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SF PERUSALS

Hazelwood Jr. High

by Rob Urbinati

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUELFRENCH.COM

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MUSIC NOTE

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HAZELWOOD JR. HIGH was originally produced by The New Group (Scott Elliott, Artistic Director) at I.S. 70 Auditorium in New York City, February 20 – March 21, 1998, under the direction of Scott Elliott with the following cast and production staff:

SHANDA . . . . . Stephanie Gatschet
TONI . . . . . Brooke Sunny Moriber
HOPE . . . . . Heather Gottlieb
AMANDA . . . . . Amy Whitehouse
MELINDA . . . . . Margaret Burkwit
LAURIE . . . . . Chloë Sevigny

Set Designer – Derek McLane
Lighting Designers – Brian MacDevitt and James Vermeulen
Costume Designer – Mattie Ullrich
Sound Designer – Kurt Kellenberger
Production Stage Manager – Christine Catti

CHARACTERS

SHANDA – a cute 12 year-old who wants to fit in.
AMANDA – 14, a romantic tomboy.
MELINDA – 15, beautiful, with a swagger that hides her fears.
HOPE – 15, easy going, from a poor family.
TONI – 15, insecure, from a well-to-do family.
LAURIE – 16, troubled, with an evangelist mother.

NOTES ON THE PLAY

HAZELWOOD JR. HIGH is a play about friendship, identity, peer pressure, and sexual exploration. It's about what young teens experience in their "formative" years. It's a play in which a murder happens, but it is not a play about murder.

The focus of the scenes depicting Shanda's murder should focus on the girls' shifting allegiances, and not the brutality. It is important not to show more violence the script indicates. Much of what the girls do should not be seen, as suggested. However, the violence the script indicates is essential.

HAZELWOOD JR.HIGH consists of many short scenes which take place in a variety of locations. The play should move quickly, with no intermission. I've seen various productions which were very simple, using lighting and modular set pieces to suggest locations, four chairs and a steering wheel for the car, etc. The New Group premiere was quite elaborate. Either is fine.

It is important that the beginning of the play does not foreshadow too heavily the later events. Before the murder, the girls were not murderers. In many ways, they are typical junior high school girls with whom the audience can identify. Gradually, the world of the play spins out of control. The early scenes have a lot of humor. The girls are young, and lack a sense of proportion. Sometimes, they say outrageous things to impress the other girls, or to fit in. Often, they lack the words to articulate their feelings. Take care not to "push" for laughs, or comment on the characters.

In the "Statements" and "Psychologists" sections of the play, be aware that the girls are in the criminal justice system. They are not always telling the truth. These sections should be "active," as the girls grapple with guilt and responsibility, construct a defense, or shift the blame.

There are suggestions for types of music throughout the script. All of the songs are by female vocalists of the period. The characters can smoke or not.

Although *HAZELWOOD* considers various issues, it is character-driven, and more psychological than sociological. Hopefully, the play provokes discussion, but it provides no answers.

–Rob Urbinati

"The truth is always audacious"
– August Strindberg

Hazelwood Jr. High is a work of fiction inspired by true events.

Scene One
Shanda's Bedroom

(Music: A song like Tiffany's "I Think We're Alone Now" plays loudly. Lights up on a small bedroom with clothes strewn about.* **SHANDA** *tries on various outfits, checking herself out in a mirror. She writes in her diary [which could be a Voice-Over)].)*

SHANDA. August 23, 1991. Dear Diary. I can't believe it but it's true. Tomorrow is the first day of school. Let me tell you what I'm looking forward to the most and what I'm dreading the most. Well, this year, I'm goin' to a different school – Hazelwood Jr. High. Thank God! I was so sick of St. Paul's. Now I get to wear cool clothes if my mom lets me. I wish my mom would understand that I don't want to be 12. I want to be 13. I want to talk on the phone on school nights and have people sleep over. I don't know anybody at Hazelwood. I'm sort of scared I won't fit in. I hope they like me. Love, Shanda.

(She adjusts her clothes to look sexier, and dances with abandon. Her confidence builds.)

***See Music Note on Page 3**

Scene Two
Lockers at Hazelwood Jr. High

(A school bell rings, and during the announcements, **SHANDA** *heads for her locker.* **TONI**, *wearing big glasses and preppy clothes, and* **HOPE**, *in jeans and a T-shirt, lean against the lockers, chatting. They notice* **SHANDA**.*)*

VOICE-OVER. Announcements for Monday, October 6, 1991. The 4H Club is holding a bake sale in the commons today and tomorrow during lunch period so be sure to try some of their goodies. The decorating committee for the Harvest Homecoming Dance will meet Thursday after school in Room 114. This year's theme is cornucopia. And finally, "Dare to Care" would like to thank everyone who brought non-perishables to the canned food drive last week. It was a big success. Have a great day.

HOPE. *(approaching* **SHANDA***)* Hi.

SHANDA. Hi.

HOPE. You're new here, right?

SHANDA. Yup.

HOPE. I'm Hope. This is Toni-Roni.

TONI. Hi.

