

The Ministry of Grace

This play has received developmental support which is omitted here, but thanks stand strong nonetheless.

CHARACTERS:

Grace/Mary – same woman, different name. A Ntlaka'pamux woman in her thirties. Always dressed sensibly, with hair neatly curled and pinned. She is warm, deeply intelligent, and her laugh is an open window on a stuffy room.

Brother Cain is a sharp-featured man of European ancestry in his late thirties to mid forties, all propriety and forever suited up in grey tones. Lupine. His "southern" dialect has telling cracks in it.

Clem is a Cree man in his forties, good-hearted, insightful, and built like a mountain. He wears a labourer's clothes, but always has a good shine on his boots.

Lizzie-Mae is a rather frail-looking woman in her early twenties, also of European ancestry. She will often travel after the ministry, following them as a groupie. Very pale.

SCRIPT:

Caryl Churchill style rules apply.

A backslash / within a line indicates the overlapping point for the forthcoming line.

A sentence ending in an ellipsis indicates the trailing off of a spoken thought.

A dash – at the end of a line indicates a cutting off, whether by another or by oneself.

Silences are very important in the rhythms of this world. Some of these are noted as unspoken lines. Mary/Grace and Clem are more fluent in silences than are Cain and Lizzie-Mae.

Transitions are fluid, never stopping. Time is cyclical.

1950, California

PROLOGUE: In the beginning.

All is staged in a revival style tent, outdoors.
Cain enters through the audience, rousing them as he goes.

CAIN: (**singing** a hymn intermittently. "Blood of the Lamb" works well.) Ooooooh, my brothers. Oh, my sisters, praise Him. Praise Him loud and praise him strong. Praise Him with me. Praise him altogether, now. (**Singing** again.)
This night has a special feel. This is a night of miracles. -yes. I have witnessed a miracle, my friends, my family in God. I have brought this miracle here unto you.

I fear, however, you may not bear bearing witness to this miracle of wonders unless you have a great mighty case of faith. Incurable. Are you incurable, sister? Brother? I hope as much. I do. For not without a great deal of faith will you be able to behold the beholden one.

Do you have faith in Jesus? Is your faith unshakeable? Is your faith in Jesus stronger than your own fear of our savage brothers and sisters? Ask yourself. Dig deep! Do you believe that He can deliver ANY man from backward ways? DO YOU BELIEVE? If you believe let me hear you Hallelujah!

Cain is swallowed by a flash of light.

ACT ONE

Scene 1:1 Begatten.

Mary sits, anxious, in a sun-streaked barn. She holds a shovel. She is sweaty, dusty and exhausted.

She holds her head a moment and then moves her face to soak up a sunbeam.

MARY: Six? Seven o'clock? (*sighs*)

She wipes her face with a handkerchief.
She pulls a rosary from her skirt pocket. She considers it and then returns it to its pocket.

She closes her eyes.

The sound of someone approaching.
Mary snaps to a sharp, steady awareness.
Boards are pried loose from a door, tossed aside. Padlocked chains are unlocked.
The barn door creaks open.
Brother Cain slips in. The door shuts behind him.

CAIN: Holy jumpin' jehosaphat! Fort Knox. Got me half expectin' a towering Amazonian. Rabid and snarling at... oh. Beg pardon. (*loudly*) Buenos dias. -noches.

Mary sort of nods.

CAIN: (*loudly and with large gestures*) I know they've had you squared away in here for muchos hours. But fear me not, señorita. Yo soy un... hombre. De Dios.

MARY: A priest?

Beat.

CAIN: You're not a Mexican.
 (beat.) What's the shovel for?

Mary looks away, holds the shovel tighter.

CAIN: There some reason you figger I'm out to harm you?

Mary keeps her eyes averted from him.

CAIN: I was just up at Old Johnson's house. I know
 for a fact he just narrowly missed having his
 nose knocked over to th'side of 'is head when you
 come at 'im with a shovel.

Mary remains silent.

CAIN: Mrs. Johnson wouldn't let me speak to Mr.
 Johnson. Said he was laid up.(*Beat.*) What does a
 man do to earn a whack in the craw with a farming
 implement? (*Beat.*) Answer me.

MARY: He wouldn't pay up what I earned.

CAIN: Uh huh. What'd he can you for?

MARY: I didn't get fired. I quit.

Beat.

CAIN: I've known the Johnsons goin' on ten years, now.
 I've seen first hand how Old Johnson struts
 around the womenfolk he employs, cock 'o' the
 walk. Gets worse every year, mark my word.
 (*Beat.*) I'm guessing he came at you this morn
 with a how-do-you-do then tried to slip you his
 cock-a-doodle-do. Then, bein' a lady, you told
 him you'd not tolerate such behaviour. He,
 feeling slapped down and yelping, sent you
 packing, only you wouldn't go without your
 earnings. And he wasn't paying. I guess that's
 when you took up the spade and charged the manor
 house.

Silence.
Cain looks Mary over.

CAIN: Not the kind of story the Missus would want told around. They want you kept quiet, I guess they'll have to pay you. Or lock you up for life. Or maybe worse. Wait for nightfall and do whatever they need to, in the cover of darkness.

Mary looks at him, unreadable.

CAIN: Hm. All day, locked away in a barn. Far from any police station I know of. Which course of action is it you figure they're takin'?' Hm?

MARY: Little I can do about it.

Beat.

CAIN: Such... excellent posture. (*Beat.*) When I pressed Mrs. Johnson, she told me you was nothing to give a second thought to. Just an uppity Mexican; which everybody knows is the worst kind. Says you swan around, reading from the Bible when you get your half-day off. Read scripture to the niggers.

MARY: I don't... claim to be holy. It's just most of those folks/ don't read.

CAIN: Are negroes. And Mexicans. But you. Are not.

Mary casts her eyes downward again.

CAIN: How 'bout a reading? Don't worry. I'm not here for last rites. Though, admittedly, I may have told the old lady up at the manor as much.

He passes the bible to her.

CAIN: Go on. I wanna hear you read. Loud and clear.

Beat.

CAIN: C'mon, now. Nobody ever did time for praising the Lord.

Mary flips through the pages.

CAIN: Go on, now. Any prayer. Loud and clear. So God himself can rejoice in it. (*Beat.*) I'm listenin'. So's He.

Beat.

Beat.

Mary takes a risk.

MARY: Psalm 121.

CAIN: Fine choice.

MARY: (*true, though timid*) "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord,

CAIN: Stronger. Like you mean it. Like your life depends upon it.

MARY: (*increasingly impassioned and clear*) ...which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

CAIN: That's it. Speak out! Tell it so dirty Old Johnson himself repents.

MARY: (*on fire now*) "The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

CAIN: More might than a swingin' shovel!

MARY: "The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy SOUL."

CAIN: WOOWEE! YES-AH! (*He rifles through his coat*) Cigarette?

MARY: No, thank you.

CAIN: Not the smartest in a barn fulla dry hay, I suspect. (*He takes a moment to light his own cigarette.*)

Will wonders never cease... I had come through to spread the good word as a servant of our Lord. I didn't dream He'd reward me with a churchified Indian. As a matter of fact... I hadn't even realized I'd been lacking one.

A car's horn is honked curtly. Twice.
Cain and Mary look towards it.

CAIN: (Cain coughs roughly.) How would you like to come work for me? Join my Ministry?

Mary looks at him.

CAIN: Most people are ignorant. They presume an Indian is an illiterate animal. If you come out on that stage and read, it will make for a hell of a show.

MARY: You want me to read the bible on a stage?

CAIN: Absolutely. You're pleasant enough of features – tidy in appearance. You have a good strong voice.

He holds his hand out for his bible.
Mary considers a moment.
She returns his bible.

MARY: The Johnsons.

CAIN: I can pay them off. But you gotta make it worth my while.

MARY: I'm a married woman.

CAIN: (*short, dry laugh.*) Is your husband here?

MARY: ...

CAIN: Is he... with us?

MARY: Yes.

CAIN: You're lucky. Lot of widows, now, doing this kind

of back-breakin' work. Pickin' cotton. Fighting off... Widows with children. Did he serve?

MARY: ...

CAIN: Me neither. They wouldn't let me. Ailment. In the lungs. (*Cough. Beat. He is still smoking.*) Where's he at, then?

MARY: Up north.

CAIN: What? Oregon?

MARY: Canada. I'm... I'm from the Dominion of Canada.

CAIN: A Canadian Indian! Hm. Write him, then. See if he won't mind. (*Beat.*) Things work out, you'll have room and board and fifteen dollars a week.

MARY: I gotta get home.

CAIN: And? They taking shovels as fare nowadays?

Beat.

CAIN: Pay's in cash, every night. I'll only keep you as long as you want to be doing the Lord's work.

Mary braves a look into his face.

CAIN: And I won't go taking the liberties Old Johnson takes.

Beat.

MARY: He never took a thing from me.

CAIN: 'Cept your pay. And your Bible. So I hear. Listen. It don't work out, I'll shake your hand and via con Dios. On the Bible.

Beat.

MARY: How do I know you really got a church?

CAIN: Ministry. I have a Ministry. Of healin'! And my

church is God's own creation. We set up our tents where we are called to set up. Head out tonight.

Mary is unconvinced.

CAIN: Take a peek out in the drive.

Mary walks over cautiously, to peer through barn slats.

CAIN: You see that roomy cooled-out Cadillac pull in? Settin', now, just over there?

Mary nods.

CAIN: That's my caddy. Now did you spy the little ole woman under that ridiculous big-brimmed hat, out in the hot sun, all day?

Mary looks away from him and nods.

CAIN: There before you is the organizational head of my Ministry. Sister Ethel. Now, you and I know that most women of her... *porridgelike* complexion... ought not to be risking exposure to this kind of heat. That woman spent all morning trying to bring the word of God to every shade of coloured that Old Johnson's got in his employ. Consider that she might as easily have been resting her hollow birdlike bones in the cool of that Caddy.

MARY: *(laughs a little, in spite of herself.)*

CAIN: Now if you can look at that alabaster spinster and think that my Ministry does not mean business, then my name's not Cain Beckford.

MARY: She looks pretty serious, arrright.

CAIN: That she is. *(Beat.)* An' for your information, if she smells this ciggie on me, I'll be claimin' it come from you.

MARY: *(laughs lightly, again.)* You say you heal people?

CAIN: You got something amiss?

MARY: No, Sir.

CAIN: Brother. Do we have a deal, Mrs-?

MARY: Oh. Mary. You can just call me Mary.

CAIN: Hm. You can leave that here.

Mary looks a "what?" at him.

CAIN: The shovel.

MARY: Oh.

She throws the shovel back to the ground.
The sound of a running river brings the darkness of night.

Scene 1:2 Baptized

Cain and Mary are backlit by a full moon – it is the only light.

Sounds of somber, artless, hymnal singing.

Sounds of water grow louder, surrounding us.

MARY: (*deep gasping inhale*)

Cain baptizes Mary, plunging her backwards, out of the moon's light.

She quickly reappears from having been bent over into the river.

MARY: (*sputtering water and gasping for air.*)

Blackout.

Scene 1:3 His Light.

Gentle moonlight on Mary, who sits at roadside, wrapped in a woolen blanket, hair still a touch wet.
She looks to the sky, rosary beads and bible in hand.

MARY: *(she speaks a letter)* Dear Rose. I sit now, in the California night, and take my greatest pleasure in writing you these few lines. I have no... pencil. Or paper. I'm sorry I'm not sending a dollar this time. I've let youse down.

Cain enters unlit, though we see the glow of his cigarette.

CAIN: Sister Grace?

Mary quickly hides her beads, though she scarcely moves.
Cain comes into view.

CAIN: Sister Grace.

MARY: Yes.

CAIN: You'll have to get used to that name in a darn hurry.

GRACE: I didn't forget. Just take a few times hearin' it.

He holds up a gas can.

CAIN: The Lord provides. Not two miles down the road. Lovely family farm, gentleman farmer out working in the yard. His woman give us these.

He hands her an orange.
She smiles, and takes it from him.
He steps on his cigarette butt.
Grace peels the orange, though she doesn't eat any.

GRACE: Thank you.

CAIN: Pleasure.

Grace hands Cain the bible she holds.

GRACE: And thank you for the loan of that.

CAIN: Hang onto it a little while. Get acquainted with John, one sixteen.

Beat.

GRACE: You smokin', carrying that gas can?

CAIN: Heh. I guess a man of morals gets his thrills any way he can. You want one?

He offers her a cigarette from his fancy case. Grace glances toward the caddy, where Sister Ethel snoozes.

