

TULSA

By Xora Odelle

In darkness we hear a woman scream. Spot light up on a black man who looks panicked and runs off stage. Black out. Lights up on a woman in a kitchen. It is Memorial Day in 1921. There is a stove and table and halfway put up American decorations around the kitchen. The woman hums and walks around the room with a natural ease. She smells the cooking in the pan and hums in satisfaction to herself then adds a bit of basil. As the food cooks, she begins to hang more decorations. Her humming changes to *Hail to the Chief*. She salutes the flags hung all over and laughs.

(Enter AUDREY)

Mama, what ya cookin'?

AUDREY

IDA

Roast beef.

AUDREY

For breakfast?

IDA

You know it's a special day today: Memorial Day. And your brother loves roast beef. Besides, I'm makin' eggs too.

AUDREY

(Under her breath)

Well, I don't know what's so special about dying for this country...

(IDA shoots her a look)

... But I do know I love some roast beef.

(Enter LESTER dressed in an army uniform.)

LESTER

Oooh, Mama it smells good.

(LESTER embraces IDA)

AUDREY

(talking about LESTER's uniform)

You ever going to take that thing off long enough to wash it? You've been home for two years now, you're not still in battle. It's called Memorial Day, not Memorial Week.

(LESTER steals a bit of food from IDA's cooking. IDA slaps him in the back of the head and they laugh)

LESTER

No. I'm proud of my service and I'm proud of this country. I'm not one of those do nothing colored folk. I'm doing something with my life. I've been slaving away as a cook, so that you don't have to Audrey, and I'm fixing to set up a meeting with Mr. Barney Cleaver about starting my own business here in Tulsa.

IDA

Mhmm. Got myself a man of honor in this house. Yes, Lord.

AUDREY

Well, what you going to do brother? Build another sleazy night club?

IDA

Now Audrey... don't you bring that mess in here. Lester's a good boy.

LESTER

No, it's okay Mama. Actually, I was thinking about getting a flower shop. Bring a little brightness into people's lives. And you know I got a green thumb.

AUDREY

And with the war ending and all the memorials going on, I'm sure you'll make a lot of profit. You're a smart businessman, Lessie.

IDA

Audrey Jackson, I've just about had it.

AUDREY

Sorry Mama, I'll go get the decorations for the home of the brave.

(AUDREY exits, stealing a piece of roast beef as she goes. IDA and LESTER begin to eat breakfast at the table. They eat on paper plates decorated with the American flag on them)

LESTER

I think it's going to work out mama. My flower shop. I been reading and talking to people. And I'll support this family. You won't have to clean up after white people's mess no more. I'll be a regular Henry Ford.

IDA

Baby. I am just so glad that I have you home and I'm glad you got dreams. Some men come home, and they've lost all their hope, dreaming in black and white, but you have a vibrant dream. Flowers...

(She chuckles)

... Yes, honey, that's what we need. Some flowers.

(Enter DAMIE FORD followed by AUDREY)

DAMIE

GOD! They're telling lies. They're telling lies in those streets.

AUDREY

Mama, she just bust right in. I didn't know what to do.

DAMIE

Ida, you're my friend and you so smart. You gotta help me. Some white hussie is lying on my baby, saying he done assaulted her, but he didn't. I know he didn't. He doesn't have it in him.

(IDA and AUDREY help DAMIE sit down)

IDA

Audrey, go get her some water.

LESTER

(sternly)

Where's Dick?

DAMIE

I don't know.

LESTER

It's only been a couple weeks since they went and lynched that white man. They're going to be eager to get another one, and a black man at that. The damn savages. I bet they gather before night fall. And Dick better not be nowhere in sight when they do.

DAMIE

Oh my baby ain't done nothing wrong. I swear.

AUDREY

How can we be so sure?

IDA

AUDREY!

AUDREY

Mama, I'm just saying. Ain't none of us know a thing about what happened. Why don't we get some more infor-

DAMIE

How dare you?

AUDREY

I'm not trying to step on any-

DAMIE

How dare you?

(Beat)

DAMIE

We all helped you through you know what and this is how you treat me. Shame on you.

(DAMIE exits)

(There is a long pause. IDA gets up to begin to wash the dishes silently)

AUDREY

I was just trying to say-

(IDA begins to speak, but LESTER cuts her off)

LESTER

Obviously, you have know idea what it means to be a coloured man in this world, sister

AUDREY

Lester, now don't start...

