

## **ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

**Copyright Protection.** This play (the “Play”) is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention, and the Berne Convention.

**Reservation of Rights.** All rights to this Play are strictly reserved, including, without limitation, professional and amateur stage performance rights; motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video, and sound recording rights; rights to all other forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction now known or yet to be invented, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, photocopying, and information storage and retrieval systems; and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

**Performance Licensing and Royalty Payments.** Amateur and stock performance rights to this Play are controlled exclusively by Playscripts, Inc. (“Playscripts”). No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this Play without obtaining advance written permission from Playscripts. Required royalty fees for performing this Play are specified online at the Playscripts website ([www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com)). Such royalty fees may be subject to change without notice. Although this book may have been obtained for a particular licensed performance, such performance rights, if any, are not transferable. Required royalties must be paid every time the Play is performed before any audience, whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. All licensing requests and inquiries concerning amateur and stock performance rights should be addressed to Playscripts (see contact information on opposite page).

Inquiries concerning all other rights should be addressed to the author's agent: Maura Teitelbaum, Abrams Artists Agency, 275 Seventh Ave., 26th Floor, New York, NY 10001 (phone: 646-486-4600; fax: 646-486-2358; email: [maura.teitelbaum@abramsart.com](mailto:maura.teitelbaum@abramsart.com)).

**Restriction of Alterations.** There shall be no deletions, alterations, or changes of any kind made to the Play, including the changing of character gender, the cutting of dialogue, or the alteration of objectionable language, unless directly authorized by Playscripts. The title of the Play shall not be altered.

**Author Credit.** Any individual or group receiving permission to produce this Play is required to give credit to the author as the sole and exclusive author of the Play. This obligation applies to the title page of every program distributed in connection with performances of the Play, and in any instance that the title of the Play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing, or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production thereof. The name of the author must appear on a separate line, in which no other name appears, immediately beneath the title and of a font size at least 50% as large as the largest letter used in the title of the Play. No person, firm, or entity may receive credit larger or more prominent than that accorded the author. The name of the author may not be abbreviated or otherwise altered from the form in which it appears in this Play.

**Publisher Attribution.** All programs, advertisements, and other printed material distributed or published in connection with the amateur or stock production of the Play shall include the following notice:

**Produced by special arrangement with Playscripts, Inc.  
([www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com))**

**Prohibition of Unauthorized Copying.** Any unauthorized copying of this book or excerpts from this book is strictly forbidden by law. Except as otherwise permitted by applicable law, no part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including, without limitation, photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Playscripts.

**Statement of Non-affiliation.** This Play may include references to brand names and trademarks owned by third parties, and may include references to public figures. Playscripts is not necessarily affiliated with these public figures, or with the owners of such trademarks and brand names. Such references are included solely for parody, political comment, or other permitted purposes.

**Permissions for Sound Recordings and Musical Works.** This Play may contain directions calling for the performance of a portion, or all, of a musical work, or performance of a sound recording of a musical work. Playscripts has not obtained permissions to perform such works. The producer of this Play is advised to obtain such permissions, if required in the context of the production. The producer is directed to the websites of the U.S. Copyright Office ([www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov)), ASCAP ([www.ascap.com](http://www.ascap.com)), BMI ([www.bmi.com](http://www.bmi.com)), and NMPA ([www.nmpa.org](http://www.nmpa.org)) for further information on the need to obtain permissions, and on procedures for obtaining such permissions.

## The Rules in Brief

- 1) Do NOT perform this Play without obtaining prior permission from Playscripts, and without paying the required royalty.
- 2) Do NOT photocopy, scan, or otherwise duplicate any part of this book.
- 3) Do NOT alter the text of the Play, change a character's gender, delete any dialogue, or alter any objectionable language, unless explicitly authorized by Playscripts.
- 4) DO provide the required credit to the author and the required attribution to Playscripts in all programs and promotional literature associated with any performance of this Play.

*For more details on these and other rules, see the opposite page.*

## Copyright Basics

This Play is protected by United States and international copyright law. These laws ensure that playwrights are rewarded for creating new and vital dramatic work, and protect them against theft and abuse of their work.

A play is a piece of property, fully owned by the playwright, just like a house or car. You must obtain permission to use this property, and must pay a royalty fee for the privilege—*whether or not you charge an admission fee*. Playscripts collects these required payments on behalf of the author.

**Anyone who violates an author's copyright is liable as a copyright infringer under United States and international law.** Playscripts and the author are entitled to institute legal action for any such infringement, which can subject the infringer to actual damages, statutory damages, and attorneys' fees. A court may impose statutory damages of up to \$150,000 for willful copyright infringements. U.S. copyright law also provides for possible criminal sanctions. Visit the website of the U.S. Copyright Office ([www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov)) for more information.

**THE BOTTOM LINE:** If you break copyright law, you are robbing a playwright and opening yourself to expensive legal action. Follow the rules, and when in doubt, ask us.

Playscripts, Inc.  
P.O. Box 237060  
New York, NY 10023

Phone/fax: 1-866-NEW-PLAY (639-7529)  
Email: [questions@playscripts.com](mailto:questions@playscripts.com)  
Web: [www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com)

## **Cast of Characters**

DEAD PETER

UNCLE ABE

BATHSHEBA

THE THREE FATES

BETSY, a dinosaur

W. ALVAREZ

HERMAN, a fly

three FLY GIRLS

A BIOLOGIST

GIRL

M-DOGG, the MALARIA BITCH

a gang of WHITE BLOOD CELLS

three FLOWERS

SEVERAL LAB MONKEYS

THE ALL CHIMP RUNAWAY LAB MONKEY BAND

## **Language Note**

If you would like to request alternate language for M-Dogg, contact Playscripts, Inc.

## Author's Note

Think of the word “biology.” What comes to mind?

Dissection is at the top of my list. And the classification of organisms. And the parts of a cell, none of which I can at the moment remember.

Don't worry. You won't be tested within the pages of this script.

Weirdly enough, as a subject for a play, biology makes a very cool theatrical sense. Like Shakespeare, it is about life and death struggles: All the world's a stage. *Everything So Far* is loosely adapted from a 9<sup>th</sup> grade biology textbook. And I must stress the word “loosely” because we barely even looked at it. Rather, science became a starting place for exploring relationships, although I think we wound up learning more about biology than we had expected.

This play is a collection of characters dealing with wanted or unwanted change, with beauty and hunger and need, all of which are biological realities. It deals in a whimsical and tender way with the proximity of death—flies, dinosaurs, people, all share the experience, maybe even the fears and the questions—but in the context of a whole cycle of life.

There are lots of creation stories—the world was formed by a spider, the world was formed in seven days, the world was formed from a random chemical process. This play was created in a remarkable six weeks, and that process has been described in articles for *Teaching Theatre* (Winter 2004) and *The Austin Chronicle* (February 6, 2004). They are available in the archives of both publications.

Both in process and in product, this play is about the near impossibility of creation. Yet it happens. How? The divine? Sure. Two different single-cell organisms that randomly bump into each other? Sure. Our focus was on the unexpected and the unknowable, and on the value of asking questions, of investigation, of the observable facts. The collaboration of the ensemble and the guest artists involved in this project resulted in complex and wonderful characters, including a fly with 24 hours to live, a dinosaur looking for her

lost egg, the three Fates, and the All Chimp Runaway Lab Monkey Band.

When you thought of the word biology, did you think of these things? No. I didn't either.

I hope you enjoy this play.

—*C. Denby Swanson*

## **Acknowledgments**

This play was created for Troupe St. Stephen's, a project of the Theatre Focus department (Clay Nichols, Head of Theatre Focus) at St. Stephen's Episcopal High School in Austin, Texas, and was directed by Ryan Sullivan.

