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DRAFT 5

*THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM*  
*an allegory*

*SETTING: An imagined colonial utopia on Lenape land in what is now called Pennsylvania, outside of what is now called Philadelphia, as pictured in Edward Hicks' paintings entitled The Peaceable Kingdom.*

*CHARACTERS:*

*Chief Tamanend*

*William Penn*

*Lion*

*Kid*

*Lamb 1*

*Lamb 2*

*Leopard*

*Invasive (a squirrel)*

*Native (a squirrel)*

*Choir as the Forest*

*Note: The choir sings movements of Randall Thompson's The Peaceable Kingdom.*

*Change of scene is denoted by a line across the page.  
Interruption is denoted by a /.*

*INTROIT*

*The choir sings from the Randall Thompson oratorio, The Peaceable Kingdom*

CHOIR

Ye shall have a song  
As in the night when a holy solemnity is kept  
Ye shall have a song and gladness of heart  
As when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord

---

*At rise, we see a tableaux recreation of Edward Hicks The Peaceable Kingdom, with Lion, Leopard, Lambs and Kid in the foreground and William Penn with Lenape Chief Tamanend in the background. PENN and the animals speak or sing:*

PENN and ANIMALS

The leopard with the harmless kid laid down,  
And not one savage beast was seen to frown.  
The wolf did with the lambkin dwell in peace,  
His grim carniv'rous nature there did cease.  
The lion with the fatling on did move,  
A little child was leading them in love;  
When the great PENN his famous treaty made  
With INDIAN chiefs beneath the elm trees shade.

---

LAMB 1

Did you notice the lion's eyes today? They were so sad.

LAMB 2

His eyes are always sad.

LAMB 1

Yes, but today they looked particularly sad. He's always, you know, thinking so hard about something, he never talks about it, but I have the sense that whatever it is, it gives him great pain.

LAMB 2

Right.

LAMB 1

You can see it, you know, it looks like almost physical pain, like some dark moral conundrum is eating him up inside, it hurts him so bad, I walked by and tried to, you know, engage him in conversation, and he just looked and looked at me, and I was saying something like, "Wow, it's really nice, the foliage, aren't you glad to be here, in this beautiful" you know and whatever

LAMB 2

What are you

LAMB 1  
And just, nothing, you know, just these

LAMB 2  
Hey

LAMB 1  
These eyes that are like, so deeply

LAMB 2  
Right

LAMB 1  
It's palpable, like, palpable.

LAMB 2  
What are you doing? What um

(Beat.)

LAMB 1  
What do you mean?

LAMB 2  
You keep putting your butt up in the air.

LAMB 1  
Yeah, so?

LAMB 2  
It's making me uncomfortable.

LAMB 1  
Well, I mean. (scoffs.)  
I don't know.

(Beat.)

I don't know. It's just a thing. It's a new thing I started doing. It feels good to put your butt up in the air.

LAMB 2  
It's super

LAMB 1  
It's just a thing

LAMB 2  
distracting.

LAMB 1

Like sometimes I'm talking about the lion, and I want to put my butt up in the air. There's nothing wrong with that.

LAMB 2

I don't know.

LAMB 1

You don't know because you haven't tried it. Try it.

(Pause.)

LAMB 2

I don't want to try it.

LAMB 1

Just do it. Come on.

Mmm. Feels good. I can feel the breeze.

LAMB 2

I can feel the breeze without my butt in the air.

LAMB 1

Yeah, but you can't feel it on your poophole, that's where it feels soooooo good.

LAMB 2

You do this when you think about the lion?

LAMB 1

I do it all the time. I could be thinking about anything.

LAMB 2

It's just not. You know. None of the rest of us do it.

LAMB 1

I don't feel insulted that he doesn't answer me, you know, when I try to engage in conversation, because I feel like there are other things at work, other ways of talking, like talking with sorrow itself, like his sorrow is touching my sorrow, and like making one big sorrow, it's a different type of communication.

LAMB 2

You don't have sorrow.

LAMB 1

What? Sure I do.

LAMB 2

I have sorrow, you don't have sorrow.

LAMB 1  
I have plenty of

LAMB 2  
You go around sticking your butt up in the air

LAMB 1  
That doesn't mean I don't have it

LAMB 2  
That's exactly what that means. It means that you have time to, to, feel the breeze on your poophole, you clearly aren't capable of feeling sorrow, because that would occupy your thoughts all the time you'd never be able to

LAMB 1  
I do so have plenty of sorrow.

LAMB 2  
You don't think enough about the group, about the Grand Plan for Peace, when the group occupies all your thoughts you don't go around

LAMB 1  
Man, you are just

LAMB 2  
The group is everything, the sorrow we feel is for the others, who are outside the group, who don't know what it's like to live in the Peaceable Kingdom, to live in grace. We have to remember them, remember those who came before and those who

LAMB 1  
Jealous.

LAMB 2  
Those who  
Wait, what?

LAMB 1  
Jealousy has no place in the group, Clotilde. It's, I mean. It's ugly.  
It's really ugly.  
You need to stop. It's unholy. I think you make the lion sad with stuff like this. I think this is exactly the type of thing that gets to him, you know?

(Pause.)

LAMB 1  
Look, I'm going to go smoke with the leopard later if you want to come. No pressure.

LAMB 2  
I

LAMB 1  
Let's just leave this whole

LAMB 2  
I'm sorry

LAMB 1  
No *I'm* sorry!

LAMB 2  
You're totally

LAMB 1  
I know that you have this thing with

LAMB 2  
Yes, I'm trying, you're right to chastise

LAMB 1  
It's good medicine

LAMB 2  
I'm so ashamed.

LAMB 1  
No, don't be. Don't be.

LAMB 2  
I'm going to do the Meditation Walk and think about what just happened.

LAMB 1  
Totally, that's a great idea, come by and smoke with us later if you want, okay?

LAMB 2  
I just have to process and release.

LAMB 1  
I understand, I understand. It's hard to stay in grace.

LAMB 2  
It's so hard for me.

LAMB 1  
We can bring this to Group later and burn it in the Fire Circle okay?

LAMB 2  
Yeah, I'd like that. Yeah.

LAMB 1  
I love you so much.

LAMB 2  
I love you so so much.

LAMB 1  
You're my best friend.

---

PENN  
That was

TAMANEND  
Yeah.

PENN  
Wow.

TAMANEND  
Mm.

(Pause.)

TAMANEND  
Can you hand me that pipe?

PENN  
I've never felt  
Anything  
Like that  
I don't even know where I am right now.

TAMANEND  
Here, move your arm a little.

PENN  
So much gentleness in what you just did  
Did you feel it?  
Like, I've never, I didn't know you could be that gentle and at the same time  
Something. I don't know. I feel like a man. I feel like we're men.

TAMANEND  
We are men.

PENN

Yes, but maybe I wasn't a man until just now.

TAMANEND

Are you going to hit this?

PENN

I... Thank you.

(Pause.)

PENN

Everything that's happened so far has confirmed it for me.

I mean, this confirms it all.

People thought I was crazy, that even the principles were crazy, but they don't understand Grace. I look at you, and I see Grace, I see it reflected on me. Just so...

Grateful! I'm grateful.

It's funny, I've never told anyone this. Um. So when I was a kid, I would commune with trees, I believed they were speaking to me but not to anyone else, that I was their prophet, or, maybe not prophet, but they were talking to me specifically. And I would press my face on the roots of a tree and cry and cry, because I was so grateful that the tree had chosen me, so grateful to be connected to everything, I knew, at that point, that I was in a state of grace.

It's so hard to stay there. It's so hard to participate in the daily, you know, the conceit that people have agreed on as society, and remain in a state of grace at the same time, it's impossible. At least where I'm from, it is.

Do you know what I mean?

TAMANEND

I'm sorry, I haven't really been listening.

(Pause.)

PENN

What?

TAMANEND

I'm distracted. I'm going to see my son later, I was just thinking about that.

PENN

Oh.

