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EXCERPT FROM
MOVEMENTS OF THE WIND
By Tara Meddaugh

As wind sweeps through a garden, its inhabitants must confront the volatile effects of Mother Nature, as well as their own changing nature. The story follows several short, intertwined pieces, as Carrot and Potato, taught to be enemies from birth, struggle to remain friends, Tulip wants more out of life than only her partner, and two pieces of pollen attempt to make a dangerous jump from a dying flower to a fresh one. Through sacrifice and friendship, they must not only survive their trials, but also come to populate another generation.

This excerpt includes sections from Part 1, Part 2, Part 3 and Part 5.

EXCERPT SECTION 1:

In Part 1: “They Wait for the Wind,” Tulip 1 has been waiting for the wind to carry her pollen to Tulip 2, in order to start a family. Tulip 2 is uncertain if he is ready to start a family.

TULIP 1

What do you think it’ll be like?

TULIP 2

I don’t know.

TULIP 1

Stop answering like that. You must have a guess. Just think. You don’t have to know. Just imagine.

TULIP 2

Look, Tulip, I’m not good at this. Imagining. I know what’s real—what I see. And that’s it.

TULIP 1

Come on. You’ve just never tried before. Now. Close up your petals. Turn your head from the sun—it’ll distract you. And just think...just imagine...a little baby tulip running around—

TULIP 2

Well, waving, really.

TULIP 1

Running around in the flower bed. Soil all over his petals.

TULIP 2

He’ll be messy then?

He's a baby!
TULIP 1

Alright.
TULIP 2

Soil on his petals. A drop of water falling down his stem.
TULIP 1

He's crying?
TULIP 2

It's from the rain, Tulip! He's had a nice drink. He's warm. Content. He nuzzles into me.
TULIP 1

He better leave room for me.
TULIP 2

Don't be jealous!
TULIP 1

I can't help it! All this talk of a baby already. I want you to myself. We just met at high sun.
TULIP 2

That seems a life time ago to me.
TULIP 1

Not to me.
TULIP 2

My life before you—I was just...I don't know. Running around—
TULIP 1

Wav—
TULIP 2

Or whatever! The point is, I was moving. I was restless. I was searching, but I didn't know what for. Then when you caught me—everything changed. And I can barely remember what it was like before.
TULIP 1

Well, I remember. And it was not worth remembering. Boring days of not running, filled with taking in the sun, the water. Rooting down.
TULIP 2

TULIP 1

Then you caught me.

TULIP 2

You were trying to get away from Cat.

TULIP 1

He is always after my petals!

TULIP 2

They're beautiful petals.

TULIP 1

And you pulled me behind you and told that fly to chase Cat and—

TULIP 2

Cat was running in circles!

TULIP 1

Away from us!

TULIP 2

And that's when I saw how beautiful you were.

(pause)

Do you know that you're the most beautiful tulip I've ever seen? The most fragrant too. Has anyone told you that before? Your scent—it's like...all the sweet things of the world joined together and dropped into you....Can you blame me that I want to have more time with you? Before a little one takes you away?

TULIP 1

But I won't go anywhere. I'll stay here. That's the thing—I'm done running. The only place I want to run to is you.

TULIP 2

With a baby.

TULIP 1

Well, yes, with a baby. But still with you.

(pause)

It doesn't matter anyway. There's no breeze now.

TULIP 2

You shouldn't have insulted the bees.

TULIP 1

Well, I hate that buzzing!

TULIP 2

They can't help it. They're any flower's best chance of carrying pollen to another flower. You know that.

TULIP 1

I wouldn't want them carrying my pollen anyway. Or yours. I want our pollen to be pure. Untouched by any other creature. Carried by the wind.

(pause)

TULIP 2

It'll come.

TULIP 1

The garden has turned to a desert. Flakey soil and dried up leaves...

TULIP 2

Tulip...

TULIP 1

Well? How else can you explain the lack of breeze? The moment I'm ready to stop running...the wind refuses. I may die old and shriveled and without a tiny tulip to carry on our pollen. A tiny tulip. A boy tulip. Our tulip...

(pause)

TULIP 2

I'll teach him to stand up straight.