SHANDA. Hi. Shanda.

TONI. You don't have a locker partner?

SHANDA. Nope.

HOPE. Lucky.

TONI. Those barrettes are cute. Where'd you get 'em?

SHANDA. They're my cheerleading barrettes from St. Paul's.

TONI. Where's that?

SHANDA. Dixie Highway.

HOPE. You're from Louisville? Cool.

SHANDA. Yeah, but I went Catholic school. I had to wear a uniform.

TONI. I'd kill myself first.

HOPE. You like Hazelwood?

SHANDA. It's OK.

HOPE. It sucks, just wait.

TONI. Only one more year – then high school!

HOPE. Who you been hangin' out with?

SHANDA. No one.

HOPE. Watch out. They don't call it HazelHood for nothin'.

SHANDA. I can take care of myself.

*(***HOPE** *notices Nathan offstage.)*

HOPE. *(to* **TONI***)* Look who's here. Get goin', girl.

TONI. I can't! He's with Amanda.

HOPE. You're pathetic. Toni wants to ask you something, Shanda.

TONI. *(to* **SHANDA***)* Would you do me a big favor?

SHANDA. Sure.

TONI. OK, see that guy over there? *(pointing offstage)* With the camouflage pants?

SHANDA. Yeah.

TONI. That's Nathan. We're goin' steady but Hope thinks I should break up with him.

HOPE. He's a dick.

TONI. I can't just walk over there and hand him his ring back.

SHANDA. I'll do it.

HOPE. Alright!

TONI. Thanks!

*(***TONI** *takes the ring off and gives it to* **SHANDA***.)*

SHANDA. What should I say?

TONI. Just tell him Toni wants to break up with him.

HOPE. Then kick him in the nuts.

*(***SHANDA** *exits.)*

TONI. She's nice.

HOPE. What is she, like, eleven?

*(***TONI** *and* **HOPE** *hide near the lockers, listening and laughing as:)*

SHANDA. *(offstage)* Hey, Nathan. Here's your ring. Toni-Roni asked me to give it back to you. Look, she wants to break up with you, OK? Just take it, dickhead!

*(***SHANDA** *returns onstage, proudly.)*

TONI. Oh my God, Shanda! I owe you one.

(Suddenly, **AMANDA** *bolts onstage and confronts* **SHANDA**.*)*

HOPE. Hey, girl.

TONI. Hi Amanda.

AMANDA. *(ignoring them, to* **SHANDA***)* What'd you just do?

SHANDA. None of your business.

AMANDA. Yeah well, Nathan's my cousin. You got a problem with him, you got a problem with me too.

(She pushes **SHANDA.***)*

TONI. *(to* **HOPE***)* Let's go!

HOPE. I'm watchin' this!

(They move to the side and watch.)

SHANDA. Look, leave me alone, alright? I was just –

*(***AMANDA** *knocks* **SHANDA** *down and sits on top of her.* **SHANDA** *swings at* **AMANDA** *and misses, then pulls her hair.* **AMANDA** *punches* **SHANDA** *in the face. A whistle shrieks.* **TONI** *pulls* **HOPE** *offstage.* **SHANDA** *sits up. She and* **AMANDA** *look into each other's eyes. A bell rings.)*

Scene Three
Detention

*(***SHANDA** *and* **AMANDA** *in detention, sitting at desks.* **AMANDA** *gazes at* **SHANDA**, *who's doing her homework.* **AMANDA** *opens a notebook and writes. She tears the page out, folds it, makes sure the teacher isn't looking and tosses it to* **SHANDA**. **SHANDA**, *surprised, picks up the note and reads.)*

AMANDA. Shana. Hey, so how you like ISS? I think it sucks. If we would'na fought this never woulda happened. Don't think I'm a bad person or nothin'. I hate fightin'. It's just I was gettin' ready to let you have it and I couldn't 'cause you looked so helpless down there. But you pulled my hair so I started hittin'. I want the truth. Do you even know how to fight? If not, don't feel bad. I'll help you, OK? Amanda.

*(***SHANDA** *puts the note away and begins writing.)*

SHANDA. Dear Amanda. My name's not Shana. It's Shanda – with a "d." It rhymes with yours. You scared me but I don't think you're a bad person if Nathan's your cousin. I don't know how to fight. I didn't fight much at St. Paul's – it was a parochial school. You think I better learn? Why don't you call me sometime? By the way, what does ISS stand for?

*(***SHANDA** *folds her note elaborately and tosses it, then puts on lipstick. Music: A song like Debbie Gibson's 'Out of the Blue.'* **AMANDA** *reads the note, saves it, and scribbles another note.)*

AMANDA. Dear Shanda. Sorry 'bout that! I like that my name rhymes with yours. You think it means somethin'? ISS stands for "in school suspension." You didn't have it at St. Paul's? I got basketball tomorrow but I'll call you maybe Friday or Wednesday. Your friend, Amanda Poo.