(Pause.)

PENN

You have a son?

TAMANEND

Yeah, three.

Three sons.



I'm going over to visit them later.

PENN

I don't understand, are you

Um

You don't live with your sons.

TAMANEND

Oh, god no. No. They're with their mother.

She has a different clan. I'm Turtle Clan, she's Turkey.

You can't marry within your own clan, it's bad for genetics.

PENN

I don't know what that means.

TAMANEND

As in, you wouldn't marry your cousin, because then your children are weak, or have deformities.

PENN

We marry our cousins all the time.

TAMANEND

Oh. Well, then I don't know how to explain it to you.

(Pause.)

PENN

So you're going to visit them.

TAMANEND

Yeah, I'll probably stay out there a few days.

PENN

Wait, but we were going to have the

I mean, we have meeting and then

The Fire Circle later, are you not coming to the Fire Circle?

TAMANEND

I'll do Fire Circle with Turkey Clan.

PENN

Yes, but wouldn't you rather do it here?

TAMANEND

Wouldn't I...

PENN

Wouldn't you rather do Fire Circle with me?

TAMANEND  
Than with my sons?

PENN  
Yes.

TAMANEND  
Not really, no.

PENN  
Oh.

(Pause.)

TAMANEND  
I mean, they're my sons.

PENN  
Right.  
No, I understand.  
I won't see my sons for a very long time.

TAMANEND  
They live with their mother's clan?

PENN  
Yes. No. I mean, they live, um. Yes, with their mother.

(Pause.)

TAMANEND  
You're crying.

PENN  
I'm sorry. I'm just so confused. Everything is happening so fast here.

TAMANEND  
You look tired.

PENN  
I am. I'm so tired. Can you hold me again?  
I'm so confused. I feel like I'm  
Like I must be doing the right thing.

TAMANEND  
When I saw you coming up the river, that's what I thought.  
I thought, he looks so tired.  
Your whole body looks tired.

---

NATIVE

Whoa, are you? Hey.

INVASIVE

AH!

NATIVE

No, it's okay, it's okay! I'm not, are you alright?

INVASIVE

...

NATIVE

Can I... You look hungry. Are you hungry? Do you have a nest?

INVASIVE

...

NATIVE

Are you wounded?

INVASIVE

(Hiss)

NATIVE

Whoa, okay, here, look, I have some extra...

I'll just leave this here for you. Don't be scared. I won't... I'll just leave this here.

I'll just leave this.

INVASIVE

...

NATIVE

I live over near the creek.

There are lots of nuts there. It's a good place.

So, I mean.

If you need help.

Anytime.

...

I'll just.

Anytime.

---

*Penn and the animals have a fire circle. They throw their sins into the fire. They dance; it is a solemnity.*

PENN

When we meet together, our purpose and our form of worship is to watch and wait for God to draw us inward and away from all visible things. And when everyone has arrived at that state, God not only reveals himself and draws near to each individual, but is in the midst of the group as well. Each one partakes of strength and refreshment which comes from the good in himself, and shares with that of the whole body... joint fellowship and communion with all.

*They continue the dance. They sit. After a moment, Lamb 2 stands.*

LAMB 2

Friends, I am struggling with my tendency to find fault with my sister, when I should be celebrating her. When I celebrate my sister, I am finding union with grace.

I am opening myself to the genuine heart of sorrow. The inward striving of the soul as mysterious as the striving of a child in the womb. Finding tolerance again.

Thank you, Friends, for your help in this.

*She sits. A silence. LEOPARD stands.*

LEOPARD

Ye shall have a song

And gladness of heart

As when one goeth with a pipe to come unto the mountain of the Lord.

*They dance.*

---

NATIVE

Whoa!

INVASIVE

I'm sorry.

NATIVE

No, no, you just startled me.

INVASIVE

I'm sorry.

NATIVE

What? No. No, come in, are you hungry? There's some... are you hungry?

I left some over there for you, in case.

You're welcome to it.

INVASIVE  
I'm bad.

NATIVE  
What?

INVASIVE  
...

NATIVE  
...

INVASIVE  
I should go.

NATIVE  
No, no, please.  
Stay. Stay. Here, there's... um.

*(INVASIVE puts large handful of nuts in mouth and swallows, barely chewing.)*

NATIVE  
There's plenty there. Or I can make you a... oh.

*(INVASIVE gets into NATIVE's nest and curls up next to NATIVE. Falls asleep immediately. NATIVE stares out into the darkness, wide awake.)*

---

LAMB 1  
Are you

LEOPARD  
Shhhhh just.

LAMB 1  
Oh

(Pause.)

LEOPARD  
State of grace. I'm

LAMB 1  
Me too. This stuff is strong.

LEOPARD  
Mmmm.

(Pause.)

LEOPARD

I am nothing, I require nothing. I am already fulfilled in the Light. I require no sustenance, the Spirit is sufficient for me

LAMB 1

Yeeeeeeeah.

LEOPARD

Beside me, this herbivore offers herself to me, but how could I feed, being, as I am, already sat-  
ed? Why should I hunger for more than Divine Love? Still I say with the poet, it is well with my  
soul.

LAMB 1

Do you think I have sorrow?

LEOPARD

What?

LAMB 1

I don't know. It was just something that Clotilde said yesterday.

LEOPARD

Well, Clotilde.

She has her own —

LAMB 1

I know.

LEOPARD

Struggles with / grace.

LAMB 1

I know, I know.

LEOPARD

You mustn't make a comparison. It's not good for the group, it's not healthy. You're better than  
that. Look at me, hey. Look at me.

You're better than that.

LAMB 1

I know.

LEOPARD

Say it. You're better than that.

LAMB 1

I'm better than that.

LEOPARD  
You're better than that.

LAMB 1  
I'm better than that.

LEOPARD  
Toleration, sister, holy toleration.  
Commere. Shhh. I've got you. Shhhh.

(Pause.)

LAMB 1  
I have sorrow, too, you know.

LEOPARD  
Of course you do.

LAMB 1  
Just because I like to stick my butt up in the air doesn't mean I don't have concerns for the larger world, in fact, I think that's exactly what keeps me IN the state of grace, when I feel the breeze on my butt or or stand in a patch of sunlight and just, hang out, you know, when I look at myself in the pond and think, wow, I am, I mean, pretty good looking, I look pretty good.

LEOPARD  
You look great, girl.

LAMB 1  
Right?

LEOPARD  
No shame in admitting it.

LAMB 1  
Eating! There's so much to eat here, since we got here it's been, you know, nothing but food, it's like an entire continent made of food, you could just

LEOPARD  
Hm.

LAMB 1  
Just eat for days and days and it wouldn't... it would never run out! You know when you've eaten so much in a day and you remember what that's like, to feel full? That's also grace. Because I don't think denying ourselves is what the Divine Love wants, I think it wants us to be fruitful, it puts all this bounty in front of us for, what?

LEOPARD  
What.

LAMB 1

For EATING, that's what! For eating, and and rubbing your butt against moss, god, have you ever tried that? Let me tell you, it is... invigorating! And standing in sunlight, and feeling... nothing here is meant for my ill. Everything is here to protect and love me. Everything. The Divine Love wants me to, like, to eat and roll in grass and stick my butt in the air, because all of it is good. The sunlight heats up right here, my haunches, you know, my gristle, right here, I feel like it's basically saying, Matilde, you are a good lamb. You should keep eating and jumping in circles for no good reason, don't let anyone tell you different, girl, keep on doing your thing, standing around thinking absolutely nothing, you know, I am able think about nothing for such long stretches at a time! And walking around in circles, jumping up really high, no good reason! Look, watch this!

LEOPARD

Oh. Wow.

LAMB 1

Right? Now check this out. Boom! And I can fall down like this.

LEOPARD

Unnnngh.

LAMB 1

Boom! Fell right over for no reason! I'm telling you, this stuff just comes out of me, totally naturally, I'm not even trying.

LEOPARD

Do it again.

LAMB 1

Which part?

