

Two empty rectangular boxes stacked vertically.

**Spoken Insects**

A large empty rectangular box.

A single empty rectangular box.

**by Krista Knight**

## CHARACTERS:

**Molly:** 14 years old, plays an intense kind of pretend. Eddy's sister. Sees self to exist as other things.

**Eddy:** Molly's older brother. The rational eye of the storm. What others see him to be. Late 20s.

**Vail:** Eddy's girlfriend and Molly's friend. Needs to be seen to exist. Early 20s.

**Georgia:** Vail's mother. Isn't blind but doesn't see.

## SETTING:

The J. Edgar Hoover interstate wraps around the edges of the Milburn strip mall in West Quincy, Illinois. Buildings on top of buildings squished and shoved into each other like a mismatched puzzle. Franchises poke out of windows of other franchises. There's a McDonalds inside an Exxon station and a Dairy Queen inside the McDonalds.

The stage is a midsagittal slice of two houses bunk next to each other somewhere below the interstate and somewhere above the Mississippi river – plump with July.

Midsagittal like how you cut a chicken's central nervous system. To see why the bugger didn't make it. To see if you won't.

Eddy and Molly's house is on the left, crammed just below/beside Vail and Georgia's house on the right.

A ladder connects the roofs like those leading up to the hatch of a coop.

## **PROLOGUE**

**Georgia in church, singing with the congregation. Perhaps we hear the mumblings of the Mormon – deep and amplified.**

**Georgia is like a Dolly Parton, who has maybe done some jail time.**

**Molly watches her.**

GEORGIA:

I have good new to bring  
And that is why I sing,  
All my joys with you I will share  
Well I'm gonna take a trip  
On the old gospel ship  
And go sailing through the air.

I'm gonna take a trip  
On the old gospel ship;  
I'm going far beyond the sky.  
gonna shout and sing,  
Until heavens ring,  
As I'm bidding this world goodbye.

Oh I can scarcely wait,  
I know I'll not be late.  
For I'll spend all my time in prayer  
And when my ship comes in,  
I will leave this world of sin  
And go sailing through the air.

**Georgia stows the church's song book in her jacket and makes to leave.**

MOLLY:

Where are you going?

GEORGIA:

Home.

**Georgia exits.**

MOLLY:

Should I come with you?

**Molly, alone on the cluttered stage, in the thick of a house that isn't hers and the precipitating condensation.**

**Thunder booms, the way it does.**

**Rain outside hitting shingles hitting rafters hitting asbestos in the ceiling.**

**The sound of water rushing in, filling up the room.**

**Molly plays as, and at the same time catalyses, the flood.**

MOLLY AS THE FLOOD:

When I come in as the flood, if I'm being the flood, it won't know that water's supposed to be separate,  
it won't know the bath water is not meant to run into the water in the toilet or the water on the floor.

When the water comes out of in between the air,  
if it did know it was supposed to be separate –

when it rushes in through doggy doors and open windows and holes in stained glass and the cracks in drywall and when it bulges under wallpaper drowning termites and flower patterns –

it would all hang suspended over the toilet bowl  
and hover beside the sink  
and bunk next to the corneas of your eyes because those have water in them too.

But it doesn't.

When the water comes in, it won't know that bathroom water in the sink and the shower comes out clean.

As soon as it leaves the spaces of supposed to be –  
leaking out,

splashing out,

flooding out,

to the tiles and the towels and onto toothbrushes – it loses its clean.

Like blood squeezing out of gums squeezing out of teeth rotten and brown and on top of each other.

Discharging out to the tiles and towels and onto toothbrushes.

Towels don't know any better and suck up everything. Can't tell flood water isn't the same as shower water, not the same as supposed to be but mixed with dirt-toilet-river-blood and floor water.

Because flood water makes its home wherever it wants to be.

When I come in as the flood, I'll wash away everything with out seeing any of it separate.

1

**Drip**

**Water drips from the storm pipe into a metal bucket.**

**Drip**

**Drip**

**The bucket tips over and spills out.**

**Molly sits on Georgia's roof next door throwing eggs from a 12 pack carton at a wall.**

**Vail enters.**

VAIL:

Anything?

MOLLY:

Still eggs.

VAIL:

I told you that wasn't going to work.

This weather gives me hives. There's bumps all over my arms. See?

**Molly reaches for Vail's arm but she's already pulled it away.**

VAIL:

Even my elbows itch. I'm going inside.

MOLLY:

Is my brother still asleep?

VAIL:

Probably. Eddy was when I left.

MOLLY:

Hold on, stay here a minute, Vail. Just for a minute.

VAIL:

Doing what?

MOLLY:

I've almost got one.

**Molly throws another egg.**

VAIL:  
Let me see.

**Vail throws an egg at the wall. Just yoke. Smearing and sticky.**

VAIL:  
Still eggs.

MOLLY:  
One of the eggs might have a chicken growing in it.

VAIL:  
You ever think maybe then you shouldn't throw them.

MOLLY:  
Transformation takes a little force.  
Egg.

**Throws egg.**

MOLLY:  
Egg.

**Throws egg.**

MOLLY:  
Chicken!

**Throws egg.**

MOLLY:  
Almost.

VAIL:  
The Mormon must heat shock the eggs on his farm before he puts them in the cardboard boxes.

MOLLY:  
Why would the Mormon do that?

VAIL:

So they don't accidentally grow in the cartons in the cold isles of his Shop n' Go.  
Why else?

MOLLY:

And break open as chickens.

VAIL

Right next to the 2%.

MOLLY:

Across from the cottage cheese.

VAIL:

Use their beaks to poke through the shell.

MOLLY:

And the sticky membrane before the shell.

**Molly playfully pecks Vail.**

VAIL:

Hey, hey, hey. I'm going inside.

MOLLY:

No!

VAIL:

Yeah. It's supposed to rain. Look at the sky, Molly, it doesn't look sticky pissed to you? My mom says she overheard the Mormon in the Shop n' Go talking about maybe another flood. Recommending they stock up on supplies and come to his sermons.

MOLLY:

Georgia doesn't believe him.

VAIL:

She goes to his church.

She thinks she's doing a good job of pretending she's paying attention.

MOLLY:

It's not going to flood yet.

All the saliva from my mouth has dried up, I'm talking through straw. I'll let you know if it rains.

VAIL:

It was already drizzling this morning.

MOLLY:

I said I'd let you know if it's going to flood.

Until then I just need one egg to turn into one chicken. One chicken has one egg and so on, and I sell those eggs or raise those chickens.

VAIL:

So?

MOLLY:

So I sleep on the floor while you and my brother Eddy sleep in the sleeping bag in the middle of what was *supposed* to be my house. My toothbrush is in Georgia's bathroom.

If I can't have a house, I want a farm.

**Molly throws an egg.**

MOLLY:

Maybe I should go back to incubating the eggs in my pajamas.

VAILS:

Why don't we just get you a chicken?

MOLLY:

That's what I've been trying for.

VAIL:

No, no, what if we got you a live one? If not from an egg, maybe we get one just directly from the source, maybe from the Mormon.

MOLLY:

A Mormon chicken?

VAIL:

A Mormon-farm-chicken. He stocks animals up two by two for the apocalypse. My mom hops the fence on Sundays and jacks things when him and his wife are leading bible studies.

MOLLY:  
Your mom doesn't steal.

VAIL:  
You've got her wrong, Molly.  
Georgia's definitely doing *something* to pay the rest back for the accident...

It wouldn't be that hard to just borrow a chicken.  
We'll have fun with it. It'll be fun.

MOLLY:  
Like when you used to baby-sit me. Until you started spending more time watching my brother.

VAIL:  
Aw, you know I do that for free.

MOLLY:  
Do you mean sex?

VAIL:  
No, just, Eddy, guys sometimes, they can have a power over you, a power over you but that you want, that makes you want things, makes you want to do things.