The 2003 Troupe St. Stephen's ensemble members, each of whom contributed to the spirit and creation of the play, included:

Kathleen Ayres  
Abby Broberg  
Sunny Chung  
Kate Erskine  
Lauren Klotzman  
Marjorie Maxwell  
Aaron Moten  
Ryan Neely  
Lizzi Sikora  
Selina Strasburger

Katherine Bailey, stage manager

Song lyrics were originally written by Lauren Klotzman.

# EVERYTHING SO FAR

by C. Denby Swanson

in collaboration with Doug Rand  
and the Troupe St. Stephen's Ensemble

## Dead Peter Introduces Himself and, Thus, the World

**DEAD PETER.** Hi. I'm Peter.

I'm dead.

Don't worry. It happens.

Do you know my Uncle Abe? He's alive. You'll meet him tonight.

Do you know Betsy? Uncle Abe's dinosaur. For real. She's alive, too. Uncle Abe says that she's older than he is, but she seems young to me.

But I guess just because you're alive doesn't mean you know everyone. It's not like a small club.

Who else—let's see.

Some musicians.

A biologist.

A fly. He's only got 24 hours to live.

I feel close to him.

Some flowers.

A bunch of other people.

It's kind of cool being dead. Being alive was confusing for me. Being dead is so certain. It sounds funny. Dead Peter. I got here. It's final. That's that. Dead Peter.

I remember the first moment I realized that's what I was. I was walking to the subway platform and I fell suddenly, flat down on my face. But nothing—felt. It wasn't that I couldn't feel, like being in shock, or being—well. I don't know. Just being. It was that

nothing felt. I wasn't *being* anymore. Right in the middle of a conversation. Right in the middle of talking up this beautiful girl on the subway platform. I almost got her phone number.

Dead Peter. That's what I realized I had become. But if you could look at me now, if you could unbury my body right now, you'd see that I'm all fungus now. Fungus Peter. Fungus Peter. Things living off me. So really, I live.

That's kind of weird, huh.

Other organisms make me into their house, they make me into their back yard. This is all figuratively speaking, you understand. A whole group of creatures sort of move in when you're dead. They are making me, my body, into their job, the grocery store, a good school for their kids.

It's neat. I don't know what else life is except those things. So I am still alive. My uncle Abe thinks I'm alive also, but in a different way, and it's confusing for his wife, Bathsheba. Did I mention Bathsheba? You'll meet her, too. Give them just a second. They'll be right out.

### Uncle Abe Describes the Dinosaurs

*(ABE talks to his nephew, DEAD PETER, as if he were alive.)*

**ABE.** Did I ever tell you about my dinosaur? Huh?

*(He pokes DEAD PETER in the ribs. DEAD PETER moves out of reach.)*

That was SOME KEEN HOOPLA, believe you me. Hey now—are you payin' attention, boy? Are ya? 'Cause this is important.

I rode a dinosaur. I did. Yeehaw! Wind blowin' in my face, smell a' dinosaur all around, sky just FLYIN' by my head—I almost got caught in a tree oncet. Heheh. Sure was nice. Sure was. And then. And then. Do you know what happened? DO YOU KNOW?

*(A moment of not knowing anything, not where he is or why he's talking to a dead person. Then:)*

I do. I know. Ya see, this man named Alvarez—Double-ya Alvarez—he came down in a meteor in Italy. Or somewheres. Somewheres Latin. Does it matter? A hook of land out in the ocean! A meteor from space! Now, I been a lot of places, but I ain't never been in SPACE!

So, this Alvarez—he's lonely in his big old meteor house and he comes on down to the dinosaurs and says: "Hey you old beastly things—Come keep me company in space!" And Alvarez, he was such a friendly type person—so many stories and good things to eat—he just got every last one of 'em up there with him! Usually Betsy stayed under the front porch, like the best kind of hound, didn't give no mind. But Alvarez got every last one. Remember Betsy?

*(Pause.)*

Whaddya think, Peter? I'll tell you what. I'll tell you a secret. Betsy left something behind. No, not a note! An egg, right there in my refrigerator freezer—little dinosaur just waitin' to pop out. Come on over like you used to when you were little and your mom would drop you off—we'll see if the little thing is ready to hatch. Hmmm? Or maybe I'll just put her in your closet! Hehehehehehe...

*(Lights fade. Another moment in which ABE loses his bearings. He casts about for DEAD PETER but finds him missing.)*

You still here Peter? I'm so lonesome.

### **There Are Things to Talk About Other Than Death**

*(DEAD PETER changes the subject.)*

**DEAD PETER.** I'll get to what happened to me later. It's really not that important in the scheme of things. There are facts and everything. Circumstances. Some evidence pointing in one direction or the other. We'll get to it. And Uncle Abe. We'll get back to him, too.

First, I want to introduce the Three Fates.

*(The THREE FATES enter, arguing.)*

**FATE #1.** Nuh-UH.

**FATE #2.** Yuh HUH.

**FATE #1.** When I smell a flower I'm sticking my nose in its—

**FATE #3.** Underpants.

**FATE #1.** Underpants!

**FATE #2.** Yep.

**FATE #1.** No WAY.

**DEAD PETER.** The Fates. They're mythological. I wonder if that means they're alive or dead, or both.

**FATE #3.** Bee says, hey, pretty flower. I'ma get me some nectar. That's totally what it is.

**FATE #2.** Bees are attracted to my red hair, I think.

**FATE #1.** Mine, too!

**FATE #2.** Do bees prefer redheads?

**FATE #3.** I heard that it takes a whole colony of bees to pollinate one acre of cantaloupes.

**FATE #1.** You did?

**FATE #2.** Wow.

**FATE #1.** Do they go around on some kind of truck?

**DEAD PETER.** The Fates. They're sort of like insects themselves, fluttery, delicate, alighting on one topic, then another, like butterflies.

**FATES.** Hi Peter.

**DEAD PETER.** Hi.

**FATE #3.** Sorry about that thing on the subway.

*(Pause.)*

**FATE #3.** Not really.

*(The FATES giggle. They swarm toward an exit.)*

**FATE #1.** Let's play the "why" game!

**FATE #2.** Yeah!

**FATES.** *(Overlapping each other:)*

Why does an oak tree have so many acorns?

Why do monkeys have prehensile tails?

Why do the marmosets have ear tufts?

Why are there so many different kinds of flowers?

Why did Galapagos and Aldabras tortoises get so big?

Why are birds' tongues the same color as their beaks?

**FATE #3.** Grey!

**FATES.** Why does a lion have a mane?

Why do goats have those weird horizontal pupils?

Why are dinosaurs extinct?

*(BETSY stands in their way.)*

**BETSY.** Some of us aren't.

*(The FATES are speechless.)*

**FATES.** *(Overlapping:)*

But—But—But—

I thought that all of them were gone.

Hey that's a dinosaur.

**DEAD PETER.** This is Betsy.

**BETSY.** I'm looking for my egg.

**FATES.** Whoa.

**DEAD PETER.** What is it that you know for certain? Let's start with what's in this book.

### **The Book Dance**

*(Characters come forward, each with their own book, each superseded by the next. It's a sort of book dance.)*

*(ALVAREZ brings an atlas.)*

*(M-DOGG brings The Origin of Species.)*

*(DEAD PETER brings the Tibetan Book of the Dead.)*

*(The GIRL brings Goodnight Moon.)*

*(BETSY brings a book by Dr. Spock.)*

*(BATHSHEBA brings a scrapbook.)*

*(The FATES bring out a big book of Greek mythology.)*

*(Finally, the BIOLOGIST enters with the biology textbook. The others leave.)*

### **Think of the Word Broth.**

*(The BIOLOGIST holds open a biology textbook. He lets it drop with a heavy thud to the ground.)*

**BIOLOGIST.** Eight hundred pages. I've read the whole thing.

There's only one interesting part. It's on the first page of the first chapter. It involves this story about a grasshopper. The grasshopper is, the book says, "brightly colored"—red, yellow and black (Class, Insecta; Order, Orthoptera)—and sitting on a plant, eating a leaf. It finishes the leaf and jumps toward another plant but lands instead on a sticky thread, one of several hundred sticky threads that make up a spider's web. It didn't see the spider's web. Or couldn't. For the grasshopper, it is like walking into a nightmare. Each thrust of its legs as it tries to get away sends a vibration to the spider. Maybe the grasshopper knows by now that he is in what we would describe as a bad horror flick. The spider, says the book, is "brown and yellow." (Class, Arachnida; Order, Araneae.) It takes the grasshopper in its jaws and bites down. But it doesn't eat the grasshopper alive. No. That would be too easy. It injects poison through its fangs. The poison kills the grasshopper. Then, the book says, "digestive fluids from the spider's mouth liquefies the grasshopper's body and the spider sucks up the resulting broth."

