SARAH
Yeah, I don't like it either. Betty hates it!

ANN
I'm with Betty.

ANDY
(human greed kicking in)
Still. Gotta be worth a lot of money-

ANN
That creepy thing! To who-

ANDY
-to SOMEBODY-

ANN
-and how in the hell would we-

ANDY
-sell it! I know. I know.
(puts it back, then notices something)
What's this switch?

SARAH
Please y'all jest leave it alone. Granny'll
be home-

A hum is heard. Then static ,then noise like a swarm of bees in a very big hive.

ANDY

God damn! What else-

ANN

Baby, I feel funny-

ANDY

Huh!

ANN

I don't feel good, I don't feel good.

ANDY

I'm getting dizzy!
(to Sarah)
What's goin' on-

SARAH

I don't' know-

ANDY

What's goin'-

SARAH

I DON'T KNOW!!!! HONEST-

ANN collapses and what appears to be a small black smoke emerges and forms the shape of a spout.

ANDY

(grabbing her in his arms, almost sobbing)
Don't take her! SCRATCH! YA HEAR ME!

Andy instantly slumps to the floor. Again, a small black smoke appears and follows the other around the room until they make a beeline into a doll, then another. The sound continues, then subsides to a murmur of voices. Their voices. Sarah is terrified. She holds her doll tightly and backs into her bed. Without taking her eyes off the Tom doll she wraps the blanket up to her chin as the lights dim. The smoke continues to go from doll to doll. Slow fade to black.

End of scene

Scene 3: Fun with Secrets and Telepathy.

Here comes Old Tom again, wheeling his way to CS. He is wearing a tin foil hat with little coils and has 2-3 more on his lap.

EDISON

So, I thought it would be interesting to conduct a little experiment in the area of Mental Telepathy or, in simple layman's terms, the sending or receiving of thoughts. It is often referred to as Mind Reading.

(Starts passing out the hats)

If I could have a few volunteers. They may look a bit odd or a tad uncomfortable, but what is that when measured against potential progress?

(Notices someone struggling with the hat)

Oh look, we're already separating the wheat from the chaff. Raise your hands when ready. Good.

BEAT

Before we begin, a brief explanation of the nature of this experiment. Everything is composed of matter: our surroundings, our bodies. Our thoughts. Indeed, the entire universe. This matter is constructed of tiny particles generated by electrical impulses. Our brains provides electrical impulses to the particles known as thoughts which instruct and provide direction to the body. I will add, that in some brains, the wiring providing these impulses is a bit more precise. The objective here is, by the wearing of the intricately constructed receptor, we will be able to transmit and receive thoughts.

BEAT

Let's begin-and please do not fuss with the receptors as they have been painstakingly tuned! Everyone please concentrate.

BEAT

I'm thinking of a number.

PAUSE

EDISON

Well?

The audience yells out various guesses (It doesn't matter if they're wearing hats or not). WRONG!

EDISON

No! 1093. All right, try to clear your mind of mundane and superficial and focus on me.

(Or if some smarty pants guesses correctly)
Eureka! All right, once is a coincidence,
twice a possibility and three times a fact.
Again!

He concentrates, motioning the audience to do so as well.

BEAT

EDISON

This might be a little easier.

He pulls out of his jacket a small jar; behold, the Tesla Spirit Radio!

EDISON

(a wicked smile)

So, what am I thinking?

(with derision)

It's not very Christian, I can tell you that.
Really, look at this thing. It looks like
something you'd order as a kit from an ad in
Boy's Life." Why let mediums have all the fun,
when, for a mere 15 cents, you too can speak to
the dearly departed. Impress your friends by
contacting the dead with the Tesla Spirit Radio."

(He puts it back in his coat)

Damn fool if he thinks in any way this could
surpass my Spirit Phone. I would show you but
alas, it is only in the design phase at this point.
In my head. There were, I'm sure of it, various
sketches, on whatever was handy, that I made over
the years—as well as my thoughts on its use. But ...
I can't seem to find them.

(pause)

I'm sure it will come as no surprise that I never
saw my deafness as anything but an advantage. It
removed distractions, blocked out the noise of the
herd. Still, there were the occasional periods of
isolation. One of these voids was filled by an
individual employed at my doll factory and later

one of my offices.

BEAT

Secrets are best held by those unaware of their value. Confidences, visions and plans discussed with, quite frankly, those who have no idea of what the hell you're talking about. Perhaps a thought or two on the implementation or facilitation, but NOT the creation. There was an error in judgement.

BEAT

I made a mistake.

A noise from his jacket. A weird static. He pulls the radio from his jacket and stares.

EDISON

Just the most primitive of crystal radios, responding to electromagnetic sources. Nothing more.

The static changes. It beeps ... and hums. Then, like coming from miles and miles away ... not distinct at all, but maybe-

EDISON

(stares down the audience)

I know what you're thinking! Impossible.

He shoves the radio in his coat and angrily snatches off his foil hat. Without a word he wheels himself off as the lights dim.