LESTER

We've fought for this country. Some of us have died for this country and we come home.

We come home to...

(His voice begins to crack)

... We come home to be treated like we ain't been raised right here on this soil. Like we don't deserve flowers. Like we ain't Americans at heart. I'm doing all I can to prove myself, but lord knows it don't mean shit. Dick was a good worker, everyone liked him, and now Dick's probably going to... Lord have mercy on Dick's soul. I wear my uniform with pride. But God knows it don't mean nothing across these city lines. The lowest of the low of them folks can come over and beat ya down good. Make sure you know you ain't never going to amount to nothing, even down here on Negro Wall Street.

AUDREY

(Sharply)

Who told you to enlist? Some of these poor men had to go. You sitting there thinkin' you're so smart, but you chose to go fight for a country that couldn't care less about you. Up here trying to prove yourself to them. Flowers. Ha! You think that'll make them respect you?

(IDA who has been trying to ignore the fighting, turns away from her cleaning and begins to watch stunned.)

IDA

Stop!

AUDREY

Oh no, Mama. I let him have his turn. Let him tell me all about how I don't know the struggles of our people. When all he does is try to be a good little nigger for th-

(LESTER slaps AUDREY. IDA stays frozen in the background)

AUDREY
(laughing)

You are just so typical.

(LESTER storms off stage, knocking one of the red, white, and blue banners as he goes)

IDA
(softly)

Lester...

AUDREY

There's a lot you don't know about. There's a lot that happened while you were "fighting for this country." If you weren't so self-absorbed...

(AUDREY collapses into a chair and begin to sob. IDA finally moves to pick up the last remaining dish on the table in front of AUDREY)

AUDREY

Mama.

(IDA picks up the dish and cleans it)

Mama.

(IDA exits)

(Lights dim on AUDREY slowly. It is now early evening, around 5pm of the same day. The audience is to believe that AUDREY has not moved since.)

(Enter CHARLES)

CHARLES

Audrey, where's Lester.

AUDREY

Don't know.

CHARLES

Don't know? Well, girl you better find out. Because all hell's breaking loose. Dick done gone in turned himself in. And the mob has begun to crowd outside the sheriff's station.

AUDREY

Guess Lester was right.

CHARLES

Lester's right about a lot of things, but this time we're not going to just let them take our brother. We're going to fight. We've shown ourselves to be a good bunch of folks, despite being coloured. Hell, we're more prosperous than they are.

AUDREY

What exactly are you going to do?

CHARLES

I'm rounding up men and guns and we're going to stand off with that nasty ol' mob. And demand Dick back.

AUDREY

(Sarcastically)

I'm sure they'll plop 'em right back in your hands.

CHARLES

(Not noticing the sarcasm)

They gon have to. They're mighty big scared of us, Audrey. That's why this kind of thing happens in the first place. Well, they've got no need to be scared. We don't want their

women. All we want is to be left alone, but if they gon be scared, then let's use it. Let's use whatever we can to not be strung up.

AUDREY

Booker T. Washington would be appalled. Ain't he your hero?

CHARLES

Booker T ain't here in Tulsa. Hell, Booker T ain't even here, rest his soul. We've raised ourselves up and still look what's happening. I think Mr. Washington was a fine negro, but you're right, I 'spose that kind of Booker T. thinking is why I can't find a decent man to stand up and fight with me. I've got some lower down men who committed to fight, mostly 'cus they ain't got shit else to do...

(He lets out a big, hearty laugh)

... Well, you get what you get. Oh Audrey, you gotta keep some humor in times like these. Anyways, that's why I've come over. I know your brother went to school with Dick, little Jimmy...

(He chuckles)

... Oh how times have changed. And I thought that maybe Lester might be one decent man ready to go out and fight. If a man can't even go to use the bathroom, while he's doing good honest work. Mmm mmm mmm. What is the world coming to?

AUDREY

What do you mean? You know what happend?

CHARLES

'Parently Dick was at his usual post, shining shoes. He goes to use the bathroom. Well there's only one bathroom for colored folk. And there's only one elevator shaft in the building to get to it. This elevator happens to be operated by a white girl, Sarah Page, ...