"Resulting broth" is a nice touch.

Makes you think of two conflicting things: a witch, stirring her potion over a flame; and the person who cooks you dinner.

My wife used to cook dinner.

Broth is a nice word. The “th” at the end makes it sound both comforting and sinister. Will you ever again eat soup without that image in your head?

The spider drops the empty body of the grasshopper down onto the ground, like you might flick a pistachio shell off the table.

Why does this happen? Why would God create a world in which this kind of violence happens?

Sometimes the best secrets are told right up front. Do you know what it is here? Sometimes the best secrets are hidden in plain view, like lions the color of tall grass, and just as hungry. Sometimes you have to rely on smell not sight to know they’re there.

Don’t worry about reading the whole 800 pages. The secret is up front. Early. Fast.

Watch out.

My lab monkeys have escaped. Watch out for them, too.

### **Herman the Fly**

*(The FATES re-enter.)*

**FATE #1.** Speaking of spiders, we forgot to tell you one little thing.

**FATE #2.** *We forgot? You’re the one in charge of this stage of creation.*

**FATE #1.** Ok. *I forgot.*

**FATE #2.** I hate it when she makes us take the blame.

**FATE #3.** Seriously. Everybody’s all like, birth, birth, birth, how great is birth. Yeah, well there are things in this world other than birth.

**FATE #2.** Totally.

**FATE #1.** Do you want me to do this or not.

*(Pause.)*

**FATE #3.** Go ahead already.

*(FATE #1 makes a circle from a piece of rope. It looks sort of like an egg. From the egg emerges HERMAN. An announcement:)*

**HERMAN.** I am born!

*(Wild applause.)*

**FATE #1.** This is Herman. He is a fly. He has 24 hours to live.

**HERMAN.** Okay. Now what.

*(Pause.)*

**HERMAN.** Okay, people, COME ON. I don't have time for this. WHAT'S NEXT!

*(The FATES giggle and re-coil the rope.)*

*(BETSY appears.)*

**BETSY.** I'm looking for my egg.

**FATE #1.** Your egg.

**FATE #2.** This was the egg for a fly.

**BETSY.** Mine hasn't hatched yet.

**FATE #2.** Where did you leave it?

**BETSY.** I was having tea.

**FATE #1.** When I lose things, I try to retrace my steps.

**BETSY.** Retrace my steps?

**FATES.** *(Overlapping:)* Yeah, that's a good idea—  
I did that with the pair of earrings I lost—  
I remember those—

*(They continue, exiting.)*

### **Serotonin! Serotonin!**

*(Marching, percussive banging, we hear it from off. Then, they enter: THE ALL CHIMP RUNAWAY LAB MONKEY BAND. They fashion themselves into something vaguely linear. They stop and sing Greek chorus style.)*

**MONKEYS.**

Serotonin! Serotonin!  
Re-up-take inhibitors!  
Were tested on us monkeys  
By an evil scientist  
Far away in a research lab  
Across the River Styx  
Serotonin! Serotonin!  
Reuptake inhibitors!  
Now we have escaped  
But to no avail  
Now we have no pills  
And our e-mo-tions have paled

*(On “pale” they spin around in a whirlpool.)*

**BIOLOGIST.** Did I hear—Lab Monkeys?

*(The song abruptly ends. The BIOLOGIST enters. The LAB MONKEYS freeze, hide behind each other, create some kind of desperate camouflage. The BIOLOGIST is fooled.)*

**BIOLOGIST.** I guess not.

*(The BIOLOGIST exits.)*

**LAB MONKEY #1.** Damn you scientists! Damn you pills!  
You’ve damned our monkey ways and ills!

*(They help each other up. They resume their percussive music and exit.)*

**1,200 Hours 30 Minutes Since Peter Died**

**DEAD PETER.** Being dead is pretty strange. About 1,300 hours into it, I discovered I could do weird stuff, like open locked cage doors, just by blinking my eyes.

Anyway.

This is Bathsheba.

*(ABE notices BATHSHEBA is behind him.)*

**BATHSHEBA.** Abe? Abe honey, can you hear me?

**ABE.** What.

**BATHSHEBA.** Abe, honey.

**ABE.** I'm not deaf.

**BATHSHEBA.** I've been calling your name, trying to get your attention, for the past 10 minutes.

**DEAD PETER.** Abe has had an especially hard time recently. Like, Bathsheba is alive, if I didn't make that clear earlier. And me, well we went through that whole thing at the beginning about how I'm not. Abe is sort of caught in between us.

*(BETSY enters. The scales on her arms glint.)*

**ABE.** It's so bright. So bright.

**BATHSHEBA.** That late afternoon sun.

**ABE.** Right.

*(BETSY comes closer.)*

**BATHSHEBA.** You've been in here all day, Abe, I worry.

**BETSY.** Have you seen my egg?

**ABE.** No.

**BATHSHEBA.** What?

**ABE.** No. I mean, nothing. I mean, don't.

**BATHSHEBA.** Well.

**DEAD PETER.** My aunt Bathsheba may come across as unfeeling, but I don't think that's true. It was as hard on her as it was on Uncle Abe. She just tries to keep moving forward, which is I guess what you have to do.

*(BATHSHEBA starts to lower the blinds.)*

**ABE.** Wait. Wait. What are you doing?

**BATHSHEBA.** The sun is setting, Abe. I'm lowering the blinds.

**ABE.** Wait. Wait.

**BATHSHEBA.** It's time for dinner.

**ABE.** Just leave them up.

*(BETSY comes closer.)*

**BATHSHEBA.** Are you coming?

**BETSY.** I'm trying to find my egg.

**ABE.** Where?

**BATHSHEBA.** To dinner. Abe, please.

**BETSY.** I left it someplace.

**ABE.** Yes. Of course. Yes. I will.

**BATHSHEBA.** It's ready. It's on the table.

**BETSY.** So I'm retracing my steps.

**BATHSHEBA.** Abe—

**ABE.** Bathsheba, give me five minutes—

**BATHSHEBA.** It's dinner time.

**ABE.** I know.

**DEAD PETER.** Wouldn't we all like to retrace our steps at one point or another and see what we left behind?

**BATHSHEBA.** Abe, you've been in this room all day. Do you even know what time it is?

**ABE.** Of course I do.

**BATHSHEBA.** Look at your watch.

**ABE.** I don't need a watch.

**BATHSHEBA.** Abe.

**BETSY.** I'll let you know if I find it.

*(BETSY leaves. ABE watches her go.)*

**ABE.** 1,200 hours, 30 minutes.

**BATHSHEBA.** What?

**DEAD PETER.** What?

**ABE.** 1,200 hours, 30 minutes since Peter has been gone.

**DEAD PETER.** Um. Wait. At 1300 hours I unlocked the lab monkeys' cages. One blink, they're out.

**BATHSHEBA.** Oh, Abe.

**DEAD PETER.** And now enough time has passed for the lab monkeys not only to escape but also form a band. They learned songs. That takes practice.