*(***SHANDA** *and* **AMANDA** *smile at each other. A bell rings.)*

Scene Four
The Steps Outside Shanda's Apartment Building

SHANDA. Let's sit out here on the steps so I can watch out for my mom. She doesn't like me havin' friends over when she's workin'. 'Specially you because of the fight.

AMANDA. What you tell her?

SHANDA. She's just really strict.

AMANDA. What about your dad?

SHANDA. He lets me do whatever I want. But he lives in Louisville with my step-mom. I wish I could stay with him and have as much fun as possible.

AMANDA. My dad's real strict since my mom moved out but he lets me have girls over anytime I want.

SHANDA. My mom doesn't like me around boys. I had the biggest crush on this guard at Skate World near where I lived and when she found out, she took away my skates. It's cause I'm – I'm only twelve.

AMANDA. Twelve? I thought you were at least thirteen. You look at least thirteen.

SHANDA. Thanks!

AMANDA. You have any boyfriends at St. Paul's?

SHANDA. Lots of 'em. Everyone thought I was boy crazy. I had to sneak around to meet 'em so my mom wouldn't find out.

AMANDA. D'you go all the way with any of 'em?

SHANDA. *(possibly lying)* Uh huh. But I never had a real boyfriend that I loved I don't think.

AMANDA. Shanda, can I tell you somethin'? Promise you won't get mad? Do you know who Melinda is?

SHANDA. Yeah, I love her hair.

AMANDA. Well, um, she and me are goin' together.

SHANDA. *(matter of factly)* How long you guys been goin' out?

AMANDA. 'Bout a year. We met after my basketball game and pretty soon we was hot and heavy. We was seein' each other for 3 or 5 months before she asked me to go steady.

SHANDA. Isn't she like, really popular?

AMANDA. Everyone's just scared of her.

SHANDA. Is she conceited?

AMANDA. She's crazy. My dad kept tellin' me Melinda's a bad person but I didn't listen. She smacks me around just for lookin' at other girls. It's messin' me up.

SHANDA. Amanda, if you're goin' through bad times and you need a friend to talk to, you can always talk to me.

AMANDA. That's so nice. You're so nice. I saw you when you was comin' out for the fire drill today and I thought you looked so nice.

SHANDA. Thanks. I was in Basic Algebra when the alarm went off. I almost fell out of my desk! Then I had Nutrition, then Earth Science, then lunch, then 6th when you saw me, then American Civics.

AMANDA. That's so nice, tellin' me your schedule like that. Shanda, I gotta ask you somethin'. This might sound dumb, but do girls – I mean – do you like girls? I think it's cool cause it's so different. Is that why you're nice to me? Tell me. I won't laugh 'cause I think it's cool.

SHANDA. I don't know, I guess.

Scene Five
The Cafeteria

*(***HOPE** *and* **TONI** *enter with lunch trays and sit at a table.* **MELINDA** *struts in with just a can of Coke. Music: A song like The Bangles' "Walk Like An Egyptian".* She joins* **HOPE** *and* **TONI***, sitting on top of the table.)*

MELINDA. Look at Leslie's boobs! They're humungous. They popped right up over the summer. Hey, baby!

TONI. Cut it out, Melinda!

MELINDA. I bet she's got a big bush now, too.

HOPE. *(enjoying this)* You're whacked out.

*(***AMANDA** *enters, and sits at the table.)*

MELINDA. But not as big as mine, right, Mandy? Little Mandy likes my big bush, don't you, girlfriend?

(She kisses **AMANDA***.)*

TONI. What if the monitor sees you!?

MELINDA. *(lightly)* Suck my dick. *(re: something on* **HOPE***'s plate)* What's that fried thing?

HOPE. Tater Tot casserole.

MELINDA. Gimme some. *(eats)* Oo look, here comes that new girl. Hey, cutie-pie! *(to* **TONI***)* What's her name?

TONI. Shanda.

HOPE. She's from Louisville.

MELINDA. Hey Shanda. Come and eat at Mel's Place!

AMANDA. Stop yellin'.

HOPE. You guys goin' to Harvest Homecoming? Laurie Tuckett's givin' us a ride.

MELINDA. That chick gives me the creeps. Didn't she sacrifice a cat and drink its blood?

HOPE. No, she only drinks her own blood.

TONI. I'm gonna wear my reindeer sweater.

*(***MELINDA** *and* **HOPE** *snicker.)*

What – should I wear my cable-knit?

***See Music Note on Page 3**

HOPE. Let's go, Toni Roni. Biology. We got frogs today.

TONI. Yuch.

MELINDA. Keep it in your pants, girls.

*(***TONI** *and* **HOPE** *exit.* **MELINDA** *notices* **AMANDA***, distracted.)*

MELINDA. What's the matter, baby?

AMANDA. Nothin'.

MELINDA. Can I come over your house after school? Is your dad workin'?

AMANDA. I don't know. Better not.

MELINDA. *(moving closer)* I miss you, honey.

AMANDA. *(separating)* I got homework.

MELINDA. Please, Poo?

AMANDA. I gotta read.

MELINDA. Read what?

AMANDA. *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl.*

MELINDA. Just skip to the end part. Look, there's that Shanda. *(shouting offstage)* Hey, little girl! You look tough in those jeans!