End of scene

Scene 4: Let's Make a Deal

We hear a rooster crow (this is the country after all) as a suspicious sun peeks out to see if the coast is clear. Slowly, the lights come up on last night's carnage. Limbs, stuffing and a couple of doll heads are scattered on the floor. Raggedy Ann and Ann are on the floor unconscious, seemingly back in their bodies, Sarah in bed amidst a restless sleep. GRANNY walks in after a discouraging night. Pushing back at 60 years, beautiful in the vein of a Hedy Lamarr or Rita Hayworth and tough as nails. Not sharp as a tack ... more like a razor.

GRANNY

Well, that was not a fruitful evening.
 (Pulls out a doll with several pins inserted)
 Who knew the first and second Missus Davis
 Looked so much alike. He's obviously got a
 type.

(tosses doll aside)

Here's hoping the third time is a charm for him.

Granny settles in a chair and stretches like a cat. No bed for her as it would take up too much useful space. Sleep is for old dogs and children. A little nap now and then is all she needs. She surveys the room before closing her eyes.

GRANNY

Going to be a big day, I see.

She rests. A couple of hours pass. Strange that as the day begins, a good bit of dark lingers in the room, receding to the corners.

GRANNY

(she may say this every day)
 Well, let's get this show on the road.
 (prodding Ann and Andy)
 Rise and shine you two.

She walks over to the stove and lights it.

GRANNY

Come on, hurry up. Sarah will be awake soon.

Ann and Andy unsteadily rise to their feet.

ANDY
(Still a little early for bravado)
Who are you?

GRANNY
At the moment, none of your fucking business.

ANN
Give us a sec and we-

GRANNY
(opening oven)
Get in.

ANN and ANDY
WHAT!

GRANNY
This way will be slow, but at least
You'll be together. If you've ever seen
Meat fall off the bone after a long cook
You'll get what's going to happen-

ANDY
(scared)
Now just hold on-

GRANNY
(turning a burner on)
-or we can do this. It'll be quick. Flame, pain
And then nothing. Little messy but ..your choice.

ANN
(going with the bluff)
Listen ya old bitch-

GRANNY
(calm)
Careful-

ANN
-there's two of us-

GRANNY
-those are fighting words.

ANN
-and maybe we'll stick you'n there.

ANDY
(recovering his courage)
Let's get her baby.

They rush her. It's no contest. With one quick movement, Granny knocks their heads together. Stunned, they stagger as she grabs them by the scruff of the necks and hauls them toward the oven.

GRANNY
It'll be a cold day where you come from when
I can't handle the likes of you.

She opens the oven door and tosses them in.

GRANNY
I got no room for strays.

Slams the oven door.

SARAH
(awakes with a start)
GRANNY! NO!!!!!!!

GRANNY
Just cleaning up your mistake. You let them-

SARAH
They just came!

GRANNY
And now they're gone.

SARAH
But they're special! They is special dolls-

GRANNY
You've no idea what they are.

SARAH
(desperate

But mebbe they could help you!

ANDY
(from the oven)
Listen to her!

ANN
(oven)
Anythin' you want!

GRANNY
What I'd like now is an apology.

BEAT

ANDY
Sorry, that we broke in.

GRANNY
Not that.

BEAT

ANN
That ... we jumped-?

GRANNY
Nope. I'm going to make some coffee.

ANN
That I called you a bitch.

GRANNY
Bingo. Apology accepted.

SARAH
Granny ... please?-

GRANNY
SHUSH!

Granny waits. She's not pondering or debating. She KNOWS what she is going to do. When the moment is right.

ANDY
(weakly)
Hello??

Granny walks to the oven turns it off and opens it.

GRANNY

Okay you two, let's talk.

BLACKOUT

End of scene.

Scene 5: Earnin' Your Keep at the Crossroad of Magic and Science

Lights up front of stage as Granny approaches the audience with a basket of freshly cut herbs. She hawks with the patter of a salesman, the eye of a doctor and the confidence of a gambler on a winning streak.**For this section audience should receive some paper money with which they can "buy" Granny's herbs.**

GRANNY

Here you go, the best that modern medicine can't buy. Save you a load of doctor bills honeys. Yeah, I see you buddy. Look like you need some Chamomile. I know, sometimes the bacon loves you and sometimes it don't. Awwww, look at you, what a lovely couple. How about some mint to make that late night kiss even sweeter? You know it also keeps mice away?! OH MY GOODNESS! Look at the head of hair on this gentleman, would you? How about some rosemary so you can keep it? Oh you'll thank me 10 years from now when all your friends are as bald as eggs and you still have use for a comb. ANYBODY HERE ITCHING! Bug bites or maybe a sore you keep scratching?-get this quick! Last of the basil.

(takes out some business cards)

Before I forget. Now, I'm here every few days but I also am available to take care of ... problems that won't seem to go away.

(passes out cards)

Okay.

Granny heads back to the stage with the basket as the lights come up. Ann and Andy are sweeping up doll debris.

GRANNY

Sarah!

BEAT

Sarah! Where is she?

ANN

I think she went-

SARAH

(entering dressed for the day)
Right here, Granny.

GRANNY
Coffee on?

SARAH
Yes. I don't feel real good.

GRANNY
Well, that's no surprise with all that's been going on. Here take the basket and pick from the garden. Be careful how you pick-make sure they're ready. Nice, sturdy roots.

Sarah hesitates.

GRANNY
Go on, while I talk to our guests.