**ABE.** 1,200 hours, 30 minutes. That's what my watch says.

**BATHSHEBA.** Right. Right.

### **A Tea Party**

*(The FLOWERS are seated around a low, child-size table, set with several teacups.)*

**FLOWER #1.** Are we all here?

**FLOWER #2.** There are only three of us.

**FLOWER #1.** Then I call this meeting to order.

**FLOWER #3.** It's more like an emergency session, isn't it?

**FLOWER #1.** Point taken.

**FLOWER #2.** It's not an emergency.

**FLOWER #1.** Can you tell how much time we have?

*(FLOWER #3 cranes her neck to look off.)*

**FLOWER #3.** It's okay, but talk fast.

**FLOWER #1.** Ahem. The Flower Code of Conduct. Number one—

**FLOWER #2.** Every single time we have a meeting you bring up the Code.

**FLOWER #3.** Every single time we have a meeting, it's because you've violated it one way or another.

**FLOWER #2.** That's so not true.

**FLOWER #1.** Explain how we got here, then. Flowers don't go to tea parties.

**FLOWER #2.** Picky, picky.

*(FLOWER #2 looks off again. She motions with her petals at FLOWER #1.)*

**FLOWER #3.** Go. Hurry.

**FLOWER #1.** The Flower Code of Conduct:

Know your roots.

The early bloom gets the bee.

Always look your best.

Never turn down a dance.

At least once a day, stare directly at the sun.

But don't ever, ever—

**FLOWERS.** Talk around humans.

**FLOWER #2.** Okay. Okay.

**FLOWER #3.** Here she comes. Quiet!

*(They arrange themselves. The GIRL enters, carefully carrying an over-full teapot.)*

**GIRL.** Who wants tea?

*(FLOWER #2 raises her hand. The other FLOWERS hasten to quash this flagrant violation before the GIRL can notice. The GIRL joins them at the table.)*

**GIRL.** What a pretty tea party! Don't you think? My mom and I used to play tea party. And then I saw you in the backyard and I thought, why, you're almost as pretty as she was. I'm going to tell you a story, Okay?

*(The FLOWERS don't respond.)*

**GIRL.** Once upon a time there lived a being. The being made a zoo, and to go in it he made tiny little organisms, which he named and

played with. The zoo was called Zoo Plankton, because he named it after himself. One day when the being arrived at their cages, he saw that all his creatures had disappeared. Well, not quite disappeared, but maybe some how had all slushed together in to one big gack-like blib. Then the blib started to stretch and birts broke off, and they all came out differently. Some were dark, some were light, and they were all formed differently. Plankton decided to call these mini blibulars *peepol*. Among the peepol was one that Plankton called Jim. Jim grew strong and then started to eat other peepol, and he got bigger and bigger. Soon there were no peepol left but Jim and he was big. He said he didn't need Plankton and went off by himself. Plankton watched Jim go and was sad. So he started over. This time he made two little peepol: a boy and a girl. He named them Jack and Greta. No. Alexis. Yeah. Alexis was good, she didn't do anything bad, and Jack was the opposite. Or maybe his name was Billy. Yeah. Okay, Alexis and Billy took Plankton and chopped him up to pieces and made the earth and the sky. Or maybe their names were really Charlie and Umberto. Charlie's a girl. I like the name Charlie. Charlie and Umberto discovered that a bunch of monkeys were more advanced then they were, so they learned from the monkeys and then they killed the monkeys and ate them, and so the peepol thrived and nobody cared what they were named. And the lived happily ever after...until they started killing each other, too. The end.

*(The FLOWERS look stricken.)*

**GIRL.** Oh, I forgot the scones! I'll be right back.

*(She leaves.)*

**FLOWER #2.** Oh, what have I done.

**FLOWER #1.** I swear, if we ever get out of here—

*(The GIRL returns and surprises them.)*

**GIRL.** Don't even think about leaving. I miss my mother and I'm going to keep you until you all wilt.

*(She storms off again.)*

### Herman Does Puberty

**HERMAN.** What is the point? I mean, people say that everything has a meaning, a purpose. But WHAT is the meaning of a flower? Or of anything? Is it just something that we will never know? “Secrets secrets are no fun” certainly doesn’t seem to be the case here. I guess I’m just going to have to go with the idea that God and Mama Nature decided on it, and pinky swore not to tell anyone. But what if there is no God? That totally messes up the whole theory! What if it’s a lie? What if God is just an excuse we make up for stuff science can’t explain? What if when you die there is nothing? Just you and the dirt. Decomposing slowly but surely. God that sucks. I guess I can’t really say that now, though, can I—the God part. So. That just sucks.

*(Pause.)*

Okay. That was puberty.

### Betsy and Alvarez Begin to Believe in Impossible Things

*(Implications of the outdoors. The books from the book dance, set in a stack, become the land’s geological layers. BETSY and ALVAREZ investigate.)*

**ALVAREZ.** One: The Mesozoic era is also called The Age of Reptiles because of the great variety of those creatures that flourished during that time.

**BETSY.** Including dinosaurs.

**ALVAREZ.** Yes.

**BETSY.** I knew you could help me, Alvarez.

**ALVAREZ.** Two: The Triassic period in this era, so named for rocks with three divisions, as seen in Germany, began about 245 million years ago and lasted for about 40 million years. During this time, many species developed a protective casing around their vulnerable offspring. A shell.

**BETSY.** A shell.

**ALVAREZ.** Yes.

**BETSY.** Do you see it in there?

**ALVAREZ.** My dear. I see a lot of things.

**BETSY.** But not my egg.

**ALVAREZ.** Three: Dinosaurs first appeared at the end of the Triassic period.

**BETSY.** So maybe it's sometime after that.

**ALVAREZ.** Three: A thin layer of clay in Italy gives us the precise time when, 140 million years later, the dinosaurs vanished.

**BETSY.** Mostly.

**ALVAREZ.** Right.

**BETSY.** I wonder how she's changed.

**ALVAREZ.** Who?

**BETSY.** My egg, Alvarez.

*(Pause.)*

**ALVAREZ.** Betsy, I'm not sure that this is going to work—

**BETSY.** You don't think I'll find it?

**ALVAREZ.** It's not that.

**BETSY.** They told me to retrace my steps.

**ALVAREZ.** The Fates.

**BETSY.** Yes.

**ALVAREZ.** They didn't know you were talking about an egg thousands of millennia old.

**BETSY.** My steps are preserved in rock. So it should be fairly easy.

**ALVAREZ.** Betsy.

**BETSY.** You don't believe it's possible?

**ALVAREZ.** I am cautious. That's all.

**BETSY.** You're a scientist.

**ALVAREZ.** Not the Wizard of Oz.

**BETSY.** Right.

*(Pause.)*

**BETSY.** Abe says that you took all the dinosaurs up with you on a comet.

**ALVAREZ.** Abe. Well.

**BETSY.** Abe believes in impossible things.

**ALVAREZ.** That he does.

*(ABE appears, as if he were at a window looking out.)*

**ABE.** Betsy?

**ALVAREZ.** Does he always come when you call him?

**BETSY.** He's very loyal.

**ABE.** Hey. Alvarez!

*(ABE mimes riding a rodeo bull.)*

**ABE.** YEE-HAW!

*(BETSY giggles.)*

**BETSY.** Just because something is impossible doesn't mean it's not true.

**ALVAREZ.** Like a comet taking the dinosaurs away.

**BETSY.** Most of them.

**ALVAREZ.** When we made our discovery of that layer from the time when the dinosaurs disappeared, we found something strange. The clay in Italy contained large amounts of two metals: platinum and iridium.

*(ABE continues to ride the bull.)*

**ALVAREZ.** Platinum and iridium are very rare.

**BETSY.** They are?

**ALVAREZ.** The platinum was eventually traced back to the wedding ring of a lab technician, but there was no explanation for the iridium except one.