AMANDA. You're a perv. Leave her alone.

MELINDA. What's the matter, you like her or somethin'?

AMANDA. You're worse than the guys.

MELINDA. Callin' me a perv. She's still wearin' a training bra.

AMANDA. Shut up!

MELINDA. What's goin' on? *(notices* **AMANDA***'s folder)* What's this? *(picks it up)* Why did you write her name on your folder!? Do you like her? What the fuck is her ugly name doin' on your folder!? You better stay away from her, missy, you hear me? *(throws it down)* I'm gone, man!

*(***MELINDA** *exits.* **SHANDA** *enters.* **AMANDA** *hurries to her.)*

AMANDA. Shanda. I'm so sorry, honey. I didn't have nothin' to do with this. If you don't want to see me no more, I understand, OK?

SHANDA. It's OK.

AMANDA. God, I'm really startin' to hate Melinda. I never thought I would but it's happenin'. Next time she talks to me, I'm tellin' her to F off 'cause I'm so pissed. Shanda, listen, OK? I'm all yours, OK?

SHANDA. OK.

AMANDA. Shanda, don't make any plans for Friday. Let's me and you go to the Harvest Homecoming Dance.

SHANDA. What about Melinda?

AMANDA. I wanna be with you.

SHANDA. OK.

AMANDA. Shanda, I have a lot in store for Friday night when we I see you. Know what I mean?

SHANDA. I think, but I can't tell if you're kiddin' or what.

AMANDA. Do you want me to be kiddin'?

Scene Six
Lockers

(A bell rings as **MELINDA** *and* **HOPE** *cross to their lockers and chat.)*

VOICE-OVER. Students, a final reminder. Tomorrow is the last day for you to hand in your picture and your 'You Said It' quote for the 1992 Hazelwood Junior High Yearbook. There are no exceptions. If your picture is not turned in by tomorrow, there will be a blank space in the yearbook where your picture should be. It will look terrible now and for years to come. Get home safely.

*(***TONI** *enters.)*

TONI. What's up?

HOPE. We're gonna kick Shanda's ass.

TONI. I like Shanda.

MELINDA. *(to* **HOPE***, re:* **TONI***)* Why do you hang around with this one?

*(***SHANDA** *enters.)*

SHANDA. Hi Toni.

*(***TONI** *hurries off.)*

Toni?

MELINDA. Listen up, little girl.

SHANDA. Me?

MELINDA. Yeah, you. Mandy belongs to me. Get your own girlfriend if you like girls.

SHANDA. We're just friends.

MELINDA. You think I'm stupid? I know it was you called Mandy's Tuesday night and hung up when I answered.

SHANDA. I can't talk on the phone on school nights.

MELINDA. Cut the shit. *(pulls out a heart-shaped note)* Did you write this? It stinks of perfume!

SHANDA. *(a beat, then, less convincingly)* That's not my handwriting.

MELINDA. It says, "Shanda loves Amanda?" *(grabbing* **SHANDA***)* Just tell me you two are screwin' 'cause I already know.

SHANDA. No we're not.

MELINDA. Liar! Stay away from Mandy, girlie-girl – I'm warnin' you. *(looks at* **HOPE***)* I have people who can find out. You talk to her again and you're gonna be sorry. Now promise me to my face!

SHANDA. I promise.

MELINDA. Promise what?

SHANDA. I promise I'll stay away from Mandy.

MELINDA. AMANDA!

(She pushes **SHANDA** *against the locker.)*

Her fucking name is Amanda!

(A whistle blows. **HOPE** *and* **TONI** *run off. A bell rings.)*

Scene Seven
Detention

*(***SHANDA** *and* **MELINDA** *sit at desks.* **MELINDA** *writes a note and tosses it at* **SHANDA**, *startling her.* **SHANDA** *opens the note and reads.)*

MELINDA. Shanda. Don't be scared of me, please. I want to be your friend. I just don't like you talkin' to Mandy when I'm not there. You act like you got somethin' goin' on with her. Mandy loves me and I love her so let's just leave it like that, OK? You need to find you a boyfriend because Mandy is mine.

(Bell rings. **MELINDA** *crosses to* **SHANDA**, *who is gathering her belongings.)*

MELINDA. Hey, girl, how they hangin'?

SHANDA. They're OK. Look, Melinda, nothin's goin' on with me and Amanda, honest.

MELINDA. You, me and Mandy need to have a talk and get this all squared away.

SHANDA. OK.

MELINDA. Where ya headed?

(They walk together.)

SHANDA. King's Daughter.

MELINDA. What's the matter? You sick?

SHANDA. No, I'm a candy-striper. I want to be a nurse.

MELINDA. *(not interested)* Great.

SHANDA. You goin' to the Harvest Homecoming?

MELINDA. Didn't anyone tell you? I hate these dances. Hazelwood can't afford a band and the DJ sucks.

SHANDA. What are you doin' this weekend?