GRACE: Um. Maybe for later...

She slips the cigarette into her blouse pocket. Cain finds this charming.

CAIN: Sister Ethel send you off?

GRACE: No. But she wanted to stretch out on the back seat. Snooze a bit. I don't sleep too good anyway.

Beat.

CAIN: How did you find your baptism?

GRACE: Well. You know I already been bap-

CAIN: I didn't ask you that.

GRACE: Sorry.

CAIN: Whatever your past, you been reborn. You been welcomed unto the true church.

GRACE: Well. Anyway... I don't remember the first one, so I can't really say what I thought of this one.

CAIN: (*laughs gently*) That's the miracle of *choosing* to

take Christ into your heart. Clear as the water you waded in. The light is yours. It is yours and it is His. (*singing*) I saw the light, I saw the light,-

GRACE: (*Cain does not hear this*) -Yours.-

CAIN: (*singing*) No more darkness, no more night. Now I'm so happy, no sorrow in sight. Praise the Lord, I saw the light.¹ (*speaking now*) We can get there by first light. Let's get.

Cain leaves, Grace stands.

A moment.

Grace glances after Cain, then she breaks the cigarette she was given, holding the tobacco in her hand.

She glances toward Cain again.

She pulls off a section of the orange.

Grace looks up at the moon.

GRACE: (*speaking more letter*) Oranges, my girl! And not even Christmas time. Mom's got work again, Rose. I'll get back to youse before school lets out, you hear me? I'll camp out near the gates with your auntie. Soon as that lock swings open, mine is the first face you'll see.

Grace takes the segment of orange and buries it in the soil. She sprinkles it with the tobacco. She says a silent prayer – non-Christian.

She stands and turns her face to the moon.

She then reaches into her pocket where she pulls out the rosary beads. She winds them around her fingers and looks, again, to the moon.

The Cadillac horn **beep beeps**, shattering Grace's reverie.

The little light on Grace spreads and warms, bleeding into morning.

¹ "I Saw the Light", Hank Williams.

Scene 1:4 B.C.

Morning.

Grace is tired out – sun-warmed and travel-weary. She stands at the edge of the camp where the Ministry has set up for now. The hustle and bustle of people working surrounds her.

She glances about.

Someone passes at close proximity.

GRACE: Excuse me, could you tell me where there's-

They are gone.

GRACE: 'K, never mind. (*to herself, doing a little pee dance*) Oh, mercy mercy. Hold on. Geez, that's all I'd need is to pee my-

Someone else passes near.

GRACE: Good Morning. Is there a ladies'-

They ignore her, too.

GRACE: (*under breath*) Tch. Chee...

Clem – also Indigenous – enters at a clip. He stops short when he sees Grace. She sees him staring.

GRACE: Morning.

CLEM: Um...

GRACE: I was, uh... I was looking for a...

CLEM: You're not a Mexican.

GRACE: No. (*Beat.*) Eye-talian.

CLEM: (*laughs*) Who...? What are you supposed to be doing here?

GRACE: I was told to... that I'm to stay here, with the Pitching Crew. But I'm not sure where the

Pitching Crew is. Or what. Or, um.. where the bathroom is?

CLEM: No! You can't... um. No no no. No, sister, you can't stay with the crew. We're all men. And we-

GRACE: Oh, I'm not... I'm not really a... "sister". A nun. Or whatever they are.

CLEM: (*laughs lightly, with kindness*) Oh. No, I didn't mean... I meant...

He gestures from himself to herself – both Indigenous.

GRACE: Oh! Oh.

They share a moment of warmth.

Simultaneously:

CLEM: I'm Clem.

GRACE: Is there a bath-

GRACE: Oh. Sorry. (*Beat.*) I'm Grace.

Clem nods. Grace sort of waves.

CLEM: Grace. Where you from?

GRACE: Cotton plantation, 'bout ten hours' drive from-

CLEM: No, I mean... who are your people?

GRACE: Oh. I'm from British Columbia. Interior. (*Beat.*) Up in Canada?

CLEM: No foolin'? I'm from Saskatchewan.

GRACE: Innit?

CLEM: Yeah. Whereabouts, the Okanagan or...?

GRACE: No, Nicola Valley. Though my dad's from further north – Stein Valley.

CLEM: We're from just outside of-

Brother Cain enters.

This ends the conversation abruptly.

Silence for a time as Cain surveys the twosome.

CAIN: Morning, Clem.

CLEM: Brother.

CAIN: I see you've met. (*Beat.*) You can show Sister Grace around the Pitching Crew, can you not? Make the necessary introductions. Ensure her comfort. Safety.

CLEM: Can do, sir. But the thing is- we're all men here, sir- Brother. Sleeping out of doors. A woman shouldn't-

CAIN: I understand, Clem. Very good. But - excuse us, Sister Grace - how do you imagine the other women would take to sharing a sleeping quarters with...

Cain smiles at Grace.

Grace looks down.

CAIN: With our newcomer?

Clem looks down, chin up.

Silence.

Cain pulls his cigarette case out. He lights one.

GRACE: It's not really that important. If you can just tell me where there's a-

CAIN: Clem will show you the proverbial ropes, Sister Grace. But don't let him go fooling you into taking part in the set-ups or the tear-downs. I wouldn't put it past his sort to have you geared up and shot through with rope burn by week's end. (*he laughs his dry laugh.*)

Silence.

CAIN: And, well... we wouldn't want that. You'll have to look your best up on stage- at the pulpit. (*Beat.*) Sister Grace reads. (*Beat.*) Good, then. A fine day to you both. And a peaceful night. May

Jesus keep you in his arms as you rest.

Beat.

GRACE: Thank you.

After another awkward moment, Cain leaves.

Clem kicks at the dirt and swears under his breath, rotating one arm rather aggressively and clocking the movement of that shoulder with the other hand.

CLEM: (low) fuckin'... stupid mean goddamn fuckin'...

GRACE: Ts'okay.

CLEM: Pardon!

GRACE: I don't mind sleeping out. Ts'nothing new for me.

CLEM: Isn't right you should have to bunk in alongside a bunch of goddamn – pardon – goddamn roughnecks. Lots of them white ones. You don't know what they'll think. What they'll think they have rights to, just 'cause you're lying down close, and you being... You don't know.

GRACE: I been in this skin my whole life. I know.

Clem hears her. He calms.

Beat.

CLEM: I can read too, you know. Went to that damn school just like every other good Indian. Jus'... jus' don't have any books is all.

GRACE: Don't doubt you do. It's him that does. Don't let on though, eh? He might stick you in a dress and call you "sister".

CLEM: (laughs.)

Beat.

CLEM: (quick inhale) Oh. Oh, hey... gear truck. Everything's almost all set up now, so the

bed of it is... I'll clean it out for you a little. Give it a sweep. Throw a blanket down. You can bunk in there. Park it far enough from the pitching crew – edge of camp – they won't be any bother to you. An' if they are, well... well you just beller [bellow] an' I'll come running.

GRACE: Must have shovels around. Jus' leave me a shovel. I'll be fine.

Beat.

CLEM: (*laughs.*) Huh. B.C., huh?

She nods.
He grins and shakes his head.

CLEM: Huh. B.C....

Cain re-enters.

CAIN: Sister Grace? -Oh. Clem. I didn't realize you were only on board to set up half the camp these days.

CLEM: Headed back now, sir.

CAIN: Noticed you favourin' that shoulder a little. Giving you trouble, is it? (*Beat.*) Not slowing you down, is it? Big guy like you?

Clem gently touches a shoulder.

CLEM: No.

Beat.

CAIN: Good to hear. Back at 'er.

Clem nods at Grace and leaves.

GRACE: Is there an outhouse?

CAIN: I beg your pardon?

GRACE: Please. I need to go. In a jiffy. Toilettoilet.

CAIN: I had, I suppose, taken for granted that your manner would remain as refined and composed as it appeared in that sticky, crookedy barn – a noble orator to the needy negro, cast out by a surly work master. *(Beat.)* A lady... doesn't ask after an "outhouse", Sister Grace.

GRACE: I apologize. If you could please just tell me where one might relieve oneself in this camp, I would–

CAIN: I don't honestly know. I don't know what the women's quarters has on offer as far as that – I have a private facility in my trailer just there, but–

GRACE: Thank you!

She darts away.

CAIN: Sister Grace. Grace! You can't enter my private... Grace! You cannot be seen in proximity to my...

He looks around him, in a bit of a panic.

CAIN: *(still shouting after her)* Just don't...! *(then, to himself)* Just don't touch anything.

He flees in the opposite direction.

Scene 1:5 Sistren

Lizzie-Mae enters gently, staring at Grace.
Grace carries on, tidying her truck bed.

LIZ-MAE: Hello there.

GRACE: Hello.

Lizzie-Mae stares.

LIZ-MAE: (**giggles.**)

GRACE: Are you lost?

LIZ-MAE: Lost? Me? (She **laughs** again.) Why, I grew up
'roun here. Wull. Not HERE here, but here with
this traveling Ministry.

GRACE: Oh.

Grace continues tidying her truck bed.

LIZ-MAE: (now containing her nervous laughter, but just
barely.) I never talked to no Indian before.

GRACE: Well... this is a Ministry. Wonders never cease.

LIZ-MAE: You're funny. I didn't expect that.

Grace only smiles.

LIZ-MAE: How do you like my blonde hair?

GRACE: It's very nice.

LIZ-MAE: It was bone white when I's a baby.

GRACE: May I help you at all?

LIZ-MAE: I jess wanted to talk with you. See what you
think of the place. How you're settlin' in.

GRACE: Oh. I find it very nice here. And the people are.. kind. Or keep to themselves.

LIZ-MAE: I used to be in the choir here for a whole long while. With my mama. When I's a girl. But I's a girl longer than most. I'm still a short order of a woman, but used to be I stayed stuck -a girl. Didn't bloom. Sixteen, lookin' like a dandy little boy. Nobody could figger it. My mama had all but given up on ever marryin' me off when it happened: can you guess?

GRACE: No.

LIZ-MAE: Wull Cain healed me. He laid hands on me and I blossomed. Not lay hands in a dirty way, like some old men do on little girls and such, but in a holy way. At a meetin'. He prayed on my little blonde head and I blossomed. Sweet magnolia. (beat.) But my mama's pretty strict. You got a fella?

Beat.

GRACE: Yes.

LIZ-MAE: Have yuh?

Grace nods.

LIZ-MAE: Is he handsome?

GRACE: An Indian Clark Gable- no mustache.

LIZ-MAE: (laughs joyously.) How dreamy! I'm gonna make a real good wife someday. Someday soon, I think. Would you come?

GRACE: um...?

LIZ-MAE: To the weddin'! Oh, you have to. You could read from scripture. Cain says- (she catches herself.) Where is your husband now?

GRACE: He's still up in Canada.

LIZ-MAE: Oh, heartache! You must miss him awful sore.
(beat.) Wull, do yuh?

GRACE: I do.

LIZ-MAE: I can't stand bein' away from my fella for more
than a heartbeat. But he travels. (Beat.) I'm
gonna say a prayer that you dream of your
sweetheart tonight.

GRACE: Thank you.

LIZ-MAE: We're gonna be friends, you and me.

A noise offstage.

LIZ-MAE: Best run. Don't tell nobody I was here, okay? I'm
Lizzie-Mae!

Lizzie-Mae hugs Grace quickly and hard.

LIZ-MAE: It's a pleasure. Bye bye!

Grace looks all around her. "Where the hell is this?"
She climbs into the truck bed.

Scene 1:6 And He Knew Her.

Night. The edge of the camp.

Grace in her little makeshift bedroom, complete with a pinned-up blanket curtain, masking her from the elements.

Clem comes in quietly, carefully, slightly shielding a mason jar that he carries. He lifts it, takes a sip, and winces, grabbing at his bum shoulder.

CLEM: *(sharp inhale of air – pain. And then–)* Ahhhh.
 Damn it. Grace?

Someone approaches, and he dives under the truck, into darkness.

Lizzie-Mae enters, **weeping** slightly and disheveled.
Brother Cain follows, tucking in his shirt.

CAIN: There's no use crying every time we're done
 doin'. We can't fault ourselves for our humanity.
 We must simply resolve to have more strength of
 character in future.

LIZ-MAE: It's just so dreadful.

CAIN: Shush, now. It is not.

LIZ-MAE: You said we'd be married. Two townsites ago.

He takes her in his arms and kisses her. She gets into it immediately.

LIZ-MAE: Cleanse me of my sins, sweet Jesus!

Lizzie-Mae tears at Cain's clothing.