**BETSY.** Except one?

**ALVAREZ.** What do you think that was.

**BETSY.** I don't know.

**ALVAREZ.** Space.

*(Beat. BETSY looks back and forth between ABE and ALVAREZ.)*

**ALVAREZ.** It's funny, isn't it. Some things just don't sound true.

*(BATHSHEBA comes along behind ABE and closes the blinds. ABE and BETSY lose sight of each other.)*

**ALVAREZ.** Would you hand me that sample?

*(BETSY hands ALVAREZ one of the books that they have excavated. It falls open naturally to the place where a small item rests. ALVAREZ gasps in surprise.)*

**BETSY.** What is it?

**ALVAREZ.** Look.

**BETSY.** Is it my egg?

**ALVAREZ.** No.

**BETSY.** Then what did you find?

**ALVAREZ.** A feather.

### **Monkey Zion**

**LAB MONKEY #1.** Jane Goodall, your tales of wonder and silver-back gorillas have been told to us through the generations through our prophets, let us remember them well: Bobo, forever martyred by L'Oreal. He was worth it. Chee Chee, martyr, prophet, Viagra test monkey. Let us take their example to heart! We will no more succumb to the scientists' murderous ways and be treated as animals! No more shampoo in the eyes! No More Silicone! No More

Pacemakers! Hell no! No more, no more! Mercy Me! Jane Goodall, prophetess, lead us on the way of light and salvation. Escape and Freedom! Tonight!

Follow me!  
To a land of milk and honey  
A land without scientists  
With their probes and cosmetics

**LAB MONKEY #1**

Jane Goodall! Jane Goodall!  
Ooooooo  
Aaaaaaaa

**LAB MONKEYS**

Lead us to the Promised Land  
The Monkey Promised Land  
Monkey Zion! Monkey Zion!

**ALL.** Lead us There! Take us there!

**LAB MONKEY #1.** Have faith my children  
in the prophet's word  
we'll find the promised land  
of that I am sure  
Fear not—Zion is near

**LAB MONKEY #1**

Jane Goodall! Jane Goodall!  
Ooooooo  
Aaaaaaaa

**LAB MONKEYS**

Lead us to the Promised Land  
The Monkey Promised Land  
Monkey Zion! Monkey Zion!

**ALL.** Lead us There! Take us there!

**LAB MONKEY #1.** Fear not—Zion is near  
Keep your eyes to the horizon—  
It shall appear  
Fear not—let us continue

**LAB MONKEY #1**

Jane Goodall! Jane Goodall!  
Ooooooo  
Aaaaaaaa

**LAB MONKEYS**

Lead us to the Promised Land  
The Monkey Promised Land  
Monkey Zion! Monkey Zion!

**LAB MONKEY #1.** No more testing  
No more sutures  
No more operations  
No more scientific futures!  
From now on we'll be free!

Follow me!

**LAB MONKEYS** (*Crescendo:*) TO ZION!

*(The GIRL runs on.)*

**GIRL.** Monkeys!

*(The LAB MONKEYS hide. The BIOLOGIST enters and does not see them.)*

**BIOLOGIST.** Ah. Imagination. One wonders what the adaptive purpose of that is. Does it make us more fit to our environment? Does it make us more attractive partners? Or is it just random and therefore harmless?

**GIRL.** Look! Monkeys! Monkeys!

**BIOLOGIST.** Monkeys? Hah.

**GIRL.** But I see them—

**BIOLOGIST.** Vision is the most complex of the five senses.

**GIRL.** But—

**BIOLOGIST.** Yes. But. But if you trust your eyes only, then a bat is a bird and a whale is a fish, and they're not. If you trust your eyes only, people with hair and skin that aren't yours are not people. And if you trust your eyes only, then living things haven't ever changed very much, and time doesn't exist, because all we see is what's around us now, and we can't observe what happened long before us, long before eyeballs even existed.

I see your mother every day. We see sometimes what we want to see, and not what is in front of us.

*(During the following, the LAB MONKEYS periodically peek out of their hiding places, stick out their tongues at the GIRL, make faces, make little dances, and generally throw silent taunts at the BIOLOGIST, none of which he sees. The GIRL eventually gives up trying to get his attention and instead enjoys the game she gets to play with the MONKEYS.)*

**BIOLOGIST.** Humans aren't the only one with eyeballs, you know. Octopi also have in many ways superior eyes. And insects have quite effective compound eyeballs.

But all eyeballs have a secret.

All eyeballs developed from the same gene. It's an old one. Old.

**GIRL.** Like Grandma?

**BIOLOGIST.** No. *Old* old. Hundreds of millions of years. The time it takes one galaxy to rotate on its axis. The time it took for everything so far to happen. This one gene. People have it. Insects have it. Octopi have it.

But that's not the secret.

**GIRL.** Well, what is it then?

**BIOLOGIST.** You are impatient. Humans in general are very concerned about time. People learned about fire. They learned about words. They learned about instant messaging. Everyone is impatient. But hundreds of millions of years and the gene for the sight is pretty much the same. Can you imagine why a thing like that wouldn't change when everything else does? It must be that its instructions mean life.

That's not the secret, either.

There are eyeless organisms. Not just blind but eyeless. And even they have the gene. They just use it for something other than eyeballs.

What is it that they use it for?

That is the secret.

It's a good one, isn't it.

**GIRL.** Yes.

**BIOLOGIST.** I miss your mother, too.

*(The BIOLOGIST exits, leaving behind his biology book. LAB MONKEY #1 sneaks out. The other MONKEYS sneak out of hiding, too. LAB MONKEY #1 picks up the biology book.)*

*(The GIRL comes over and stares at it also. The LAB MONKEY #1 gives the GIRL a conspiratorial look. They giggle together. All the LAB MONKEYS giggle.)*

### **You Heard The One About The Fly At The Bar?**

*(HERMAN sidles up to FLY GIRL #1 at the bar.)*

**HERMAN.** Hey. Wanna mate?

*(She slaps him and leaves. HERMAN spots FLY GIRL #2.)*

**HERMAN.** Hi there. Uh. You're cute.

**FLY GIRL #2.** Thanks.

**HERMAN.** Wanna mate?

*(She slaps him also and leaves. FLY GIRL #3 sits down next to him.)*

**FLY GIRL #3.** Rough day, huh.

**HERMAN.** Yes! And the thing is, I'm perfectly harmless. I wouldn't hurt a fly.

**FLY GIRL #3.** That's funny.

**HERMAN.** Really.

**FLY GIRL #3.** Yeah.

**HERMAN.** You wanna—um. Talk for a while?

*(She smiles at him.)*

### **The Flowers Plot Their Escape**

*(The FLOWERS sit at the tea table.)*

**FLOWER #1.** Potpourri.

*(FLOWERS #2 & #3 gasp in horror.)*

**FLOWER #1.** Potpourri. I know.

**FLOWER #3.** That's a terrible dream.

**FLOWER #1.** Tell me about it.

**FLOWER #2.** It gives me the shivers.

**FLOWER #1.** And then, once I'm all dried and packed into a plastic bag, they spray me with flower scent.

**FLOWERS #2 & #3.** Flower scent!

**FLOWER #1.** That's when I wake up.

**FLOWERS #2 & #3.** Ew. How awful. Yuck. *(etc.)*

**FLOWER #3.** And I thought being chased by a clear glass vase was bad enough.

**FLOWER #1.** So now we're here. Uprooted. Sitting at a tea party.

**FLOWER #2.** Talk about a nightmare.

**FLOWER #3.** You got us into this mess.

**FLOWER #2.** I said I was sorry. What else do you want?

**FLOWER #3.** I want to wake up tomorrow in my own bed!

**FLOWER #1.** Okay. Okay. Enough fighting. We need to come up with a plan.

**FLOWER #3.** A plan?

**FLOWER #2.** You think we can get out of here?

**FLOWER #1.** I think it's possible.

**FLOWER #3.** How?

*(The GIRL enters. The FLOWERS are suddenly silenced.)*

**GIRL.** I'm going to tell you a story.

**FLOWER #3.** *(Sotto voce:)* Oh boy.

**GIRL.** Once upon a time, there was an asteroid. It did not have a rose, or a businessman, or a king, or a lamplighter, or a volcano, or a little prince. It had a warren, though, and five rabbits. Their names were Hazel, Blackberry, Bluebell, Pipkin, and Fiver. They did not travel to other asteroids, but stayed right where they were and lived happily ever after. The end.