MOLLY:  
Ok, but no, because if this works out, neither of us will have to do anything else.

VAIL:  
I thought you had a savings, or something.

MOLLY:  
I lost that money on buying those hermit crabs that went and drowned.

VAIL:  
I thought those hermit things caught the flu?

MOLLY:  
Hermit Crabs. No, drowned.

VAIL:  
You don't have to punish yourself, you know, there are people plenty ready to do it for you.

MOLLY:

I held them underwater. They drowned.

VAIL:

Oh.

MOLLY:

I wrapped them in saran wrap. They smelled like the back of the Red Lobster. Eddy thought they were leftovers.

**Vail throws another egg.**

VAIL:

Where would you keep this chicken?

MOLLY:

My house.

VAIL:

Eddy and your house or Georgia's house?

MOLLY:

My house my house. The same one you and Eddy sleep in!

VAIL:

Ok. Eddy just can't find out. He'd rat me out to his boss, the Mormon fucker.

MOLLY:

We could make a coop for the chicken in the oven or the refrigerator –

VAIL:

Sure, put some of those heat-shocked eggs in there and chicken'd feel right at home.

MOLLY:

Maybe some straw like the inside of my mouth.

VAIL:

Or we could just keep it inside there. Every time you speak it gets to stretch its wings.

MOLLY:

Kissing would spread birds like the flu.

VAIL:

We'll catch the chicken in Eddy's sleeping bag. I hate sleeping in that thing.

MOLLY:

We only need one. They're self perpetuating cycles. Chicken and eggs and eggs and then chicken.

VAIL:

So you'll be set. Even with out having to pretend.

MOLLY:

Let me get my duct tape.

2

Drip

Drip

Drip

Later that morning.

Eddy's house.      What Molly might still call Eddy and Molly's house.

Lights up a green and slippery silver sleeping bag. It is surrounded by stacks of clothes and groceries: peaches in syrup, rolls of paper towels, boxes of Easy Mac.

Vail and EDDY lie in the sleeping bag making out.

Vail kicks Eddy, he doesn't react.

Kicks again. Still nothing.

Molly enters and watches them from the periphery.

Vail kicks Eddy. They don't acknowledge Molly.

VAIL:

Touch them.

MOLLY:

Eddy.

Kicks again.

VAIL:

Touch the bumps. Eddy!

MOLLY:

Eddy, Eddy, Eddy!

EDDY:

What?

VAIL:

On my arms. The clear bumps.

MOLLY:  
Don't do it, Eddy.

EDDY:  
What?

MOLLY and VAIL:  
Touch the bumps on her/my arms!

VAIL:  
The bumps on top of bumps between bumps. I know it sounds funny, but I can't see them so you have to touch them, Eddy, so I know if they're still there.

EDDY:  
If you've got a rash, just go to a doctor or something.

VAIL:  
No, Eddy, it's easy, just check, the sleeping bag is giving me bumps, they showed up this morning when Molly was trying to hatch chickens, and if the bumps are still there it means my arms are turning into bumps. I need my arms, Eddy. Please.  
Eddy!

EDDY:  
What!

VAIL:  
Touch the bumps!

EDDY:  
I don't see anything!

MOLLY:  
I can see them.

**They don't hear her. Fuck them.**

**Vail sits up.**

VAIL:  
Georgia says the Mormon says it's going to flood.

EDDY:

He's just trying to scare people into coming to his church. Believe me, I work for the guy every day.  
Come on, when you sit up in the sleeping bag all the light leaks in. Come on, come here, baby.

**Molly makes her presence know in the room, looking for the duct tape.**

EDDY:  
What are you doing here?

MOLLY:  
I need to find something.

EDDY:  
Now?

MOLLY:  
When are we going to do the thing, Vail?

VAIL:  
Later, ok?

EDDY:  
We're busy here.

MOLLY:  
Later this morning?

EDDY:  
Will you get the hell out of here?

MOLLY:  
I need to find something.

EDDY:  
Get the fuck out!

VAIL:  
Molly, please.

MOLLY:  
Why?

VAIL:

Like what I was saying earlier, remember? I'll explain later.

**Molly exits, reluctantly.**

EDDY:

What's she looking for?

VAIL:

Forget it, baby.

**Eddy pulls Vail back into the silver and green monster pocket of the sleeping bag.**

**Vail, flirtatiously:**

VAIL:

Stop it!

EDDY:

What?

VAIL:

It's too close to me!

EDDY:

Fine.

VAIL:

You're not, though.

**Eddy wraps in Vail – pulling the sleeping bag tighter around her.**

VAIL:

I mean it, I said stop it.

EDDY:

It's a sleeping bag!

VAIL:

I hate that thing.

EDDY:

Why, Vail, why? Molly convince you you hate it too cuz I got rid of her bed?  
We have sleeping bags now. When we get the chance to get a queen, we will.  
Until then there is nothing wrong with this sleeping bag.

VAIL:  
It's not cuz of Molly.  
It's not real.  
Why can't we use your parents' old bed?

EDDY:  
What the fuck, not real?

VAIL:  
Yeah, not real.  
Beds, beds are real.

EDDY:  
Real, huh?

VAIL:  
Huh, what?

EDDY:  
How do you explain you're not going through the sleeping bag if it's not real, is what 'huh'? How come you're not just swimming right through it, like just passing it on by when you lie down on the bed like a trucker passing Quincy 'huh.'

**Eddy pushes Vail playfully, roughly, with the silver green sleeping bag.  
Laughs like clucking cuz it doesn't go through her.**

VAIL:  
Don't touch my arms with that thing.

EDDY:  
You don't see how things are.

VAIL:  
The silver feels fake. The whole bag feels fake, but the silver feels like *fake* bag.

EDDY:  
I touched you with it, you felt it, you know why? Because it's here. You understand?

VAIL:  
No.

EDDY:  
I just touched you with it!

VAIL:  
Hot nights I wish for a beak, to break through. Instead of suffocating. Beakless.

EDDY:  
K, well you work on that, I'm going to do what people do, and we'll just see if you're the one ever getting out of here.

VAIL:  
Oh, you getting out of here, Eddy? You leaving me?

**Eddy doesn't answer, puts on his boots.**

VAIL:  
Not if I leave you first.

**Vail gets ready to leave.**

EDDY:  
You're not going anywhere. Without me to set you straight in the morning you don't know who you are enough to find yourself a way to spend the day here let alone find yourself anywhere else.

VAIL:  
Geez, Eddy, you'd love a beak.

EDDY:  
Hell-yeah.

VAIL:  
I see you with a beak. But with vestigial wings. No flying. No escaping when you get caught.

EDDY:  
You gonna come to the farm with me?

VAIL:

No.

EDDY:

You said you would this time! I already promised the Mormon you were gonna be there.

VAIL:

I got other things got to get doing today.  
Come here, couldn't we just...?

EDDY:

I have to go to work.

**Beat.**

Fine, get in, quick.

**Eddy shakes out the sleeping bag. Fake silver and green billows dust.**

VAIL:

Eddy?  
Just take it off, this time, ok?

EDDY:

Come on, Vail.

VAIL:

Just this time. I hate it when you just move my underwear over. The elastic burns.

EDDY:

Burns, huh?

VAIL:

It pinches. See? Like pincher bugs in the underwear. That kind of pinches. Burny pinches.

**Eddy pulls away.**

VAIL:

Eddy?

EDDY:

Why aren't you coming with me? Don't you care you're making me look bad?

VAIL:

You're the only one making darn sure you're looking that way.

EDDY:

I told the Mormon and his wife you were gonna help out today.  
I can't set this down yet, Vail, my word means something.

VAIL:

What did you say to him?

EDDY:

Did I not just say what I said to him?

VAIL:

Tell them I forgot.

EDDY:

They're not going to believe that.

VAIL:

They don't have to believe.

EDDY:

Just have faith in you?