(He scoffs)

... So she gets to screamin and Dick runs off. A storekeeper near by hears the screamin and supposes Dick must've been up to no good. 'Parently the girl ain't even pressing charges. It's all them men folks that are up in a fit. I think they just like to be angry. Gives them some kind of a purpose or something.

AUDREY

But why did she scream? You think women just go around screaming for no reason?

CHARLES

No, not women. White women...

(He laughs)

... C'mon Audrey, I know you ain't but 18, but you gotta be able to see what's happening. It's the tale as old as time. Little white girl goes sweet on the coloured boy who has a reason to visit her every time she's working. But Dick is smart, so Dick knows not to get too close to no white woman. He rejects her advances, and boom, there you go. She goes screaming, trying to get him in trouble. Or hell, I don't know, maybe Dick wasn't that smart and he goes to get involved with her. Youth will do that to you. Make you a damn fool. One day they get to bickering, and little Miss Page gets a bright idea. White women know their screams hold all the power in the world. So of course Dick gets scared and goes running. Mhmm mhmm mhmm. It's a damn shame is what it is, so we have to go out and fight. It's just what's right...

(Beat)

... I'm sitting here talking to you when we need to be organizing...

(He gets up)

... LESTER! You in here Lester?

(Enter LESTER. He has changed out of his army uniform)

LESTER

What's going on? Is the mob already here? I hope Dick made it out of town.

CHARLES

No, sir. He turned himself in. He's safe for now. Working in the white part of town he made himself some friends. He shined the shoes of some attorneys every week. And they think this whole mess is nonsense, just like everybody else. They don't think that Dick had it in him. He's a good-hearted boy. But the mob outside is demanding the sheriff turn him over to them. Well, I say we go over and make our own demands.

AUDREY

Well, that's one thing coloured and white men got in common. Not believing the cry of a woman

(CHARLES acts as if he hadn't hurt the comment, but LESTER shoots daggers at AUDREY while she avoids his gaze)

LESTER

You think we have enough men to fight?

CHARLES

I feel it deep down in my soul. I really do feel the energy at least with folks like us. Some of them uppity negroes who already made it don't see the point. They think they're above it all, but if they don't get their sense together they're gonna be under it all. Don't they know it's their wealth that makes these white folks burn with fury? They're all going to some show in some night club tonight. Said they ain't got time to defend little ol' Jimmie. You remember when he was called Jimmie. Oh brother, how did it come to this?

(Beat)

LESTER

I'll fight with you. Just like in France, I'm not going out without a fight.

(Enter SHERIFF BARNEY CLEAVER)

BARNEY

Charles! I've been looking all over for you. What's this ridiculous idea I hear of yours. Meeting the lynch mob with men and guns? Explain to me exactly how you think that is going to go.

LESTER

Mr. Barney Cleaver?

CHARLES

(Unfazed)

We're going to demand that Dick be put in our care and be given safe passage.

BARNEY

You are a smart man, Charles. This is going to turn out to be one bloody fight over one boy.

LESTER

Do you think he did it?

BARNEY

Oh Lester. No, I don't, but-

LESTER

Well then he deserves people fighting for him.

BARNEY

The boy is safe. I've spoken with the police chief, and they have no intention of handing Dick over to the crowd. They want to keep this a safe, law abiding place. As do I. Dick's got character witnesses. White character witnesses at that. And I hear the girl isn't even pressing charges. He's got a good case, and I'm sure this can all be settled without throwing fuel on the flames. What good is it to go and hit a hornet's nest. Some things just need to be let be.

CHARLES

We've been letting things be let be for too long. When a man can do no wrong and still have to fear for his life, something is wrong.

BARNEY

We do not disagree there, but do you really think the answer is guns?

CHARLES & LESTER

Yes!

BARNEY

Lester, you were talking about starting some kind of a shop. A bakery of some sorts...

LESTER

A flower shop.

BARNEY

Oh yes, a flower shop. Now, that's the way to do it. Show them you're better than this. Don't resort to being exactly what they think you are. Just some negro savage.

LESTER

They're the savages.

BARNEY

Yes, but they don't know that. And in the eyes of the law they can do no wrong. It's horrible I know. I'm a black man too, but we must act on intellect and not on emotions. We are men and not women, let's start acting like it and think rationally about this.