LEOPARD

The whole thing.

LAMB 1

Oh yeah? You wanna see that again?

LEOPARD

Please.

LAMB 1

Pretty please?

LEOPARD

Please do that whole thing again please from the beginning please.

LAMB 1

I don't know... did you mean something like... THIS?



LEOPARD  
Ah!

LAMB 1  
Or THIS?

LEOPARD  
Oh sweet loving / Christ

LAMB 1  
Blam! Blam blam! I'm unstoppable! I'm an unstoppable dynamo of jumping and falling over and running in circles! POW!

LEOPARD  
Oh that's amazing.

LAMB 1  
Right? I am filled with the spirit!

LEOPARD  
You're the manifestation of the majesty

LAMB 1  
Of the MAJESTY! One more for the win! WHOOOOOOT!

LEOPARD  
Ah ah ah I have to go.

LAMB 1  
Yeah, YEAH! Yeah you do!

LEOPARD  
No seriously it's necessary that I go right now I have to go.

*(LAMB 1 is alone, but continues her dancing, breathless.)*

LAMB 1  
Suit yourself man. Suit yourself because I'm. On a roll. Can't stop, won't stop. CAN'T STOP!  
Whew! I'm one with the Divine Plan, I am the manifestation! Manifestation of the... whew. Of the Majesty! The great... invisible... hand that ties... everything that... man, I'm unstoppable, I'm a Truth Exalted, I am Innocency with her... smiling FACE!... YEAH! Groove on it! Dig this, dig my innocency. Innocency and gladness. Gladness of heart, gladness, gladness of heart, gladness, GLADNESS! GLADNESS OF HEART! Second wind, here we go. GLADNESS! GLADNESS! GLADNESS!

*(The LION has entered, and stares at LAMB 1 sadly as she continues, unaware that she is observed.)*

LAMB 1

GLADNESS! GLADNESS! GLADNESS! GLADNESS!

The mountains and hills break, break forth before me, into singing, and all the trees of the fields, all the trees clap their hands! Clap your hands!

CLAP NOW! CLAP! YEAH! CLAP ON IT!

Get down with it, CLAP YOUR HANDS!

YEAH! UNGH! Gotta clap your hands!

ALL THE TREES OF THE FIELD, GOTTA CLAP YOUR HANDS NOW! ALL THE BIRDS OF THE AIR GOTTA CLAP YOUR HANDS NOW! ALL THE BEASTS OF THE EARTH GOTTA CLAP, CLAP, CLAP YOUR HANDS! CLAP, CLAP YOUR HANDS!

Gotta clap now, earth gotta clap now, sky gotta clap now, better clap your hands now, comon clap your hands now —

*(The LION begins clapping. LAMB 1 turns, shocked. The LION stops clapping. They regard each other.)*

LAMB 1

Hello.

Um.

It's really nice here.

Aren't you glad to be here, in this nice?

The foliage.

*(The LION exits. LAMB 1 is left alone, bursts into tears.)*

LAMB 1

Stupid.

---

INVASIVE

*(mouth full)*

And then they started burning huge sections of forest. For farmland, you know.

NATIVE

I don't know what that is.

INVASIVE

It's when they take the trees away and put down lines of plants, all the same.

NATIVE

The same?

INVASIVE

In lines, all the same thing, no trees, it's ridiculous. Or they make pasture for cows.

NATIVE

Cows?

INVASIVE

Really, you don't have...? Grazing quadropeds, aurochs, domesticated ungulates?

NATIVE

Um.

INVASIVE

(mouth full)

Well, count yourself lucky, friend, because I always say, where there are cows, forests do not long endure, nawmean? Oh boy. That's why I left.

NATIVE

If you want, I can tenderize those nuts for you, I usually hit them against the floor like

INVASIVE

No, I take my nuts hard, the harder the better, I'm crazy about these, whatever these are...

NATIVE

Oak. They're oak / acorns.

INVASIVE

Right, I'm super into this oak, oh man, it really gets the job done.

They have these little caps, so adorable, right?

I mean, I'm an adventurous eater, there isn't a nut I wouldn't eat, when the habitat started dwindling I had to branch out, so to speak, ha ha

NATIVE

Heh

INVASIVE

Ha HA! Right, branch out, because

NATIVE

No, I get it

INVASIVE

Anyway, the elms started getting diseased, of course, and everything else was cut down for these ungulates, you know, maples, totally gone, the beech, the corktree, I was like, this is no way to live.

NATIVE

I'm so sorry.

INVASIVE

I can't say it hasn't affected me, permanently. The memory of that kind of hunger.

NATIVE

Yeah, of course, I...

INVASIVE

If you want to really know what terror is, spend an autumn staring at your own ribs.  
I said to Carla, Carla was a real fighter, you know, one of the best. She had... oh god, the shiniest fur, eyes that actually flashed, you ever see moonlight on a pond?

NATIVE

Yes, we have ponds /here

INVASIVE

Eyes that hurt you, deeeeeeeep, sharp eyes, that's what she, damn, she really did love me. Hm. I was too immature at the time, you know, to understand that kind of, I was going through my own thing. But god if I ever loved anyone, it was her, man, she was outrageous in mating season, just could not get enough

NATIVE

Oh.

INVASIVE

Voracious! You know? There's me, totally starving, my ribs sticking out, I was a mess, I won't lie, I was a complete mess, and there she is, like, "You are so beautiful," you know

NATIVE

You are / beautiful

INVASIVE

But how was I to, at the time? And she's looking at me with this hungry, this thing that says that she's either going to mate with me or eat me, I mean, I was afraid, ha ha, it was a distinct possibility that she would eat me, she had problems, man. But then, we all did. We all did back then. I think she might have had a litter of pups that year, hard to remember, she ate a few of them, I don't know, it all goes foggy after that, of course I'd left by then

NATIVE

You have —?

INVASIVE

Yeah, I don't know, it's hard to talk about, suffice to say I don't remember a lot about that time. I have to be honest, man, I'm coming back from a pretty bad place.

NATIVE

You have this.

You can have all of this, anything that I have is yours.

Just don't... don't think you're alone, because you're not.

I'll protect you.

INVASIVE

Wow.

Wow.

Sorry.

I don't know what to... I just, I'm not very good at this, at

NATIVE

You don't have to

INVASIVE

I feel this weird pressure, with thanking people.

NATIVE

No, You don't have to

Don't thank me, please.

Just let me help you, let me take care of you.

INVASIVE

Man, I'm not good at that either, letting people care for me, I'm pretty

NATIVE

Just stay

INVASIVE

Independent. It's...

NATIVE

I know

INVASIVE

It's hard, you know? But I'll try

NATIVE

Just stay here with me, for as long as you want, or care to, or need.

And I promise, you won't be hungry again. I promise you that you don't have to go back to that, that horrible time.

It's better here. Things will be better now.

INVASIVE

I wish I could believe that.

NATIVE

Please, please believe me.

I just

Honestly, I have never seen anything like you before.

---

PENN

What is this?

TAMANEND

It's for you. It's a wampum belt.

PENN

I... who made this?

TAMANEND

We did. Well, I gave the idea to Locust Woman and then together we came up with the design; I mean, she basically made it, but certainly others helped. She's very good at what she does. She's definitely, I would say probably the best in Eagle Clan. It's a collaborative project, though, she's really open to suggestions, and of course her daughters are part of the design conversations, too.

PENN

And what is this, this picture? They're holding hands.

TAMANEND

Oh yeah, that's me and you.

PENN

Oh. ... Oh.

TAMANEND

I'm on the /left.

PENN

Yes.

TAMANEND

The thinner one.

PENN

I see.

TAMANEND

Are you... you don't like it?

PENN

Uh.

TAMANEND

Is it. Whoa. Did I just do something wrong?

I'm sorry. I'm not sure what your culture... if this is not done.

Are you... somehow... offended?

PENN

No. No. It's not offensive. No. I just. Ah.

My heart.

TAMANEND

Oh.