SARAH
Can I have some more tea?

GRANNY
No! Let me smell your breath.

Sarah opens her mouth.

GRANNY
You need some thyme and maybe a little sage. Chew the leaves while you're picking and then spit them out. Go!

Sarah leaves with the basket.

GRANNY
(pouring herself some coffee)
I wasn't precisely expecting any guests ... but I did have a hunch that I'd be getting a surprise. Sit down. Did you miss a spot? Get it later, I want to speak to you both.

Ann and Andy move cautiously and sit down. Granny stares at them intently like a surgeon deciding where to make the first cut.

GRANNY
Two lost souls who decided to pick up right where They left off. You all created quite a stir. Robbing a bank, or trying to anyway, is robbing a Bank. Doesn't matter if the bullets are real or

not. In fact, I think you hurt the police and the guards feelings. Pissed them off, like you took them for fools. Don't expect they'll take it easy on you.

BEAT

GRANNY

What were you thinking?

ANDY

Well we-

GRANNY

Hold on a sec. Let me check on Sarah.

(Looks out window)

She's got a lazy streak in her.

(Sitting down again)

One of the only things to remember my daughter by,
And she has the nerve to look like her father.

(pause)

You were saying?

ANDY

I.. we ... one minute we was one place and the next
minute we was here. Like this. So-

GRANNY

So, you improvised.

ANDY

Huh?

GRANNY

The most successful man I ever knew, didn't
listen to anybody. Worked for him. I'm going to
ask the both of you to do the opposite and
listen to everything I have to say. There might
be a quiz. When I'm done I'll ask a question
and you will give me an answer. Yes?

ANN & ANDY

Yes, ma'am.

GRANNY

I've been working on a little project for
a while now. Tried to get my daughter
interested but nothing doing. Even when
the cancer got her and I begged her, all she

did was work on that damn doll for Sarah.

Is that emotion? For a second and then it's gone.

GRANNY

I was born at the crossroad of Magic and Science. We all are, for that's what birth is, but usually the paths start to diverge. But I just kept walking the middle and they both had their way with me. My mother was a doctor they called a witch and my father a wizard they called an engineer. Science took him from us in form of a brick falling from the fourth story of a building he was working on. Force equals mass times acceleration. We lived, for a time, on my mother's potions and spells then Magic made her disappear. She just didn't come home.

BEAT

GRANNY

(looks at Andy)

So, how did my father die?

ANDY

Ummm ... mass ... equals-
(sigh)

ANN

A brick caved in his head.

BEAT

GRANNY

That's paraphrasing but I'll accept it.

(pause)

I wonder if I really need two of you? Anyway, so there I am all of 12 years old Sleeping in doorways, stealing whatever I Could get my hands on. Science told me I was starving. Dying. Then I saw the tallest, thinnest, flower of a man feeding pigeons in a park. Just giving these fat birds bread. They didn't need it! I jumped right between all of them, shooing and kicking, eating that bread right off the ground. Those pigeons didn't know what hit them. Next thing I know, this manicured, ivory hand is offering me half a loaf of bread, and I'm staring straight into the eyes of Science and Magic. They looked at

me with disgusted admiration and then, his pleasure gone, the wind carried him away before I could steal anything else from him. He was in such a hurry to get away he left this book behind: *Experimental Researches in Electricity*.

(pause)

Well?

BEAT

BEAT

ANDY

Did yuh ... eat one of the pigeons-

GRANNY

What!?

ANN

Jesus Christ-

ANDY

I mean, I don't know how they taste-

ANN

-BABY!

ANDY

-but I had dove once and quail ain't bad ...

(pause)

Was it like that? "cause that's what I would've-

ANN

Oh for God's sake, please be-

GRANNY

I was expecting you to say "what happened next?"

BEAT

GRANNY

(turning it over in her mind)

That was very interesting. You were actually listening and your response was predicated on that, rather than seeking approval. No. I didn't eat pigeon but grabbed the book and ran after him.

BEAT

ANN

(understanding the game)

Why?

GRANNY

Asked myself that a thousand times. My best guess: a conditioned response to my environment. Excuse me. I went with my gut. I figured if I gave him back the book, maybe he'd give me a little more bread. Beat the pigeons to it.

ANN

Smart.

GRANNY

I caught him just as he was going into his office and shoved it into his hands. All he did was turn the book over a few times and then frown: "All the effort to give it back to me. Instead of reading it? What a dull girl." Then he takes some coins out of his pocket and gives them and the book to me. "Read this and meet me here this same time next week."

(to ANN)

What would you have done?

ANN

I don't know.

(pause)

I'da have to read his face to see if he meant me harm.

GRANNY

(slight smile)

I didn't even give it that much thought. I was a dull girl. I couldn't make heads or tails of it. I went back the next week and he led me to this room. "Tell me about the book." That conversation didn't last long. He asked me if I knew what an experiment was. "It is a game to discover a truth about the world. I want you to play it with me." He left the room, locked the door and the next thing it felt like ... just before a thunderstorm. A little rumble, a flash of light and suddenly was as if someone had driven a nail in my

head- but the nail felt good. Then he opened the door, told me to read the book again and come back. I went to see him four more times. By the end of "our" experiment, I UNDERSTOOD. " I have given you a key to unlock the world. At the same time, people will become more of a mystery-"

ANN

So was that Science or Magic?