LESTER

We are thinking rationally, which is why we're going to fight c'mon Charles

(LESTER and CHARLES exit)
(Beat)
(BARNEY looks at AUDREY in disbelief)

AUDREY
Don't look at me. I'm just irrational woman folk.

(BARNEY exits. IDA enters. She looks distraught.)

IDA
I been dreaming. Been having some awful dreams.

AUDREY
You been sleep all this time?

IDA
There was Lester in a field of flowers. I swear I could smell the lavender. Then the sky went gray and all the flowers wilted like they were bowing before God, Himself. They turned to ash. And Lester's skin went all sickly. Oh honey, he's lost his dream. He'll never dream in color again. All because of you. Why'd you have to go and take away his dream? ...

(She begins to cry)
... Just because yours was taken from you. You had to go and take my baby's dream.

(AUDREY put a hand on IDA to comfort her)
(Cross fade onto CHARLES and LESTER with various other black men opposite a group of white men and a few white women. It is a split scene and the lights change accordingly, so the focus is always on the speaker.)

CHARLES
We demand safe passage for Dick. No man should have to give up his dream, a humble dream, of just getting by, for events that have not been proven true. We deserve the presumption of innocence like everyone else.

LESTER
Yeah!

CHARLES
All we want is to live. The pursuit of happiness. It's a right we have.

AUDREY

Mama, I just want to be happy.

(Beat)

I just want us to be happy.

IDA

Mhmm

AUDREY

I wasn't the first one to steal joy. Mine wasn't just stolen. It was ripped from me. Mama, they RIPPED it from me.

CHARLES

Here is a perfect case of the white man ripping the black man of justice, ripping the black man of his rights.

LESTER

Ripping us of everything.

AUDREY

It doesn't feel like they just took a part of me mama. It feels like they took my whole being. They took everything. Everything, mama. In just one moment.

CHARLES

In one moment, Dick's life was changed. We will not back down. It will take more than a moment to destroy this young man's life.

IDA

You can't let one moment ruin your whole life. You think we all don't have moments, Audrey. We get through them.

POLICE CHIEF

Now, we don't want any trouble today. We all just want to get through this

LESTER

(to POLICE CHIEF)

We want safe passage for Dick!

POLICE CHIEF

The boy is safe. Now, I suggest y'all go home. All of y'all.

IDA

I suggest you go bring him home. Let my boy be safe. Oh please Lord.

AUDREY

I will Mama. I promise. I'll bring him home

(AUDREY crosses the stage to LESTER)

LESTER

Audrey, go home! This isn't the place for you

AUDREY

Mama's got a bad feeling, Lester. Now you quit all this foolishness and let's go home.

LESTER

It's not foolishness.

AUDREY

I'm not gonna be the reason you get killed.

CHARLES

We're not the ones who will be hurt this time.

AUDREY

Mama would never forgive me.

CHARLES

Girl, this is more than your mama.

AUDREY

You're her baby. Come home. If not for me, then for mama.

(White men from the opposing mob begin to whistle when they notice AUDREY)

MAN #1

Oooh. Cute little thing.

MAN #2

Wait a sec. This looks like the one we caught a while back.

MAN #1

You're right. Boy, did she put up one hell of a fight

(The men begin to laugh. LESTER stares at them and then stares at AUDREY.)

MAN #1

Who is this? Her boyfriend?

MAN #2

Lucky man. She's got one hell of a -

(LESTER silently and swiftly pulls out a gun. The men fall silent. Both crowds turn to stare.)

(Beat.)

(MAN #1 walks up to LESTER and pulls out a gun of his own.)

MAN #1

I've been itching for a nigger brave enough.

AUDREY

Lester!

LESTER
(to AUDREY)

What happened while I was gone?

MAN #2

You want to know what happened? It's a fun little story. Ain't that right?

LESTER

Shut up!

(Beat.)

Audrey?!

(AUDREY stays silent)

MAN #1

She was strolling late at night like the harlot she is. We caught her kissing some boy. A smart boy 'cus when he seen us, he just ran off. Just left her there out in the cold. All alone.

(To AUDREY)

Didn't your Mama teach you to stay in once the sun sets? Or is she a whore too?

(LESTER strikes MAN #1 in the face with the gun in his hand. MAN #1 hits back. They fight. People from either side cheer them on. A single gunshot goes off. It is unclear who fired the shot. It seems accidental. Both men jump back unharmed.)

MAN #1

The nerve of this one!