VAIL:

No. I don't know.

EDDY:

Then who? In something else for you? Believe in some higher power than you or me that you really are responsible and are going to start doing what you say you're going to? You really want them putting their trust in you into something else? Start asking something else to be responsible for you and you invite it to watch everything you do. You don't want that. The Mormon himself'd tell you. You don't want that.

VAIL:

Don't talk to me.

EDDY:

Oh, I can't talk to you now?

**Eddy points at her face. He'll talk where at where he wants to talk.**

EDDY:

It's one thing to watch saying what's what to the Mormon, but you're telling me I can't talk to *you* now?

VAIL:

You're speaking in butterflies. I'm afraid they'll fly into my eyes.

EDDY:

Why can't you just come, Vail, why not this time?

VAIL:

I'm not standing in the place where I was so can't expect me to be the same as I was.

EDDY:

What were you then?

VAIL:

Someone who said I was gonna go work with you at the farm!

EDDY:

You have to work somewhere. You've got to pay rent now on that house since Georgia sold it to the Mormon.

**Pushing away the sleeping bag.**

VAIL:

It's too close to me!

EDDY:

Ok, yeah, fine. It's way over here. See? I'll figure out a bed if that's what you want. Yeah?

VAIL:

Yeah.

EDDY:

Just spend some time with some other people today instead of Molly, will you?

VAIL:

You don't like your sister?

EDDY:  
Of course I do.

VAIL:  
Doesn't sound like you do.

EDDY:  
I like her and I like you, especially when you're not spending all of your time with a 14 year old making up crazy theories about bumps on your arms. Don't be stupid.

VAIL:  
Oh, great, Eddy, now what was it you wanted me to do for you? Just be real quiet amenable? Cuz I've got such admiration here?

EDDY:  
You just love Molly's desperate attached, pretends she's you and you lap it up cuz otherwise you forget who you are when you're not seeing it. Now, if you were to ask me, I'd be more than happy to remind you.

VAIL:  
I don't lap.  
Eddy you've got to give Molly a break about the pretending, don't you think? What else does she have?

**Eddy shoves the sleeping bag at Vail.**

EDDY:  
No. Two of you is the last thing I need.

VAIL:  
You don't know what you need.  
You know what you need, Eddy? Eddy? You need to touch my arms!

**Eddy storms off. Vail stays standing with the sleeping bag.**

## GEORGIA:

You hear around here in West Quincy that what you do comes back to you in the wrath of God, and all you need to do, all it is you *need* to do is not to step on His toes.

And then you learn His toes up there have got to be the size of football fields down here because everywhere you step someone's telling you it's onto his bad side.

But the truth is—you go ahead—you trod lightly  
You make your mistakes, you have your accidents.

The summer comes round and the rains pick up and the Mormon says there's going to be a flood—so watch out what you do, but the Mormon can say whatever the hell he wants to about whatever flood he wants to, but it floods just about every year and hasn't been one yet that's washed all of this franchised glory away.

If He is there, then He's there too busy to be watching,  
because He doesn't see that when I bow my head in church  
like what's overcome me is all that,  
what I'm really thinking is how every summer when it floods  
no matter what, I come out dry.

People look at me in church and wonder how it is I've got the system beat.  
They look at me and ask, Georgia, what about when you *need* Him?  
So I look back from under my bowed head and let hem know the time  
comes when I'm drowning, I wouldn't let myself be saved by something  
that isn't even watching.

They tell me, Georgia, I hope you can swim.

4

**Eddy and Molly in their house. Eddy packs up her things that are left. Molly has come back for the duct tape. The sleeping bag is missing.**

MOLLY:

I'm not here.

EDDY:

Funny, looks like you are.

MOLLY:

I'm rarely ever here.

EDDY:

Exactly why we're getting your things together.

MOLLY:

But I'm supposed to be. I'm not supposed to be next door.

EDDY:

'Don't want to' you mean. Once in awhile we have to do things we don't want to. Have to be a little sacrificial for the team once in awhile. That's the deal. Did our parents choose to meet their maker? Did I choose to have to put up with you?

**Eddy finds one of her bras.**

MOLLY:

It's not fair.

**She tries to grab it back. He shouldn't even be touching it.**

EDDY:

I never said its equal, said it's fair.

MOLLY:

I know, that's what I said, *not fair*. Give it back.

**He holds it out above her.**

EDDY:

Can't even get close, can you, Molly. Forsaken way down there in the mud.

**Eddy swings it low.**

EDDY:

Almost got it that time. Pretend you're taller.

MOLLY:

No!

EDDY:

Pretend you've got a ladder.

MOLLY:

Stop it!

EDDY:

Pretend —

**Molly grabs the bra out of his hand. Puts it in her pocket.**

MOLLY:

I'm the one got you.

EDDY:

You expect things to be equal. You expect that we get equal say on this place, we don't.

MOLLY:

What do we get then, to listen to you saying what we're gonna get? How's that figure out in your plan?

EDDY:

You want to be older?

MOLLY:

No, I don't.

EDDY:

No, it's ok, I understand now, you want to be older.

MOLLY:

Didn't say that. Seeing words into my mouth again, Eddy, seeing words aren't there.

EDDY:

Let's just pretend for a second.

MOLLY:

What?

EDDY:

Like you and Vail pretend. Like you infect her with your little way of pretending.

MOLLY:

Stop it.

EDDY:

No, No, just one second, you got time to give me one second, you got plenty of time. Let's say you're older, how you seeing things working then? You be mature, I believe in you, Molly, you be real mature until about 6 o'clock. Let's say you got to till 12 o'clock to take care of something important. Let's say you got to till midnight to turn in our taxes.

MOLLY:

What?

EDDY:

Just an example, I admit, there're holes, just an example. Let's say you got until midnight that night to get our taxes postmarked. Oh, you got yourself secured a ride to the airport post office at thirty past 9. That's how you can make it there by 12, if you can just keep yourself together. You got yourself a ride and a time to be there. But what happens? What happens is at 6'o clock you start getting nervous.

MOLLY:

This doesn't make any sense, Eddy, your example is shitting everything up.

EDDY:

You're nervous and you want me to know it so you start pulling on your sleeves. You make yourself a cheese sandwich,  
you pull on your sleeves.

I'm not noticing of course – or you think I'm not because you take it up, you start scratching the moles on your neck. Maybe if you're lucky you even draw blood. Course then I'll have to notice. Just like Mom and Dad would notice. But I've

seen it before, Molly, you've been pulling that shit for a *long* time, and I've seen it all before.

MOLLY:

What's your point, Eddy? You are gonna get to one right?

EDDY:

And so I go outside. Fix the pipe that's come unloose from the toilet bowl or maybe do some yard work and close the door. Then is when you start crying. Is in any of this time, have you started the tax return? This 6 o'clock time that is quickly become 7 o'clock then 8 o'clock time?

MOLLY:

No.

EDDY:

Willing to agree with you, no.

MOLLY:

Good, we done? I played. I want to stop now.  
You can't pretend for shit.

EDDY:

And you're crying, you're scratching and the neighbors are calling and we all know Vail hears even though she's going to pretend tomorrow morning she didn't.

MOLLY:

I'm said I'm done pretending.

EDDY:

Or maybe the cops and the fire department come!

MOLLY:

Shut up!

EDDY:

Maybe someone calls 911 !

"There's a teenager, down by the Dairy Queen, screaming something awful, I think she's in trouble."

**Eddy makes the sound of a fire engine.**

MOLLY:  
Shut up!

**He spins his fingers like the emergency light. He siren screams. He is a deranged fire engine – coming for Molly.**

MOLLY:  
Eddy, goddamit!

EDDY:  
Shhh, Molly, they're coming, maybe they won't know it's our house.

MOLLY:  
I'm going to kill you.

EDDY:  
Shhhhh, if we're real quiet maybe they think it's Vail in another all out with her mom. I'm not going to tell.