*(The FLOWERS smile politely but don't say a word. The GIRL finds this aggravating.)*

**GIRL.** There WAS an asteroid! There was there was there WAS!

### **Do You Think That Means We Never Existed?**

*(BATHSHEBA holds a scrapbook.)*

**BATHSHEBA.** You ever slam your finger in a car door? You don't feel it at first. Then it's a dull pain. Like pain through a layer of felt or something. And then someone takes the felt away. It gets sharper and sharper and moves up your arm—and suddenly it was never in your arm at all because it's burning in your brain. You can feel the blue blood, cold and sharp, like the blue itself carries the pain around.

Blue is hands down the most popular color in the world. Like the color of the sea off the coast of Greece. "It's so peaceful," people say. "It's calm and serene."

*(She shows a picture from her scrapbook.)*

**BATHSHEBA.** This is the island where we stayed after we first got married. Abe went to Italy with his first wife. That's where he met Alvarez. We went to Greece. We didn't meet anyone there. Greece was amazing. We stayed on an island. There was a small chapel at the bottom of one cliff. A long staircase down. I counted the steps. I don't remember now how many there were. A lot. It was steep. It felt like gravity worked differently there because I didn't fall into the ocean and I probably should have. I had never seen blue that blue before. The houses were white and the rooftops were blue also. Blue tile.

Blue is also the color of a bloody fingernail. Today I slammed the car door on my hand. I was thinking that Abe is blue's favorite color. Or. I mean, the other way around. Blue is Abe's. I have been putting things backward since Peter died. I just can't seem to make order anymore, or speak in the right direction, or go forward.

It's very, very hard.

Abe wore his blue suit to the service for Peter. Peter was Abe's nephew. We took care of him sometimes.

We didn't have kids of our own.

Do you think that means we never existed?

### **Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha Ha Ha**

*(LAB MONKEY #1 produces a tuning fork. They find some kind of pitch together.)*

#### **LAB MONKEYS.**

Oh! Scientist!

You'll never catch us!

We are so smart! So cunning! So superbly clever!

Ha-ha-ha-ha ha ha!

We showed you!

You silly little scientist!

Thinking you had power over us!

Ha-ha-ha-ha ha ha!

Now we're back to the wild

Pestering you with great style

Forever away from your hell of a lab

Ha-ha-ha-ha ha ha!

Not even if you asked us

Not even if you dragged us away

Would we ever, ever go back

Ha-ha-ha-ha ha ha!

*(As the LAB MONKEYS march off, the BIOLOGIST snags a straggler, LAB MONKEY #2, and drags him in the other direction.)*

### **Dead Peter Catches Us Up On What's Happening**

**DEAD PETER.** Right.

Here's the deal.

It appears that I'm going backwards in time.

Uncle Abe and Aunt Bathsheba are also.

And Alvarez. He's that geologist guy.

It's all Betsy's fault. She's retracing her steps and we have to go with her.

You first met me as Dead Peter, well over the last little while all that fungus that I was all show-off about has retreated. Like it was never there to begin with. I can feel it. The little fungus playground—gone. The grocery store. Gone. All the little fungus highways, office buildings, dog parks—bye bye. It's gliding out the way it came in, like the tide, leaving what? Me. Before I died.

Weird, huh.

When have you ever heard of this happening before? I mean, it's sort of unprecedented. Has anything ever gone backwards before in the history of everything? There's no adaptive technique for that, is there. You don't survive better as a species by dying. You have to live to survive. Once you're dead, you're dead.

*(BETSY enters.)*

**BETSY.** Mostly.

**DEAD PETER.** At first I was alive, and then I wasn't, but my body was helping other things live, so I was sort of still living, too. Now, each time you meet me I'll be closer and closer to the moment when I died. And then what will happen? Who will I be?

**BETSY.** I don't know.

**DEAD PETER.** Being alive is so much more confusing than being dead.

**BETSY.** Tell me about it.

**DEAD PETER.** What do you do when you're confused?

**BETSY.** I walk places

**DEAD PETER.** Where do you walk?

**BETSY.** Beside the purple water, up into the sticky mountains where the fresh oranges are.

**DEAD PETER.** Wow.

**BETSY.** It's a popular dinosaur hangout.

**DEAD PETER.** I used to take the subway.

**BETSY.** What's a subway?

**DEAD PETER.** Never mind.

**BETSY.** I hope I find my egg.

**DEAD PETER.** Yeah.

### **Herman Does Midlife**

*(HERMAN and FLY GIRL #3 pose for a family portrait.)*

**FLY GIRL #3.** Everybody smile!

*(The flash of a camera.)*

**HERMAN.** You gotta take those family portraits every chance you get. They grow up so fast, you know.

**FLY GIRL #3.** I know.

**HERMAN.** Why, just yesterday I was—  
I was—  
Not even born yet.  
Huh.

**FATE #2.** Imagine his lifetime in proportion to the whole five billion years of the planet's history.

**FATES.** *(Overlapping:)*

12am: Earth forms.

3:55am: First life.

9:30pm: First plants on land.

11:19pm: First flowers.

11:40pm: POW, last dinosaurs.

1.9 seconds to midnight: First humans.

**HERMAN.** Well. Sounds like it's about time for a midlife crisis.  
Where's that convertible!

### Watch

*(A formerly runaway LAB MONKEY is strapped to the Biologist's examining table, barely anesthetized, obviously in danger. The BIOLOGIST putzes around it, setting up the appropriate tools, covering the LAB MONKEY's body with a paper-thin sheet that has an open square in the center, washing his hands, etc.)*

**BIOLOGIST.** "Constant change." One of the book's favorite phrases. It would know about change. It's been revised nine times. Nine times! And why do you think that is? Mistakes! Mistakes of epic proportion. But this textbook nonetheless finds its way, still rife with bad information, into the classrooms of our children, into their lockers, into their homes, into their very minds, like a bad movie, like a disease that replicates and destroys.

How do you think I lost my wife?

In fact, I can drop this textbook open to any page and find something completely irrelevant, even inaccurate, even dangerous. Watch.

*(The BIOLOGIST lets the pages of the book fall open, revealing the discarded banana peel left there earlier. He hears a snicker of laughter. He spins around but nobody is there.)*

*(He holds up the banana peel by one limp, quickly darkening end.)*

**BIOLOGIST.** They think they're so clever.

*(The BIOLOGIST takes the lab monkey's clothes and props and folds them into a small box. He puts it away for storage.)*

**BIOLOGIST.** The book says that "Viruses can enter cells and cause permanent, inheritable changes." They make normal cells into virus-making factories, filling them up more and more until they burst. But on their own they don't reproduce, feed, or grow. Very horror-show. Are they alive? We don't know. Maybe they arrived from outer space on an errant comet, along with some bacteria, a few protozoa, other agents of change. That's what disease does. It changes you. Would you change if you didn't have to?

I had to change when my wife died.

That was like a virus that slammed into my life.

Now I'm a new person. With a new mission. I'm going to find out how things change.

Watch.

*(The BIOLOGIST takes a large needle, fills it with fluid, and injects it into the exposed area of the LAB MONKEY's belly.)*

### **Malaria Bitch Fights the Powers, Fights the Powers That Be.**

*(Represent.)*

**M-DOGG.** Shiat! That was a badass trip yo...whoa...this monkey is a slammin' joint yo—how'd all these people get in here...Anywayz, gotta introduze myself.

Yo, Wusup. I'm M-Dogg, the Malaria Bitch. Ya heard? That's right. I'm a badass mutha protozoa yo! Malaria Represent! Better recognize. Anywayz, me and my dogs gonna tear shit up in this here monkey—create some mad hyster-I-AY in the hizzouse. That monkey shoulda never messed with my scientist-homie yo! Represent. Mad props to the scientists yo.