CAIN: Ah ah ah! Not out in the wide, wide open, Lizzie-
 Mae.

LIZ-MAE: But you are gon' make me an honest woman someday
 soon. You promised.

CAIN: Of course, darlin'.

LIZ-MAE: I have an idea. Why don't you marry us? The good Lord speaketh through you, Cain sugar, you can marry us yourself!

CAIN: Hush.

He nuzzles deep in her bosom.

LIZ-MAE: Can we not go into your trailer, just this one itty bitty time? It's only just over there. Nobody's awake to see us.

CAIN: You know we cannot. And you know there are eyes everywhere.

He takes a flask from his pocket and he feeds her a drink like he's bottle-feeding a kid goat.

CAIN: Mmm, good girl. Swallow hard.

LIZ-MAE: Can't we just have one more go, sweetheart, please?

CAIN: I will see you tomorrow afternoon, Lizzie-Mae. From the pulpit.

LIZ-MAE: And I shall see you. Sweatin' and hollerin'.

CAIN: Praise.

LIZ-MAE: You know what I'm gon' do?

CAIN: What's that, my pretty pet?

LIZ-MAE: I'm not gon' wear no underthings. And only you will know.

CAIN: Well, now... there are eyes everywhere. And I do mean everywhere.

LIZ-MAE: Not under there, silly!

CAIN: Absolutely under there! Especially under there. One of God's holiest of creations is under there.

LIZ-MAE: You dirty little-

Cain dives underneath Lizzie-Mae's dress.

LIZ-MAE: Oh! Oh, yes! Praise!

Cain comes up from under Lizzie-Mae's skirts.

CAIN: Come on along with me one more time. But you gotta be real soft 'n' low, Lizzie-Mae.

LIZ-MAE: (*whispering*) Soft 'n' low.

They kiss. They leave, climbing each other.
A moment.

Clem emerges from under the truck, agog. He stares after them, hand still soothing his shoulder. He remembers the jar in his hand, unscrews the lid and takes a few swallows from it. He stares after Cain and Lizzie-Mae.

CLEM: (*soft laughter*)

As he turns toward the truck – THWUMP! – a shovel to the head.

CLEM: AGH!

Clem staggers back.
Grace stands before him, in a slip and a few curlers, wielding a shovel.

CLEM: Damn, woman! It's just me! Clem!

GRACE: Well, how's I supposed to know that? I heard rustling and carrying on for over an hour now. What the hell are you getting up to?

CLEM: I just got here. Was Cain and some little tart carrying on and... Ow! That's a damn shovel!

GRACE: Brother Cain? What business would he have, late night with some chickie?

Clem checks his nose with his hands, looks at his hands.

CLEM: Is this blood, or what?

GRACE: Neh. You're probly jus' cryin'.

Beat.

Simultaneously:

CLEM: (*laughs.*)

GRACE: (*laughs.*)

CLEM: Cryin'! Ts'not even that big a shovel.

They laugh some more.

GRACE: Serious, though. What the heck was he doing out?

CLEM: Whaddaya think he was doin'?

GRACE: Well, I know what, but why would he be doing that private stuff out in the open, anyways? He's got a camper, don't he?

CLEM: Sure. But he plays the holy man in there. And anyways, I think it was that girl that used to sing in the choir with her holy rolling mom.

GRACE: You mean Lizzie-Mae?

Clem shrugs.

GRACE: That little blonde thing?

CLEM: Yeah.

GRACE: She doesn't work with him anymore?

CLEM: Heck, no. Her mom hauled her outta here by the scruff of her scrawny neck- far as the wind would take them. Caught her sneaking around with Cain. But the girl came back. Keeps coming back. We all pretend we don't know.

GRACE: Does he know I stay in here?

Clem shrugs.

GRACE: Hope he doesn't think I heard 'em.

CLEM: Damn, my eyes keep watering.

GRACE: That's called cryin', Clem.

CLEM: It's called getting smacked in the nose by a shovel full of crazy.

They laugh.

CLEM: Geez. That really hurt.

GRACE: What're you doing out anyway? -he see you?

CLEM: Naw. I dove under the... Um. I just thought I'd do a little patrol past your bunk there, just to make sure.

GRACE: Huh. Real chivalrous, innit? And what's the jar for?

Clem looks at the jar, much of its contents spilled on impact with the shovel.

CLEM: Bum shoulder. And I... I thought if you was still up you might want a nightcap.

GRACE: Huh. Well.

CLEM: Hm.

Silence.

GRACE: (*the jar*) What is it?

CLEM: ...what's left of it. Moose Jaw moonshine. My Grannie sends it down for me in crates of her canning. Deer. Saskatoons. Moonshine!

GRACE: (*laughing*) Your Grannie?

CLEM: Sure. She's been bootlegging since the twenties,

up Saskatchewan. Used to call Moose Jaw "Little Chicago", you know.

He offers her the jar. She takes it.

GRACE: No, I didn't.

CLEM: Yup.

She drinks.

CLEM: I don't make a habit of it, mind you. Just when we set up and tear down, the sting of it can keep me from sleeping if I don't find some way to... (clears his throat.) Anyways... warm weather here's good, too.

Grace looks at his shoulder.

GRACE: You got brothers?

CAIN: Not... not by blood.

Grace looks at his shoulder again. She lightly sets a hand on it for a second.

GRACE: Little piece of something in there.

Beat.

CLEM: Little souvenir from Europe.

GRACE: Oh.

Beat.

GRACE: You remember how it happened.

CLEM: (*looks down.*) Yeah.

GRACE: Wonder if I brought any snakeroot. Or...

CLEM: Pardon?

GRACE: Oh. Um. (*Beat.*) You got a- (*cigarette gesture*)

CLEM: Oh! Sure.

He pulls the cigarette from behind his ear and lights it with a match. She shares it with him.

GRACE: (*the smoke*) I usually don't, but... So you're from up north, too?

CLEM: (*smiles*) "Up north." Right.

GRACE: What brought you down here?

CLEM: Um. Nothing to keep me there, I guess.

GRACE: No family left?

CLEM: Well. My kokum's a tough old boot. She's okay without me. And that's all we really got left. Us two. How 'bout you?

GRACE: My grannies passed some years ago.

CLEM: Sorry.

Beat.

CLEM: Any kids? Husband?

GRACE: I should turn in, Clem.

She snuffs the cigarette out.

GRACE: Who knows if that old hypocrite will be back or somethin'.

CLEM: Heh. Hope his nose is as sturdy as this old Cree's.

GRACE: Yeah. Sorry 'bout that.

CLEM: Hey, no problem. Better to swing first, ask questions later anyways.

GRACE: Yeah.

Beat.

CLEM: You want me to hang out here for a bit? Jus' till you fall asleep?

GRACE: (*too strongly*) No.

CLEM: Okay.

GRACE: No thank you.

CLEM: 'K.

Silence.

GRACE: 'Night.

CLEM: Hey, yeah. G'night, Grace.

GRACE: Oh. Um.. hang on a minute.

Grace goes into the truckbed and then re-emerges with a book.

GRACE: I only got the one – well, used to have a bible, too, but... if you wanted to, uh...

CLEM: Oh! (*He takes the book.*) "Anne of Green Gables."

GRACE: It's sort of a girl's book, but there's lots of good words and some funny bits-

CLEM: "L.M. Montgomery." Huh. Never heard-a him. Thanks.

GRACE: Sure. And thank you. Thanks for uh... yeah. Thanks.

CLEM: My pleasure.

Beat.

GRACE: 'Night.

CLEM: 'Night.

She climbs back into the bed of the truck, the curtain falling behind her.

Clem stays a moment. He drinks and looks up at the sky.
Grace peeks out at him.
He looks at her.
A moment.

CLEM: Right. Okay. I'll get reading. G'night!

He leaves.

Scene 1:7 He Created Her

Morning.

Grace is on a small makeshift stage.

Cain is in the audience, smoking.

He **coughs and clears his throat**. His voice is hoarse.

CAIN: Do it again. Breathe deep and put your voice right inside that breath as it comes out. Like I done. Lookit how the word is a mighty torrent in me. (He shifts into performance mode) This poorly squaw prattled and babbled and squawked in her savage tongue until I heard the voice of our saviour, as pure and as clear as a heavenly song, right in my left ear. He spake unto me, "Give her the good book, my son, and she will be a servant of the heavenly word." (He returns to Grace.) You see how even when I whispered, I could be heard? I live and speak in faith and that- (*he erupts into a coughing fit. He recovers.*) God gave you a voice for a reason. Do Him proud.

GRACE: You got a bug?

CAIN: Wassat?

GRACE: You been coughing all morning. You coming down with something?

CAIN: Always had sore throats. Ever since I was a young man.

GRACE: Not a bug, eh? (*Beat.*) Something bugging you?

CAIN: Pardon me?

GRACE: Well, I mean that... I don't mean to [intrude.] It's just that... if it's something you had a long time, maybe it's something you aren't saying. Could be words stuck in there. Words that are... sore. And raw. And you not speaking them.

CAIN: What is this?

GRACE: ...

CAIN: Are you soliciting my confession? My testimonial?

GRACE: No.

CAIN: Conductin' some kind of shaman voodoo hoodoo?

GRACE: No, sir. Just thought if it would help you feel well... thought you might-

CAIN: That husband of yours put up with this type-a pryin'? Or izzat why you're so far from home?

Grace stares at him defiantly.

CAIN: He- what? Sick-a your jawin'? Maybe... maybe you nagged him too hard one day and he put you in your place, huh? Knocked you down a peg and landed hisself in the clink.

Grace casts her eyes downward – her resilience unmoving.

CAIN: Meddling. Meddlers. Meddlemeddlemeddlemeddle... Talk or walk your way blindly into a dark room and you might not find your way back out.

GRACE: Sorry, sir. Pardon me.

CAIN: Brother. Brother Cain. How many times I gotta tell you "BROTHER"? (*he erupts in another coughing fit.*)

Grace fixes a stony gaze on Cain as he rides out the cough.

GRACE: Why did you change my name?

CAIN: Go again. From the beginning.

GRACE: I will call you "Brother", if you prefer. But you won't use my real name. I'd appreciate knowing why.

CAIN: (*clears his throat roughly. Again. Again. He can't settle it down. He swallows and swallows, clears and swallows.*)

GRACE: What's yours?

CAIN: Watch yourself, fool woman! (*coughing*)

GRACE: My name was given me by my mother. I don't have her anymore, but I do have my name. I'd like to know why you won't use it.

CAIN: If it troubles you so goddamn much, think of it as a stage name! You think we'd give a holler about Rita Hayworth if she were still Margarita Cansino?

GRACE: Heavens, no. Sounds Mexican.

CAIN: Sweet Jesus, woman. You got some lip.

Cain laughs in spite of himself.
Grace grins to herself.

CAIN: Save your fire for the audience -congregation.

GRACE: When do you think I might-

CAIN: Tonight. This very evening. The debut of Sister Grace; Tamed Heathen. Gotta make you sparkle. (*to himself*) Like trying to spit-shine a cow pie...

Beat.

CAIN: "Mary" is a favourite of our saint-swillin' friends, Grace. An' I ain't been one-a them in a coon's age. How would it look if I had my first Indian Orator up on stage sporting such a moniker? You tell me.

Cain lights another smoke.

GRACE: I don't... "Saint-swillin' "?

CAIN: Ca-tho-licks. Grace. "Mary" is too... Ca-tho-lic. Doesn't get more fucking Catholic. Under "Grace" you can be someone else entirely. Let it set you free.

Grace sees something in him for the first time.

CAIN: Whadda you lookin' at? Go again. Like you're
singin' to the man Himself.

Grace opens the bible.

GRACE: The Gospel according to John. Book one, verse
sixteen.

BAM! A spotlight.

Scene 1:8 Babble

A spotlight - bright and unyielding - isolates Grace.
She is the proverbial Deer in Headlights.
Silence.
Murmurs from the congregation.

GRACE: "For office..." No. (*she breathes deep*) "For."
"Of." "His... fullness we have all received, and
grace up-pup-pah... Grace upon grace." (*Beat.*)
Grace. Ha. Um. Sorry... "For the Law was given-"
Oh. (*She recalls she must speak out and then goes
way too loud.*) "The Law was given through Moses;
grace and throoth-" no. "Grace and TRUTH were
realized through Jewsus Christ." Shit! "Jesus."
"JESUS Christ."

Cain dives in front of her. Grace slowly inches out of
sight.