(pause)

TULIP 1

Yeah?

TULIP 2

Sure. So he doesn't topple over during that awkward time of growth. I'll show him what it is to be a strong tulip. Where to find the prime soil. He'll always have the purest, most wholesome soil and everyone will want it.

TULIP 1

He'll like having pure soil.

TULIP 2

I'll tell him how to tickle the earthworms.

TULIP 1

No...

TULIP 2

The earthworms love it! And maybe, he'll even get to spy a potato while he's down there. And a carrot!

TULIP 1

They would never be together.

TULIP 2

He might get lucky.

TULIP 1

Well...maybe I'll spy one too.

TULIP 2

I think you might...

(pause)

He'll start having friends over.

TULIP 1

Maybe Daisy?

TULIP 2

Or Hyacinth. He'll have lots of friends.

(pause)

TULIP 1

You know, eventually, he'll leave us.

EXCERPT SECTION 2

In Part 2: "They receive a warning through the wind," Carrot and Potato are children. Carrot has just run away from other carrots, crying, and come across Potato, who shows concern for her, even though they don't know each other.

CARROT

Those stupid carrots back there bit my tip off.

POTATO

They what?

CARROT

They bit my tip off! See?

POTATO

Were you underground?

CARROT

Of course I was! I'm not stupid. You think I want Cat to get me, stupid?

POTATO

Maybe I should just bite the rest of your tip off!

CARROT

No!

(pause)

I mean, I'm sorry. No, I just...it's my tip and it still hurts and...

POTATO

I wasn't really going to do anything.

CARROT

I know. You don't seem like, well, like them.

POTATO

Of course I'm not like them.

(pause)

CARROT

They're always picking at me. The carrots at the north end. Just because I'm beautiful, and strong!

POTATO

Maybe it's because you're mean.

CARROT

I'm not mean!

(pause)

Well, they make me mean.

(pause)

I usta be nice. Too nice, I guess. You know, when Carrot 92's mother got taken away, I offered her some of the moistest soil I had. I'd been guarding that soil ever since I can remember. And I'm still young and growing, you know? But I offer it to her anyway! And you know what she does?

POTATO

What?

CARROT

She laughs at it. Says she never would share soil with me, take my useless second-hand dirt. Then they all come around—the north end carrots—and poke at my soil saying it's got germs and—oh, I hate those carrots!

(pause)

POTATO

Potatoes are nice. Where I live.

CARROT

Potatoes! Ew! Those brown blobs?

POTATO

Hey—

CARROT

They're the ugliest things I've ever seen!

POTATO

What are you—

CARROT

So fat and round and dirty with dry soil!

POTATO

What's that all over your greens? Butterfly dust?

CARROT

I'm not always dirty. That's just because of those carrots. They were chasing me. I had to get away—so I got a little dirty. I don't like being that way. Potatoes like being dirty. They roll around in it on purpose because they're filthy ugly selfish vegetables.

(pause)

POTATO

Why did you call me a brown fat carrot?

CARROT

Because I was mad. Sorry.

POTATO

You really think I'm a carrot?

CARROT

Well, what else would you be?

(looks up and sees Potato well for the first time)

Aren't you a carrot?

POTATO

Are carrots brown and fat?

CARROT

Weird ones might be, I guess. I haven't seen all the carrots.

POTATO

I'm a potato.

CARROT

No, you're not.

POTATO

Yes, I am.

CARROT

You don't—but you're not—I mean, well...I guess you are kind of ugly.

POTATO

Maybe I think you're ugly!

CARROT

I'm sorry—I'm sorry. I just—you're not ugly. You're—I don't know. You're different, I guess. But, maybe it's not ugly.

POTATO

Everyone says the carrots are the selfish ones.

CARROT

I'm not selfish!

POTATO

They say they get the best soil and spread their roots as far as they can so no one else can get it.

CARROT

I like to take a stroll every now and then, but—

POTATO

They say you push us out. Make us have the shady spots.

CARROT

Don't potatoes like shade?

POTATO

I don't know. It's all we ever get.

(pause)

CARROT

I've never met a potato before.