GRANNY

I don't know. Maybe that was just chance. But he was right. People became such a mystery. I scared them.

Sarah enters, her basket full of herbs.

GRANNY

Let me take look ...

(Searching through the basket)

Come on, come on, I know there's at least one.

Ah, here we go. Happens every time.

(pulls two herbs out of the basket)

See these two basil? See how the roots are?

These are young plants pulled before they got

A good hold in the ground. Sarah always pulls a

Couple before she should.

SARAH

Sorry, Granny.

GRANNY

(ignoring)

It's the same with souls. That's why, even with a weak current, Missus Tom was able to pull you all out for a bit and make such a mess. Wouldn't be able to hold two of you anyway.

ANN

Ma'am, no disrespect, but what do you want? We got no choice right now but to say yes. I ain't goin' back in the oven and I sure as Hell don't want to be out there tryin' to rob a gas station. or a shootout with the cops, with a Whitmans Sampler comin' out of my gun.

GRANNY
(to Andy)
What about you?

ANDY
Like she says, ya kinda got us over a barrel at
the moment. I ain't never run a con with a medium
before-

GRANNY
I'm not a medium. Remember that or I'll take
A scissor to that hole Sarah patched.

BEAT

GRANNY
I'm a Spiritual Horticulturist-Gardener.
We'll start tomorrow. First step of 2. Like
re-potting a plant.

Sarah is staring at Granny.

GRANNY
What are you looking at?

Stage grows dark. Sarah almost unconsciously grabs the Betty
doll and holds it front of her. Granny stares at it turns on her
heel and exits.

End of scene

Scene 6: A Prison By Any Other Name

A windy night, with a little moonlight that seems to be searching for something, groping its way in this dark place. It finds a sleeping Sarah. Then it shifts slightly to the Betty Doll. The winds pick up and tree branches tap at the windows with an insistence of someone trying to get in. We hear a whisper of something learning how to speak again:

Sssssssssssssssawwww. sssssssssaaaaaaaaww

BEAT

ssssssssssssssaaaarraawwww

BEAT

Ssssarrrrrrrrrah!

Sarah awakes. Without a sound she crawls out of bed. She takes a quick look at Raggedy Ann and Andy sleeping in a corner and then walks to the curio. The moonlight waves a finger for her to come back to bed.

Sssarrrrrrah?

BEAT

Saraaaaah

The moonlight finds the Betty Doll. Even though it's still pretty dark, we can see Sarah smile. She gets back into bed and hugs Betty.

BEAT

Ann turns over and moves closer to Andy.

ANN

(softly)

You asleep?

(No answer)

Baby, you asleep?

(No answer)

You as-

ANDY
(stage whisper)
I WAS!

ANN
Sorry.
(pause)
How much longer you think we gonna
need to do this?

ANDY
What? Sleep?

ANN
Yeah.

ANDY
I dunno. Why you think we won't?

ANN
'cause I feel like mebbe the human part is burnin'
away. You know, little by little. First we look
like this, then I ain't been hungry since ... I can't
remember-couldn't even taste that tea the girl gave
us-could you?

ANDY
A little. Didn't taste like no Sassafrass.
(pause)
I mean I could taste the chocolate some. Kinda
like I recall. But ... you're right. I ain't hungry.

BEAT

ANDY
I ain't had no urge to piss either ... or shit.
Damn! I think I might miss that-

ANN
All the things you could-

ANDY
Women'll never understand. There's somethin' about
goin' to the head in the mornin' and takin' that
first piss-

ANN
(Half grossed out, half amused)
Oh Jesus Christ-

ANDY
No, I'm serious, or sittin' on the head, readin'
The sports page-fuckin' Cardinals!-while takin'-

*ANN kisses him. She puts her mitten gently over his mouth and
Wraps herself around him.*

BEAT
BEAT

ANN
This still feels good.

ANDY
Excuse me for sayin' this, but I think
this part's gone too.

ANN
Huh?

ANDY
Kinda the one thing I wish would go away.
It's gonna be like torture.

ANN
Always about your pecker! Even when you
don't got one anymore.

(pause)

I get it though. I do.

(pause)

Just hold me. If she does what she says she's
gonna do, it'll be a long while before we get to do
this again.

Ann holds him tighter, like maybe this is a goodbye.

ANDY
I'm sorry, Baby. Seems like I took us from one
prison to another. Can't beat the Devil. Think
I woulda known that.

ANN
Yeah, well you can't cuss him out either.
(grabs his face)
You think it's just you that got us here?

BEAT

ANN

While you was playin' your little game, he made me an offer. He told me you was a loser and that he KNEW you was gonna cheat. "tell you what my dear, If you can look him in the eye and tell he's a bum, AND that you hate him now and love only me ... I'll send you back. Just as you was. Maybe better and wouldn't that be somethin'." I called him a liar and he said, "scouts honor. No trick. I just wanna see his face when you tell him. Dumb sonofabitch bet all his pain 'gainst me letting you see him again. So, I'll let him, just so you can tell him good riddance. Think you can do that?"

BEAT

BEAT

ANDY

So what did you say, 'xactly?