MELINDA. Goin' up to the mall. Last week, me and Crystal got kicked outta there for messin' with the Catholic boys. But I'm goin' back for more – 'cause I'm too slick and I hate dick.

SHANDA. Me too.

*(***SHANDA** *smiles and walks away.* **MELINDA** *stands still, concerned.)*

Scene Eight
Civil War Cemetery Across the Street from Hazelwood

(Music: A song like Paula Abdul's "Rush" plays in the distance as **AMANDA** *and* **SHANDA** *leave the dance.)*

SHANDA. The decorations were great. The wigs on the pumpkins were so funny. Did you see Toni?

AMANDA. Her and Hope are probably in a car makin' out with some guys.

SHANDA. Where we goin'?

AMANDA. 'Cross the street. No one goes in this cemetery. *(as they walk)* I was walkin' behind you yesterday after Wood Shop and you didn't even know I was followin' you.

SHANDA. *(enjoying this)* Really?

AMANDA. You look sexy tonight.

SHANDA. Thanks.

*(***SHANDA** *and* **AMANDA** *sit on the ground.)*

AMANDA. Shanda, do you want what I got in store to happen? Do you wanna make love with me? If you do, just say so. I know it's a big question for such a little girl.

SHANDA. I'm not a little girl.

AMANDA. Shanda, my feelings for you are gettin' stronger and stronger every day. I want you real bad.

(The girls lie on the ground and embrace. They kiss passionately as the lights fade and the music builds. When the lights come up, **SHANDA** *is lying in* **AMANDA***'s arms. From out of the darkness,* **LAURIE** *enters with a lighter in front of her face. She stares at* **SHANDA** *and* **AMANDA** *for a moment, then wanders off.)*

SHANDA. What was that!?

AMANDA. Laurie Tuckett. Prob'ly lookin' for Hope.

SHANDA. I've never seen her in school.

AMANDA. She quit. She's in therapy or somethin'.

SHANDA. She's scary.

AMANDA. She worships the devil.

SHANDA. You like her bangs?

AMANDA. I like yours better.

(They dance closely to the music in the distance. **HOPE** *enters unnoticed and watches.)*

Scene Nine
Hazelwood Girls Room

*(***MELINDA** *brushes her hair as* **HOPE** *enters.)*

HOPE. Hey, Mel.

MELINDA. Hey, girl. How was the dance? D'ya get lucky?

HOPE. I met this guy and we went to his car but he was drunk and droolin' all over me so I took off. I saw Amanda.

MELINDA. Really? She said she was stayin' home 'cause she had a canker sore.

HOPE. She was with Shanda. They were dancin' together.

MELINDA. In front of everyone!?

HOPE. In the old cemetery. By themselves. Slow dancin'.

MELINDA. You're shittin' me. Yesterday was my birthday, Hope, and –

HOPE. You didn't tell me. Happy Birthday, girl!

MELINDA. Yeah, right, sweet sixteen. Last year on my birthday Mandy wrote a poem just for me – "My Rose of Love." Now she's too busy messin' with that baby-girl to remember. She's gonna teach her everything she learned from me. Mandy didn't even know how to kiss when we met.

HOPE. Get out.

MELINDA. The first time we made out, it was awful – I thought, shit, this girl can't kiss, I gotta do some practice, teach her. She picked it up pretty quick though.

HOPE. Does she act like a guy – when you have sex, I mean?

MELINDA. No. Sex-wise, I'm basically in control. But we haven't done it in weeks now, Hope. She's breakin' my heart.

HOPE. That Shanda's a snake. You gotta watch out for chicks like that.

MELINDA. Me and Mandy are through. I want my panda ring back.

Scene Ten
The Steps Outside Shanda's Apartment

(Music: A song like Mariah Carey's "Emotions".)*

SHANDA. You smell pretty. What is it?

AMANDA. My dad's cologne.

SHANDA. Mandy, ever since the old cemetery, I can't stop thinkin' about you.

AMANDA. *(taking off the ring, very seriously)* Shanda, will you accept this panda ring if I give it to you? Always and forever?

SHANDA. Yes I will.

AMANDA. *(putting the ring on* **SHANDA***'s finger)* A panda for Shanda from Amanda. *(They kiss.)* "My Rose of Love is sweet and shy. And I'll prob'ly love her till I die." I wrote that just for you.

SHANDA. This means we're goin' steady, right?

AMANDA. You bet.

SHANDA. I'll never take it off. I love you so much, Mandy.

AMANDA. I love you too honey. I loved when you said I love you today after lunch. *(separating herself)* But Shanda, there's one big question I gotta ask you. How come you want to make love every single time I see you?

SHANDA. Isn't that what people in love do?

AMANDA. Love's not just about S-E-X. If you want to have a real girlfriend, that's a lot, not just what happens in bed. Are you just doin' this 'cause it's somethin' new?

SHANDA. When you make love to me – I've never felt like that before.

AMANDA. That's what Melinda says too. Better not wear that ring to school. If she sees you wearin' it, she'll kill me.