POTATO

I've never met a carrot.

(pause)

CARROT

You know we're not supposed to talk to each other.

POTATO

I know.

CARROT

I mean, if they bit my tip off because they heard me singing about earthworms being cute—they didn't like that—they called me a pota—it doesn't matter—I mean, can you imagine what they'd do if they saw me talking to you?

POTATO

I saw a potato once, totally skinned. Every eye was cut out, every layer rubbed off. I asked my mom what he did, and she said he was caught sharing soil with a carrot.

CARROT

That's awful. I mean, cutting the eyes out!

POTATO

One or two grew back, but he still didn't look anything like a real potato. He looked more like a rock than anything else. Rocks are dead, you know.

(pause)

CARROT

Well...

POTATO

Yeah.

In Part 3: “They live without wind,” there is a greenhouse containing POINSETTIA, FERN, BANANA TREE and HYACINTH. The excerpt starts at the beginning of the scene. All, except for Banana Tree, are hopping around, playing a game and singing:

PLANT CHORUS

*Hop right in to our paradise
We'll welcome you once and we'll welcome you twice.
A perfect world for all perfect plants,
The only way to have a second chance
At living.*

(The game ends and they cheer and clap, then find space to lounge around, fanning themselves. They might pick up a drink or two.)

POINSETTIA

Ah...hot and perfect.

FERN

Feel that sun...

BANANA TREE

Through the glass.

POINSETTIA

Where's my spritz?

FERN

They haven't been in here yet today.

BANANA TREE

They were here a few minutes ago! They just spritzed you, Poinsettia. See—your leaves are even moist.

POINSETTIA

Are they?

(pause)

HYACINTH

I miss the little Girl Tall.

BANANA TREE

She's the one who just spritzed us.

HYACINTH

I miss her reading her book to us. About the plant princess? Maybe I'll start reading a book.

POINSETTIA

You can't read.

FERN

The girl doesn't read either.

HYACINTH

Well, she looks at the pictures then. And calls me a princess. I could look at pictures and call me a princess.

FERN

She draws in her books.

HYACINTH

Well, that's too hard then. Never mind.

FERN

She makes those round puppy faces and cat ears...

POINSETTIA

I hate Cat.

BANANA TREE

She shouldn't draw in those books.

FERN

Why not?

BANANA TREE

They're not hers.

HYACINTH

Whose are they?

BANANA TREE

The Boy Tall's.

FERN

He doesn't care about them now. He's too old.

BANANA TREE

It's still not right to take someone else's things. You should know that.

HYACINTH

Maybe she got permission.

BANANA TREE

I doubt it.

HYACINTH

She's very sweet.

BANANA TREE

She's a spoiled little brat! You know how many leaves she's pulled off of me? Every time she comes in here!

FERN

You're the one who's spoiled, Banana Tree.

BANANA TREE

And you're not? Of course—I mean, of course, we're spoiled—we live in a greenhouse, Fern! But that doesn't mean—

POINSETTIA

Oh, please don't go on with a boring lecture.

HYACINTH

You don't think we're lucky?

BANANA TREE

Well, in a sense...

HYACINTH

We don't have to deal with thunderstorms.

FERN

Or droughts.

HYACINTH

Or wondering where our next meal will come from.

POINSETTIA

Or Cat!

BANANA TREE

Yes, I know—okay—we have that. But—the most important thing—the air, the air we breathe and live in—it's all, everything is all stagnant. Don't you feel that? No breeze!

HYACINTH

I never liked the wind anyway.

FERN

(to Banana Tree)

You just feel stagnant because you're boring. Boring and old and withering. If I were that Girl Tall, I'd pick off your leaves too—just to make you more interesting.

HYACINTH

You do kinda ignore all our exciting games, Banana Tree.

BANANA TREE

You know, Fern, you'd be considered a weed if you lived outside. How boring is that?

FERN

But I'm not a weed! I was born and raised here—right in this greenhouse!

BANANA TREE

And I'm not as good as you because I was brought here, right? Well, at least they wanted me enough to take me. You were just an accident. A seed carelessly dropped by that Girl Tall.

FERN

That's not true!

