

NANCE SIDES (pick one or both!)

NANCE

Dad *loved* to needle you. (*to Raymond and Lydia*) Grandpa Myron knew how to get under your mom's skin. In the 80s, your mom would blow her hair out with enough hairspray to preserve a body, and he made a game of throwing things in her nest. Q-Tips, bits of paper, even one time little pieces of cereal. Your mom had a date coming to pick her up, and he arrived after Grandpa had spent the past hour flicking Frosted Flakes in her hair. By the time the date arrived she looked like she had fallen asleep in Tony the Tiger's lap. And her date comes and says, "I think you might have something in your hair," and then spent ten minutes picking out all of the flakes. Grandpa was crying laughing, kept saying she should've used dandruff shampoo. Still, to think of a small-town Missouri girl wanting to make it in *finance* of all things, but your mom did it. Scholarship to her fancy New York school, on to a big firm, rode the Reagan boom to become a lady executive!

(in a sudden, uncharacteristic shift)

I really am very proud of you. You know that, don't you?

NANCE

We speak in heavenly dialects, when the Holy Spirit enters us. We all did growing up. Your mother never kicked the habit. Don't you remember? Don't you? Your mom was more bought in than all of us. I remember her on the altar, speaking in heavenly tongues.

KATHLEEN

God damn you.

NANCE

Don't take the Lord's name in vain!

KATHLEEN

There is no god.

GOD IS REAL. AND GOD IS LISTENING. You remember what it felt like up there, connected to something bigger than yourself—

Nance rises and begins speaking in tongues, intentionally goading Kathleen to remember.

NANCE (*approximate, not necessary to get words exactly*)

Corrabbua esta moresta mamba miesta kiara enda mairesta brianda le shacama ambua tura embrienday ibott ey ey ey meistre bes goza a ka kaya shacama dia kond maka shonda ra shonda! Kī bio resta rebaba thurmummiti ther-minglus hestia olala jest helter skelter skull brawl miestra

KATHLEEN SIDES (pick one or both)

KATHLEEN

You think I'm jabby, you should've seen how Grandpa Myron ran this house. Imagine growing up out here in the woods, away from everyone. No support, nothing but put-downs and criticism. Look what happened to Aunt Nance, shut up here her whole life, raising that daughter of hers with Grandpa still ruling the house. If I hadn't left, you'd be just like Lydia. Your dad made these visits bearable. I couldn't have made it through Grandpa's funeral without him. All the paperwork, all the inheritance bullshit, all of Nance's insanity. He was so sharp, so confident, keeping things in the right hands. Who could've known... two years later, I'd be burying him too. I just... I'm not sure I'm ready for this without him. He kept me sane. Kept me calm when they all went for the jugular. They know exactly how to... how to get under my skin. How to make me feel like a stupid little girl. Like they want me to revert back to what I was *was was was was*—

RAYMOND

Mom. You're peppering

KATHLEEN

Back to what I was. (*a pause.*) I think I'm cold.

KATHLEEN

I know you think I look down on you, and I sincerely do not. But my needs and your needs are very different. I have the responsibility of being a part *of of of* society! To participate, I *need* enough to keep my tennis club membership. To send birthday gifts, thank-you gifts, wedding gifts! I need money for fancy clothes to wear to my fancy lunches with my fancy friends so they don't suspect I'm on the outs. I need money for the Botox that keeps my forehead from betraying just how worried I am all the goddamn time Now I can't even afford the good prosciutto. And none of my rich friends will bail me out because once you beg, you've lost face, they're afraid your failure will infect them, I'll reek of the downswing, and I'll have to go at it alone *lone lone loan loan* and hustle and claw and humiliate *ate ate hate hate hate* myself and I hate it, and I hate that my husband is gone and I hate that I feel like I have no purpose and I hate *hate hate* that I've ended up back here in the same place that I started!

LYDIA SIDES

Lydia goes to the bookshelf and removes a copy of the *Sefer HaRazim*. Gran goes to Raymond and touches his chest, still laughing. Lydia touches his back, reading from the book. Gran mumbles along.

LYDIA (conjuring)

Taken from the Books of the Mysteries, given to Noah, the son of Lamech, son of Methuselah, son of Enoch, son of Jared, son of Mehallalel, son of Kenan, son of Enosh, son of Seth, son of Adam, by Raziel the angel in the year when he came into the ark but before his entrance! And he learned from it how to do wondrous deeds, and learned secrets of knowledge and how to master the investigation of the strata of the heavens, to go about in all that is in their seven abodes. I ask of you, angels who rule the fates of the children of Adam and Eve, that you do my will and bring in conjunction the planet of Raymond son of Frank into conjunction with the planet of Frank, father of Frances. I adjure you spirit of the ram bearer who dwells among the graves upon the bones of the dead, that you will accept from my hand this offering and do my will and bring me the spirit of Frank, father of Frances, Frank who is among the dead.

Lydia holds up the bloodied blanket. Something breaks in Kathleen. She covers her mouth and begins to silently sob.

LYDIA

Raise him up so that he will speak to me without fear and tell me true things without concealment. Let him not be afraid of me and let him give me what I need from him.

Raymond is shivering. Lines start to overlap.

LYDIA

Come, ibbur.

Come, ibbur.

Come, ibbur.

I ask of you, angels who rule the fates of the children of Adam and Eve, that you do my will!

LYDIA

You sound like the people at our church. They're all for fellowship, all for embracing you as a person, until you do something they don't like. It's like what they did to Pearl, this old lady who went to our church. Her husband dies, she's left with nothing. Lost her house. Oh, big fundraiser for Pearl! They let her live in the church annex, give her food, all's good until they find out that she was doing mag—things the church didn't like. No family, no kids, nowhere to go. They kicked her out. I don't think she ever got her money. She was living on the street until... I don't know. So yeah. The church is really welcoming. As long as you follow their rules. And don't ask too many questions.

RAYMOND SIDES (pick one or both!)

RAYMOND

And you wonder why I wanted to spend Thanksgiving in New York? My other family doesn't end Thanksgiving dinner **SPEAKING IN TONGUES**. Do you know what we do? We play **SCRABBLE** like a normal family. My dad's dead and you think I want to spend my holidays sorting through your ancient family drama, when I have an actual storm raging inside of me? Every day I wake up feeling nothing but regret and hopelessness and maybe it's because of what I'm surrounding myself with! Look at you! **LOOK AT YOU!** Instead of rehashing the past, why don't we just get this over with so we can leave. You're not here because you want to be. Tell them you're selling the house, Mom. Tell the **FUCKING TRUTH FOR ONCE IN YOUR LIFE!**

RAYMOND (possessed by the spirit of his father)

Is Raymond here?

I'm here, Dad.

Who else is here?

Mom, Lydia—

WHO ELSE IS HERE?

Mom, Lydia, Baby Frances—

THERE WAS SOMEONE FOLLOWING ME.

No one's following you, Dad—

SOMEONE FOLLOWED ME HERE.

Dad, you're scaring me.

I WANT TO GET OUT.

I'm sorry, Dad. I'm sorry.

I DON'T WANT TO BE HERE. I DON'T WANT TO BE HERE.

Dad. DAD. LOOK AT ME.

LET ME GO. LET ME OUT.

I'm sorry I failed you.

DON'T SHOW YOUR FEAR,

Dad, please, I need you to—

YOUR WEAKNESS OR

—tell me you love me—

IT WILL KILL YOU!

Dad.

FIGHT IT.

I'm so lost.

FACE IT LIKE A MAN.

I'll try. The cycle...

I feel it strangling me...strangling you...

This house...

Where do you end?

Our inheritance...

Where do I begin?