***See Music Note on Page 3**

Scene Eleven
Limbo

(Alone with a candle, **LAURIE** *recites her poem. Music: A song like L7's "Shove".*)*

LAURIE. The Forest by L. Tuckett. The forest burns. The children scream. Shadows await, to take souls unseen. Stones that mark death await their calling. Innocence allies with evil, hence falling. The children struggle and then break free, running, half flying with hideous glee. But one girl remains who is crying in fear. As the forest burns on, listen and hear.

***See Music Note on Page 3**

Scene Twelve
Cafeteria

*(***AMANDA** *frets as* **SHANDA** *enters.)*

AMANDA. What's goin' on? I called you like, three times last night but your mom kept hangin' up.

SHANDA. She found a note I wrote you.

AMANDA. Which one?

SHANDA. It said "I love you and want to make love to you" – stuff like that.

AMANDA. What she say?

SHANDA. We had a talk. She asked me if you touched my body in a way you shouldn't. It was creepy.

AMANDA. What'd you tell her?

SHANDA. I said I wrote it like a girlfriend to a boyfriend just for a joke.

AMANDA. She believe you?

SHANDA. She blames it all on you.

AMANDA. It'll be OK, honey. We can still hang out at school and stuff.

SHANDA. She's makin' me switch schools. I gotta go to "Our Lady of Perpetual Help."

AMANDA. Man!

SHANDA. She already talked to Sister somethin', the principal. I have to wear a uniform again! What am I gonna do, Mandy?

AMANDA. Our Lady's not that far. We can still be together. Always and forever, OK? Promise?

SHANDA. Promise.

AMANDA. D'ya say anything to Toni and Hope?

SHANDA. I told Toni.

AMANDA. So the whole school probably knows by now.

*(***TONI** *and* **HOPE** *enter.)*

HOPE. *(rubbing it in)* Hey Shanda, that really sucks about "Our Lady." My cousin goes there – she say it's like a prison. They make y'all wear these ugly uniforms –

TONI. *(to* **HOPE***)* Shut up! *(to* **SHANDA***)* I'm sorry you're switchin' schools, Shanda.

MELINDA. *(enters, gloating)* Hi Shanda

*(***SHANDA** *runs off.)*

Bye Shanda! I been in a real excited mood all day, right Hope – actin' real stupid and crackin' everyone up. I feel like jumpin' all over you, Mandy, but I'm a good girl.

HOPE. *(enjoying this)* You're messed up is what you are.

MELINDA. *(putting her arm around* **AMANDA***)* I got you all to myself again, baby.

AMANDA. Get offa me!

*(***AMANDA** *runs off.* **MELINDA** *is crushed. A bell rings.)*

Scene Thirteen
Notes

(Limbo. **MELINDA, AMANDA** *and* **SHANDA** *read and write [which could be Voice-Overs].)*

(Music: A song like Amy Grant's "Hopes Set High.")*

MELINDA. Dear Poo. I was in the hall and I went past this class and I saw the most beautiful girl in there. She was holdin' her hair back in a sexy way and doin' some work. Do you know her? I think her name starts with A and has six letters. Hey, we get off Thursday and Friday for Thanksgiving – wanna come over my house if your dad lets you? Love, Mel.

AMANDA. Dear Mel. What's goin' on is I need to figure out some things like how you are without me and me without you. Just give me a little time and we'll talk about this later or call later or somethin'. Well, see you around. Love, Amanda.

SHANDA. *(writing in her diary)* Dear Diary. I've been goin' to "Our Lady" for two weeks now and I hate it. There's some cute guys, but I'm goin' steady with Mandy and that's enought for me. This weekend "Our Lady" is havin' its First Friday service in the gym. We can invite kids from other schools so guess who I asked. Love, Shanda.

***See Music Note on Page 3**

Scene Fourteen
Hallway in Our Lady of Perpetual Help School

(Music plays in the distance. **SHANDA** *and* **AMANDA** *kiss in a dark hallway.)*

SHANDA. You feel so good, Mandy. I miss what we used to do in my room.

AMANDA. You seein' any of these guys?

SHANDA. This one guy Ray calls me a lot.

AMANDA. Your mom lets you talk to him?

SHANDA. Sure, she's real nice to him.

AMANDA. What about girls?

SHANDA. I wanna be with you, Poo. I wear your ring to school every day.

AMANDA. That don't mean you love me.

SHANDA. Yes it does.

AMANDA. You think you do but deep down you prob'ly really don't.

SHANDA. Why are you sayin' that?

*(***MELINDA** *enters, unseen by* **AMANDA** *and* **SHANDA,** *and listens in.)*

AMANDA. OK, listen. I can't hold nothin' back.

SHANDA. You're still seein' Melinda! You told me you guys were through.

AMANDA. She won't leave me alone!

SHANDA. So!?

AMANDA. What kills me is I really want to be with both of you. I have two beautiful girls who love me and I don't know what to do.

SHANDA. You said you were all mine. I wrote Melinda's name on my folder and put a big X through it!

AMANDA. I can't just stop lovin' her. It could take a while, honey 'cause love takes time. I love you too, but I don't know.