ANN

Baby, I wish I could tell you that I didn't think about it. It's never been easy and sometime it should be. But two things: He was so sure I was gonna say yes. Smug fucker. Then I thought about your puppy dog eyes, makin' this stupid, sucker bet just for the chance to see me again. I told him to go fuck himself.

ANDY

Really!?!??

ANN

Yep.

ANDY

Damn you! All this time I was thinkin' it was my fault-

ANN

-Well it still partially is. You ain't in the clear, you see that right?

ANDY

I guess.

The moon goes behind a cloud.

ANDY
Ya really told Ol' Scratch to go fuck
himself?

ANN
(maybe getting a little sleepy)
Mmmmhmm.

ANDY
(chuckling)
Damn. I'm scared of you.

BEAT
BEAT
BEAT

ANN
Good.

End of scene

END OF ACT 2

INTERMISSION

ACT 3

Scene 1: Can You Hear Me? Even If I'm Not Here?

The stage is dark except for a small light on in the loft. Granny works, surrounded by notes and a few dolls. It's almost like she's miming, as we hear nothing or maybe just the faintest rustling of paper. Edison walks in stumbling a bit in the dark until he reaches the ladder to the loft. A dim light appears on him.

EDISON
Where the hell am I?
(looks up)
Ah, so it's you.

BEAT

EDISON
May I come up?

No answer.

EDISON
Hello? May I come up?

No answer.

He begins to ascend the short ladder, pausing at each rung to make sure it's steady. Granny continues to work, ignoring him.

EDISON
(Finally reaching the loft)
I think that 3rd rung bears watching. Thought I heard a crack-
(realizes)
Do you mind saying something?
(pause)

He observes the three dolls.

EDISON
Oh, you still have it. Glad to see.
Wonder how many are still around?

Granny gets up to look at some notes. Edison notices the work and slyly takes a look. He reaches for the Tom doll.

EDISON

Mind if I take a look?

No answer.

EDISON

(picking up doll)

What have we here?

(examines. As if someone slapped him)

What the goddam blazes is the meaning of this.
This! THIS! THIS IS AN ABOMINATION! YOU HAVE
IMPREGNATED MY DOLL WITH THAT ... THAT! THAT
MAN'S-

Granny still doesn't seem to hear him.

EDISON

(Dropping doll and grabbing her)

Are you listening to me you-

GRANNY

(Grabbing him back more fiercely)

No.

That's odd. We can see she said it but ... we didn't hear anything.

GRANNY

(again we see the lips move but ...)

I think about you all the time. Do you ever
Think of me?

EDISON

(struggling)

Think ... of you?

GRANNY

It's ok.

She goes back to work.

EDISON

(a piece of the puzzle)

I can't be thinking of you. It's not possible.

Granny almost absent mindedly reaches for a stack of papers and offers them to Edison.

EDISON
 What's this?
 (sorting through them)
 I knew it. Of course. All this time trying to piece-

GRANNY
 Take them.

EDISON
 What?

GRANNY
 They're useless-

EDISON
 WHAT!

GRANNY
 Take them.

EDISON
 WHAT! I'll sue the pants-

GRANNY
 Take them, take them, take them-TAKE THEM!

That last "take them" we hear. The entire world hears but ...

EDISON
 What?

GRANNY
 Jesus Christ.
 (grabs him by the ears, a light kiss)
 There. Just take them and go.

EDISON
 (he now hears her)
 ...why? Don't you need-

GRANNY
 No. Doesn't work.

She starts to tinker with the dolls again.

GRANNY
 Should have known. Even then.

EDISON
(almost humbly)
May I ask ... please tell me.

GRANNY
You never even tried but ... what would
you know about communication? About wanting
to.

BEAT

GRANNY
Goodbye.

EDISON
(Puzzle coming together)
I came a long way for this.
(pause)
May I ask about-

GRANNY
No.

*She's getting lost in the work. Ignoring him. Forgetting him.
But he's a stubborn old bastard.*

EDISON
Well, you were always very detailed.
Thorough. So, I'm sure you know that
what happens next it just the first step-

GRANNY
I do.

EDISON
Good. These ... individuals, I guess we'll call
them. They're the mice before the guinea pig.

GRANNY
I know that.

EDISON
Then there's the question of patents. Keeping it
all in house until you're ready.

BEAT

EDISON
What are you going to call these little
Frankenstein's monsters?

GRANNY

What do you mean?

EDISON

For marketing purposes. For the patent.

GRANNY

I haven't thought about it. Tom, goodbye!

EDISON

I'm sure someone will.

He leaves with her looking after him. The light on him grows less distinct, almost blurry, but stays there as he exits. She slowly turns in the direction of where Sarah is sleeping. Light on Granny dims.

End of scene.

Scene 2:The Mice

Granny, Ann and Andy are sitting at the table. Sarah attempts to eavesdrop while sweeping.

ANDY

So, what ya tellin' me is that I got a
Bunch of bees in me?

ANN

No, she's sayin' that are souls-that's right
ain't it?- are made of stuff that act like
bees. These ... What'dya call 'em-PARTICLES act
like bees. Like a hive-

ANDY

That don't make no sense. Ain't no preacher
I ever met-

ANN

This ain't about religion-it's about
SCIENCE!