*(The BIOLOGIST enters.)*

**BIOLOGIST.** Now this is what I call imagination.

**M-DOGG.** Anywayz, my peeps been blowin' me up bout this here gang war, dig? The whole hood's gone wack yo, cuz of this battle between the 2 baddest gangs in the cardiac system—the Bloods and the Cells. Anywayz, whilz I wuz just postin' here with you hellafine peeps, I went and tooks the opportunity to wreak some mad havoc yo... Now this here monkey's got a mean mofo headache and a fire in his blood even FDNY couldn't put out and it's all cuz of M-Dogg! Represent!

**BIOLOGIST.** Yeah! Represent!

*(Enter the WHITE BLOOD CELLS.)*

**BIOLOGIST.** Uh oh.

**M-DOGG.** A few white blood cells? Whatever.

**BIOLOGIST.** Immune system response.

**M-DOGG.** Unless they got some quinine, yo, it ain't even gonna be a fight.

*(An epic battle ensues between M-DOGG and the WHITE BLOOD CELLS. The WHITE BLOOD CELLS win, probably.)*

### **24 Hours 15 Minutes Since Peter Has Been Gone**

*(In Dead Peter's room, ABE searches through the closet, which is full of books, ropes, and other props. BATHSHEBA finds him there.)*

**BATHSHEBA.** Abe! Abe, what are you doing?

**ABE.** Digging.

**BATHSHEBA.** What?

**ABE.** I'm digging.

**BATHSHEBA.** You're making a mess.

**ABE.** I just looked at the clock, Bathsheba.

**BATHSHEBA.** The clock?

**ABE.** Am I only going to tell time now based on this?

**BATHSHEBA.** I don't understand.

**ABE.** 24 hours, 15 minutes. That's what the clock said.

**BATHSHEBA.** Oh.

**ABE.** 24 hours, 15 minutes since Peter has been gone. Is that the way I'm always going to think?

**BATHSHEBA.** No. Of course not.

*(DEAD PETER watches them.)*

**DEAD PETER.** Walter Alvarez never really rode a meteor.

He didn't come for the dinosaurs and take them back into space.

He did discover something in Italy, in some rocks—

And a lot of this one rare metal, called Iridium.

Somebody else found it all over Waco.

But you find a lot of weird things in Waco.

Turns out, Waco was washed over by a tidal wave, millions of years ago.

It came up all the way from the Yucatan.

There's a crater there.

You can see it on pictures taken from a satellite.

It's pretty big.

If a meteor that big crashed into that hook of land

Everything in North America would have caught on fire

All the trees, everything—

And black smoke would have cut off all the sun all over the world.

We don't know for certain that happened—

But we do know that a tidal wave reached all the way up to central Texas.

This is what the evidence points to.

The evidence that we have.

The circumstances.

We are just trying to figure out how we got this big chance to live.

It's a theory of, well,

Everything so far.

*(BETSY enters.)*

**BETSY.** Peter, I've looked everywhere.

**DEAD PETER.** Shh. Watch.

**BETSY.** What is he doing?

**DEAD PETER.** He says he's digging.

**BETSY.** Is my egg in your closet?

**DEAD PETER.** No. I think Abe's just sad.

**BETSY.** Oh.

**ABE.** Bathsheba.

**BATHSHEBA.** Yes, Abe.

**ABE.** I feel like I'm wandering around in my head. I don't know where I am. I'm lost. I don't know what to do.

**BATHSHEBA.** It's okay. It's going to be okay.

**ABE.** I love you.

**BATHSHEBA.** I know.

**DEAD PETER.** Betsy, I was thinking.

**BETSY.** About what?

**DEAD PETER.** Betsy, are you for real or am I just imagining you?

**BETSY.** Why is that important?

**DEAD PETER.** Well.

After the meteor, things that were small, maybe, and closer to the ground,

Like mammals,

Might have survived better than big things, maybe,

Like dinosaurs.

Things that were small, like mammals, suddenly might have had the whole world to themselves.

**BETSY.** One big salad bar.

**DEAD PETER.** Right.

**BETSY.** It's all about survival. You do what you need to do to survive.

*(ABE holds out his hand to BATHSHEBA.)*

**ABE.** Do you want to dig with me?

**BATHSHEBA.** Sure, Abe. Sure I do.

*(She digs with him.)*

**BETSY.** Peter you were a very messy person.

**DEAD PETER.** Thanks.

**Think Of The Word Broth.**

*(The FATES slowly wrap HERMAN in rope.)*

**HERMAN.** Hey.

**FATES.** Hey.

*(The FATES continue wrapping. HERMAN struggles.)*

**HERMAN.** Hey, hey, hey—that's kind of tight.

**FATE #1.** Sorry, Herman.

**HERMAN.** Wait. Wait.

**FATE #2.** It's going to be okay.

**HERMAN.** Stop. Let me go.

**FATE #3.** Think pleasant thoughts.

**HERMAN.** Pleasant—what are you talking about—what—Hey, don't do that—

*(FATE #3 cuts the end.)*

**FATE #3.** Think of the word "broth."

*(The FATES exit, leaving HERMAN alone.)*

**HERMAN.** Broth?

**And I'm a *Diatryma* From the Pliocene Epoch**

*(At the subway. PETER finds something.)*

**PETER.** Cool.

*(He holds it up. It's pieces of an empty egg shell.)*

**PETER.** I wonder where this came from.

**GIRL.** A pigeon, probably.

*(PETER notices the GIRL.)*

**PETER.** A pigeon? In the subway?

**GIRL.** What else could it be?

**PETER.** I don't know. A fossil.

**GIRL.** A fossil.

**PETER.** A reptile.

**GIRL.** Right.

**PETER.** Reptiles lay eggs.

**GIRL.** I know that.

**PETER.** Maybe it's the egg of an ancient reptile. Maybe I've just made a critical scientific discovery.

**GIRL.** Yeah. And maybe I'm a *Diatryma* from the Pliocene epoch.

*(Pause.)*

**PETER.** What's that.

**GIRL.** Just a weird looking bird kind of thing. My dad's a scientist.

**PETER.** Oh.

**GIRL.** Feathers evolved among dinosaurs. Did you know that? And it wasn't because dinosaurs needed to fly. A bunch of them already could.

**PETER.** Really?

**GIRL.** Just look at the fossil record.

**PETER.** Okay.

*(They smile at each other. FATE #3 measures out a white rope in a pattern on the ground.)*

**GIRL.** Here comes my train.

**PETER.** Mine, too.

**GIRL.** Cool.

*(PETER steps into the circle of white rope. He stops. He looks down. He sees the FATES. FATE #3 slowly pulls the rope closed around his feet.)*

**FATE #3.** Hi Peter.

### **Monkey Zion (reprise)**

*(The LAB MONKEYS infiltrate the Biologist's lab. It's an elaborate reconnaissance mission—ropes, tethers, maps, signals, very detailed timing. One LAB MONKEY serves as lookout. LAB MONKEY #1 approaches the cage where LAB MONKEY #2 lies, groggy, feverish, limp.)*

**LAB MONKEY #1.** Hey. The door's open.

*(The LAB MONKEYS recover their friend and head toward the exit.)*

*(As they leave, they sing:)*

**LAB MONKEY #1**

Jane Goodall! Jane Goodall!

Ooooooo

Aaaaaaaa

**LAB MONKEYS**

Lead us to the Promised Land

The Monkey Promised Land

Monkey Zion! Monkey Zion!