CAIN: God bless us all, she has taken the word of the
Lord into her heart, but she is struggling to
speak The Word, so moved is she, my brethren. Let
me hear you speak it: Praise Jesus.

CON: Praise Jesus.

CAIN: I wanna hear you praise from San Diego to Santa
Fe, praise JESUS!

CON: PRAISE JESUS!

CAIN: YES-AH!

Snap to black.
As quickly as black touches in, we see a lamp outside-

Scene 1:9 Witness

Later that evening.

Clem carries a lamp, and approaches Grace's truck.

He knocks shyly on the side of the truck, then sort of ducks.

CLEM: It's just me.

GRACE: Over here.

Grace sits on the hood of the truck, hugging her knees.

CLEM: Oh, hey. Evening.

GRACE: Yeah.

Clem walks over and leans on the truck.

They stare at the sky.

CLEM: Seem blue.

GRACE: Nah.

CLEM: Should I put this out?

Grace shrugs.

Clem dims the lamp.

CLEM: Chewed on that root you gimme.

Grace looks at him, curious.

Clem does a bit of shadow boxing.

CLEM: Good as new.

GRACE: Hm. Glad.

CLEM: What was that, anyways?

GRACE: Brought it from home.

CLEM: Tasted awful.

GRACE: Yeah.

Beat.

CLEM: Thank you.

Beat.

CLEM: You know... I thought you did pretty good.

GRACE: You were there?

CLEM: Well- outside. Jus' listening.

GRACE: Aw, nooooooo...

CLEM: Thought you did fine.

Grace covers her face.

GRACE: (*small moan.*)

CLEM: I couldn't get up there. No way. Can barely get my name out when I'm bein' introduced. You did great.

GRACE: I didn't. I was horrible.

CLEM: I think-

GRACE: I don't wanna talk about it, Clem. Shit, I really needed this work.

CLEM: Aw, he woulda kicked you out already if he was gonna. Wouldn'ta bothered waiting till morning. You're okay.

GRACE: I don't wanna think about it.

CLEM: Sure. Okay.

Silence as they stare at the sky.

GRACE: Don't tell anyone, k?

Clem looks at her.

GRACE: 'Bout the medicine. People don't like it. Us knowing things.

CLEM: Anything, Grace. All you gotta do is ask.

GRACE: Thanks. (Beat.) You got any that Moose Jaw moonshine on you?

CLEM: No. So many people still up. You want me to run back for it?

GRACE: No, no. Ts'okay.

CLEM: Okay. (Beat.) I can.

Grace buries her head again.

GRACE: (*sighs*)

Clem is all concern for her.
He searches his brain for an idea.

CLEM: (*inhale*) Hey. You wanna go to a show?

GRACE: What?

CLEM: A show. I could take you to a show.

GRACE: How'd we get there?

CLEM: Our dogs'll take us. Come on!

Clem extends his hand. Grace takes it, leaps off the truck and away they go.

Scene 1:10 Reap

Evening.

Brother Cain counts cash inside his trailer. He is displeased. He is drunk. He picks up his Bible and finds the passage Grace had read. He has no "southern accent"

CAIN: Fuckin' useless goddamn... make more fuckin' money pickin' cotton myself. (*Beat. He prays.*) So... what? What's yer point? Is it so irksome to you that I've taken another Catholic from your fold? You wouldn't have me, wouldja? Fuck it. God's God. Nothing wrong here. Still a Christian God. Not like I made her an Ay-rab or a goddamn... I will not repent for this. I will not shout out a decade for you. No. No. No. No. No. (*Beat.*) No.

Cain tosses his Bible aside.

CAIN: (*he sighs deeply*) "Grace". Of all fuckin' names.

He pulls from the bottle.

Scene 1:11 Spake

Same night.

Clem leads Grace to the side of a trailer. They move quickly and quietly.

Voices of women can vaguely be heard, coming from inside the trailer. Their conversation is indiscernible.

Clem turns the lamp off, and they crouch down low, beneath a window.

They speak in whispers.

CLEM: Oh! Wait.

Clem takes his coat off and lays it on the ground. Grace looks at it.

GRACE: What's that?

CLEM: For you. To sit on.

GRACE: Oh. (*she sits*) Thank you.

Clem smiles, pleased with himself. He sits on the ground beside her. A moment.

GRACE: I thought you said we were going to a show.

CLEM: Must not be quite nine o'clock yet.

GRACE: Where is...? What is it – do we watch some kind of... herd? Passing?

CLEM: Aw, gimme some credit. I can do better than that to get your mind off your failings.

GRACE: Uh! I was awful.

CLEM: You were pretty bad.

GRACE: I got tongue-tied when I tried to say "Jesus".

CLEM: Heh. You said "Jew-sus". (*He laughs.*)

GRACE: Uch.

CLEM: Then you said "Shit!"

GRACE: Shit.

The **sound of a radio being switched on and tuned** can be heard from within the trailer.

CLEM: (*inhale*)

[RADIO]

ANNOUNCER: "From out of the west comes Red Rider,
America's famous fighting cowboy!"

Music.

He listens, looking to Grace for a reaction.

CLEM: There she goes. See? They got a radio in there.

Grace smiles.

RED RIDER: "Trot up that pony, Little Beaver. It's
trouble in Frying Pan Valley. Let's hit the
trails. There's hard riding ahead!"

LITTLE BEAVER: "You betcha, Red Rider! Get along! Get 'em
up! Get!"

RED RIDER: "Get going Thunder, Hit that trail! Come
oooooon, Thunder!"

ANNOUNCER: "The Adventures of Red Rider."

Music.

Clem **whistles** along, "Oh, Bury me not on the lone prairie,
where the wild coyotes will howl over me."

CLEM: That Little Beaver? He's an Indian, but I don't
think they ever say what kind.

GRACE: A small white one by the sounds of it.

CLEM: (*laughs outright, then catches himself.*) Whup.
Shhhh.

He points up to the trailer window.
Beat.

GRACE: You just... sit here in the dark and listen to the radio by yourself?

Clem nods.

GRACE: Often?

Clem nods.

GRACE: Every night?

CLEM: When I can.

GRACE: This the Women's Quarters trailer?

CLEM: Yeh.

GRACE: Geez, Clem, you know what would happen if they caught you sneaking around the women's trailer at night?

CLEM: Prob'ly hang me.

GRACE: Prob'ly geld you and hang you.

CLEM: (*giggles quietly*) "Geld." You grow up on a ranch?

GRACE: Clem! This is serious. If you get caught lurking around a trailer full of white women, they'll kill you. For real kill you.

CLEM: Probably.

Beat.

GRACE: Shit, they look for reasons to get away with killing us.

CLEM: (*quick inhale.*)

Clem pulls an orange out of his pocket with a "ta-daaa" gesture. He peels it, carefully putting the peels back into a pocket.

He gives it to Grace.

She smiles her thanks. She sees he only had one.

She gives him half.
He smiles his thanks. They "cheers" their halves.
They eat and listen.
Beat.

GRACE: Why do you do it?

CLEM: What else? Can't sit every night with the rest of the crew, making like I believe they like me 'cause they're after the Moose Jaw. Should see how friendly they get when payday's a distant memory but not yet near enough on the horizon.

GRACE: Still, though, Clem. It's just a broadcast.

Clem listens in on the show a moment more.

GRACE: Why take the chance?

They listen for a bit.
After a time...

CLEM: I survived a lot worse than a trailer full of nervous women.

GRACE: Well, it's not really them you gotta worry about, it's the men who would hunt you down and-

CLEM: I've survived them, too. (*Beat.*) I seen buddies. *Brothers...* Right here. (*right in his face.*) I seen the switch shut off like a light.

Grace looks at Clem.

GRACE: Sorry. Sorry you had to live that.

He looks at her.

GRACE: (*gently setting a hand on his bad shoulder.*) Can I...?

CLEM: Sure.

Grace concentrates gently on Clem's shoulder – removed from the man, in a way, more about his shoulder ache and understanding it.

CLEM: It's stories. You know? Get lonesome for stories. Telling them somewhere I know they'll be heard. And hearing 'em from people who aren't fulla shit. Oh. Pardon.

GRACE: Ts'okay. Consider what I said on the pulpit today.

CLEM: Almost choked on my own tongue!

He **laughs** again. She is able to **laugh** about it now, too. She lets go of his shoulder and feels her own.

GRACE: I didn't think anyone I knew was listening.

CLEM: Aw. Your first show, right? Wouldn'ta missed it.

GRACE: Thanks.

Beat.

GRACE: You lost a brother over there.

CLEM: Only other Indian in the thirteenth. Cree, like me. Northern Ontario. Protected him with everything I had.

GRACE: You can't be everywhere all the time.

CLEM: I've always been... unafraid. Of that kinda thing. Never scared to take a punch. Ts'how I was raised. And I outlived the old man, so who could possibly...? Figured no one could get me. Makes you kinda crazy- not caring. But in the army... guy like me gets medals in the army. So mad. Put my neck on the line. Stupid. Lotsa times. An' Tommy... he followed me everywhere.

She takes his shoulder again and then lifts his arm a little, feels the back of the shoulder.

GRACE: They shot you in the back. (Beat.) Bullet didn't even pass through.

CLEM: Tommy got hit first. He just looked at me like he

was gonna sneeze or something. I just. Picked him up. Turned around and started running. Second later, I was hit. Dropped me to my knees. In the mud. And I dropped him. In the mud.

Beat.

GRACE: You don't need to... you can have it taken out, you know. It's not like it's near your heart. Or your spine.

Silence.

GRACE: Least you could do is take more care with it until you get it looked at.

CLEM: War's been over almost five years now. I won't go back to squeaking by. Gotta sing.

He tries to get her to meet eyes with him.
She doesn't.

CLEM: Sorry. Was that... too much?

GRACE: Nah. Don't gotta mind your P's and Q's with me.

Clem seizes his chance and leans in, kissing Grace.
Grace leaps up.

GRACE: Jesus!

CLEM: I'm sorry.

GRACE: I gotta husband.

CLEM: I didn't know!

GRACE: Well, now you do.

CLEM: I'm sorry.

GRACE: Well. Ya.

CLEM: I am sorry.

GRACE: Okay.

CLEM: No, I'm sorry. I'm sorry that you have a husband.

GRACE: Ahhh...

Grace starts to leave.

Clem follows.

CLEM: GraceGraceGrace. Slow up.

She stops.

CLEM: I didn't know. I would've minded my p's and q's better if I had. Okay? Come on back.

GRACE: Ah, no, Clem. I gotta... (*she's at a loss*) I'll just turn in, Clem. It's not the end of the world, it's just... good night.

CLEM: Grace, I just need a bit of home now and then, like anyone. I'm sorry.

GRACE: It's not... you don't have to be sorry.

CLEM: Been a long time since I had anyone be warm with me. I just... love you. And I-

GRACE: Don't say that, Clem.

CLEM: Well, who is it hurting?

GRACE: I have a husband.

CLEM: He ain't here. I am.

GRACE: You have to hear me about what's okay and what's not, if you really want to be friends with me, Clem.

CLEM: I don't. I don't wanna be your friend. I wanna be your husband,/ but *-(cont'd)*

GRACE: Holy Moses.

CLEM: you tell me there's one in my way, so I'll/ just do whatever I have to do-

GRACE: You just barely met me, Clem. -Yesterday!

CLEM: The way I see it, it's our third time going out together, and/ that is due time for-

GRACE: Out? Wuh...? What? And our third time? Clem, even if it were our third date - which it is not - you don't go telling a woman you wanna marry her on a third date.

CLEM: I do. Hell, I'm a Cree man. I don't date, I move IN.

GRACE: Oh, Clem! You gotta look after yourself. You gotta-

The **radio is switched off.**

Clem and Grace freeze. They look up to the window.

Women whisper in the trailer, and there are shadows of women trying to see out the window.

CLEM: Run!

Clem and Grace sprint away.

Scene 1:12 Gifts

Morning.

Cain washes - his shirt on, but unbuttoned - in a basin outside of his trailer.

Grace comes in, carrying a jar of green liquid. It is in a jar that used to hold Moose Jaw Moonshine.

Cain sees her approach. He glares at her.

She extends the jar toward him.

Beat.

He takes it.

CAIN: What is it?

GRACE: For your throat.

Cain passes it back to Grace.

CAIN: No thank you.

Grace doesn't take the jar back.

GRACE: It's just a tea. It'll help the rawness. Heat it up a little and sip it in the mornings. Put some honey in it if you have it. Or just - take it regular. Right outta the jar. Just nicer with honey. And warm.

Cain sets the jar down.

CAIN: You know I could turn you over, at any time.