GRANNY

You're correct. Simplified of course
But essentially correct.

ANDY

So, my-Jesus Christ!- my bees is gonna
follow the sound that radio makes-

ANN

And follow it into the doll.

(pause)

Excuse me for asking, but so what?

GRANNY

What do you mean?

ANN

We go in there-

GRANNY

You will speak. To me.

BEAT

GRANNY

You know the purpose of a Grief Doll?
It served as a way to cope with death.
You can't argue with death, negotiate or
reason. It just comes and takes what it
wants ,when it wants. And your left with
nothing-

ANN

It took us hard.

GRANNY

-and usually a lot you didn't say.
Before all you had was prayer and these
Dolls. Silent. An effigy to your grief, a
tribute to matter over mind.

BEAT

GRANNY

We all need to communicate. I'm assuming
that's true even in death. Once the soul is
lured to the radio, they will know doubt try
to speak . To the living, to the others
nearby. Those first few, precious words
will be transmitted by the phonograph. It's
primitive but should do the job.

ANN

And after?

GRANNY

The recording will be limited. Probably 30
Seconds. 30 seconds of hearing a voice that
Meant something. A chance for them to say...

(pause)

I think that's all you need to know.

ANDY

But what about us after?

GRANNY

After you're part of the doll?

ANDY
Yeah.

GRANNY
I'll have your recorded voices, hopefully.
Your job will be done. I'll let you go.

ANN
How you gonna do that?

GRANNY
Removing the radio and deactivating it.
(pause)
That will free you and remove the possibility
Of anything else showing up. Honey to the
bees, so to speak.

ANDY
So you just gonna turn us loose and then
What?

GRANNY
Not really my concern. More than likely
You'll head to the light. The dark seems
through with you.

ANDY
Hold on ... so it's gonna be like being let
out of prison, with no plan, no nothin'
just headed for some wild, fuckin' blue
yonder-

GRANNY
To wait your turn.

ANN
Wait my turn to see who?
Jesus? God? I seen the other guy, face to
Face. Didn't much care for it.

GRANNY
You'll eventually find another vessel I
assume. Some of your memories will be
pulled apart, separated. You'll begin
again.

SILENCE

ANN
Begin again. As a baby?

BEAT

ANN
Second chance, slate swiped clean?

Granny nods.

ANN
I'd like that-

ANDY
Wait, ya mean I gotta, we gotta, come back
As kids? As what, brother and sister? Fuck that-

ANN
Baby-

ANDY
Nah, there's gotta be some kind of shortcut-

GRANNY
There isn't-

ANDY
Bullshit! Yer yankin our fuckin souls out these
dolls, putting us in another-jest stick us in
Another body-

GRANNY
It's not that easy. If it was ...

ANN
You'd a done it for your daughter.

GRANNY
No. She would have never let me.

BEAT

GRANNY
She could have done it
For herself.

SARAH
But she didn't. She said it wasn't right.

Granny seems on the verge of something now: a truth.

GRANNY

No, she hated the whole idea. When she was Sarah's age, wilted flowers bloomed when she walked by. Colicky babies stopped fussing and smiled. It was a game to her. Then one day she saw a puppy get run over by a wagon. A pile of crushed soft lying in the road. A little boy was crying and Elizabeth felt bad. She walked over and put her hands on that dead puppy and ... and it tried to walk. Yelping and in pain, dragging itself on the ground. Bones protruding ... it kept moving and with every step that little boy screamed "STOP IT! STOP IT! MAKE IT STOP SOMEBODY-" A man shot it in the head.

(pause)

Lesson learned. No resurrections. No Magic. Just a second chance ... maybe.

ANDY

How we gonna stay together-

ANN

We won't. And mebbe that's for the best. Or we'll find each other somehow.

ANDY

You want to get away ... from me.

ANN

I don't want to be no doll!
(to Granny)
Once we're out, we're out-right?

GRANNY

Before, you were rubber bands that snapped back. Young plants pulled and then Replanted. This will be-

ANN

A second death.
(little smile)
How many people get to say that? I'm ready.
(to Andy)
I love you. Know that.

ANDY

Back atcha.

(pause)

I love you. Tell your particles.

Granny begins. The two dolls are activated while the Tom doll watches in silence. A hum is heard. Static. Static. Buzz. Ann goes limp first, followed by Andy. The spouts emerge and they seem to be searching, aimless. Then suddenly the spout which was Ann bolts into one of the dolls. The other seems to resist it.

GRANNY

Damn it!

SARAH

He ain't gonna go-

GRANNY

He has to-

SARAH

He thinks it's a prison.

(earning her keep)

It's ok Mr. Andy. It ain't like where
You was before.

(simply)

An' I hope you has a better life. Go on
now. Go on. Speak to my Granny.

The spout disappears into the other doll. Granny paces nervously.

SARAH

What's ya waitin' for.

GRANNY

You wouldn't understand-

Sarah impulsively pulls the string of :

GRANNY

This is my-

SARAH

C'mon Mr. Andy.

Static. Buzz

SARAH
Sooner you talk, the sooner-

Static. Buzz. Buzz. Something far away and then:

ANDY'S Voice
(like with the Tom doll but more so)
Hello? Hello? Am I- where am I? Tell her for-
Help me. I don't like-

It cuts off. Granny slowly walks to the other doll. Pulls string.