*(The BIOLOGIST comes out from hiding and watches them leave.)*

### **The Meaning of a Flower**

*(The FLOWERS sit at the tea table.)*

**FLOWER #1.** This is what we're going to do. We're going to tell her a story.

**FLOWER #2.** Tell who a story?

**FLOWER #1.** The girl.

*(Pause.)*

**FLOWER #3.** Our *captor*?

**FLOWER #1.** Yes.

**FLOWER #2.** You want us to *tell her a story*?

**FLOWER #1.** I think it would be a good idea.

**FLOWERS #2 & #3.** What—Why—What are you talking about?  
Are you insane?

**FLOWER #1.** I think she's lonely.

**FLOWER #3.** Oh, please.

**FLOWER #1.** I'm serious.

**FLOWER #3.** Come on.

**FLOWER #2.** But a rule of the Flower Code of Conduct is to never,  
never, never—

**FLOWERS.** Talk to people.

**FLOWER #1.** I know.

**FLOWER #1.** She's told us two stories. Maybe she wants one back.

**FLOWER #3.** And telling her a story would make her let us go?

**FLOWER #1.** Do you have a better idea?

**FLOWER #2.** What would our story be about?

**FLOWER #3.** Maybe it should be about how we should never,  
never, never—

**FLOWERS.** Talk to people.

**FLOWER #3.** Especially some of us.

**FLOWER #2.** Okay. Okay.

**FLOWER #1.** I think we should tell her a story about the meaning  
of a flower.

**FLOWER #2.** The meaning of a flower?

**FLOWER #3.** Are you like, new age or something?

**FLOWER #1.** No.

**FLOWER #2.** Wait. I get it. Give her some reason to think of us as more than just pretty things.

**FLOWER #1.** Right. Like—

**FLOWERS.** (*Overlapping:*) Food for animals.

A pleasant break from day-to-day life.

The special language of courtly love.

Sexual competition for the birds and the bees.

The hair on a buried guy's head.

Nature's fashion statement.

A reminder that things can look the same but still be different.

A wish to know more about ourselves.

**FLOWER #2.** I think we could break the code to tell her that.

**FLOWER #3.** Do you think it will work?

**FLOWER #1.** It's our best shot.

(*FLOWER #3 motions to the other two.*)

**FLOWER #3.** Quick. Here she comes!

(*The GIRL enters. The FLOWERS don't pose.*)

**GIRL.** Hi.

**FLOWERS.** Hi.

### **Alvarez Tells Several Jokes**

**ALVAREZ.** One: One windy day two monks were arguing about a flapping banner. The first said: "I say the banner is moving, not the wind." The second said: "I say the wind is moving, not the banner." A third monk passed by and said, "The wind is not moving. The banner is not moving. Your minds are wrong."

(*Pause.*)

**ALVAREZ.** Two: Two monks are sitting in a cafe. One says to the other "Life is like a cup of tea." The second monk asks, "Why?" The first asks, "How should I know?"

*(Pause.)*

**ALVAREZ.** Three: Well, unfortunately, I only have two monk jokes.

Oh: This isn't a joke, but it's kind of funny. A scientist in the 1600s used a microscope to examine a piece of bark from an oak tree and saw row upon row of tiny compartments. Row upon row. Exactly alike. Like the cells where monks lived in monasteries. That's what they came to be called.

Scientists are a lot like monks. Even geologists, like me. We separate ourselves in labs, work day and night hunched over sacred text, trying to find the answers to life, or at least a few plausible options.

The paleontological records of life on this planet show that the giant dinosaurs and other organisms became extinct about 65 million years ago. Subsequent work has shown that this was but one of a series of mass extinctions that have periodically disrupted life on Earth about every 26 million years. At each cycle boundary, there is evidence of one or more meteor or asteroid impact. I find this fascinating.

My father thought geology was boring. He won the Nobel Prize for physics. But when I was a child my mother and I would spend hours hunting rocks. For me it was like the best parts of detective novels—finding the clues, tracking down the culprits, assembling all the suspects in a room and figuring out what pieces of information each person has.

We used to think that all change was gradual. That's what Darwin thought. That's what the word evolution implies—incremental changes over a long period of time. Long meaning *long*. Thousands of years. Millions of years. Today, geologists still tend to think that MOST processes are gradual, but are open to the possibility of catastrophic events that can quickly cause massive change. But we have a new evolutionary weapon: we can predict meteors and asteroids. Maybe we can even find ways to prevent them from hitting the planet. What kind of change will that cause?

---

### Let's Make Someone Fall in Love

*(The FATES sit among piles of books, as if they were the ruins of an ancient Greek civilization.)*

**FATE #1.** I know! Let's make someone fall in love.

**FATE #2.** Yeah!

**FATE #3.** No, no, no.

**FATE #1.** Come on, why not?

**FATE #3.** We did that already today.

**FATES #1 & #2.** Aw.

What's wrong with love?

Spoil sport.

Not fair. Not fair.

**FATE #3.** Haven't you ever heard of overpopulation?

**FATE #2.** Oh.

**FATE #3.** The things we do have repercussions.

**FATE #1.** It'll work itself out.

**FATE #2.** No, it's true. We have to be careful.

**FATE #1.** Man.

*(FATE #1 kicks at a pile of books, knocking them over. Then, FATE #1 picks up one of the books and opens it wide. Its front and back covers become the wings of a bird, flapping up and down.)*

**FATE #1.** Hey, look.

*(FATE #1 makes little bird calls.)*

*(FATE #2 takes another book and lays it on the ground.)*

**FATE #2.** Stepping stones.

**FATE #1.** Excellent.

*(FATE #1 bounds from step to step.)*

*(FATE #3 forms books into small, path-side houses.)*

**FATE #3.** It's a little town.

**FATE #2.** Who lives here?

**FATE #1.** A girl!

**FATE #2.** A boy!

**FATE #3.** Their families!

**FATE #1.** Some insects!

**FATE #2.** A handful of other primates!

**FATE #3.** Millions and millions of viruses!

**FATE #1.** You can never just let it be a happy little town, can you.

**FATE #3.** Viruses are my specialty.

**FATE #2.** This is the girl's house, where she is warm and safe from predators.

**FATE #1.** She marries a lovely man. They have 3 children.

**FATE #2.** Good!

**FATE #3.** But then do you know what happens?

**FATE #2.** She lives a long and happy life?

**FATE #3.** So you know what happens?

**FATE #2.** No. Don't tell me.

**FATE #3.** What happens is—

**FATE #2.** Don't tell me.

**FATE #3.** This little girl grows up.

**FATE #2.** Don't tell me don't tell me don't tell me—

**FATE #3.** She grows up. She makes it to adulthood. She marries. She has kids. She has a house. A dog, even. She is happy.

*(Pause.)*

**FATE #2.** Oh. Well. That's not so bad. You made it sound like—

**FATE #3.** And then lightning strikes and fries everybody.

**FATE #1.** Dang.

**FATE #3.** That's my idea at least. Sometimes you just have to catch them off guard.

**FATE #2.** But it hasn't happened yet, has it. It's just a little town.

**FATE #1.** It's just a little town.

**FATE #3.** Yeah, but we're the *Fates*.

**FATE #2.** I know.

**FATE #3.** One weaves the rope, one lays the rope, one cuts the rope.

**FATE #2.** I know.

**FATE #1.** So they can all hang out for a while. Would you like that?

**FATE #2.** Yes.

**FATE #3.** For a while.

**FATE #2.** That would be nice.

*(They watch the town.)*

### **The Biologist and the Girl Let Go of Their Captive Hearts**

*(The GIRL looks up into the sky and sees a star.)*

**GIRL.** A star. The object. The unreachable. The recipient of millions of wishes. Hopes. Dreams. Prayers. People's ideas, theories, religion. The unattainable, the distant. Wonderland with Peter Pan waiting for us to join him. The soulmate to the Man on the Moon. The many lovers of Zeus who have been fated to remain in the skies forever, like Io. Zodiac signs forever deciding the fates of peoples' days, their love lives. People damn you, oh great star; others worship you. Millions of years ago people made sacrifices to you, now people have a career out of studying you. Timon of Athens says that the sun's a thief, and with his great attraction / Robs the vast sea. Timon of The Lion King says that stars are little fire flies caught in a net. Little Timmy of Third Grade says that stars are made up of gases, but then so is he. What should I believe?

*(The BIOLOGIST enters.)*

## **THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!**

In order to protect our associated authors against copyright infringement, we cannot currently present full electronic scripts.

To purchase books with the full text, and to apply for performance rights, click ORDER or go back to:

*[www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com)*