PENN  
My heart.

TAMANEND  
Here, lay down. I'll call them to come help. You need medicine.

PENN  
Neither. No. Don't call them. I've just never  
Ah.  
Never felt anything this wonderful before. My heart.

---

KID  
That's not what I said.

LAMB 2  
It's an ontological problem, that's what I mean —

KID  
Of course, but that's not the point. Ultimately, listen, there's ultimately a fallacy in this sort of thinking, we stumble naïve-ly upon utopia, we think, "Oh, this is it, the second chance..."

LAMB 2  
I think you're being unfair here, I wouldn't say / naïve.

KID  
"It's a clean slate!" Which can't, it's too convenient, you know, and by the way, you know the indigenous population believes in circular time, like the seasons, it's a conceit that really frees you from this ridiculous linearity that tells you a fresh start is even possible, that's a comforting illusion, but it's fundamentally, still, a, uh, you know.

LAMB 2  
I think the Lion would disagree with you.

KID  
Ha! Please. You don't know the first thing about the lion.

LAMB 2  
I absolutely — what do you / know about the lion?

KID  
I know enough. I know enough to know he would be more likely to agree with me. Why do you think he looks so sad all the time? Because he understands. It's all tautological, this sort of thinking, you have to get out of linear time and you see that we've already done it, we're doing it now! We're well-intentioned beings operating on the erroneous assumption that there is such a

thing as a new beginning. As though we're not about to build the same hell we just came from here. It's not just misguided, it's selfish, frankly.

LAMB 2

You talked to the Lion about this?

KID

We don't, uh, that's our problem, we think we cut ourselves loose, or no of course I don't talk to the lion about this nobody talks to the lion.

LAMB 2

Oh, okay.

KID

Ha. Yeah, just stroll up to him, "can I bend your ear, sir?"

LAMB 2

Heh. Yeah.

KID

"A minute of your time, amigo? since we're already such good —"

LAMB 2

"Such good pals." Right.

KID

Right. But what I'm

LAMB 2

"Bend your ear," heh heh

KID

Yeah, my point is not that change is impossible, I don't believe that at all, I just think transformation is different, you can't just change like that, you can't say, "well, that part of my life is done—"

LAMB 2

Why not?

KID

You can't — what?

LAMB 2

Why can't you change like that?

KID

I mean.

LAMB 2

...



KID

....

I don't know. It's just. You can't.

LAMB 2

....

KID

You can't.

LAMB 2

....

KID

Um.

....

Anyway, that was all I was trying to say.

And the bigger issue with the — Whoa! Did you see that?

LAMB 2

What?

KID

It was one of those grey squirrels again. Just like we have back at home. I knew it! The cow told me I was nuts, that squirrels here are red, but no, I'm not crazy, that was definitely a grey one — Look! It's a real

LAMB 2

Yeah.

KID

Skinny one!

LAMB 2

Hm.

KID

Whoa! Wow.

It's comforting, actually. A piece of home.

LAMB 2

Are you...?

KID

Hm?

LAMB 2

I don't think you should come to the meeting anymore.

...

Don't come to the meeting, don't come to fire circle.

KID

Whoa. I don't —

LAMB 2

I'm telling you, stay out. I'll tell them what you said, just now.

Just.

Stay away.

---

CHOIR

The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together; the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle.

They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children.

Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword.

Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled; and their wives ravished.

Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt.

They shall be afraid

---

TAMANEND

You want to think well of people.

And we do, we do. We assume the best of people here. I don't think it's worth believing ill of people, that isn't how to conduct a life.

Of course, there is always misunderstanding. That's unavoidable. When I gave him the wampum belt, I thought he was gonna die. I wanted to say, "Hey man, it's a hunting and fishing license. I mean, a really nice one, but. Still, it's..." You know.

Then just now, when I asked for the pipe back, he just shrunk away suddenly, as though I'd slapped him, he said, "But you *gave* it to me!"

*(Chuckle.)*

You *gave* it to me! Man, that's a hoot.

They have neurotic responses to simple requests like this. But that doesn't mean I think ill of them, they clearly come from some strange place where, I guess, once pipes are given, they just... never circulate again, they sit in one man's home, barely used, gathering dust, everything in his wigwam is gathering dust. It sounds crazy, but that's... what they do, I suppose.

I mean, they didn't even know how to make a fire circle before they arrived here! Ha! Can you believe it?

"But you *gave* it to me."

They are a very neurotic bunch.

But I don't think the worse of them for it.

He told me this story about talking to trees, when he was a child.  
He told me the story as though he didn't know that all trees talked.  
I thought, this man is acting as though he thinks he's the only one who ever heard a tree speak!  
And then I realized, oh wait, he *does* think that.

---

NATIVE

Where...?

INVASIVE

There you are! I was just thinking, maybe this side of the nest should be bigger, maybe some owl down if you can find it, that stuff is so warm. You have owls here, right? I just want to pull my weight, you know, help you get this place in shape. I dismantled that side of the nest, it seemed like some shoddy craftsmanship, no offense, but that whole stack-and-accumulate school of nest building does not work out well in the long run, you have to weave it together. Of course you're going to have to get new materials, these won't do anymore.

NATIVE

Where did the nuts go?

INVASIVE

What?

NATIVE

All the... I brought in so many nuts this morning, what did you do with them?

INVASIVE

Oh. Those?

Like the big pile that was over there?

NATIVE

The, yes, the big pile

INVASIVE

Oh yeah, I ate those.

Ha! Yup. I ate those right up.

NATIVE

You ate

INVASIVE

Yeah, those oak acorns aren't safe around me very long. So good! You know, I've discovered this way of tenderizing them? Makes the shell all crumbly and delicious. You take one, see, and you just hit it on the floor like this, it cracks the shell a little bit, makes it nice and tender in no time. I'm not one for hard nuts, I have a delicate system, you know.

NATIVE

I don't understand.

INVASIVE

Like this, it's easy. See, I just take a nut, right, and I smack it a few times on the floor like this. Boom, boom, done!

NATIVE

You ate. Um. All of them?

INVASIVE

The...

NATIVE

The nuts

INVASIVE

...Nuts? Oh yeah. Absolutely. Oak acorns, so delicious! Who knew? We don't have many quercus species where I come from, that's more of an Asiatic thing, I think.

NATIVE

Azy-Attic?

INVASIVE

I'm sure they'll be after these oaks, too, in no time, good for sailing masts, good for roof beams, you know, they are maniacs for building over there. Thick straight trunks, that's what they like. They've already started marking up the forest, you haven't noticed? Claiming the tallest ones, a big X.

NATIVE

Uh, no. I didn't

INVASIVE

And make no mistake, they'll bring the pastures out here, too. It may take a while, but...

(NATIVE falls over.)

INVASIVE

Whoa! Hey, what's going on, buddy? You got an inner ear thing? Whoa, wake up!

NATIVE

I can't

INVASIVE

Sit up, man, stay awake, oh Jesus! Here, do you need some water? Don't fall asleep, stay with me, man!

NATIVE

I can't believe

I just spent

So much time

Getting those  
I  
Can't  
You just  
You ate them  
All?  
All of them?

INVASIVE  
What?

NATIVE  
I'm sorry  
I just  
What about the emergency stuff?

INVASIVE  
The...

NATIVE  
The special food for emergencies, you didn't...?

INVASIVE  
Um

NATIVE  
You  
Really?

INVASIVE  
'Fraid so.

NATIVE  
Ah.  
Ah.  
I need to  
I'm going to pass out

INVASIVE  
Whoa, man, you need to eat something, you don't look so good.

NATIVE  
I can't  
I can't believe it  
I can't believe you  
You took everything

INVASIVE  
Wait.

Are you

NATIVE

How is this possible

INVASIVE

Are you

Um

Mad at me?

NATIVE

....

INVASIVE

Are you mad at me?

NATIVE

We don't have anything to eat.

INVASIVE

Uh

NATIVE

We don't have anything to eat.