*(***SHANDA** *turns away.)*

Shanda, I'm lookin' forward to a good future with you.

*(***MELINDA** *storms over, grabs* **SHANDA***, and slaps her in the face.)*

MELINDA. This is the same shit all over again! I've had it with the two of you!

(She holds **AMANDA***'s arms behind her back, and pushes her toward* **SHANDA***.)*

Tell her you love me!

AMANDA. *(a beat, then, to* **SHANDA***)* I love her.

MELINDA. Say my name!

AMANDA. Melinda. I love Melinda.

MELINDA. Tell her you don't love her.

AMANDA. C'mon, Mel.

MELINDA. Tell her!

AMANDA. *(to* **SHANDA***)* I don't love you.

MELINDA. Now tell her to get lost!

AMANDA. Get outta here.

*(***SHANDA** *looks* **AMANDA** *in the eye, then exits.)*

MELINDA. *(grabs* **AMANDA** *by the throat)* If you talk to her again I'm gonna kill you, understand? You people are destroyin' me! I'm tired of this shit. You forgot my birthday, missy! I'm real mad at you. *(starts to cry)* Hug me. Hug me!

*(***AMANDA** *hugs her. After a while:)*

I'm sorry, baby. I got cramps and I'm in a real bitchy mood.

*(***AMANDA** *pulls away and runs after* **SHANDA***.* **MELINDA** *slumps to the ground.)*

Scene Fifteen
Lockers At Hazelwood Jr. High

*(***TONI** *and* **HOPE** *lean against their lockers as a sullen* **MELINDA** *enters.)*

HOPE. Hey, Mel. Where you been?

TONI. We thought you quit school.

MELINDA. I'm so pissed at Mandy I can't look at her face.

HOPE. Was she at "Our Lady" like I told you?

MELINDA. The two of 'em were all over each other.

TONI. Right in front of the nuns?

HOPE. D'ya kick their ass?

MELINDA. I totally went off on 'em, Hope. They treat me like I'm scum of the earth.

HOPE. Forget about them. Come with me and Toni tonight. Laurie Tuckett's pickin' us up and we're goin' to the Witches' Castle.

MELINDA. That chick's too weird. Does she really drink her own blood?

HOPE. Yeah, but she has a car.

Scene Sixteen
Laurie's Car

(Music: A song like L7's "Fast and Frightening." **LAURIE** *is driving,* **MELINDA***'s in the passenger seat, and* **HOPE** *and* **TONI** *are in back.)*

MELINDA. So I told her, I go, "Mandy, it's me or Shanda. You can't have your cake and eat it too." I played sick and didn't go to school and when I went back today she starts winkin' at me and I just ignored her and kept right on steppin'. I am so hurt and pissed at her I wanna kill myself.

LAURIE. Want me get in the other lane and smash into that car comin' at us?

TONI. No! What are all these clothes doin' back here?

LAURIE. *(to* **MELINDA***)* I had a thing for this chick Suzette –

MELINDA. You're into girls?

LAURIE. Whatever.

HOPE. Are you makin' this up? You never told me! Damn, everyone I know is muff-divin'!

TONI. What's that?

LAURIE. Suzette was the coldest person I ever met. She moved here from California. *(shows* **MELINDA** *a picture in her wallet)*

MELINDA. She's freaky.

LAURIE. *(puts the picture away)* After that she shaved her head except the bangs.

MELINDA. So then you did it.

LAURIE. She's how I learned about cuttin' myself too. Once I cut real deep on the top of my hand – you could see the bone. *(showing the scar)* Blood was gooshin' out all over. I thought I was dyin', but Suzette just pulls out her camera and starts takin' pictures. I called her my ice princess. She was bad-ass, but I loved her. All of a sudden one day she moved to Utah. I said fuck it. Now I don't give a fuck about a fucking thing.

MELINDA. I wanna be like that. But I hate Shanda, I can't help it.

Scene Seventeen
The Witches' Castle

(A small stone building in the woods. Inside is a small bench and a candle. **HOPE**, **TONI** *and* **MELINDA** *sit on the ground.* **LAURIE***'s boombox plays a song like P.J. Harvey's "Happy and Bleeding".** **LAURIE** *stands with her eyes closed, moving her arms "ritualistically.")*

LAURIE. The three witches who controlled the town of Utica lived here in the Witches' Castle. They're buried in a dungeon deep beneath the earth – right where you're sittin'. All that's left is their bones.

MELINDA. *(to* **HOPE***, not taking this seriously)* What is she, like, Vogueing?

HOPE. Shhh.

LAURIE. If you listen, you can hear them cry in pain.

*(***LAURIE** *sits on the bench. She writhes her body from the waist up, slowly and strangely.)*

TONI. *(to* **HOPE***)* What's she doin' now?

HOPE. She's gonna channel some dead person.

MELINDA. What's that?

HOPE. Dead people come into her body and she talks like them.

TONI. Can she pick any channel she wants?

MELINDA. *(amused)* This isn't TV, retard.