Grace casts her eyes downward.

CAIN: You're lucky you ain't on the chain gang already, given your Tom Foolery last night.

GRACE: "Tom Foolery?"

CAIN: Shenanigans. Skullduggery. *Butcherings*. Of The Holy Word. Have you forgotten, or are you pretendin' you didn't choke on the gospel on purpose?

GRACE: I was mortified, Brother Cain.

CAIN: "Mortified" no less.

GRACE: Just realized I was up there, speaking to strangers. Not a friend in the place. I got spooked.

CAIN: I took you in, didn't I? Drove you across the state to give you gainful employment – didn't charge you for that country ride. Put a roof over your head. Warm meal at night, along with everyone else. Pretty friendly of me. Wouldn't you agree?

Beat.

Grace casts her eyes downward.

GRACE: Yes.

CAIN: Good. Might this improve your performance?

He hands her a bible.

GRACE: Is it really mine?

CAIN: Mrs. Johnson weren't too fond of keeping it anywhere near the house, as you can imagine.

GRACE: Thank you, Brother Cain.

Grace furiously flips through the pages. She flips again. She then shakes the book, expecting something to fall from it.

CAIN: You'll go up again tonight, Grace. See what scares you more – spoutin' a bit a scripture for some cowpokes or dying of thirst in the California desert, never seeing those little kiddies of yours ever again.

GRACE: What?

Cain pulls a tiny photo from his shirt pocket.

CAIN: "Rose and Ricky. Four and five. Summer. 1948."
How precious.

Beat.

CAIN: You can forget the few bills you had tucked away.
You cost me more than ten times that, in purchase
and yest'dee evening, in take. The letters you
can earn back.

Beat.

CAIN: Why didn't you send any of them?

GRACE: (Beat.) I don't know.

CAIN: I was sent away to school, too, you know.
Ever'one said I was gifted. Or "called" as they
put it. I couldn't argue. Never had any letters
though.

GRACE: Maybe they didn't let them through to you.

CAIN: Hm. Nice idea. (Beat.) (Beat.) You write in one
of those letters that you had to send them away.
Why izzat?

GRACE: It's law.

CAIN: Must be a British thing.

GRACE: Only Indian kids. We all- they all get taken to
school. Away.

CAIN: Sounds like your nightmare was my fantasy. And my
folks'. They were delighted to be cut of me.
(Beat.) Only lesson I took away was that talent
will interfere with discipline at every
opportunity. And I taught that one myself.
(Beat.) Psalm 51, Sister. Loud and penitent.
Tears if you can manage.

Cain shaves.

GRACE: (*direct and emotionless*) Psalm 51.

CAIN: Oo! Fine choice.

GRACE: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."

CAIN: At any time, I can write a l'il letter of my own sending my regrets to those kiddies about their mama, mind. Fallen angel. Victim to the bottle and the California dream! Read.

GRACE: (*now fuller, richer*) Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

CAIN: Now tell me that next part as an apology to those kiddies you left so far behind.

GRACE: (*deeply upset*) Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

CAIN: Very nice. Now, this next part is their reply.

GRACE: Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

CAIN: YES-AH! Now skip ahead a little. "Hyssop."

GRACE: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

CAIN: (*laughs like a jackal*) Good girl! Oh, I shall cry! (*laughs and then calms*) Now, tell me this. Could you do that again, on a stage, tonight, if you had to?

GRACE: Yes.

CAIN: Well. You have to. You will not disappoint me again without being very sorry. On the Bible. (*Beat.*) You can go.

Grace leaves.

Cain puts his shirt back on and looks at the jar.

He picks it up and opens it. He sniffs it. Not bad. He sips it. He sips more.

He goes.

Scene 1:13 Heavens

Night.

Clem sits with Grace, on the hood of the truck.
They drink from tin cups.

CLEM: Star of the stage and screen, Sister Grace!

They cheers.

GRACE: Screen! Imagine a real Indian in a movie?

They **laugh**.

CLEM: I heard Will Rogers was part Indian.

GRACE: Which part?

CLEM: Well, for his wife's sake, I hope it was an
important part. (*he lets out a mischievous laugh*)

Grace whacks him in the arm.

GRACE: G'wan! (*she laughs and then bursts out in a
coughing fit. As it settles...*)

CLEM: How'd you do that, anyways?

GRACE: What?

CLEM: Tonight. That was really something.

GRACE: I don't... I hardly even know. I just... (*clears her
throat, groggy voiced*) buckled down. Thought
about getting home. Said it like... like my life
depended on it.

CLEM: Well, then. To life.

GRACE: To life.

They cheers.

CAIN: (o/s) Well.

Clem and Grace fall silent and look to Cain.
He comes toward them slowly, drunk. He slips in and out of his southern dialect.

CAIN: Well, well, well, well, well. What have we here?
Two kids out past curfew.

CLEM: We weren't doing nothing.

CAIN: Indeed yuh... (*he sways and then regroup*s) Indeed you weren't. Doing *nothing*. Wrong.

Clem jumps off the hood of the truck and stands strong.

CAIN: Uh-ho! Cavalier, are you? (*quick shift*) Would you look at something for me? Would you do that?

CLEM: "Look at something?"

Clem looks to Grace.

CAIN: No, no. No, no. Don' lookit her. You do nuff lookin' at her. Lookin' and moonin' and oogling. Enough!

He sways and then drinks.

CAIN: Would you look at something for me, Clem?

He pats Clem on the shoulder sloppily.

CAIN: Doh worry. Doh worry. S'not... it's not... anything below the belt. (*he laughs raucously*)

Grace and Clem are desperately uncomfortable.

CAIN: Come 'ere. Come 'ere.

Cain opens his mouth wide and moves close to Clem.
Clem is reluctant.

CAIN: Look in 'ere. Righn insine 'ere. (*he opens wide again*) Ahhhhhhhhh. Whaddayou see? Ahhhhhhhhhhh.

CLEM: Nothing. Ts'pretty dark.

CAIN: Mm mm mm! No. *Noooo*. That is nonnan excuse. What. Do. You. See? (*he opens wide*) Look. (*opens*)

CLEM: Looks normal.

CAIN: Ah ha! Ah... HA! You bet it does. Why?

CLEM: 'Cuz... you... are... normal?

CAIN: (*laughs hysterically*)

Clem looks at Grace again, worried.

Grace takes hold of the shovel, which has been laying behind her on the hood.

Clem shakes his head vigorously- don't even think about it! Grace swings the shovel around and stands it before her anyway.

CAIN: No, the... the reason why everythin' looks so damn *normal* is because this- this lady here made me some goddamn tea. In't that right, lady?

Grace stays still and calm. Ready.

CAIN: Oh, what's? Oh! She got 'er shovel out! Look out! Hey. Hey, I thought you guys likes tommyhawks, not spades. (*he laughs roaringly again*)

GRACE: Jesus Christ.

CAIN: JESUS CHRIST! Yes-ah. (*limply*) Jesus Christ.

LIZ-MAE: (o/s) Cain?

Cain falls silent and turns a 360, on spot.

Clem and Grace look at one another - damn. Now they're really in trouble.

LIZ-MAE: (o/s) Cain, sweetie, izzat you?

CAIN: The hell...?

She enters.

LIZ-MAE: Cain, I need to see you.

CAIN: I beh... I begyer pardon, young lady. Shop is cloooooosed. Run 'long, now.

LIZ-MAE: Cain, baby, please don't send me 'way. I need to talk to you. Hold on to yuh.

CAIN: Young lady, I don't know who you thing you are. But you gotta... you got a steely nerve comin' over here innuh dark of night an'... an' callin' me (*big swallow*) "Cain." I am a man of the cloth. An' I will be... I will be addressed...

LIZ-MAE: Please, baby, there's no one here to tell you out. Jess' these two red Indians ain't never met me. Hello, folks. Baby, come on. I gotta see you right now.

Lizzie-Mae drapes herself on Cain and he pulls away, reaching his arm back to slap her. Clem grabs hold of Cain's arm and twists it behind him before Cain can register what's happened.

Simultaneous:

CLEM: Don't.

LIZ-MAE: No!

CAIN: Agh!

Clem cranks on Cain's arm.

CAIN: AAGH! You will stop this now. AAAGGHHH!

Simultaneous:

GRACE: Clem, stop it.

LIZ-MAE: I'm sorry, baby. I jess' need to talk to you in private.

CAIN: That's how this whole thing started, isn't it?
ISN'T IT?

Lizzie-Mae **crumbles into tears.**

GRACE: Let him go.

Clem releases Cain, shoving him to the ground.

CAIN: God damn your soul, Clem. You leave this camp right now.

He springs up to his feet.

CAIN: Get the hell out!

GRACE: How much money you take in after my reading tonight?

CAIN: Shut your fuckin' mouth.

CLEM: Watch how you-

Grace sets a gentle hand on Clem's chest.

GRACE: You start talking now or you'll have a steel-toed size fourteen down your craw in a real hurry.

Grace releases Clem. Cain is agog.

GRACE: How much?

CAIN: Lots. Lots of money, you frigid witch. More money than I seen since the glory days of the Depression, arrright?

GRACE: (*fighting a frog in her throat*) Ts'what I thought.

CAIN: I been doin' this tent circuit since they cast me out from the seminary. Not even army aged. And I ain't seen this much money since way back.

GRACE: Well, then. You feel the need to meddle with Clem and send him out, you lose your Tamed Heathen act and you lose the haul that comes along with it.

CAIN: An' who do you think is gonna hire some lippy squaw that-

LIZ-MAE: Sweetheart, please.

CAIN: I have WORKED. SLAVED! (*to the heavens*) And you send this uppity Indian to upstage me? FUCK YOU!

LIZ-MAE: There's something the matter with me.

CAIN: Fuck you, too!

Lizzie-Mae runs away.

Cain stands unsteady but considerably more sober than he was a minute ago.

CAIN: I shone. Fifteen years old. And I was drawin' crowds no holy roller ever seen before. Shit – even the Klan weren't getting that many folks out to their negro necktie parties. I SHONE! (*Beat.*) I still shine.

Cain remembers his company.
Grace and Clem only wait it out.

CAIN: You're a one trick pony. You don't know where I been. What I've come through to be who I am today. You don't know a fuckin' thing about-

Clem pulls Cain to his own face, slow and calm.

CLEM: You will cut that language out right now.

Grace gently touches Clem.
Clem lowers Cain a little.

CAIN: I could shoot you like a dog for talking to me like that. An' no one would say "boo".

Clem releases him.
Cain looks around for Lizzie-Mae.

CAIN: Boo. (*Beat.*) Time we moved on outta here anyway. Tomorrow mornin'. First light. (*Beat.*) May Jesus... may Jesus keep you in his... (*the words sour in his mouth.*)

Cain makes to leave. He stops.

CAIN: What the hell is it?

Grace nor Clem answer.

CAIN: What's in the goddamn tea?

GRACE: Mostly water.

Cain sways and leaves.

Clem trembles with rage.

Slowly and delicately, Grace holds onto Clem.

He calms.

When he feels soft and safe, he holds her back.

They hold one another.

Blackout.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Scene 2:1 Mary and Joseph

A new campsite.

Late night.

Brother Cain is sitting out on the steps of his trailer, unwinding after a sermon/meeting.

He is reading a letter and sipping from a tea cup – no saucer. He scans for company and – seeing none – tops up his cuppa with a flask.

As he shoves the cork back in, Grace enters, on her way to bed.

Beat.

He puts his flask away, not looking at her.

CAIN: Bit late to be out.

Beat.

GRACE: 'Night.

CAIN: I said-

GRACE: I heard you.

CAIN: I can guess why you're out late. I'm not asking. I simply wondered at whether you'd own up to it.

GRACE: I'm working hard at looking the other way for you, you know. Pretending I didn't see that girl out at the edge of camp. Following the trucks like some farm dog who doesn't have the good sense to stop at the gate.

Silence. A long silence. An awful silence.

He pulls out his flask and drinks from it directly.

GRACE: I was tending to a broken thumb. Pitching crew fella. Got it caught in some rope, setting up here this morning.(beat) Fingers ain't a big deal. A thumb, though... that's a real nuisance.

CAIN: Healing the afflicted again, are you?

She only looks at him.
He offers the flask to her.

CAIN: To our health.

Beat.
Grace looks at him, surprised.
She takes it.
His mouth tries to smile.

CAIN: We ought not to be seen out at night like this.

She stands to leave.

GRACE: Sorry if I imposed.

Beat.

CAIN: Where in hell'd you get your schooling?

GRACE: Church-run school for Indians.