Oh.

But they're here, and they want to come inside. Maybe it's someone that's hurt you, maybe it was me, maybe it was your babysitter, Vail, maybe it was both of us – they don't know.

They don't know it's only the hour and half you got left till total meltdown.

So they come and you act real calm. All of a sudden.

Comatose calm.

Know what going from frantic to calm in less time it takes someone else to start in on what they got to do makes you look like?

Makes you look crazy. Like a chicken with its head cut off sitting real sweet and demure like – it's claw-y little scaly yellow legs folded to one side. So what you got then? No tax return – you got to hide when your ride comes – and no chance of talking straight into the neighbors eyes ever again cuz they all think you died and now here you are, come back to life.

MOLLY:  
Can I talk now?

EDDY:  
Not finished.

MOLLY:  
What?

EDDY:

Makes you look *crazy*.

After everything that's happened, not such a far cry to go ahead and say maybe it is you've gone crazy.

MOLLY:

I don't think I was asking to run the money, or do midnight accounting or whatever that was, just saying you being oldest doesn't give you every say in what we do with this place.

EDDY:

Did you not hear the illustration I just laid out into your decision making?

MOLLY:

Doesn't mean you can have it all to yourself. You can't make me just completely pick up and go. I live here too. I'm here too.

I'm deciding that. I'm doing that. Oh, look, no policemen.

Yup, nothing.

Do you hear anything? Oh, Nope.

Guess you're a no good predictor.

EDDY:

What is wrong with next door? You love Georgia. She loves you almost as much as Vail.

MOLLY:

When she sees me.

EDDY:

Why do you want to keep doing this to ourselves, Moll? We don't even get along.

MOLLY:

We get along.

EDDY:

And you'd get your own room at Georgia's place.

MOLLY:

It's Vail's.

EDDY:

She'd be here.

MOLLY:  
All her stuff is in it.

EDDY:  
Even better.

MOLLY:  
It's not my stuff.

EDDY:  
Yeah, so you can fuck it up and it won't matter. You don't really want to be here, you're just making a stink to pay me back.

MOLLY:  
So you think you have something needs paying back for?

EDDY:  
What happened to them wasn't my fault.

But look.

What if I say I'm sorry anyways? Sorry sorry sorry.  
You're not looking – saying sorry. See?

EDDY:  
Let's make a deal, Molly.

MOLLY:  
No!

EDDY:  
Please, Molly, just stay there for a little while and let Vail and me be here alone.  
Do this one thing for me?

Good.

**Eddy exits with Molly's bag of stuff. Molly follows him out grabbing duct tape en route.**

**The ceiling leaks. Hits the metal bucket with a tap tap tapping. Vail enters with the sleeping bag and stashes it away. She looks for non-stale, non fermented, non fruit-flied food. Georgia unwraps a damaged motor from a cardboard box.**

GEORGIA:

Think you can patch that roof back up?

VAIL:

Now?

GEORGIA:

Why not?

VAIL:

Can't I wait until it stops drizzling?

GEORGIA:

The Mormon says it's going to be a while.

VAIL:

Well, if he said it you better listen, wouldn't want to evoke the wrath of the Mormon.

GEORGIA:

Not me who's on the Mormon's bad side.

VAIL:

Not if he knew better.

Where's the tar?

GEORGIA:

Had to sell it back to the hardware store.

VAIL:

But you just bought it!

GEORGIA:

Right, is how I was able to sell it just back!

VAIL:

I thought you were done.

GEORGIA:

Lord's work is never done.

VAIL:

I thought you were done with the payments from the car accident.

GEORIGA:

Nope, sir.

VAIL:

Then what've you been doing with your money?

GEORGIA:

Lawyers are nearly half of it.

VAIL:

And the other half's collection plates?

How much left do ya-

GEORGIA:

Why are you so interested?

VAIL:

No reason.

GEORGIA:

Just don't see what's piqued your oversight all a sudden. Seems to me it hasn't got much to do with you.

VAIL:

Got to do with me when I'm slipping on the roof trying to glue plastic shingles together. Just tell me where we stand.

Eddy says you're desperate.

GEORGIA:

He does, does he? Which Eddy?

VAIL:

Eddy Eddy, the only Eddy.

GEORGIA:

Well, I guess Eddy Eddy's an authority then. But seems to me if the roof is leaking, if you can feel the leak, then there's a leak – just looking to be dry.

VAIL:  
Are you desperate?

GEORGIA:  
Course not.  
Don't take it out on me just because you're not getting it at home.

VAIL:  
That's not true.

GEORGIA:  
Why are you over here interrogating me instead of next door.

VAIL:  
Because I'm standing right here!

GEORGIA:  
Good, then make yourself useful, fix this.

**Georgia gives Vail the broken object.**

VAIL:  
Where'd you get this thing?

GEORGIA:  
What?

VAIL:  
This motor or whatever this is.

GEORGIA:  
One of those abandoned construction sites. They're all over the place.

VAIL:  
Those aren't abandoned. They're heaping up new buildings all the time.

GEORGIA:  
Borrowing then.

**Reading the address label.**

VAIL:  
If you're borrowing it then why'd you sell it?

GEORGIA:  
A guy in Alabama offered to buy it.

VAIL:  
I knew it! You stole it.

GEORGIA:  
But I guess the thing doesn't work so the guy sent it back.

**Georgia lifts up the broken motor. A part falls off. The thing is shit.**

VAIL:  
You stole it.

GEORGIA:  
Just building collateral. Said it yourself, got a lot to pay back.

VAIL:  
Lawyers, huh.

GEORGIA:  
Huh, yeah, sweetheart. And next week I'm getting the Chevy back. Watch out!

VAIL:  
You don't have a license!

GEORGIA:  
I have a license.

VAIL:  
Not supposed to use it.

GEORGIA:  
Not supposed to be a brat. But I don't see that stopping you. Lighten up.

VAIL:  
What about that boy's family?

GEORGIA:

I'll pay back my debts then think about family.

VAIL:  
What about me?

GEORGIA:  
I didn't hit you.

VAIL:  
Might as well have.

GEORGIA:  
Can't exactly blame me for something I didn't see. And saw him not at all before the bumper did so there's no use keeping picturing it because that doesn't bring his legs back, so my part's just got to be paying the hospital back, and paying the insurance back, and the lawyers, and the reparations from the civil litigation and praying that the crippled boy's parents forgive me as I have, and you can or not too but really don't think it's got a ton of a lot to do with you.

**Georgia searches through the domestic debris.**

VAIL:  
I try to picture him.

GEORGIA:  
Vail?

VAIL:  
In my head, when I think of the little boy.

GEORGIA:  
Vail.

VAIL:  
I see you as him.

GEORGIA:  
Vail!!

VAIL:  
What?

GEORGIA:

Stop that.  
Now, have you seen the superglue?

VAIL:  
No! Are you listening to me? I see you as him so then you'd *have* to see the boy.  
You're the only one you see.

**Eddy enters with the bag of Molly's stuff.**

EDDY:  
Hey, Georgia.

**Georgia feigns not recognizing him.**

GEORGIA:  
Yeah?  
Oh, Eddy, right, yeah. Eddy Eddy.

VAIL:  
What're you doing?

EDDY:  
On my way to work, just had to bring some things over.

**Molly enters carrying the half empty carton of eggs.  
No one acknowledges.**

EDDY:  
D'you take that from the farm?

VAIL:  
It's none of your business.

EDDY:  
I think that's exactly what it is.

VAIL:  
What's that stuff?

EDDY:  
None of your business.

MOLLY:

It's my stuff.

GEORGIA:

You can take it back with you. It doesn't work.

EDDY:

That's real generous of both of you.

**Eddy hands Molly her bag and exits with the motor.**

GEORGIA:

What's his problem?

MOLLY:

He likes to keep an eye on everything.