LESTER

It wasn't me. I swear.

MAN#2

You better run nigger.

(LESTER and AUDREY exit. Gunfire goes off between the two opposing groups. CHARLES is shot dead, along with all black men on stage. A few white men are also shot dead. The remaining men continue on after AUDREY and LESTER. Lights up on AUDREY and LESTER as they enter their home. IDA is praying)

LESTER

They're after me, mama.

AUDREY

They're after all of us.

(IDA continues to pray silently.)

LESTER

Mama!

IDA

Go on and put on your army uniform. If they care about this country as much as they say they do, maybe they'll--

(LESTER exits)

AUDREY

I did everything I could, mama.

(IDA embraces AUDREY)

IDA

I know baby. I know.

(Beat.)

God been sending visions. I don't what we've done to be thrust upon such wickedness, but it's coming. And all we can do is be and love. That's all we can do now.

(IDA begins to take down the Memorial Day decorations)

AUDREY

There's got to be something. Pray some more mama. Pray some more. Tell God I'm sorry. He'll listen to you.

(AUDREY gets down on her knees.)

Lord, forgive me please. I didn't fight hard enough. I didn't scream loud enough.

(She begins to talk in a trance like state.)

Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.

James 1:14-15. James 1:14-15. James 1:14-15. James 1:14-15--

(LESTER re-enters with his Army uniform on during AUDREY's prayer. As she trails off he holds her)

LESTER

Audrey. Audrey. Shhh. Hush, Audrey.

AUDREY

It gives birth to death. It gives birth to--

LESTER

I love you. That won't ever change. I will protect you.

(IDA holds AUDREY's hand as LESTER holds her)

AUDREY

It's all my fault, mama. I'm sorry. You raised me better. You raised me Christian and pure. You raised me to forgive. I let temptation carry me away. I let them fill me, fill me with their hatred until that's all I was, and that's why--

(IDA gets a washcloth and begins to dab at AUDREY's forehead)

IDA

Baby, if that was true, guns would be going off every second of every day. We all sin, but we are all forgiven. In Jesus name.

AUDREY

I love you, too.

(There is a silence as AUDREY finally begins to catch her breath. Loud jazz music is heard. It is "Struggle Buggy" by Joe "King" Oliver. Black people in their best club outfits swarm all parts of the stage, even the house. They are dancing, drinking, and laughing. AUDREY, LESTER, and IDA are frozen in tableau as the scene happens. Spot light on a couple dancing. A man whispers in a woman's ears. She laughs)

WOMAN

Oh Buster, all that jive talk. You make a girl feel like she could die happy.

(The woman is shot in the back and falls. The two white men from earlier enter the stage with guns. The music gets louder. The rest of the ensemble run around the stage frantic and screaming trying to escape as every single one is shot dead. Their bodies remain on stage. The music continues to play, now distorted. Sounds of planes, gunshots, and screams are heard. MAN #2 breaks the fourth wall and notices the family still in tableau. He points this out to MAN #1. The family breaks out of tableau with subtle movements, such as the dabbing of the washcloth, hair caressing, and breath. The men begin to walk over.)

IDA

It's time.

(LESTER slowly stands.)

LESTER

I'll take care of it.

(AUDREY and IDA hide. This can be them hiding behind some piece of furniture or simply remaining frozen on stage, etc. They are not seen or noticed by the white men)

MAN#2

An army boy?

LESTER
(sarcastically)

Yes, sir.

MAN#2

Where were ya stationed?
(He spins a gun around as he talks)

LESTER

Paris.

MAN #1
(in bad French accent)

A négro.

LESTER
(voice shaking)

I served this country because I believe in this country. I believe this country could be a home for all of us. I do.

(The men laugh)

You don't have to do this. You could go home. We won't bother you none. We could live in peace.

MAN #1

You call that peace. Flaunting your wealth. Building churches 10,000 feet high. Soon you'll be hiring us to clean your mess. That ain't peace. Ain't no peace in living like an animal. Less than animals. Less than monkeys. What they call this town?

MAN#2

Little Africa.

MAN#1

Little Africa.

(He scoffs)

Negro Wall Street. Y'all want Africa so bad then go on there and build your churches. Go there and leave us alone. Leave our women alone. Take your sins somewhere else and let us make something of ourselves on our own goddamned land.