CAIN: Right. You do your own schooling, then, I guess,
huh? Own readin'?

GRACE: When I can.

CAIN: Well. Smartest fuckin' Indian I ever met.

GRACE: How many of us you ever talk to?

CAIN: Fair point.

Beat.

CAIN: Were you really just healing some bohunk's thumb?

GRACE: (nods.) Did what I could. Set the bones back in
place. Splint. All you can do.

CAIN: No special teas or... spells?

GRACE: Don't know of any tea for that, except maybe for
pain. But he was helping himself to some rye
whiskey anyway.

CAIN: So, where'd you get that schoolin'?

Beat.

GRACE: It's nothing secret. Or magic. Spent summers on ranches. Farms. People get hurt. My Grannie would wrap them up and send them back out. And the tea, well... it's old medicines from the land. Kitchen cures. (coughs) Like a mustard plaster or what have you.

CAIN: Huh.

Beat.

CAIN: I think I... I think I could use some more of that tea. I mean. I could pay you for your services.

GRACE: It's... it's from home. The, uh... the plant.

CAIN: Oh.

GRACE: Not much left. You can have it. It's just... once it's gone, it's gone. You have to find other means of fixing up your throat. Long-term.

CAIN: Never mind. Not as bad as it once was, anyway, I thank you for your kindness.

GRACE: It's just... decency.

Cain pulls something from his pocket.
He passes her a small photo.

CAIN: This is yours.

Beat.

She holds the photo firmly to her breast until she catches her breath.

She then gazes upon the photo, a face full of love.

Beat.

CAIN: Clem's an Indian too, you know. Most people take

him for a Mexican. He's not. (*over-enunciated "Spanish" pronunciation*) Apache.

GRACE: (*restrained laugh*)

CAIN: His grandmother raised him up. She was royalty. A Comanche Princess. And later "the Queen of the Shining Moon" – says Clem.

GRACE: (*full laugh*)

CAIN: Why is that worth laughing for?

GRACE: Nothing. Never met a guy named "Clem" before is all. S'funny. Some reason.

CAIN: It's an honest name.

Silence.

GRACE: This is all... I dunno. It's kinda... different.

CAIN: What is?

GRACE: I dunno. The whole thing. Pitching that big tent in the middle of wherever. People from who-knows-where crowding into that tent for church. Sunday best on a Thursday night. Then getting all riled up. Keeling over and squawking.

CAIN: "Tongues", Grace. It's called "speaking in tongues". Direct communion with God.

GRACE: (*beat*) Them bellerring and you... You...

CAIN: What? What about me?

GRACE: (*beat*) You get bigger from it. It's like I seen you growing. Almost glowing. It's all kinda... well. Different.

CAIN: It's the spirit, Grace. It's our Heavenly Father. His power is great.

GRACE: Yeah.

Beat.

CAIN: You been looking at me. Watching me.

Silence.

Cain moves over to Grace.

He offers her the flask.

She doesn't respond.

CAIN: When those women came to me the other night...
wanting me to lay hands on them... you were
standin' close. (*Beat.*) Did you feel it?

Grace does not look at him. He's standing too close.

CAIN: You feel the power in that? The sweet godly power
in taking a spirit into my hands and-

GRACE: You're not taking any spirit into your hands. You
didn't create them. They're not yours to take.

Cain glares.

Grace meets his eyes without guile.

CAIN: Sounds like heathen talk to me.

Grace casts her eyes downward.

Cain moves even closer.

CAIN: How do you do that, huh? Spout a river of holy
heaven and Hail Mary, and float your sage
Indian proverbs right on top of that goddamn
Catechism without so much as a blink? -Like a
vice on my throat.- How do you set one right
alongside the other like that, and make sense of
it, huh?

Grace remains silent.

CAIN: Set your hands here. (*His throat.*) On either
side. Go on.

GRACE: Why?

CAIN: I wanna see somethin'.

She makes no move.

CAIN: Do it. I ain't gonna bite'cha.

Grace puts her hands on Cain's throat.
They are silent. Cain stares at Grace, Grace not meeting his eyes.

CAIN: Where's your shovel?

Silence.
Cain steps away from her.

CAIN: Hm. (Swallows.) Nuthin'.

Cain drains his flask and moves away from her.

Grace slowly looks up to the moon.
Cain looks to it as well.
A moment.

CAIN: Seems like that moon's been full since you got here. Somehow. "Shining Moon..."

Cain drop-kicks his flask.
He finds another one in his jacket. He drinks and goes.

Beat.
Without looking, Grace calls to Clem, who is hidden nearby.

GRACE: He's gone.

Clem enters, tentatively, from nearby.

CLEM: I... I wanted you to know. I only told Pedro you might be able to help him with his busted up thumb because I knew no one else would even try to help. Didn't mean to... tell anyone.

GRACE: It's okay. Better we jimmed those bones back in place before they settled in wrong.

CLEM: Wanted to make sure you got tucked in safe, too. Said you were tired. (Beat.) But then you talked to him for a pretty long time.

GRACE: *(soft laugh)* You should get. I'm headed to bed.
And he could come back. See us here.

CLEM: What do you care what he thinks?

GRACE: He can fire us, Clem. And worse.

CAIN: He won't. He needs you and you bargained for me.
Beat.

CLEM: What'd he give you?

GRACE: What?

CLEM: He took something out of his shirt pocket and
give it to you.

Silence.

CLEM: I'm a damn fool. "Husband."

GRACE: Clem.

CLEM: Thanks a lot.

Grace shows Clem the photo.

CLEM: They're yours.

Grace nods.

CLEM: Are they...?

GRACE: Away at school.

Clem read the back of the photo again.

CLEM: First year?

GRACE: Yeah. Six and seven, now. But hoping they both
got put in Grade One. Least she can look out for
him a little. Even if they can't talk and that.

CLEM: Lets out soon.

Grace nods.

CLEM: Aw, Grace...

GRACE: Was saving up to get home at my last job. Lost all of it. And they took my bible. All the letters I had in it. And that.

Clem returns the photo to her.

CLEM: And he's had all that the whole time?

GRACE: Gave me back the bible and nothing else. 'Til now. He's been reading the letters I wrote them.

CLEM: Goddamn snake.

GRACE: That he is.

CLEM: Guess we got less time than I thought.

Clem passes Grace a jar of hooch.
She sips lightly.

GRACE: Where'd you get all your tenderness, huh?

CLEM: Same place I got that. [the jar] For all the good it does me.

Beat.

GRACE: Hey, didn't you say your grannie was a bootlegger in Moose Jaw?

CLEM: Still is.

GRACE: (*laughs*)

CLEM: Why, what'd he tell you?

GRACE: What'd you tell him?

CLEM: I forget.

GRACE: (*laughs*)

CLEM: Haven't told him much for truth since he renamed me "Clem". Can't remember which of the lies about me were mine and which are his.

GRACE: What the hell did he change your name for? You're not even in the show. No one needs to know what you are and are not called.

CLEM: He just said, right out – "too Catholic. When you work for me, you're Clem."

GRACE: Figures. So, what did the Queen of Moose Jaw moonshine call you?

CLEM: Huh...

GRACE: Come on.

CLEM: Don't tell no one. He'd be pretty grumpy.

GRACE: (*in Cain's "southern accent"*) On the bible.

They **laugh**.

CLEM: Aw, geez. Okay.

GRACE: Ready.

Beat.

CLEM: Don't laugh.

GRACE: I won't.

CLEM: Aw, geez.

He breathes deep.

CLEM: It's Joseph.

GRACE: Joseph.

CLEM: Yeah.

GRACE: Joseph?

CLEM: Yes, Grace?

GRACE: My name's not Grace, Joseph. (*Beat.*) It's Mary.

They **laugh**.

GRACE: Ho-lee...

CLEM: Heh.

Beat.

CLEM: I'll just walk you home. No funny business.

GRACE: Okay.

They stand to go.

Clem reaches for Grace's left hand, she gently pulls it from him.

CLEM: No ring. If we were married, I'd give you a ring.

Grace shows him a ring, tied around her neck on a string.

CLEM: Oh. (*Beat.*) Where is he, Mary?

Grace struggles a moment.

GRACE: Doesn't matter, Clem. He's still my husband. Don't call me that now, okay? Here?

CLEM: Why would he be so far from you? I wouldn't leave your side. I'd walk with you anywhere you wanted.

GRACE: Good night, Clem.

CLEM: Please let me.

GRACE: NO.

She plants him on the spot with her eyes. She leaves. He watches her go.

Scene 2:2 Devotion

Morning.

Grace's truckbed.

Grace emerges, wearing her slip and wrapped in a blanket. She looks up at the sky and greets the sun.

GRACE: G'morning!

CLEM: (*startled, and under the truck*) I'M UP!

Clem sits up, banging his head on the underside of the truck.

Simultaneous:

CLEM: (*pain*) Agh!

GRACE: (*startled by Clem*) AAH!

Clem rolls out and springs to attention, as though at the foot of his army bunk.

GRACE: Clem!

CLEM: Oh, shoot. Don't hit me!

Clem dives back under the truck and grabs his things—blanket, lantern, book. He fumbles and drops the book. It's Grace's copy of *Anne of Green Gables*.

GRACE: Clem, what the hell?

CLEM: Sorry!

GRACE: What are you doing here?

CLEM: I dunno. Usually back to my bunkroll before you wake up, but I was up pretty late.

GRACE: What?

CLEM: Yeah. Anne and Diana were goin' to that ball, and then Gilbert was putting on airs, eh? Pretending all like he didn't—

Grace picks up the book and starts hitting him with it: one whack per word.

GRACE: Ugh! /You! You, you, you!

CLEM: Ow. Ow! Ow! Ow!

GRACE: What are you doing under my truck?

CLEM: You toss all night every night, Mary. Shout out in your sleep. I worry about you. I hear what he's done to you.

GRACE: It's not yours to listen in on and don't call me that!

CLEM: Does he hurt them? Like he does you?

GRACE: That is NOT YOURS. You gotta... you gotta give room, Clem. I can't have you close like this and hang onto myself. To them.

CLEM: There's nothing we're doing that's wrong.

GRACE: I took vows. In a church. That means something.

CLEM: What does it mean?

GRACE: (*barely sounding the words*) I don't know.

CLEM: I'm not letting you go back there to that.

GRACE: It's not your business. You don't-

CLEM: I know you. I seen you put tobacco down. I seen you shine back at the moon with more glory than I ever seen you have with those fucking rosary beads.

GRACE: Clem.

CLEM: I'm sorry. For cussing. But it's true.

Beat.

GRACE: I've made my choices. I'm somebody's wife; before God. And I love my kids- our kids. If I betray that I won't know anything anymore. And I'm so goddamn far from home I'm forgetting the sound of their voices. (*she cries*)

He gives her time.

CLEM: I want to hold onto you.

GRACE: Please don't.

A moment more. She composes herself.

GRACE: I got so much shame on my soul, Clem. I wanna keep this good. This... this you and me, whatever it is.

CLEM: You got nothing to be ashamed of, Mary.

GRACE: Look where I am. What I'm doing. Where...? Couldn't keep hold of my kids 'n' couldn't keep that man from hating the way he does. With his raging. And his running. I don't even know where in hell he is. I didn't even have my man at home to put up a fight when that cattle truck came for my babies. Least throw a few punches. Rocks. Something. Just nothing.

CLEM: Don't you got a shovel at home?

Beat.

GRACE: (*release of laughter.*)

Grace goes to Clem and hugs him tight. As he warms to her, she pulls away.

GRACE: Oh, goddamnit, Clem.

She keeps him at arm's length.

CLEM: It's okay. It's okay, Mary. Nothing funny.

Slowly, he moves closer and wraps his arms around her. He hangs on - firmly but gently - as she resists.

She can't struggle anymore, and Clem has strength enough to hold her forever.

She surrenders to his embrace. She **weeps**.

CLEM: I'll keep you safe here, now. I'll keep you safe until you go home to them.

After **a good cry**, Grace stands on her own again.

Clem wipes her face with his shirttail.

Clem finds her dress in the truckbed and hands it to her.

He holds her blanket up between them, screening her from his view.

Grace slips the dress on and then stops, too downtrodden to finish.

Clem sets the blanket in the truck.

He buttons her dress for her as she stares blankly.

She is dressed.

CLEM: I'll see you up there tonight. —hear you. You're getting real good at that, you know. For someone who doesn't know.

GRACE: Yeah.

He picks his blanket and lantern off the ground.

GRACE: Clem?

Beat.