BANANA TREE

You know it is!

POINSETTIA

Please stop fighting! Fern! Banana Tree!

(pause)

At least until my spritz gets here.

(pause)

Okay—some of us were born here; some of us were brought here. What difference does it make? We're all here now.

BANANA TREE

It makes a difference to Fern.

FERN

It does make a difference, because we're full. We're all filled up and when the Talls bring in more plants, it just takes up more of our breathing space. Just look at Banana Tree! With those big intruding leaves. You're choking me, you know! You're choking all of us!

BANANA TREE

Oh, please! You're hysterical!

(A new plant, a TULIP enters. It is as though he is shoved on. TULIP 3 is not a child, but not quite an adult. He is the tulip child of Tulip 1 and Tulip 2.)

Look! POINSETTIA

You've got to be kidding me! Another one! FERN

Hello, new plant. Come on in. HYACINTH

He's a big one. POINSETTIA

I'm a tulip. TULIP 3

We can see that. POINSETTIA

We don't want any more plants here. FERN

Especially big tulips. Sorry. HYACINTH

You better not have any fruit flies on you. POINSETTIA

I don't. TULIP 3

Looked like one was climbing up your petal. POINSETTIA

No. TULIP 3

EXCERPT SECTION 4

In Part 5, "They wait for the wind again," two pieces of pollen, POLLEN K-10, the leader of the pollen group, and POLLEN V-6, a young pollen, are on a wilting flower, preparing for a jump. The excerpt begins at the start of the scene.

POLLEN K-10

Quick—it's coming!

(The WIND enters. This may be a silent group of actors, or if the director wishes to eliminate this acting role, it may be replaced with the sound of wind, or simply implied through the pollens. The WIND is slow and soft at first, but gains momentum and volume as it progress through the pollens' dialogue.)

POLLEN V-6

It's too weak.

POLLEN K-10

It's not! It's a perfect breeze!

POLLEN V-6

No, no. It's too—we won't get anywhere.

POLLEN K-10

We will! We'll—hurry, now! With this gust!

(The WIND picks up speed)

POLLEN V-6

Don't pull me!

POLLEN K-10

Well, you're just standing there, rooting in to the petal even more!

POLLEN2

I'm storing my energy.

POLLEN K-10

Don't store it—use it! Come on! Now!

POLLEN V-6

Quit rushing me! You'll mess it up. We'll never make it to another flower and we'll just end up, we'll end up stuck in the wind and...fall somewhere useless, like in that box of sand or...I just—you need to think a little more before you act!

POLLEN K-10

Oh! I need to think more? You're telling me that I don't think about things? That I haven't planned ahead? Well, I'll tell you—I've been planning this moment since we got to the flower! Who started the jump-off training on this petal?

POLLEN V-6

It's not about the training...

POLLEN K-10

You don't think the training was important?

POLLEN V-6

Well...

POLLEN K-10

I've had 5000 successful pollen jumps since I started! You know what the rate was before I instituted the class?

POLLEN V-6

Ten percent success. I know. You quote that every time you start a new session!

POLLEN K-10

And you know what it is now?

(The WIND slows down)

POLLEN V-6

You say eighty percent success.

POLLEN K-10

You don't believe me?

POLLEN V-6

Maybe it's true. It might be. I'm just saying...you've never mentioned how you get these statistics...

POLLEN K-10

You never questioned that before.

POLLEN V-6

Everyone was wondering.

POLLEN K-10

Why didn't you tell me that?

POLLEN V-6

I was being polite.

POLLEN K-10

You should have told me.

(The WIND is gone.)

It's gone now. The breeze. You distracted me and we missed another one.

POLLEN V-6

Well, it's good we didn't ride it. It was short-lived. See? If we'd jumped it, we would have ended up half-way there and fallen in some pile of cow dung, or that circle of water the baby Talls splash around in. Then we would have drowned.

POLLEN K-10

Pollens have made it with less wind.

POLLEN V-6

And pollens have failed with more wind.

(pause)

I'm sorry, Pollen K-10. Please don't be discouraged with me. We'll take the next one.

POLLEN K-10

That's what you've been saying all day.

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