INVASIVE

Yeah, but it doesn't take much

Does it? To replenish? I mean, you got so many just this morning, just from one forage, there's plenty to go around, right? There's no

Scarcity

Just

I'm sorry but

You never told me that you didn't want me to eat the

Ah, this is hard.

I just.

I guess when you said it was for everyone I thought

You know, that you meant it

NATIVE

I... did. Of course I meant it

INVASIVE

I thought that you were just being super generous,

I thought

Sorry, I should have known

I shouldn't have taken you too seriously

I take things seriously sometimes

NATIVE

What? No! Of course you should

INVASIVE

No, no, I'm stupid. Stupid stupid stupid

NATIVE

Stop, don't hurt yourself

INVASIVE

No, I deserve this. I'm going to make myself throw it up.

NATIVE

What? No!

INVASIVE

Aaaar, I'm bad, I knew it, I always knew it, I'm no good for anyone, I'm no good for you, I was no good for Carla

NATIVE

No no

INVASIVE

I just destroy everything I touch

NATIVE

No! Stop, you're killing me, stop that

INVASIVE

I should have died, I should be dead. I wish

NATIVE

Don't say that

INVASIVE

I wish I were dead, I wish I were  
(Gagging)

NATIVE

Don't, don't throw up, you'll waste the fat and the energy, you need it

INVASIVE

No, I need to be dead. That's what I need

NATIVE

Stop, please, please, please stop please. Please, you're hurting me, please stop. You've been starving, you need to replenish, you needed that protein, it's going to make you better, don't cry, it's going to make you better, and it's all going to be better now, and I'm sorry I snapped at you, I'm sorry, don't cry

INVASIVE

I just don't know what to believe

NATIVE

No, believe me, believe me, I want you to have it. I want you to have the nourishment, to heal, to get healthy. Let me keep helping you. Don't die, don't go, don't be sad, just. Just let me hold you here.

INVASIVE

I'm bad.

NATIVE

No, you're not. Don't say that. You're not.

---

TAMANEND

You should come, sometime!

PENN

What?

TAMANEND

To Turtle Clan. You should come check out our Fire Circle.

PENN

*(choking on smoke)*

Ha ha!

TAMANEND

What?

PENN

Um. Oh.

TAMANEND

Why did you

PENN

Sorry

TAMANEND

Why was that funny?

PENN

It's not. It's not funny. I was just um

TAMANEND

Okay



PENN  
Surprised.

TAMANEND  
Okay.

PENN  
Yes, of course I should... I don't see why not.

TAMANEND  
I'm sorry I didn't invite you earlier, it's just.

PENN  
No, of course!

TAMANEND  
I wasn't quite sure of you, of, you know. Your intentions. Because people like you... sorry, I hope you don't find this offensive.

PENN  
Not at all.

TAMANEND  
The Wampanoag, up north, have had problems with other, uh. You know. Whiteys. Honkies.

PENN  
What?

TAMANEND  
It's what we call you. Because of your funny voices, you sound like geese. It's really pretty funny.

PENN  
Huh.

TAMANEND  
When you came up the river, and called to us on the shore, you sounded like, "MRP!", sorry, I can't even do it, ha, it was so funny, my little nefew said, "Wow, listen to that honky!"

PENN  
Ha.

TAMANEND  
Oh, man, we had a good laugh. He's a funny kid. But yeah, uh, what was I saying?

PENN  
The Wampanoag.

TAMANEND

So we'd heard about you in the north, with the Wampanoag, you were getting everyone involved in your honky wars, giving everyone honky diseases, they said you bred like rabbits and you grew hair on your bodies and smelled awful — understand, I don't mind the smell, I really don't. And I have to admit that I believed these stories, that I had come to think of you as a group rather than you, an individual, I didn't know any of you, you understand, and I hope you'll forgive me for... judging you that way. I understand now.

PENN

Understand?

TAMANEND

You're one of the good ones.

PENN

I hope so.

TAMANEND

Aren't you?

PENN

Yes. I think yes.

TAMANEND

Good. It's settled. Good.

*(Pause.)*

Are you

Is everything okay?

PENN

I love you.

TAMANEND

I love you, too, brother! I love you too!

PENN

Can I ask you something?

TAMANEND

Of course.

PENN

Will your... sons be there? At the Fire Circle?

TAMANEND

Maybe my oldest. It will depend on whether their mother wants to bring them along.

PENN

Ah.

TAMANEND

But you should, you should meet them. I'd be happy to introduce you.

PENN

Yeah?

TAMANEND

Of course!

I'd be proud.

---

LAMB 1

Guess how many?

LAMB 2

I don't know, just tell me!

LAMB 1

Guess!

LAMB 2

Two.

LAMB 1

Nope. Keep guessing.

LAMB 2

Three.

LAMB 1

NOPE!

LAMB 2

Five

LAMB 1

Noooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

LAMB 2

I don't know just tell me I am not going to guess anymore tell me!

LAMB 1

SEVENTEEN!

LAMB 2

What?

LAMB 1  
That is SO MANY!

LAMB 2  
That's a *lot* of ladybugs.

LAMB 1  
On ONE ROCK! I was like, whaaaaaaaaaaaaa?!!!  
They were crawling everywhere, making little patterns and stuff  
I mean, have you ever seen that many?

LAMB 2  
I think... I have. Sure.

LAMB 1  
Heh. No.  
No no no. On ONE ROCK?

LAMB 2  
I don't know. I think so.

LAMB 1  
You haven't. There's no way. There's no way you saw SEVENTEEN /on the same rock

LAMB 2  
How do you know? How do you know what I see and don't see? How would you know?

LAMB 1  
BeCAUSE, stupid, you would have told me!

(Pause.)

You would have told me!

LAMB 2  
Maybe not.

LAMB 1  
Yes, you would have!

LAMB 2  
Don't call me / stupid

LAMB 1  
PLEASE you would never be able to keep something like that from me.  
No way. Nope. Mm-mn.  
It's so hard for you to keep any surprise you would never, / never in a million years

LAMB 2

You don't know that, I do so keep surprises

LAMB 1

Oh yeah? Yeah? What about the soggy moss patch? Remember the soggy moss patch?

LAMB 2

That was such a long time ago, give me a break.

LAMB 1

MmmmmmmNOT that long ago, actually

LAMB 2

That was like half my lifetime ago like three months ago.

LAMB 1

Not even. Not even three.

LAMB 2

Anyway, I've changed a lot since then

LAMB 1

"Let's get the cow to fall in the soggy moss patch, it'll be so easy!"

LAMB 2

Shut up

LAMB 1

*(barely surpressing laughter)*

"Oh my god won't that be funny? All I have to do is NOT TELL THE COW ABOUT THE SOGGY MOSS / PATCH."

LAMB 2

That was forever ago and also that cow was super perceptive also you always seem to be under the impression that I stopped aging after I was four months old which is just not accurate, okay, you really don't know anything about my life right now.

*(Covers her face)*

LAMB 1

*(Still laughing)*

Uh, girl, please. Can we not

*(Collects herself)*

Can we not make this a thing?

Look. Look.

I'm sorry I saw the ladybugs and not you, okay?

LAMB 2

*(Still hidden)*

This isn't even about that.

LAMB 1  
I thought you'd be excited for me.

LAMB 2  
*(Hidden)*  
This isn't about the ladybugs anymore.

LAMB 1  
Look, I had some big news I wanted to tell you because I know ladybugs are your favorite at least they used to be, and yeah, I know you might be over that now because you're like really busy with the Kid these days and because you guys are like best friends now But I thought maybe you could take a little time out of your day and like like Maybe you'd want to know this mind-blowing thing I experienced Because when things happen to me, I tell you about them.  
Okay?  
When things happen to me, I want you to know.  
Because that's what sisters do.

*(Pause.)*

LAMB 1  
That's what we do, right?  
Right?  
Hey.  
Listen to me.

*(Pulls LAMB 2 out of hiding, or uncovers her face.)*

Are you okay?