GRACE: It scares me. Being up there. Feels like... when I really really get it, you know? Feels like I go somewhere. And I get scared that one night I won't come back.

CLEM: You gotta come down. It's nearly June. You remember what that was like. Ten months, never seeing your mom or grannie at all. And then there's warmth in the air, and you're headed to bed when it's still light out, and suddenly you feel hope again. Gotta hide it, though. Can't let the brothers and sisters catch the whiff of it. They'd try to smack it outta you.

Grace nods.

CLEM: You anchor yourself to them and come on back.
Push through two more weeks. We can get you home.

GRACE: Where do you stand? When you listen?

CLEM: On your left. At the pole on the side. Little
peek into the tent, there.

Grace hands him the book and then kisses him slowly,
gently, on the cheek – a thank you.
He takes the book and kiss and does not kiss her back –
you're welcome. He goes.
Lizzie-Mae emerges from somewhere hidden.

LIZ-MAE: Sister Grace?

GRACE: (*starts.*)

LIZ-MAE: Sorry to bother you. I got trouble.

GRACE: I'm... I'm sorry. I can't talk to you.

LIZ-MAE: Please? Cain says you near cured his rotten cough
-maybe for good. I wondered could you maybe make
something for me? Help me with me lady problems?
And a love potion, maybe? You people make magical
potions all day long, don't you?

GRACE: I'm sorry, I-

LIZ-MAE: He's not sweet on me anymore. An' I know why that
is. I think I'm becoming a girl again. Somehow.
Maybe it's because of my sin, I don't know. But
my monthlies have stopped, Sister!

GRACE: Lizzie-mae. I can't... you need to go home to your
mother.

LIZ-MAE: Ain't got no home no more. No mama either. Given
what I done.

GRACE: Go. I have a show tonight.

Grace works. Lizzie-Mae takes a look into the truck and
then walks away, not yet defeated.

Scene 2:3 Wayward flock

Evening.

The stage/pulpit.

Grace reads beautifully as Cain looks on.

She lets her gaze rest where Clem stands, outside the tent, on her left, at key moments.

GRACE: "...my hope is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be shaken. Oh God my salvation and my glory rest; The rock of my strength, my refuge is God. Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him.²"

CAIN: Praise!

CON: Praise Jesus!

CAIN: Praise Him!

CON: PRAISE JESUS!

Lizzie-Mae emerges from the audience/congregation.

LIZ-MAE: Lay your light on me, Sister Grace! Touch me with the healing light of the Lord!

Grace looks, panicked, to Cain.

He is aghast for a moment, and masking it the next.

CAIN: Praise. (*Beat.*) Praise! May God bless our little sister for taking sweet Jesus into her heart.
PRAISE JESUS!

CON: PRAISE!

CAIN: Heal her, Sister Grace. Muster thy many talents and LAY YOUR HANDS UPON HER, HALELUJAH!

CON: Hallelujah!

² Psalm 62, V 5-8. New Testament.

CAIN: Our gifts from God are for every man, Sister.
Don't be greedy. Give to the needy, oh Sister
Grace, PRAISE-A!

CON: PRAISE!

CAIN: Amazing SISTER GRAAAAAACE, c'mon everybody with
me. AMAZING GRACE!

CON: AMAZING GRACE!

CAIN: HOW SWEET THE SOUND!

CON: How sweet the sound.

CAIN: She once was lost, and now is found, PRAISE
JESUS!

CON: Praise Jesus!

Cain forces Grace's hands onto Lizzie-Mae's head. Lizzie-
Mae flies into a fury of religious ecstasy, hitting the
dirt and speaking in tongues – full out.

LIZ-MAE: I see the light! (*then, tongues.*)

CAIN: She has been washed in the blood of the lamb-ah!
Sing with me, brethren and sistren! Sing out with
me!

Amazing Grace rises around us, led by Cain.

Grace recedes, unhappy with what she has partaken in.
Darkness swallows everything but Grace, as night descends.

Scene 2:4 Offering

Night.

A small soft light on Grace.

It spreads.

She is at her truckbed now.

She checks – rather hopefully – for Clem under the truck.

He isn't there.

She looks up to the moon. It isn't there.

GRACE: Where are you? (*Beat.*) Tucked away somewheres?

She glances around.

She offers some tobacco to the earth.

GRACE: (*in prayer*) Please let them hear me. So far from them, but right up inside of them, like their own heartbeats, this I swear.

She feels the earth on her hands.

She stands back up.

She looks up again and opens her hands to the sky – the clouds part somewhat and the moon is there. The moonlight glows up a little on Grace – it stays with her intermittently, clouds rolling.

GRACE: Gookschem. (*Beat.*) Dear Rose. Here I am, under the California sky, taking my greatest pleasure in writing you these few lines. Hello, my girl. Are you and Richard doing okay at school? Keeping outta trouble and safe? I'll be with you soon. Do you hear my words? I send them to youse on the moon. Same moon as home. Mom is missing you. Missing you bigger than your smile. Missing burning up brighter than Ricky's laugh. Missing as deep as your old dad's voice first thing in the morning – God help me from loving him.

Grace hears a noise in the truck and stops abruptly.

She takes a few steps back.

GRACE: You can't be in there. If you're a friend to me, you can't be in there.

LIZ-MAE: (*from inside*) I'm sorry. I jess...

Slowly, she emerges from the truckbed. Her skirts are covered in blood.

LIZ-MAE: I jess' hoped you might... help me. Save me, Sister.

GRACE: Jesus!

Lizzie-Mae drops into Grace's arms.

GRACE: Clem. Clem!

Clem jumps out from the cab of the truck, throwing off a blanket.

CLEM: I'm here!

GRACE: Clem.

CLEM: Holy Jesus!

Clem quickly lays Lizzie-Mae out on the ground, a blanket beneath her.

LIZ-MAE: I jess gotta stay real quiet and sleep a little time.

GRACE: Settle now, my girl.

LIZ-MAE: I'm not some foolish g...

CLEM: What the hell did he do to her?

GRACE: Go into my bag. Find the raspberry leaf and bring it here.

CLEM: How do I know which one's-

GRACE: Bring the whole bag.

Clem rushes to grab the bag.
Grace cradles Lizzie-Mae.

GRACE: You rest yourself now, okay? Just easy as you

can. Shh, now. Shh shh shh shhh shhhhhh...

Clem sets down beside Grace, with the bag. He retrieves a small variety of pouches, all with herbs therein.

GRACE: There.

CLEM: This one?

GRACE: Yeah. Need hot water.

CLEM: Mess tent.

GRACE: Go!

Clem rushes off.

Grace puts some raspberry leaf into a mason jar.

LIZ-MAE: I could feel the healin' in you. First time I ever really... felt it.

GRACE: Who did this, Lizzie-Mae?

LIZ-MAE: I felt a stroke of light come into me. By the light of the Lord. An' I knew if I acted fast I could make my womanly times come back.

GRACE: What do you mean, Lizzie-Mae? Did you do something to yourself?

LIZ-MAE: I knew. And I tole him. And he said he wanted to heal me. Love me. He said he could heal me again.

Lizzie-Mae passes out.

GRACE: Lizzie-Mae. I need to take a look at you, okay? Be strong, now. (*in prayer*) Help me do this. (Grace looks beneath Lizzie-Mae's skirts. **She gasps**. She emerges.) Hail Mary, Mother of God, protect and keep this girl.

Grace sets her hands on Lizzie-Mae's lower abdomen. Grace's uterus seizes and quakes. Grace clutches at her own pain and moans her way through a contraction. It eases and calms, regulating her breathing.

CLEM: Water!

Clem runs in, hot kettle of water in hand and some towels thrown over his shoulder.

GRACE: Good, Clem. Here. (the jar) And pour some over my hands.

CLEM: T'sboiling hot.

GRACE: Fine.

Grace breathes big.

Clem pours the water over her hands.

Grace takes a cloth from Clem's shoulder.

GRACE: And here.

Clem pours water onto the cloth.

GRACE: I can't see if the bleeding is inside or out. Or both. Needle and thread in my bag. Throw them in the kettle.

Grace holds her breath and goes back under Lizzie-Mae's skirts.

Clem reels back and looks away.

LIZ-MAE: (moans.)

Clem finds a needle and thread and drops them into the kettle.

Grace emerges from examining Lizzie-Mae.

GRACE: Lizzie-Mae. Do you hear me? Lizzie-Mae. (She slaps her until there is a flutter in Lizzie-Mae.) Listen, sweetheart, you have to gimme all you got, you hear me?

CLEM: (Pointing at the kettle.) Needle. Thread.

GRACE: Thank you.

Grace returns her hands to Lizzie-Mae's lower abdomen.

GRACE: Lizzie-Mae, what happened inside you is not

finished, but it can't be undone. We can save you, but we have to finish what was started. Do you hear me?

LIZ-MAE: I hear.

GRACE: Stay awake Lizzie-Mae! Drink this up.

Lizzie-Mae gulps and chokes down some raspberry leaf tea.

GRACE: Good girl.

Grace passes Clem the tea and takes another towel from him. She stuffs it into her own skirts.

GRACE: Now, you can do this if you leave Cain behind, do you understand?

LIZ-MAE: Yesma'am.

GRACE: Lizzie-Mae. No Cain. His healing will kill you. Do you want to die?

LIZ-MAE: I do not.

GRACE: Say it yourself. Say it and mean it. I am leaving Cain behind.

LIZ-MAE: Oh!

GRACE: Lizzie-Mae!

LIZ-MAE: I am leaving Cain behind.

GRACE: Good. Big breath.

Lizzie-Mae and Grace take big breaths.

Simultaneously:

GRACE: (Shriek of labour.)

Lizzie-Mae sits up, bears down, yet seems strong and focused.

Grace is significantly weakened. Lizzie-Mae is much more alert, returning to strength.

CLEM: We have to leave. All of us. We can't stay here.

LIZ-MAE: That's right.

GRACE: Clem.

Clem goes to Grace, who folds herself into his arms.

CLEM: What do you need?

GRACE: Just rest. I'll be alright.

He picks her up and takes her into the trucked.

LIZ-MAE: She looks awful pale.

Clem only nods.

LIZ-MAE: Dun't seem fair. Her sufferin' like that.

CLEM: How old are you?

LIZ-MAE: 'Bout a hundred and ten.

CLEM: Bunk in with her. Keep each other warm.

LIZ-MAE: My dress is ruined.

CLEM: Where's he at now?

LIZ-MAE: Probably in town. Gettin' drunk and bothering some other little girl. God forgive me. He always has to tear himself up when he done somethin' he ought not to've done.

Beat.

LIZ-MAE: I'm pretty sore myself.

CLEM: Get some sleep. We'll move out at first light.

He stands strong, keeping watch.
Lizzie-Mae climbs in then turns back.

LIZ-MAE: Awful nice feller you are. She's lucky to have a friend like you.

Beat.

LIZ-MAE: I'm Lizzie-Mae.

CLEM: Joseph.

LIZ-MAE: Pleasure.

Lizzie-Mae tucks herself in.

After a moment, Clem paces the truck perimeter.

Scene 2:5 Grace is Able

Evening.

A congregation can be heard, not too far off, doing their abysmal best at praising the Lord through a hymn.

Grace stands outside of Cain's trailer.

She holds her bible.

Cain rushes out from his trailer - sleek hair, Sunday best suit, and starched shirt - in a rush.

GRACE: Brother Cain.

Cain rushes past.

GRACE: Tried to find you last night.

He stops.

GRACE: And all day today.

CAIN: Jesus Christ, woman.

GRACE: I'm here for my letters. And then I'll be out of your hair for good.

CAIN: Is she gone?

GRACE: Gone? If you mean dead, no she ain't. But only just. Could barely stop her bleeding, you know.

CAIN: I *don't* know. And neither do you if you fucking well know what's good for you.

GRACE: What kind of a man does what you done?

CAIN: I've never seen that girl before she came out to our meeting last night. And last I saw, it was you laid your hands on her.

GRACE: A woman can't get another woman into her condition. And a woman sure as hell wouldn't try

to get her out of it like some butcher.

CAIN: Find someone who'll say different.

GRACE: You know as well as I do that if I know what happened to her, Clem knows what-

CAIN: (*no drawl*) Someone WHITE. You meddling squaw.

They face off.

CAIN: Half that crowd are here to see you. Are you going to do your part or am I turning you in to the authorities? The harm you did that poor child, for shame. You'll be hunted down and burned at the stake.

GRACE: Every single word out of your mouth.

CAIN: A show. And a damn good one. And they love me for it. And you know something, Sister Grace? It enriches their lives.

GRACE: You poor soul.