ANN'S VOICE
(distorted)
Hello?
STATIC. STATIC

ANN'S Voice
Tell him for me ... goodbye. Thank yo-
Cut off. Granny sinks to her knees. Sarah runs to her.

SARAH
Granny!

GRANNY
(sobbing)
It worked.
(pause)
One more step.
(pulling herself together)
Before I forget ...

She takes the radio out of the doll and deactivates. The spout rises out of the doll. It seems to already to be splitting, forming new hives, as it drifts away. Uncertain. A Little lost. Picking a direction and then ... gone. Sarah moves to the Andy doll:

GRANNY
NO! Not yet!

SARAH
But I promised-

GRANNY
I need him. To document-never mind.
He stays for now as evidence.
(pause)
Give her a good head start.

SARAH
That's not fair.

GRANNY
(putting the doll up)
I think we need a good meal. Something special.
I'm going out. I expect nothing will change
While I'm gone. I can't explain everything to you
now. I won't.
(Picks up basket)
Take this and fill it up for me. I appreciate the
little help you gave me. Maybe, someday, you can
help me more. I wish I could have shared this ...
Ok.
(Pause)
He was a criminal. So was she.

SARAH
I know.
(picks up basket)
Can we have some eggs?

GRANNY
We'll see.

Sarah leaves with basket. Granny puts the Andy doll on the
highest shelf. She stares at it and pulls the string:

ANDY's Voice
Hello? Hello? Am I- where am I? Tell her for-
Help me. I don't like-

Lights dim as Granny smiles.

End of scene

Scene 3: Crossroad

Early evening. Grey in the way that so much of life is. The hounds of light and dark await a bone to be thrown their way. Granny enters, home early, with a little bit of food. Sarah is in bed.

GRANNY

If you want something to eat, you're going
To help me make it. Did you pick what I told
you? Where's the basket?

Sees the basket by the bed.

GRANNY

Let's go! I'm sure you're hungry and
I'm feeling a bit pekid.

Normally, perceived lethargy annoys her. But this has been a good day so...

GRANNY

Went to the Farmer's Market before it closed and
grabbed the last of the tomatoes. I know you like those so help
me cut some up and we'll put them with some greens.

SARAH

I already ate some tomatoes.

GRANNY

How's that?

SARAH

I ain't hungry. I ate them little ones.

Granny starts preparing food. Then:

GRANNY

What?

BEAT

GRANNY

Sarah?

Granny stops and walks to the bed.

GRANNY
Time to get up. Sarah.

SARAH
Noooo. I don't feel good.

GRANNY
You're just hungry. So am I-

SARAH
It hurts.
(Tries to sit up)
Granny-

GRANNY
What little tomatoes-

SARAH
Those little cherry ones-

GRANNY
We don't have any cherry-

SARAH
Yes we do-

GRANNY
NO WE DON'T! A frost killed-

Granny quickly exits. She returns holding three red berries resembling cherries.

GRANNY
Was it these? Was it these!

SARAH
Yeah. They didn't taste-

GRANNY
How long ago?

SARAH
(in pain)
It hurts and-

GRANNY
HOW LONG AGO?! YOU STUPID-

SARAH
What?

GRANNY
GOD DAMN YOU HOW LONG AGO!

SARAH
I dunno, I dunno, I dunno
(crying)
It hurts, I dunno-

GRANNY
Before the sun went down?

SARAH
Yes.

BEAT

GRANNY
I have to go.

SARAH
Don't leave me-

GRANNY
I'll be back.

SARAH
Nooo-

GRANNY
I'm getting the doctor-

SARAH
NOOOOOO-

GRANNY
I'll be back-

SARAH
YOU! YOU! You can fix it-

GRANNY
NO! I CAN'T!

SARAH
I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY! DON'T BE MAD AT ME!
(pleading)
I'm scared.

MAGIC and SCIENCE have Granny where they want her.

SARAH
I'm sorry I-

GRANNY
You can put that old sorry of yours out
For the trash. Don't have any room for it.
A sorry doesn't earn its' keep. Ok?

SARAH
Ok.

GRANNY
Here' what we're going to do. Just like with
the two Ragggedys. You know what an experiment is?
It is a game to discover a truth about the world.
I want you to play it with me.

Granny pulls up a chair next to the bed. She comforts her grandchild until she seems to go to sleep. It's dark now. Granny leans back in the chair. Lights dim but no blackout.

End of scene.

Scene 4: Guinea Pig

Granny awakes, picks up her basket of herbs and, as in the second act, takes them to the audience. The patter this time is different. Robotic.

GRANNY

Here you go, the best that modern medicine can't buy. Save you a load of doctor bills honeys. Yeah, I see you buddy. Look like you need some Chamomile. I know, sometimes the bacon loves you and sometimes it don't. Awwww, look at you, what a lovely couple. How about some mint to make that late night kiss even sweeter? You know it also keeps mice away?! OH MY GOODNESS!
(pause)

Oh ... my goodness. My good-... Before I forget. Now, I'm here every few days but I also am available to take care of ... problems that won't seem to go away.

(throws cards)

Ok.