*(LAMB 2 looks at her sister, hesitates, and runs off. LAMB 1 watches LAMB 2 run away.)*

---

INVASIVE  
This nest is a mess.

NATIVE  
...

INVASIVE  
Did you hear me?

NATIVE  
What?

INVASIVE  
I just...

I don't know how I'm supposed to live in this.

I mean.

One side of it is completely... what is this? It's just completely blown apart, it's not even

And what is this? What are these feathers?

NATIVE

They're... owl feathers.

INVASIVE

...OWL?! I mean, what in the WHAT? Why would I want to sleep in a nest that smells like a predator, what kind of torture is that?

Do you want me to have nightmares?

I mean, you want to keep me in some kind of heightened paranoiac state, is that it?

What's funny is that you actually enjoy my distress, you enjoy it.

NATIVE

No, I don't

INVASIVE

You do heh man you really um wow

OWL FEATHERS?! ARE YOU SERIOUS???

This place is designed to be my own personal hell.

This isn't a home, it's a prison. Prisoners get better treatment than this, actually.

NATIVE

If you don't like the feathers

INVASIVE

La la la la, no, I don't want to hear it, I don't want to hear how you didn't MEAN to

You do mean to, because you ARE mean

You're spiteful, and you're venomous, and you can't bear the idea of me having a moment of happiness, that's not how you want me to be, you need to keep me weak

NATIVE

That's... not true

INVASIVE

That's why you bring me these horrible... oh god

These rotted out, mealy nuts, they aren't fit for worms

You think I don't notice? You think I don't see that?

NATIVE

It's the end of the season, the nuts are just different, that's all

INVASIVE

You think I don't know what season it is?

You think I don't know you're trying to do?

You think I don't

Ha

You think  
Oh man  
You think I  
That I don't  
Oh god  
You  
You  
Don't touch me  
You don't touch me

NATIVE  
I'm not

INVASIVE  
Stop it

NATIVE  
I'm not trying to touch you

INVASIVE  
Stop it get out get out

NATIVE  
I'm going

INVASIVE  
GET OUT NOW

*(NATIVE goes. INVASIVE is alone. Sits down in the owl feathers, eats nuts, staring blankly)*

---

LEOPARD  
Hey Kid.

KID  
Whoa!

LEOPARD  
Whoaaaaa, calm down, jumpy!

KID  
You scared me.

LEOPARD  
Yeah, sorry, I can't help it, it's easy to forget how stealthy I am. Mixed blessing really. Maybe I should wear, like a bell or something. Ha ha!

KID  
That would be nice.



LEOPARD  
Can you imagine?

KID  
Yeah, I think that would be / reasonable

LEOPARD  
That's ridiculous. Anyway, I just uh. Wanted to see what was up.

KID  
Up?

LEOPARD  
You didn't come to meeting today.

KID  
Uh-huh. Well.

(Pause.)

I've just been feeling some resistance. From members of the group.

LEOPARD  
Whaaaaa?

KID  
Like, they don't want me there.

LEOPARD  
Whaaaaaaaa? That's

KID  
Yeah

(Pause.)

LEOPARD  
That's awful, friend. Who would? Wait. Wait.

KID  
I don't want to go where I'm not wanted, and it's true, I talk a lot, I tend to overthink things, and maybe I spoke out of turn

LEOPARD  
Wait wait wait. Clotilde, right?  
Was it Clotilde?

KID

Well

(Pause.)

LEOPARD  
UNNNNNNGH I knew it

KID  
She isn't wrong, I mean

LEOPARD  
Of COURSE she's wrong, man, of course she is! She's making everyone uncomfortable lately, just just freaking everyone OUT!

KID  
Yeah.

LEOPARD  
Personally, I think she's gone too far, man. I mean, I know lambs are skittish, I realize that's their nature, but I mean, that's why we're here, right? Transcending all that? Transforming? Ascending? Evolving? Loving? Living in toleration and love and I want to believe that you believe that, my brother, I want to believe that you are with me on that because it is so hard

KID  
I know, it is. It's really hard.

LEOPARD  
I work really hard to keep this going, we all do

KID  
Yes, I want to keep it going. I just get scared.

LEOPARD  
Don't let her! Don't let her scare you!

KID  
I'm scared, I'm scared of you right now I'm scared.

LEOPARD  
What noooooooooo

KID  
Because this kind of faith, this radical transformation requires a constant teleological suspension of terror, the practical, natural, intrinsic alarm system that was put in me for a reason, wasn't it? Wasn't it? And shouldn't I? / Be afraid?

LEOPARD  
I think that all the time, too, you can't let it get to you.

KID

I want to believe that! But

LEOPARD

I need you to believe that, man, because how will I hold it together if you don't? You think I'm not starving my ass off?

KID

Yeah, but see?

LEOPARD

You think you don't look delicious right now? You look SO DELICIOUS right now!

KID

Yeah, I probably do!

LEOPARD

I mean, you're scrawny and everything, but man, you'd still be

KID

Yeah I bet!

LEOPARD

Your flanks first, I mean, that's where I'd start, personally.

KID

Yeah well

LEOPARD

Because you've got all that power in your back legs, springy, right? And if I got my back claws in there, I could shift my weight and bite the back of your neck, once my canines punctured you'd start to panic, and I'd be able to taste the panic, it abso-*lute*-ly changes the taste, makes it really metallic and tangy, and then maybe I'd let up a little, since that's part of it, that's part of the fun, not to make it too quick, and maybe you'd start trying to kick and I'd flex my claws again and push down on you hard, so you lose your breath, and just at that moment change my grip and get my jaw right over your throat, make a new little puncture, you can see where this is going, right?

KID

I

LEOPARD

And I WHIP my body around real fast, behind you, you kick like CRAZY! You fight for your life! I've got my paws on your front quarters and your head is just wrenched back, your legs are like a blur in the air, it's beautiful! I just hold you there, let you go through it, get through it, fighting for as long as you can, oh god it's so amazing to watch you fight, and I get to be the witness, the privileged witness, everything firing off at once, I'm just holding your shoulders like, "Shhhh. Shhhh. I've got you. I'm not gonna let you go. I've got you."

KID  
Stop. Don't touch me.

LEOPARD  
Shhhhhhhhhh I've got you.

KID  
Stop it stop it.

LEOPARD  
I've got you, just

*(KID kicks the LEOPARD in the genitals and makes a run for it.)*

LEOPARD  
AAAAAAAAAAAAAH! Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaarrrrrrrrrr  
oh man ow  
*(sucks air through teeth)*  
Ow ow ow ow.  
That  
really  
REALLY  
ow.

---

CHOIR  
The paper reeds by the brooks  
by the mouth of the brooks, and everything sown by the brooks,  
shall wither, be driven away,  
and be no more.

---

*Penn and the animals have a fire circle. They throw their sins into the fire. They dance; it is a solemnity.*

PENN  
I am grateful that we will be joining Turtle Clan for communion and Fire Circle next week.  
I am proud of our community and holding us in the Light, even in the midst of loss.  
Our Brother Kid is sorely missed, and we hope he finds his way back to the circle.

*They continue the dance. They sit. After a moment, Lamb 1 stands.*

LAMB 1  
Friends, I am missing my companion. I was not as close with him as some, but he was a great boon to our community and uh. I am holding him in the Light.

*She sits. A silence. LEOPARD stands.*

LEOPARD

The paper reeds by the brooks,  
by the mouth of the brooks, and everything sown by the brooks,  
shall wither, be driven away,  
and be no more.  
But these are they that forsake the Lord, and forget thy holy mountain.

*They dance.*

---

PENN

Perhaps it wasn't right to allow dancing at the meeting.  
Is it a form of ostentation? The dancing?  
Perhaps I went too far.

...

I can't help but think it's my fault. This was all somewhat... improvisatory.  
And the dancing seemed appropriate, somehow, in this other place. And he was there, and I  
was so excited, it was all going so well! He was smiling, in the firelight... I mean.  
The fire seemed appropriate, and frankly, I don't know, I was willing to experiment.  
A man finds himself falling and calls it flight. Can you blame him?  
How can you tell the difference? Can you tell?