**Georgia removes the damaged object from the second box.  
She unwraps it from the bubble wrap and tries to fix it.**

VAIL:

I'll say.

**Molly hands Vail the cartoon of eggs.**

GEORGIA:

Are those my eggs?

VAIL:

No.

GEORGIA:

Then what are you doing with them?

MOLLY:

Chicken—

VAIL:

Omelets. You ready, Molly?

MOLLY:

I'll meet you there in a minute.

VAIL:

Ok, but I'm not waiting forever.

**Vail exits.**

MOLLY:  
Do you need help?

GEORGIA:  
You know anything about arks?

MOLLY:  
Not really.

GEORGIA:  
That's what the Mormons got Eddy building. When his flood doesn't come I'm going to unhinge timber for the roof off of it.

MOLLY:  
Cool.  
Is it ok that I'm staying here?  
I don't really have much that's mine right now, but I will.  
I'm going to be getting something.

I used to have hermit crabs but they drowned.

GEORGIA:  
Maybe they had it coming.

MOLLY:  
They were supposed to come out of their shells. That's what you're supposed to do, if they're not coming out.  
    Only got them because hermit crabs are supposed to be versatile. Wanted to see how they could pick up and move into a new shell but with making it their own.  
But they wouldn't do it.  
They were just spending all day in their shells.  
    The woman at the pet store said that if you dunk them, then they get desperate and crawl out,  
otherwise you're just staring at a fence of spiky legs all day. When I finally let go they bobbed to the surface – they didn't get out so they drowned.

GEORGIA:  
Well, I don't have any problem with you.

MOLLY:  
I'm not always me.

GEORGIA:  
Fine with me.

MOLLY:  
When the times I don't feel like being me, I just have to see myself as something else and be careful not to look at my arms or down at my legs.

GEORGIA:  
What's wrong with your legs?

MOLLY:  
It's really my elbows that give me away. The way they angle and bend only one way makes me know it's me.

GEORGIA:  
Uh-huh.  
Can you pass me the pliers?

MOLLY:  
But if I keep looking forward, if I act like attached to my bottom lids are heavy saucers filled with nice things and I'm standing over a sink with an open drain, then I don't look down.

**Georgia screws something together.**

GEORGIA  
That Eddy's your brother?

MOLLY:  
Yeah. He thinks his watching is the only way there is.

GEORGIA:  
See if you can get that motor back.

MOLLY:  
Um. Ok.

So I can stay here?

GEORGIA:

Of course, honey. Until you have to go home.

**Georgia exits with the piece of farm equipment.**

6

**Eddy working in the barn. He stands and inspects a plank of a boat.  
Molly enters.**

MOLLY:  
Eddy, I want to make that deal.

EDDY:  
What deal?

MOLLY:  
Earlier, you said you wanted to make a deal.

EDDY:  
Yeah?

MOLLY:  
But I want to set it.

EDDY:  
You don't know what it's out of.

MOLLY:  
I'm setting the deal, you're choosing.

EDDY:  
Shoot then.

MOLLY:  
I'll sleep next door.

EDDY:  
Good, great.

MOLLY:  
But you can't touch Vail.

EDDY:  
You're kiddin.'

MOLLY:  
You can't touch Vail.

EDDY:  
Won't in front of you.

MOLLY:  
Not at all.

EDDY:  
It's non of your business.

MOLLY:  
You don't know how. You mess everything up. You use it to control her, Eddy. You use it to wrap Vail around you so she forgets what's she wants and doesn't think what she's doing.

EDDY:  
You're being creepy. This doesn't sound sick to you?

MOLLY:  
I'll sleep next door if you don't touch her.

EDDY:  
Why?

MOLLY:  
It creeps me out. It sounds sick *to me*. That's my deal.

EDDY:  
Ok, then stop thinking about it.

MOLLY:  
I won't have to if it's not happening.

EDDY:  
And stop thinking about it not happening, that's just as weird. Just stop.

MOLLY:  
News to you, Eddy, can try to tell me where to live but not what I'm seeing and thinking.

EDDY:  
How're you going to know if I do or not?

MOLLY:  
She'll tell me.

EDDY:  
What happens if I do?

MOLLY:  
I'll come back. I'll sleep in between you.

EDDY:  
It's not going to work.

MOLLY:  
Maybe.

EDDY:  
Ok, but I'd control her even with my hands tied behind my back. Then we'll see who has her and who has got to let her alone.

MOLLY:  
You want to make another deal?

EDDY:  
No.

MOLLY:  
This one's a good one.

EDDY:  
No. Get out. And keep you're mind off me.

**Eddy pushes Molly out.**

GEORGIA:

No, I haven't seen it or the other I say to the Mormon because he's standing there at the counter saying

Georgia.

Georgia, my wife's been seeing you carrying things off from the farm.

Things we're using for building is what things, is what he says to me.

Nosirhaven'tseenem.

Haven't seen *any* motor – that is really wasn't a motor the one I saw because motors got to run to be that and didn't see it turn its damn self on – so haven't seen em is what I say to the Mormon and he says

Georgia,

it's not just she who's seen you with them.

And I'm thinking who else it is keeping track of my comings and going from over the farm fences and he the Mormon sees that and holds up his hand and says – without even me seeing him say it, I know he says

Georgia,

you've been *seen* so don't even try to pretend it didn't happen, you've been seen and you've been judged but there is a *chance* that you could be saved.

There is that chance, and that chance is that you *could* be saved, is what he said to me when he said

Georgia.

8

**Eddy in the barn.**

**Molly and Vail watch him from the periphery.**

MOLLY:

Vail, no, I thought we were going to go get the chicken.

VAIL:

Yeah, yeah we are. There's just something I have to be sure of. Then chicken.

MOLLY:

But we also need chicken wire from the Shop n' Go.

VAIL:

I can't you in there anyway, you go ahead and I'll meet you there.

MOLLY:

No, I'm waiting for you.

VAIL:

Ok.

MOLLY:

I thought we were going to get the chicken.

VAIL:

We are!

MOLLY:

But. I think of Eddy as a chicken.

VAIL:

Sure, smells like him nough that.

MOLLY:

Yeah. With pecky feet. And a wattle.

**They play at being a chicken version of Eddy.**

VAIL:

Speaking a whole different chicken language.

MOLLY:

I pretend he's doing his redeeming but as a chicken.

VAIL:

Yeah, Chicken Eddy, easier to hold onto him.

MOLLY:

Where are you going?

VAIL:

I told you, I have to talk to him for a minute. I'll meet you out there, ok? Ok?

**Molly exits.**

**Vail enters the barn, swipes the wire cutters off a work bench.**

**Vail and Eddy can almost connect – but don't.**

VAIL:

Hi.

EDDY:

What are you doing here?

VAIL:

Missed you.

EDDY:

Sure it's not just Georgia missin' her contraband farm equipment, sending ya here to retrieve that motor?

VAIL:

No.

EDDY:

What do you want, then?

VAIL:

Did you tell Molly she should move into my room?

EDDY:

No.

VAIL:

That's all her stuff you brought over.

EDDY:

If you'd prefer she could sleep in between us, but I know how much you love being tight up in that sleeping bag.

VAIL:

So we're moving in together for real?

EDDY:

The Mormons at the store today. You could go stop by, tell him why you didn't come in to work today yourself.

VAIL:

I don't want to apologize to the Mormon.

EDDY:

Guess you should've just come to work with me like you said you were gonna.

VAIL:

He sells those postcards in the Shop n' Go. The ones of the Mississippi. I asked him to take them down.

EDDY:

You went in there and told him you didn't like the postcards and you asked him to stop selling them?

VAIL:

Yeah.

EDDY:

You walked in there?

VAIL:

Never mind.

EDDY:

No, I'm just trying to get things straight, because I'm listening to all this, I really am.