She goes back to Sarah and holds her hand, feeling her pulse but also putting it to her cheek. This moment can last as long as Granny wants it to. Finally:

GRANNY

Let's get this show on the road.

She brings the Tom doll to the table. We hear the hum. Slowly we hear the hum. The static rings and the weird disembodied voices sing and the spout emerges from Sarah. Almost instantly following, we see something emerge from the Betty doll, then from the window, then from Andy's doll. Sarah opens her eyes and vomits.

SARAH

MOMMA! MOMMA!

Sarah grabs Granny who collapses in shock.

SARAH
MOMMA! Where's Sarah?!

The room grows dark. The hum of the hive becomes loud. Sarah leaves Granny and makes her way towards the Tom doll.

SARAH
BABY! IT'S ME!
(Pulls string)
BABY!

Nothing. The hum becomes louder and more of the hive pour through the window. The stove begins to glow.

SARAH
(frantic)
SARAH!

She sees the Betty doll and grabs it and starts to exit. Suddenly, something draws her back to the Tom doll. She pulls the string.

SARAH
Sweetie ... please.

Static. Static. Static, Static, Static ...

SARAH'S VOICE
Momma?

Sarah grabs the doll and exits. Seconds pass and Granny stirs.

GRANNY
BETTY! MY GOD! BETTY!
(sees the hive)
GO AWAY! I'VE GOT NOTHING FOR YOU!

The dark meets the light as it dives into the glowing stove. Blackout.

End of scene.

EPILOGUE: Hello Again

Edison rolls out on stage in a bathrobe. Much of the vitality of the previous scenes has left him. The spirit is following the body. He carries with him a little glass vial.

EDISON

Behold! The last breath of Thomas Edison. Or it will be. My son plans to place a dozen or so of these near my deathbed and then distribute them upon my passing. A bit macabre and symbolic but everyone seems pleased with the idea. No clue how they'll determine which contains my VERY last or who gets what. I hope they put it to good use.

His mind seems to wander and he addresses an unseen figure.

EDISON

There will be no resting. I shall be looking over your shoulder the whole time. You think you can keep us Apart? My particles shall remain as they are, 'till they claim another vessel. Or perhaps the spark I started will be ignited by another and slowly their work will meet my memory.

BEAT

Perhaps it will be one of you. Remember, much of invention is really modification.

(breathes into vial and coughs)

Maybe this will help.

(Seals vial and tosses it into the audience]

Don't let it go to waste!

He wheels himself off as the lights dim. Sarah and WOMAN enter from back of the house, Sarah holding the Tom doll.

WOMAN

...so, I'm just gonna show you your room and let you get settled.

(notices doll)

I forgot, what did you say the name of your doll

was?

SARAH
(hesitating)
Ummm ...

WOMAN
I'm sure she has-

SARAH
Well, she's kinda new.

WOMAN
Oh, I see. Well how about Amanda? Kathleen?

SARAH
Elizabeth.

WOMAN
Do you mind if I call her Betty?

SARAH
No ma'am.

WOMAN
You can call ... no, we'll work are way up to that.

They arrive on stage. A small bed and drawers.

WOMAN
Here you go.
(pulls open drawers)
I already went'n got you some clothes.
Gussed at the sizes but I think they're fine.

They sit on the bed. Awkward silence ...

WOMAN
Sweetie, I know this hard. But I'm gonna love you to pieces. If you let me. Your dad-Mr. Brewster is so excited. I shouldn't tell you this but his head was so in the clouds this mornin- you know what he did? Left for work without putting his shoes on! Had to turn right around and come back and get 'em.

She laughs and Sarah attempts a smile.

WOMAN
OOPS, OOPS, is that a smile I see?

MAN enters in work clothes.

MAN
THERE SHE IS!
(Kneels down to Sarah)
Hello, Sarah. And who is this?

WOMAN
That's Betty. What are doin-

MAN
Boss let me come home for a bit. Said"
Get the hel-

WOMAN
Language!

MAN
-heck outta here and go and see your daughter."

BEAT

MAN
I sure liked hearing that. Going to see my
daughter. Ooooh and I got a surprise-

WOMAN
What didya do?

MAN
Hold on.

Leaves and then enters holding Raggedy ANN and ANDY

WOMAN
Oh my Lord-

MAN
Ain't they great. Never seen them this big.
(to Sarah)
So Betty here'll have some company.

WOMAN
(pulling him slightly aside)
Can we afford-

MAN
Oh I didn't pay for 'em. I got in the truck as
I was leavin' work and there they was in the back
Probably some of the guys chipped in and bought 'em
for me. I'll get somebody to spill the beans. Heck of
a surprise. What do ya say Sarah?

SARAH
Thank you.

MAN
Well your welcome! Okay, well I better get
back. (kneels to Sarah again)
Lotsa love in this place for you young lady.
I know it's a lot to take in but we're your
parents now, just like if you was born to us.

WOMAN
(kissing Sarah gently)
A momma's kiss. First of many. Let's let her
rest. I'll call you for supper in an hour.

Man and Woman leave. Sarah stares at Raggedy Ann and Andy as they stare back, lifeless(?) from each corner. She pulls Betty closer, still staring, as the lights dim.

End of scene.

THE END