...

I thought freedom was a decision. Not to be afraid anymore. Maybe that was not —

...

....

I'll tell them not to dance anymore.

---

INVASIVE

Oh, hello!

NATIVE

...I'm just.

INVASIVE

Hi.

NATIVE

Coming in for a moment.

Hi.

INVASIVE

There's food, if you want some.

(Pause.)

NATIVE

Okay.

INVASIVE

Here, sit here. Here.

NATIVE

Um. Thank you.

INVASIVE

You know, there's still plenty to forage down by the creek.  
It was a really nice day.

NATIVE

I know, I was / out there

INVASIVE

Indian summer, they call it.

NATIVE

Indian?

INVASIVE

Summer.

I mean, it's a warm autumn, but it's called Indian summer

NATIVE

What's an Indian?

INVASIVE

It doesn't matter. It's just a thing people say.

Man, but out there today, the easterly wind, everything smells so clean,  
It smells new!

I feel like I've gotten to a place, in my life where...

I think, you know, I must be doing the right thing.

I found a freshwater spring, today

And you can see right through to the bottom,

I saw my face for the first time in a long time, and uh

NATIVE

I saw someone with your face.

INVASIVE

It was — what?

NATIVE

I thought I saw you, but it wasn't you.

(Pause.)

It was someone who looked exactly like you.  
I thought I was going crazy but then  
There was two of them. A mother and a pup.

INVASIVE  
Where?

NATIVE  
Upstream, near the / caves

INVASIVE  
Caves, yeah. Uh-huh.

(Pause.)

INVASIVE  
The caves, of course, well, of course.  
There's decent foraging up there, too, but nothing like what we have down here!  
She's not, I mean, it's her choice man, but I doubt she'll come down here.  
But if she starts moving downstream, we're going to have a real foraging problem, because  
those little sons of guns can EAT! Ha!

NATIVE  
Who can?

INVASIVE  
Pups, they're eaters. Oh yeah. Unstoppable eaters.

(Pause.)

INVASIVE  
Listen, when I saw my face in the creek today, I was thinking,  
How am I even? It's like, I'm really in a good place now, and I owe that to you. Straight up.

NATIVE  
I don't understand

INVASIVE  
I'm just saying, I really have grown, this whole ordeal  
Hey  
Hey  
Are you okay?

NATIVE  
I don't understand what's happening

INVASIVE

Whoa, just lay down here, here in the feathers. See how warm that is?

NATIVE

What's happening?

INVASIVE

What's happening is that I'm going to make you something nice, some nice food, and then I'll just hold you, like this, would you like that?

NATIVE

I... yes.

INVASIVE

And I'm going to kiss your face

Your furry little screwed-up face, you are adorable, you know that?

You're all skinny, you look skinny now

I'm going to make you feel beloved.

NATIVE

Okay.

INVASIVE

Okay? I'm going to kiss the pads of your paws. Has anyone ever done that?

NATIVE

(crying)

My mother.

INVASIVE

Sshhhhhhh.

Like that.

NATIVE

Thank you.

INVASIVE

Is that nice?

NATIVE

Yes.

INVASIVE

What about this, is this nice?

NATIVE

It feels so nice.

INVASIVE



I know, honey. It's gonna feel really good.

NATIVE

Okay.

INVASIVE

From now on

NATIVE

Yes

INVASIVE

Would you like that?

NATIVE

Yes please, thank you yes

---

PENN

Hey! Um. Can I talk to you?

TAMANEND

Yeah, what's up? WHITE BEAR, LET ME CATCH UP WITH YOU! I was about to go into the longhouse, we're going to have the tobacco ceremony. Listen, wow, it's been so great having you here, the children were really excited to see you!

PENN

Yes, definitely

TAMANEND

The elders, too, I mean, we have some skeptics in the bunch but generally everyone is just glad you're here. I guess you saw White Bear really turn it up in the dance?

PENN

Ha yeah.

TAMANEND

Yeah! Ha ha! Whew! Man!

He was totally showing off, I haven't seen him do that in years! I think that was for you.

He's getting things ready in the longhouse now, you want to come?

PENN

Um, no, I think I should start... heading back. I just feel a little strange

TAMANEND

Ah, okay. Your heart?

PENN

No. Yes. Um. It's just different, I feel like you act differently when we're here, I don't know. Like not the same as when it's just you and me.

TAMANEND

I... uh-huh.

(Pause.)

PENN

Well, when it's just you and me it's like I get more of your attention, and I understand we're, you know, you have a lot of people depending on you but. When it's just us, I feel special to you And I felt special in a different way today, A disturbing way.

TAMANEND

A disturbing way?

PENN

Well, when you, like, showed the kids my hairy arms

TAMANEND

Yeah, they loved that.

PENN

But then they like, lifted my whole shirt up, they kept pulling on my chest hair and you, you know, didn't do anything about it, you were just laughing.

TAMANEND

Yes, because it was funny.

PENN

They were poking at my stomach and my nipples

TAMANEND

They're kids, man.

PENN

And somebody makes a joke and everybody laughs before I can tell what the joke was Everybody's just talking so fast, even if they're smiling I can't stop feeling like Everyone's looking at me like I'm different.

TAMANEND

You are different.

PENN

But I don't see it that way, I don't see you as different, I don't see that! I mean, here, it's strange,

But when it's just you and me, um  
Um  
Will you just come back with me, now?  
Like, back to the settlement?

TAMANEND  
Right now?

PENN  
Yeah.

TAMANEND  
Rather than complete my role in the tobacco ritual?

PENN  
Yeah.

TAMANEND  
And leave everybody in the longhouse waiting for me?

PENN  
Yeah.

TAMANEND  
No.

PENN  
Oh.

(Beat.)

TAMANEND  
Maybe we should talk about this later, eh?

---

KID  
Pssst.

LAMB 2  
AH!

KID  
Shhhhh! Over here.

LAMB 2  
What is wrong with you? You look

KID  
Listen.

LAMB 2  
Really dirty.

KID  
Just quiet down, they'll hear you. Listen to me.

LAMB 2  
I think I've heard enough already.

KID  
Listen, just listen to me.  
Okay?  
I've joined a group of white-tail deer. They've been laying low, watching us all this time, waiting to see what we're up to. They're into a lot of really radical stuff. It really makes sense to me.

LAMB 2  
Uh-huh.

KID  
They believe in the circular time thing, AND they have a whole different grazing regimen predicated on looking out for predators.

LAMB 2  
What are predators?

KID  
Yeah! Ha! Right? Yeah! Ex-ACTLY! That's exactly what I said, but boy, did they open my eyes.

LAMB 2  
Look, whatever you have to say, I'm not interested.

KID  
Just listen

LAMB 2  
*(hooves over ears)*  
Na na na na na NO. I don't care what you and the white-tail deer are planning, I don't want to be a part of it, I am struggling now to just, just keep my faith in tact. Everybody's wondering where you are, they're all demoralized, we're not even allowed to dance in the Fire Circle anymore and and... I have to believe that this wasn't all for nothing, okay?

KID  
No, it's bigger than that now, / trust me

LAMB 2

I have to believe that we didn't come all the way here just to repeat, repeat history, you know? Repeating it and just be stuck in the same... ridiculous... And you come in here, saying there's no such thing as change? That there's no such thing as a decision to change —

KID  
I never said that

LAMB 2  
Yeah, but you DID, see, you did, because I believe in that. I do. I believe that we can decide to trust one another, decide to love one another, to make the kingdom of heaven on earth! And if that's not real, then why even try? I refuse to live in that world! You're going to tell me I can't have peace on earth? Is that what you're telling me?