You walked in there and you told the Mormon you didn't like his taste in souvenirs

and you asked him to take them down

and my boss didn't tell you you had to get out of the Shop n' Go

for whiling your days playing with a teenager instead of spending one day that you promised to, actually working?

VAIL:

I was thinking of saying it to him.

EDDY:

Right.

VAIL:

I saw myself say it to him.

EDDY:

Move.

VAIL:

Where?

EDDY:

Left, right, I don't care, just aside.

VAIL:

What are you building?

EDDY:

The bow of a ship.

VAIL:

That's not going to do anything in Illinois.

EDDY:

It's not for me.

VAIL:

I scratched my arm.

EDDY:

Doing what?

VAIL:

Bad. Can you wrap it up?

EDDY:

Does it look to you like I've got anything here for that?

VAIL:

I don't know. You could.

EDDY:

Yeah, it's a practical field hospital out here.

VAIL:

You could put something around it.

EDDY:

Unless you want straw, you're gonna have to wait until I can get to the store and get cotton and polysporan. Maybe I'll tell the Mormon you got scratched lurking round the barn, sneaking over the fence like Georgia because you "miss" me so much.

VAIL:

I wasn't lurking. You're not gonna tell him that, are you? Don't tell him you saw me at the farm today.

EDDY:

You trying to dictate again what I can and can't say to him?

VAIL:

It doesn't need that, it's not infected.

EDDY:

What'd you do?

**Eddy looks at her arm without taking it.**

EDDY:

You do this to yourself?

VAIL:

The bumps itch.

EDDY:

There are no bumps.

VAIL:

I can feel bumps, Eddy, I'm not crazy. Feel it.

EDDY:

There are no bumps on your arm.

VAIL:

Touch the bumps.

**Molly re-enters – watches them from the precipice of the barn.**

EDDY:

What if they are there, and they're contagious and I touch your arms and then I touch your face, you want bumps for a face?  
Just stop itching them.

VAIL:

Eddy, please.

MOLLY/EDDY:

Vail!

EDDY:

Jesus. She came here too?  
What did I ask about you two spending so much time together?

VAIL:

Hold on a minute, Moll!

EDDY:

What are you doing back here?

VAIL:

We ran into each other.  
Touch the bumps, Eddy. Let me just see your hand. I can't stand the itching.

**Eddy picks up one of the thin, long planks.  
Jabs her with it, playfully, violently.**

EDDY:

I'll scratch it for you.

VAIL:

That's not what I meant.

EDDY:

It's real. You want something real? It's really scratching you. Scratch, scratch, scratching you.

You can't feel it? Something very real is scratching at you. Close your eyes, see if you feel it.

MOLLY:

Eddy.

VAIL:

Stop it.

MOLLY:

Eddy!

**No one acknowledges Molly. Again.**

EDDY:

See, you're moving.

VAIL:

Stop it, Eddy.

EDDY:

We just put a shovel in your hand and you could really get some things done. Dig a trench in no time.

VAIL:

Why won't you touch me?

**Eddy goes back to work.**

MOLLY:

Vail, let's go.

VAIL

Eddy.

**Trying to pull Vail out of the barn.**

MOLLY:

Vail! Just stop wanting it, Vail!

VAIL:

You're not going to touch me, Eddy? Huh? This is your chance. You afraid?

**Vail clucks at Eddy. Why does he have to be such a fucking chicken?**

VAIL:

You trying to keep me separate? I'm washing my hands of it, Eddy. You hear that? Do you hear me, Eddy?

MOLLY:

Come on!

**Molly pulls Vail out of the barn.**

**Vail sits outside the Shop n' Go pinning butterflies to the pavement. Molly is inside the store.**

VAIL:

They're trying to fly into my eyes. Pinks and blues and those wings that're made to look like eyes all trying to fly into mine.

The wings with patterns of circles and ovals looking like corneas and iris'.

When they fly at you each wing pushes air like blinking.

I used to tape them to the wheels of the shopping cart – the wheels made them blind. The Mormon invited me to not come back in the store. He doesn't like the sound of insects crunching on linoleum. Didn't think it was worth banishing me over but some people – now matter how much they spout – are hard up on forgiveness.

Now when I catch them, I pin them down to the yellow lines dividing the parking lot. If the Shop n' Go'ers are good and park just on the lines, they run over the butterflies. If they park crooked then they see them there and the butterflies are fine. This time we're saved when one transgresses and punished when we park right.

Sometimes, I wonder if Eddy thinks I existed before he met me. If him finding me in the house next door saw me into existence. Saw me just like as a butterfly stuck under a rock waiting to see what fate was gonna deal me in the form of a front wheel.

**Molly comes out of the Shop n' Go with a shopping bag of chicken wire in one hand.**

VAIL:

I wonder if Eddy thinks sometimes about picking up that rock, but then knows, nahhhh,

something put that there and it wasn't him, so hell if he's going to touch it now.

MOLLY:

Vail.

VAIL:

I'm coming.

**Vail exits.**

MOLLY:

That's right. Eddy. Just try and touch her now.

**Molly follows Vail off.**

GEORGIA:

What is that I'm supposed to do for a person like the Mormon so hard up on forgiveness that he won't even dole it out to a woman who spends every Sunday with her head bowed low?

He can't just whisper to me in "Georgia"s that there's a chance all my sins can be washed away and not give me any indication of how it is I could go about doing that. That's not what's fair.

He, the Mormon, at home on his Mormon easy boy chair thinking about how I can't be saved, how it's just not going to happen for Georgia.

I'll be saved. I'll.

I'll find some way to be saved. That's just the type of ingenuity I have.

11

**Molly and Vail (sleeping bag in hand) stand outside the chicken coop. They cut the links in the chicken wire with wire cutters. Eddy, unsuspecting, cleans the coop.**

MOLLY:

I think I can hear them. Hear it?

VAIL:

Sounds like sucking up to the Mormon.

Pecking at his Mormon feed.

Well, do you want to grab them both?

MOLLY:

No, we just need one.

The one that looks like Eddy.

With his feathers. With his wattle.

Eddy and one of the preordained pair of chickens trapped into each other.

VAIL:

Yeah. Chicken Eddy.

MOLLY:

Paying for his sins but as a chicken. Redempting but as a chicken.

VAIL:

Easier to hold him *down*.

**Above the twisting interstate and sardine buildings within buildings and behind the fence, Eddy transforms into one of the chickens.**

VAIL:

We got to make this fast. Eddy threatened to say I was lurking round the barn.

MOLLY:

I know, in and out.

Pretty sure the Mormon's wife has a shotgun.

VAIL:

How you figure that?

MOLLY:

Georgia saw her leading some Lutherans out the window of the Shop n' Go.

**Molly mimes leading them with her gun.**

VAIL:

I was supposed to come clean up the coop.

MOLLY:

Probably no one doing it before.

VAIL:

Infested probably.

MOLLY:

That's what happens with these coops abandoned.

VAIL:

Desperate and diseased.

MOLLY:

You can hear it. In between the squawking and the calling.

VAIL:

It's practically torture.

MOLLY:

Might as well hold them underwater until they drown.

**Eddy turns around and catches them. They duck out of sight. He laughs to see them flee.**

VAIL:

Their rustling sounds like laughing.

MOLLY:

Their laughing sounds like scratching.

VAIL:

I had enough of Eddy's laughing without adding scratching.

CHICKEN EDDY:

Feathers can't tell what's straw and what's shit so stick to everything. Feels the same to feathers. Area in between gets itself caked with everything supposed to be and anything not.

**They break through the fence.**

MOLLY:  
That one!

**Molly and Vail try to catch Chicken Eddy. He's wily. He's slippery. He's covered in straw and chicken shit.  
Molly and Vail tackle Chicken Eddy.**

VAIL:  
Put him in the bag!

**They scoop him in. If they had a white van, it would be a drive-by kidnapping. The kind that accidentally goes to hell.**

CHICKEN EDDY:  
Chickens screaming!