CAIN: And you will be laying hands tonight. On every inbred hick that wants you to. Tidy your hair.

He leaves.

Grace watches him go.

She throws her Bible to the dirt.

The hymn comes to an end.

Brother Cain takes the stage. We hear him, but don't see him.

The congregation echoes him on cue.

Grace stews, waiting to go on.

CAIN: Thank you, Sister Ethel, for leading us in song. And thank you all again for coming out here tonight. Praise Jesus!

CON: Praise Jesus!

CAIN: Let me hear you PRAISE JESUS!

CON: Praise JESUS!

CAIN: Ee-yesss-ah! Puh-raise Him. O, the presence of the Lord in all of his glory is strong in His children tonight. And that is why I know the time is right.

GRACE: Right.

CAIN: The time is now and the place is here. I have for you, my brothers and sisters of Death Valley, a very special visitor indeed. Through snow she has come! Praise Jesus.

CON: Praise Jesus!

CAIN: Through the blackest hellfires of heathen rites and satanic song and dance she has come – praise Jesus.

CON: Praise Jesus!

CAIN: This savage sister comes to you today, having been baptized only weeks ago.

Grace crosses herself halfway and then stops.

CAIN: She has been cleansed by the blood of the lamb-ah. She has been SAVED through the glory and grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, praise Jesus.

CON: Praise Jesus!

GRACE: (*quietly*) Give me strength.

CAIN: Now, ladies and gentlemen. This woman came to us one dark and windy night, folded and cradled – I daresay SWADDLED – in the love of our saviour. She arrived at my doorstep speaking only a savage tongue. And I admit I was unsettled. I am a man. I falter. I fear. I am not proud of this weakness, but I know it brings me closer to Jesus when I ask for deliverance from this fear, praise Jesus.

CON: Praise Jesus.

CAIN: "Who is this ebony-eyed woman, traveling – alone – in the dark of a windy night?" I asked, in prayer, praise Him.

CON: Praise!

CAIN: I called upon my own Christian charity and I did invite our savage sister inside my humble abode for a warm blanket and a hot cup of tea.

GRACE: Such bullshit.

CAIN: She prattled and babbled and squawked in her savage tongue until I heard the voice of our saviour, as pure and as clear as a heavenly song, right in my left ear. He spake unto me, "Give her the good book, my son, and she will be a servant of the heavenly word." Puh-raise!

CON: Praise Jesus!

Grace considers her bible. A idea strikes. She retrieves it from the ground.

CAIN: Our savage took the good book into her little brown hands and she did tremble. Jesus spake into my right ear, "Lay your hands upon her, Brother Cain." And I did. I lay my hands upon that black head, all grease and vermin,

Grace flips through her Bible, moving her bookmark, to mark a new page.

CAIN: and our savage sister raised those black eyes up at me – filled with tears. She blinked those tears away and she opened that good, good book. You won't believe me if I told you the rest, my friends. Not without a great deal of faith. Do you have faith in Jesus? Is your faith unshakeable? Is your faith in Jesus stronger than your own fear of our savage brothers and sisters? Do you believe that He can deliver ANY man from backward ways? DO YOU BELIEVE!? If you believe let me hear you Hallelujah!

CON: Hallelujah!

CAIN: HALLELUJAH!

CON: HALLELUJAH!

CAIN: SHOUT IT OUT FOR THE NATIVE IN THE DESERT –
HALLELUJAH!

CON: HALLELUJAH!

CAIN: I present to you, brothers and sisters – A Native who is restful, at last, in the arms of the Lord – a Tamed Heathen who I Christened myself... Sister Grace!

Grace makes a prayer gesture to the sky – for strength. Worlds collide and rotate, on Cain's reveal of Grace: the trailer is transformed into the stage. Cain is upon it, and Grace steps up. The audience is, once again, the congregation.

Grace opens the bible to the new page she has marked.

CON: *(gasp) (whispers and titters)*

Grace looks at Cain, gathering her courage.

CAIN: Don't be shy, Sister Grace. I know you are unaccustomed to our refined ways, but, go on, now. Yours is the way of the Lord and you shall not stumble. Go on.

GRACE: *(clears her throat timidly and reads from the page)* The Second Letter of P-

CON: *(gasp)*

GRACE: ...of Peter.

CAIN: Grace?

GRACE: "But false prophets–"

CAIN: John. The Gospel according to John. Thank you for your forgiveness, brethren, the heathen is having

a holy hiccup. Go again, Grace. John. One sixteen.

GRACE: "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who brought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned;"

CAIN: Thank you, Sister Grace. Sister Grace, brothers and sisters – praise/ Jesus!

GRACE: PRAISE Him. (*continuing*) "...in their greed, they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep."

CAIN: (*under his breath*) Grace, you will stop this now-

GRACE: "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness-

Simultaneously:

Cain swings at Grace, knocking the bible from her hands.

CAIN: DAMN YOU!

CON: (*gasps*)

CAIN: (*no drawl*) Damn you and your heathen fucking soul.

Cain thinks fast – he feigns a seizure – a self-exorcism.

CAIN: (*shrieking and choking*) No. NO, not me, Lord! DON'T LET THE DEVIL TAKE ME! NOT UNTIL I FULFILL YOUR WILL! (*gasp for air, returning to feet*) DEMON OUT! (*he makes himself throw up, and then reels back.*) Oh, blessed be. Demon out...

CON: (*some questioning murmurs, some shrieks from the delicate of humour*) "My Lord. He suffer fits?" "Is he touched?" "Should we call the Sheriff?"

Cain wipes his mouth with his handkerchief. He collects himself and points at Grace, who is still startled and on the floor, from having been struck.

CAIN: I CAST YOU OUT, WRETCHED DEMON! YOOUUU!!!!

Grace looks up to Cain. She slowly stands.

CAIN: No sister of mine art thou! (*shift. He drums up tears.*) I trusted you. I took you in as my own.

CON: (*whispers*) "For shame." and "Shame on her."

Cain picks up Grace's bible and holds it between them as a shield.

CAIN: One can take the savage out of the woods, but one is hard pressed to draw the Christian out in the savage.

Beat.

Grace walks into the audience and slowly away from the stage.

CAIN: Do not let her gentle manner and her cunning ways win your charity, brothers and sisters! Allow the demon to pass from our midst. Do not allow her pretty eyes to lure you in, good fellows. Do not allow her soothing voice to win your friendship, ladies. Demon OUT! OOOUUUUT!

Quick gear shift.

Scene 2:6 Blood of the Lamb

Late night.

Cain walks up to Grace's truckbed.

Beat.

He pounds on the side of it.

Nothing.

CAIN: If you've had the nerve to stay, please understand that you are still welcome here. I've got your precious letters here.

He takes a bundle of letters from inside his coat. He pounds on the truckbed again.

CAIN: COME OUT! DEMON OOOOOOUT! *(he laughs himself into a coughing fit. It eases.)* "Demon out." *(He giggles. He knocks on the truckbed a little.)* Get yourself tidied up and get to the tent. We gotta work out some kinks before tomorrow, but this new act is a keeper. I ain't seen such a haul since... well. Ever. Not ever. *(Beat.)* You'll snare a bigger take, arrright? Some 'o' this? Some 'o' this holy-damn haul is yours. Rightly so. Pretty inventive. You'll make enough to send for them kiddies if you like. Maybe we could put them in the act. *(Beat.)* But he's gotta go. -not safe. For me. You'll have to send him on his way. He only barks on command for his master's voice. *(Beat.)* We all make sacrifices for glory. Arrright? *(Beat.)* Huh.

Cain tucks the letters back in his coat and begins to leave.

Clem enters, carrying a lantern. He is eerily calm. He hangs the lantern on the truck bed rails. He unbuttons his shirt.

CAIN: *(laughs.)* She ain't here, don't bother. You can pack yourself outta here right quick. No need for such a lame old broken down horse anymore. *(Beat.)* Toodle-oo!

CLEM: Any last words?

Clem hangs his workshirt on a hook on the outside of the gear truckbed – as ever, undershirt beneath. Holy shit, this cat is huge.

CAIN: (*laughs*) You. Threatening my life. You can't kill me. I am a son of GOD! No man can kill me. And you're less than a man. Git along... little doggie. Ha! You still sniffin' around after that bitch? No wonder you lost her scent. She's been clenching her raggy brown knees before you for weeks.

CLEM: I'll ask you one last time. I'm going to end your life now. Do you have any last words? I'll see to it that they are heard.

Lizzie-Mae emerges lightly from the truck, wearing Grace's slip, which hangs on her tiny frame. She has a shovel in her hands.

Cain nor Clem sees her.

CAIN: I sent that treacherous whore trembling from my big fat pulpit. By now she's probably up a mountain somewhere, chawin' on moose hide.

Clem moves toward Cain just as – THWUMP! – a shovel to Cain's head. Cain is leveled. Lizzie-Mae steps over him and looks at Clem, as though asking a question. Clem only looks at her, amazed.

CAIN: (*groaning*) Wuh the hell...?

Lizzie-Mae takes a deep breath and pounds Cain's skull with the shovel again. Again. Again. Again.

CAIN: (*sputters and bleeds.*)

Cain stops making any sound. Stops moving. One more blow from Lizzie-Mae.

Lizzie-Mae steps away from Cain, blood-soaked.

CLEM: Ho-lee shit.

GRACE: (*entering*) Okay. Let's go! Everything's dry. I
got most of the blood out of the-

Grace stops dead when she sees Lizzie-Mae.
Beat.

LIZ-MAE: Shoulda heard what he said about you.

She drops the shovel.

LIZ-MAE: Last night? After you lain your hands on me? He
tole me we was gettin' married that very night.
He took me into town. Shoulda known no preacher
would be workin' at that hour, and in a room like
that. Too much blood then.

CLEM: (*to Grace*) Get your things. Go on. Both of you.
Now.

GRACE: (*in shock at seeing Cain*) In the truck...

Clem grabs Grace's bag from the truck.

CLEM: (*to Lizzie-Mae*) Change out of that. Get rid of
it. Bury it. Or burn it. —both! Wash up. First
chance you get. Put this on.

He stuffs his big workman's shirt into Grace's bag.
Grace stands over Cain, stunned but calm. She picks up her
letters.

LIZ-MAE: Leaving Cain behind.

Clem places Grace's bag in her hand.

CLEM: Take this. You can't take the truck anymore.
It'll catch too much attention.

GRACE: Clem.

CLEM: I'll grab you some water from the mess tent. Some
bread.

Lizzie-Mae sits on the running board of the truck, looking absently at the blood patterns on the slip she sports.

GRACE: Clem, we can't outrun them. They'll need to blame someone.

CLEM: I can probably keep this from getting found out 'til morning. Buy you some time. As soon as they know he's killed, I'll take the truck straight south. You head straight north and we should be alright. Your book!

GRACE: I'm not leaving you here.

CLEM: Bread, water, book. Gimme one minute. Change her outta that.

He turns to run.

GRACE: Clem. (*Beat.*) Joseph!

Clem stops dead. He turns back to her.

Grace looks at him.

A moment.

He returns to her.

A moment. And then...

CLEM: You got kids. (*Beat.*) I got you. If they take you down for him, everyone has nothing.

Grace looks slightly toward Lizzie-Mae.

CLEM: The whole town saw his show tonight. Saw him send you out - a demon.

GRACE: I can't kill a man.

CLEM: They don't know that.

GRACE: I mean you. Leaving you to them? It's the same as hangin' you myself.

CLEM: Take this.

Clem pulls a roll of bills from his pocket.

GRACE: I won't take your pay

CLEM: I was gonna give it to you anyway. (*Beat.*) Get you home to those little ones. Was just... hoping it would be more.

She looks into his face.
Grace takes Clem's hand.

CLEM: I left him. In the mud. I dropped him and I left him there. And I got out alive. I won't leave you to this.

He kneels before her. He sets her open palm on his heart.

CLEM: Please let me.

Grace cries and holds Clem to her chest.
They take each other in this way for a moment, breathing together.

Finally, Clem stands.

Lizzie-Mae looks up to the sky.

LIZ-MAE: Full moon.

Grace and Clem look up to the moon.
Grace looks over to Brother Cain's body.

LIZ-MAE: You got kids?

GRACE: Yes.

LIZ-MAE: I jess know you're a wonderful mama.

Beat.

GRACE: (*barely sounding the word.*) Yes.

Grace reaches into her bag for her bible. She sets it beside Cain.

She takes the string and ring from around her neck and puts it on Clem.
Clem gives her the lamp.

Clouds cover the moon.

End of Play.