KID  
Well

LAMB 2  
Is that what you're telling me right now? If I can't have that, then why even try? I just want to live knowing that I'm doing the right thing, that I'm living in grace, that there's a way to change and be better and and

KID  
Okay, calm down, they'll hear you

LAMB 2  
And I just want to be able to not be afraid anymore, please, we came all this way, just tell me I don't need to be afraid anymore because why be alive / otherwise, WHY?

KID  
I —  
I gotta go. (*He goes.*)

LAMB 2  
(*panic attack*)  
Why if it's all for nothing?  
Ohhhhh god please tell me it's not all for nothing  
Or just kill me now  
Please tell me it will get better  
Please tell me that it's real, that I'm doing something good  
That we're making something beautiful and good  
If I can't hope for that world then then what? Then what?  
If I can't live in that world I'd rather be dead  
Oh please help me

(*The LION has entered and is watching. LAMB 2 sees LION.*)

LAMB 2  
Please help me  
Please

I'm just  
So scared  
Please  
I don't know what's real anymore  
Please take this feeling away  
Can't you take it away?  
I just want to feel peace again.  
Please?

*(The LION calmly walks towards LAMB 2. They stare at each other. LAMB 2 calms down, stares at LION gratefully.)*

LAMB 2  
Thank you.

*(LION kills LAMB 2. This may be reminiscent of the LEOPARD's description, but it is enacted slowly and solemnly. It is a solemnity. The CHOIR is singing the Have Ye Not Known? movement throughout. It ends in a sort of pieta with the LION's paws on LAMB 2's shoulders. LAMB 2 expires ecstatically.)*

CHOIR  
Have ye not known?  
Have ye not heard?  
Hath it not been told you from the beginning?  
Have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?

*(LAMB 1 enters. LION looks up from his kill. LAMB 1 bursts into tears.)*

LAMB 1  
Why did you pick her over me?

---

INVASIVE  
Good morning  
You  
Lucky  
Little

NATIVE  
Hm?

INVASIVE  
You little

NATIVE  
Hee hee

INVASIVE

(sings)

Good morning good morning look around you good morning

(Pause.)

NATIVE

I don't understand, when did you do this?

INVASIVE

While you were sleeping.

I started when you first fell asleep, and I finished about an hour ago.

NATIVE

You completely...

There's no way you could have

INVASIVE

I did.

NATIVE

Overnight

INVASIVE

But I diiiiid!

I did it.

I did.

I did.

There's this way of doing it that's really fast.

You don't have to weave it, it's this sort of stacking method, it requires basically no weaving

NATIVE

Yeah, I know that's / how I do it.

INVASIVE

And it goes SO FAST!

God, I feel so good, it was just coming out of me so rapidly, and I was just riffing, you know?

Freeform, total abandon, not judging, not thinking, just pure action, like liquid energy.

And I thought, "There's no way you can do this before the sun comes up"

But then my body was like, "Wrong, son!" and BAM BAM

I was just AT IT, I was just

You know, I can be really harsh with myself, really screw myself over with this tendency to like, over-craft, to like judge what I'm crafting, make it more complicated than it has to be but when you let go? When you really let go, it's amazing what emerges, man. GOD!

I feel so... but it's good, right?

NATIVE

It's amazing.

INVASIVE  
RIGHT?

NATIVE  
It's amazing.  
I'm  
yeah.  
Astounding.

INVASIVE  
Well, for me, it's just easy  
Like breathing just. You know.

NATIVE  
It's um — where are you going?

INVASIVE  
Out

NATIVE  
Out?

INVASIVE  
Oh yeeeeeeeah, I just got too much energy. Can't stay still, nawmean?

NATIVE  
Do you want

INVASIVE  
What

NATIVE  
— company?

INVASIVE  
Oh! No. No, you'll just slow me down, no offense.

NATIVE  
Oh. Okay.

INVASIVE  
Hey, do me a favor?

NATIVE  
Anything.

INVASIVE  
Enjoy.



NATIVE  
What?

INVASIVE  
Your new nest!

NATIVE  
Ha. Yes. Thank you.

INVASIVE  
Later, we'll hang, we'll giggle and tell stories, I'll do that thing to your ears, it'll be great.  
I'm lucky.

NATIVE  
Yeah, well, yeah. Me too.

INVASIVE  
Yeaaaaaaaah, you are. Ha HA! You sure are, buddy.

*(INVASIVE exits.)*

*(NATIVE sits alone in the newly refurbished nest. It gets dark. It becomes night. Owls are heard.)*

---

*(Morning. NATIVE sits alone in the nest. Finishes tenderizing a pile of nuts. NATIVE places the last nut on the pile and goes and sits on the other side of the nest, waits. Remains onstage throughout the following scene.)*

TAMANEND  
I hope you understand.

PENN  
Of course, yes.

TAMANEND  
The clan mothers agree, and I do too.  
We can't have that thing around our kids.

PENN  
He was always so quiet before, I don't understand. So quiet and just. Sad.

TAMANEND  
When we said you could live here, it was with the understanding of peace, that you'd be able to maintain a peace.

PENN

It's my fault, yes, I'll acknowledge that.

TAMANEND  
I trusted you.

PENN  
Yes, I see that. I brought danger into your settlement, and I acknowledge that, I'm sorry. But I really didn't know, you have to believe me.

TAMANEND  
I do believe you.

PENN  
Really?

TAMANEND  
Of course.

PENN  
Oh. Ha ha!  
Whew! That's a relief.  
Thank god. I hate thinking that you're mad at me, or that you think I'd do something

TAMANEND  
No

PENN  
Intentionally!

TAMANEND  
Of course not. No. I realize that you have no idea what you're doing.

PENN  
YES! I actually have no idea!

TAMANEND  
I mean, what kind of idiot puts a bunch of herbivores and carnivores together in a boat?

PENN  
*This* idiot!

TAMANEND  
That was such a goofy idea in the first place, man, I don't know how you managed to pull it off for so long

PENN  
I know, right?

TAMANEND

Then you told me about the marrying cousins thing, I was like, “Well, that explains some of it.”

PENN

Yeah. What?

TAMANEND

I mean, I understand, you blunder around, thinking you can do better, making a mess of everything, and never once considering that it’s a lot to ask of us to try and teach you, you say, “whoops, I didn’t mean it, my parents were first cousins, I can’t plant corn, I don’t know how to make a Fire Circle, can you help me out?” and you know, we can tolerate to a point but, hey. We do have our own lives to run, too. You just show up at someone’s doorstep asking to be cared for, and then you say, “Whoops, can I bring my giant carnivore in here, too?” It doesn’t work that way, at a certain point, we have to draw the line. Do you understand?

(Beat.)

PENN

Um. Yes?

TAMANEND

Comere.

PENN

What? Oh. Okay.

*(They embrace. PENN goes in for a kiss, TAMANEND kisses him on the cheek, smiles, turns to leave.)*

PENN

Wait! Hold on. Wait. I’m confused.

TAMANEND

What’s up?

PENN

Are you... breaking up with me?

TAMANEND

I saw you coming up the river and I really felt so sad for you, I thought, “That poor man is so frightened, he just has no idea what he’s doing.”

I just...

I thought I could help.

PENN

You did! You have, so much, so much.

TAMANEND

Well.

We gave it an honest try, eh?

PENN

We, yeah! I think so. I think we could still... help each other, and

TAMANEND

You can keep the pipe, brother.

PENN

Yeah, and. What? Wait! WAIT!

*(TAMANEND is gone. PENN remains still onstage with NATIVE.)*

*(NATIVE lays on the other side of the nest, looking gaunt. The nuts remain where they are. Night comes again. Night passes.)*

*(Daytime. NATIVE has not moved.)*

*(Enter the LEOPARD, who goes to PENN)*

LEOPARD!

Hello, uh.

Excuse me, Friend?

I couldn't help but notice that uh. Turtle Clan has brought our ships around?

To the harbor? And um. Is encouraging us to get into the canoes and go aboard.

So I guess I'm behind the ball or something, but, are we... going somewhere?

I don't understand.

Friend?!

We're not giving up, are we?

*END OF PLAY*