**Chicken looks to the other for a response. A retaliation. A coup...but just scuttling.**

CHICKEN EDDY:  
Chicken screaming?!  
...other chicken clucking cuz it just don't care.

MOLLY:  
Tell it to be quiet.

**In an Eddier moment:**

CHICKEN EDDY:  
Think you can tell chicken what can and can't be saying?

**Vail hits Eddy in the bag.**

CHICKEN EDDY:  
Talking.

**Vail hits him again.**

CHICKEN EDDY:  
Squawking. Like suffocating.

**Eddy jabs at them through the bag.  
Molly calls out in pain.  
He goes for their shins. And knees. And thighs. And eyes. And arms.**

MOLLY:  
Shitter's poking me.

**Molly whacks the bag.**

MOLLY:  
It's getting my knees. I don't want it touching my knees.

CHICKEN EDDY:  
Infectious chicken pecking. Species floodgates beginning to break. In between becoming seen.

**Again, Eddier:**

CHICKEN EDDY:  
Going to have to pay for what not seeing you do. Chicken himself telling you, you going to have to pay *too* for what you're not seeing yourself do.

VAIL:  
Duct tape it.

**Molly puts duct tape over Eddy's mouth.  
Molly and Vail pull him to the ground.  
Vail sits on him and Molly holds his head down.  
Thunder claps. Ominously.**

VAIL:  
Let's get out of here.

**Vail and Molly drag Eddy in the sleeping bag off stage. The drizzle becomes rain.**

GEORGIA:

I always hear about planes going down I think cuz they got so far to go. I've never heard of 155 people going down in any car. Never seen a car crash on the 6 o'clock news unless cuz of the traffic it's blocking. You have to know how to see em – the small accidents. Make sure they're not coming your way before you go it.

Can't watch out for that sort of thing on a plane. The pilot slumps over and nobody's watching and there's no *way* to get out of.

Just open sky and then the ground.

Long way to that ground.

Long way down to all the farms in boxes.

And a black box they can fish through to hear what happened when everything else exploded.

They could make black box planes, they'd be set. But God likes keeping planes exploding.

Then we know what's it's like to be on the ground and be grateful to fall *only* on that ground.

The Mormon reminds me, he says

Georgia

be grateful for it.

You don't see something, you miss it,  
right on run over it. Caught in and under the bumper  
because it wasn't seen.

Have to see something into existence for it to be.

Like us seen through the divine corneas of God.

Like Jesus' sheets left somewhere in Turkey make  
sure we see He's real.

But it never works well enough. We stay in our  
shells, under our rocks. We aren't able to see  
ourselves fall when it's only on to the soft ground  
we're falling.

We don't see what we do.

That's why God crashes planes and sends rain.

I can be saved – not through my trials,

but through *seeing* my trials as that and thanking god  
for that opportunity and that sight because I sat  
months in a court room and never realized what it  
was for.

But I no longer sit in the defendants chair but stand as  
the witness –

I stand here to stand witness before you that I can be  
and will be *saved*.

13

**Vail and Molly.**

**Molly is trying to build a cage out of the chicken wire from the Shop n' Go.**

**Water drips more feverishly than before into the metal bucket.**

**Rustling is coming from the closet. Something struggling.**

VAIL:

I don't like the sound of feathers against wood. I think we should let it out.

MOLLY:

Not yet.

VAIL:

What's that for?

MOLLY:

It's a cage. Carrying cage. We can move it when we want it someplace else. Just pick up and go.

**Scuttling behind the closet.**

VAIL:

I'm going to open the door.

MOLLY:

Not yet!

VAIL:

Why not? It's not going to be able to escape. We got it now.

MOLLY:

I don't want it pecking at us again.

VAIL:

How long do you think before it starts laying eggs?

MOLLY:

I don't care about that anymore.

VAIL:

I want to hold it.

**Clawing and flapping from behind the closet door--picks up.**

MOLLY:

We'll keep it here for awhile, then if the coast is clear, we'll move it next door, then maybe back again. We want the chicken here, we move it here, tomorrow we want it over there, we pack up it's stuff, we take it there. It's going to get so fucking discombobulated!

**Vail opens the door. There's Eddy.**

**Duct tape over his mouth. A chicken. And pissed.**

**To Chicken Eddy:**

VAIL:

Hi there, you want something to eat?

**Eddy grabs her arm – between her wrist and elbow. Holds firm.**

VAIL:

Hey. Hey!

**Vail calls out in pain.**

MOLLY:

What?

VAIL:

Stop it.

**Holds firm.**

VAIL:

I said stop it!

MOLLY:

I told you not to let it out, Vail.

VAIL:

It's digging into me.

MOLLY:

Make it stop.

VAIL:  
I can't. It's breaking skin.

MOLLY:  
It's a chicken.

VAIL:  
It's scratching me.

**Chicken Eddy pulls off the duct tape.**

EDDY AS CHICKEN  
Scratch, scratch, scratching you.

VAIL:  
Let go!

MOLLY:  
Pull it off!

VAIL:  
I can't.

**Eddy begins to twist her arm backwards.  
Chicken laughing.**

MOLLY:  
Let go!

**Vail calls out in pain. Wanted touching not like this.**

**Molly grabs him.**

MOLLY:  
This isn't fair.

**He pushes her off.**

MOLLY:  
Let go!

VAIL:  
Why is it doing this? Get it off.

**Molly grabs him again. Duct tapes his hands behind his back.**

**Chicken Eddy holds Vail firm.**

MOLLY:

Don't touch her.

**Eddy keeps twisting her arm backwards, Vail falls to her knees.**

VAIL:

It's hurting me.

MOLLY:

Don't touch her, don't touch her!

VAIL:

Please, get it off!

MOLLY:

No one else can touch her!

**Molly pushes Chicken Eddy's head into the metal bucket filled with water that's been drip drip dripping from the leaky ceiling.**

**He struggles. He stays holding firm.**

**His head breaks free.**

EDDY AS CHICKEN:

Molly, don't!

**Vail and Molly push his head back into the bucket.**

**They hold it there.**

**He stops moving.**

**He lets go of Vail's arm.**

**They pull him out of the bucket. He falls limp to the ground.**

MOLLY:

That was the deal.

**Thunder booms, the way it does when it's about to flood. Rain outside hitting shingles hitting rafters hitting asbestos in the ceiling.**

**The drip becomes a drizzle becomes a stream becomes a deluge.  
The rain becomes a flood.  
The sound of water rushing in, filling up the room.**

**They step away from the body.**

VAIL:  
What's that?

MOLLY:  
The water's coming in.

VAIL:  
What water?

MOLLY:  
The flood water!

VAIL:  
You said it wasn't going to flood.

MOLLY:  
Wasn't going to then yet. But now I've been let out.

**The knocking of water against the roof, against the walls, against the door.**

VAIL:  
It can't come in here. That's what roofs are for!

MOLLY:  
It's supposed to stay separate. It's supposed to stay outside.  
But it's coming to wash everything away. It's coming to wash me a place.  
It's coming in. I'm coming in.

VAIL:  
No.

**Vail begins to climb up the ladder on the side of the house.**

**Out of luck, chicken-Eddy.  
Out of luck, rest of them too.**

VAIL:  
No.

MOLLY:  
Where are you going, Vail?

**Sound of water pouring in. Of levees breaking.  
Of small towns flooding.**

**Eddy, as the dead chicken, floats, or perhaps breast strokes, out of the room.**

**Georgia appears – singing The Gospel Ship –**

GEORGIA:  
I have good news to bring  
And that is why I sing  
All my joys with you I'll share.

VAIL:  
Georgia. What are you doing?

GEORGIA:  
I'm a gonna take a trip  
On the good old gospel ship  
And go sailin' through the air.

**Getting excited:**

MOLLY:  
The water's coming up. We've broken the barrier and let it come in through doggy doors and open windows and bulge under wallpaper. Seeping into mattresses and rushing over table tops and mixing with the mildew in tiny dead hermit crab tanks.