MAN #2

Making us compete like dogs.

MAN #1

Now, what y'all don't understand is, if ya make us compete like dogs, we'll act like dogs. We'll be more viscous than you could even imagine.

(The men begin to circle LESTER and bark)

MAN #2

We're hungry.

MAN #1

Starved for weeks.

MAN #2

We're beaten.

MAN #1

The Germans scarred us all up.

MAN #2

We're strays.

MAN #1

Ain't got no home.

MAN #2

But we're all American.

MAN #1

And we won't.

MAN #2

We won't.

MAN #1, MAN #2, and LESTER

We won't go out without a fight.

LESTER

Never without a fight.

(He salutes them. They salute back)

God bless America.

MAN #1 and MAN #2

God bless America.

(LESTER tries to strike one of the men. They grab his arms and quickly restrain him. MAN #1 punches him in the stomach as he is held by MAN #2. MAN #2 releases him and LESTER falls to the ground. MAN #2 kicks him in the head, stomach, and groin. They take off his army pants and castrate him. LESTER screams. The men begin to sing to the tune of "America the Beautiful".)

MAN #1 and MAN #2

*O beautiful this negro dies, for emerald waves of rage
For purple bruised like tragedies, above this man we've slain*

(AUDREY and IDA come out of "hiding". They begin to sing.)

MAN #1, MAN # 2, AUDREY, and IDA

*America, America, God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy sin, from blood akin, from plea to sickening plea*

(The dead bodies that have been on the ground begin to get up. CHARLES, MR. BARNEY CLEAVER, and DAMIE enter. They all stand still with their heads down. AUDREY and IDA go to center stage.)

AUDREY and IDA

Dick Rowland?

ENSEMBLE

He escaped.

IDA

Where?

ENSEMBLE

Kansas City.

AUDREY

He lives?

ENSEMBLE

Yes.

(LESTER slowly gets up and walks in between AUDREY and IDA)

LESTER

Worth it?

ENSEMBLE

Don't know.

AUDREY, IDA, and LESTER

Don't know?

ENSEMBLE

Couldn't tell you.

LESTER

Why?

ENSEMBLE

(scattered)

Pain. Pain. So much pain. Can't speak.

IDA

The Tulsa Race Riots. It would come to be known as.

ENSEMBLE

RIOT!

AUDREY

Black Wall Street Massacre is how it will be known.

(Beat.)

From here on out.

LESTER

It was not spoken of for decades. Tulsa, Oklahoma. Monday, May 30th, 1921. Wiped from history.

ENSEMBLE

We don't speak. We don't feel. We don't heal.

IDA

Dick escaped.

AUDREY

Dick lived.

CHARLES
(Triumphantly)

We did it!

BARNEY

Was it worth it? For one boy?

DAMIE

Yes.

IDA

A whole city destroyed.

CHARLES

A life saved.

AUDREY

Men, women, and children dead.

MAN #1 and MAN #2

We left survivors.

ENSEMBLE

NO!

LESTER

No one survived. Not really. How do you survive war?

ENSEMBLE

You don't. You didn't. None of us did. None of us survived the war.

AUDREY

Was it worth it?

IDA

Son dead. Sun gone. No more light.

LESTER

Still we must fight.

CHARLES

We can never stop fighting!

AUDREY

Fight, fight, fight. I get it now.

ENSEMBLE

When do we stop?

LESTER

Don't know.

ENSEMBLE

Don't know?

IDA

Couldn't tell you.

AUDREY

We just keep living and dancing.

ENSEMBLE

Fighting.

IDA

Praying.

AUDREY

And one day, out of the silence, will come our story.

LESTER

And one day, out of the soil, flowers will bloom.

ENSEMBLE

Speak. Bloom.

IDA

Our voices will be heard.

AUDREY

And we can heal.

LESTER

And we can grow.

ENSEMBLE

Speak now or forever hold your peace.

MAN #1 and MAN #2

Peace.

AUDREY

This is not the end. Lights will go out and the curtain will fall, but...

AUDREY, LESTER, and IDA

The flowers still grow.

IDA

Buried the voice.

AUDREY

Buried the pain.

LESTER

Buried the flesh. The soil is rich here now.

ENSEMBLE

Dirt heals.

EVERYONE

Speak. Bloom. Flowers.

(The sound of birds chirping are heard.)

END OF PLAY