**Vail climbs the ladder to the roof of her own house bunk next door.**

**The lights go out. They flicker on bright and hot and full of dust but the rain drowns it out.**

**When the lights come back up Georgia's already up there. She's soaking, but doesn't seem to notice.**

GEORGIA:

The Mormon, he told me, he said Georgia I've seen what's going to happen and what's going to happen ain't good.

VAIL:

How's the Mormon know things aren't good?

**Thunder crashes.**

VAIL:

Other than, you know, normal not good.

MOLLY:

Cuz sometimes the inside breaks through to the outside.

GEORGIA:

And I thought, yes, sir they aren't. The flood is coming just like you said, we finally brought it on, just like you said.

You've got that ark, and I've got no ark, and I'm not getting on your ark am I because I still haven't found redemption you little Lazy Boy Mormon shit.

But THEN he told me. Then he said 'Georgia.'

MOLLY:

And now the water is pouring out of the line in between of puzzles and their pieces and egg shells and their yolk, oranges and their peels and skin and the stuff gushing underneath of skin.

GEORGIA:

He said Georgia, I saw those girls stole one chicken of two.

**Vail tries to build cover atop the coop.**

VAIL:

Well, he's lying. The Mormon is lying.

MOLLY:

And making the swimming we do through the inside on the outside. Now the between's let out.

GEORGIA:

And all I have to do to be saved and get on that ark is bring him the chicken. I get fast forwarded to being saved.

MOLLY:

Now things turn into what they are to get what they deserve.

GEORGIA

But without a chicken there is no out, just the flood.

MOLLY:

What' you mean an out?

**Molly tries to climb up to where Georgia and Vail are.**

MOLLY:

Georgia.

GEORGIA:

The Mormon told me you lost him a chicken so go on and give it back.

VAIL:

We can't.

MOLLY:

It's dead.

MOLLY:

Georgia.

GEORGIA:

Then help me get a new one.

MOLLY:

Georgia.

What' you mean an out?

Is there was already gonna be an out?

Would you have brought me with you, Georgia?

VAIL:

It was going to rain, it was always going to rain. Eddy and the chickens got nothing to do with it.

GEORGIA:

Where *is* Eddy Eddy, Vail?

MOLLY:

I turned him into the chicken. He didn't get out so he drowned.

GEORGIA:

You can turn people into chickens?

MOLLY:

Yeah.

Yeah yeah. Can I come up?

I want to stop pretending. You were going to help me. I want that to be real.

Please. I can't swim.

Georgia?

**Molly starts to sink.**

**{A disjunction with the imagined – because of the chance for something to be not.}**

VAIL:

I can't just hatch up open another chicken. We tried that, Georgia, all you get is yolk.

**Georgia looks down at Molly. Sees an opportunity.**

GEORGIA:

I think I see one.

VAIL:

What're you looking at?

GEORGIA:

Molly, right? Yeah.

I think I see feathers.

VAIL:

You don't see anything.

GEORGIA:

And a beak. A beak breaking through.

**Georgia helps Molly climb up to the roof.**

**Grabs her arm between the wrist and elbow.**

VAIL:  
Georgia. No.

GEORGIA:  
We'll turn her in, give her to the Mormon.

VAIL:  
She's the flood.

GEORGIA:  
So, now you be the chicken! Come on, sweetheart, let's see what you can do.  
One more transformation. Make some chicken noises. Clucking or something.  
Come on, cluck cluck.

VAIL:  
No.

MOLLY:  
Ok.

VAIL:  
You can't use her.

GEORGIA:  
She wants to do it.  
Don't be selfish, Vail, she can come with me if she's a chicken.

MOLLY:  
You can keep me in your closet.  
Cluck, see? Cluck.

VAIL:  
They keep records of these things.

GEORGIA:  
All my records are under water along with the courthouse, and the insurance  
papers along with the company. Guilt caught in hair washed right out like I was  
went and washed clean with Pantene Two-in-One.

MOLLY:  
And maybe after awhile,  
I'll belong with you,

not even like I was switched in,  
but like I'm supposed to be?

GEORGIA:

Sure, yeah, something like that.

**Georgia works at turning Molly into the sacrificial chicken.**

VAIL:

You're better off as the flood than as her chicken. Molly, are you listening to me?

MOLLY:

Cluck.

VAIL:

You can't use her, Georgia! Just, what, to trade yourself a ride. Some ark that'd save you dry only cuz you claim to the Mormon to see something the rest of us haven't.

You want me to see too? Isn't that what you're supposed to want? To make the rest of us see?

GEORGIA:

Thanks, sweetheart, but things are looking just fine now.

VAIL:

You don't think I can see? I can see a hell of a lot clearer than I've ever seen you seeing. I see what I do. I know what I've done, and what I've drowned, what I've taken and what I can't replace and what I could.

I could see myself as the chicken. The bumps on my arms like goose bumps. Or chicken bumps. I can pretend too if that's what it takes.

Feathers on my arms because I'm looking. Growing from the bumps like reverse plucking. Transparent skin because I'm looking and putting legs in scales and feathers in tracts.

Scratch out the feathers.

Scratch my eyes because they butterfly with infested fluttering flapping word lashes. Why not scratch out beady chicken eyes? Cartilage chicken beak?

**Georgia is having trouble making Molly look like a convincing chicken.**

VAIL:

There's water more than enough to make the ground padded chicken shit.  
Squish and alive. Water more than enough touching me all over. Taking me  
under. Towing me under species separation to become the chicken.  
I see what I do, you don't need to crush me to show me because I've seen and I'm  
doing what it is to lift that burden. And get out from under.

**Vail becomes a chicken.**

GEORGIA:

Well, shoot. A Vail Chicken.

I didn't see that coming. Come on, we're coming home!

**Georgia, ecstatic, leads Vail off to present to the Mormon, to get herself on the  
ark.**

**Suddenly, the rain stops.**

**Molly, free of becoming the chicken, exits the same direction as Georgia and  
Chicken Vail.**

**The world begins drying out.**

**Mud turns back to dust.**

**The McDonalds arch emerges from the sewage.**

**Butterfly wings become unstuck.**

**Molly reenters. Perhaps holding a live chicken, perhaps in a cage for easier  
carrying. It is Chicken Vail. Now in Molly's arms.**

MOLLY:

When I leave as the flood, if I'm being the flood, I'm not leaving like I'm *supposed*  
to when it'd been just so many days and just so many nights and when all of the  
sin of the world had been washed clean, and with all the sin, all of the world. I  
won't know that's what it's supposed to have been.

Instead, when the water recedes through open windows and holes in stained  
glass and the cracks in drywall, when the water recedes turning the mud back to  
dust and the McDonalds arch emerges from the sewage and the butterflies  
become unstuck, it'll be because things can be separate and things can be seen  
and the middle can go back into the in between. Because water knows what's  
given up and taken on.

When I leave as the flood, if I'm being the flood, I'm leaving because water sees the sacrifice of transformation. Because then nothing is separate. Even when it is.

**Your fingers unwrinkle. End of Play.**

## Appendix:

- The actual West Quincy is directly across the Mississippi River from Quincy, Illinois and once housed a train station, drive-in theater, and a manufacturing corporation. However, since the **flood of 1993**, many businesses have left.

During the flood, the levee was sabotaged and water filled the floodplain, and a nearby barge was sucked into the break in the levee. The barge hit a local gas station and caused an explosion. The oil caught fire and the fire snaked across the water.

West Quincy now has no official population. It is a town forgotten.

- The pre-Yom Kippur practice of kapparot in Jerusalem's Mea She'arim open-air market involves the transferring of sins into a chicken, and atonement for those sins through the chicken's slaughter. It is understood that unless you also atone for your sins in the following year, you will share the fowl's fate.