LAURIE. I hear the voices of dead people caught in the spirit world. They want to speak through me. *(She stops moving and listens carefully.)* Someone is callin' me. Who are you? *(a beat, then)* It's Deanna the Vampire. She's callin' my name. Come to me, she's sayin'. Come to me!

*(***LAURIE** *shakes, then becomes limp. Slowly, she sits up, and her demeanor has changed. NOTE: While* **LAURIE** *is not actually "channeling" Deanna, she uses Deanna to express her own pain.)*

***See Music Note on Page 3**

HOPE. Who are you now?

LAURIE. *(speaking like a little girl)* I am Deanna the Vampire. I am the evilest person on earth. I would love to kill somebody and watch them die. I see desolation everywhere. A forest is burnin'. Bloody babies are hangin' from trees. I hate God. I want to be a boy. My heart is beatin' real fast and it hurts!

*(***LAURIE** *has a few spasms and collapses, then regains her composure.)*

HOPE. *(impressed)* You're twisted! *(to* **MELINDA** *and* **TONI***, re:* **LAURIE***'s cuts)* See that? It's where she jabbed herself with a safety pin. And this –

MELINDA. Why do you cut yourself?

LAURIE. So I can watch the blood ooze out.

MELINDA. Don't it hurt?

LAURIE. It feels good when it's bleeding. All the tension drains away.

TONI. What if one time you cut too deep?

LAURIE. I die.

TONI. I think it's gross.

*(***LAURIE** *springs on* **TONI** *and grabs her arm.* **TONI** *screams.* **LAURIE** *releases her and laughs demonically.)*

HOPE. That's her devil laugh!

TONI. Why'd you try to scratch me?

LAURIE. I want to drink your blood.

TONI. No way!

LAURIE. *(pulls out a Swiss Army knife)* How 'bout I cut you a little?

TONI. Get away from me!

HOPE. *(volunteering)* I have a scab on my leg.

LAURIE. That'll work. *(She picks the scab, and puts her mouth on* **HOPE***'s cut.)*

(Everyone watches in silence for a few moments as **LAURIE** *sucks* **HOPE***'s blood – for* **TONI** *and* **MELINDA***'s benefit.)*

HOPE. It tickles!

TONI. This is makin' me sick. Seriously.

MELINDA. She's just showin' off, Toni.

TONI. I gotta get goin'. I got a book report.

MELINDA. And my butt is freezing.

(The girls prepare to leave.)

TONI. *(to* **HOPE***)* I'm doin' mine on *The Secret Diary of Laura Palmer.*

HOPE. How long is it?

TONI. 184 pages.

HOPE. What's it about?

TONI. That girl from *Twin Peaks,* the blonde? She wrote a book.

MELINDA. Tuckett, ever stab anybody with that knife?

LAURIE. It's too small.

MELINDA. What are you doin' this weekend?

(The girls walk toward **LAURIE***'s car.)*

LAURIE. Goin' to Louisville – to a punk show. I know the drummer.

HOPE. The A-1 Skate Park! Alright!

TONI. I hate that kinda music.

HOPE. There's tons of guys, Toni-Roni.

LAURIE. *(to* **MELINDA***)* Wanna come?

MELINDA. Yeah, sure. But Tuckett, do me a favor. Before we go to the show, let's stop by Shanda's house. I wanna teach her a lesson.

*(***LAURIE** *looks* **MELINDA** *in the eye.* **MELINDA** *smiles.)*

Scene Eighteen
Melinda's Bedroom

*(***TONI** *and* **HOPE** *try on* **MELINDA***'s clothes.* **MELINDA** *fixes her hair.* **LAURIE** *lies on the floor, playing with her lighter. Music: A song like Taylor Dayne's "Shelter".*)*

TONI. You have so many nice things!

MELINDA. My dad bought me tons of stuff.

TONI. *(re: a pair of shoes)* Hope, look at these – Pine Cones! *(to* **MELINDA***)* If they fit, can I wear 'em?

MELINDA. Wear whatever you want 'cept my leather jacket.

TONI. You look so tough in that! *(She squeezes into the shoes.)*

HOPE. This is like the Land of 1000 Bras!

TONI. *(re: shoes)* They're tight, but I'm wearin' 'em anyway.

HOPE. *(holding up a pair of* **MELINDA***'s jeans)* You think these'd look good on me?

MELINDA. *(slyly)* It's hard to pull 'em down.

HOPE. Maybe I'll take my top off, and wear this black bra with just my jacket over it. *(She takes off her top, and puts on the bra and jacket.)*

MELINDA. D'you guys see how much Shanda started copyin' me before she transferred? Wearin' tight clothes and stuff?

TONI. Lotsa girls wear tight things.

MELINDA. I gotta show her who's boss.

HOPE. Like how?

MELINDA. We're gonna go get her and beat the shit out of her.

HOPE. Cool!

TONI. What are you gonna just go over there? You don't even know if she's home.

MELINDA. We'll call first.

TONI. And say what?

MELINDA. Tell her we're gonna pick her up.

TONI. She's afraid of you.

***See Music Note on Page 3**

MELINDA. You call. She likes you.

TONI. No way.

MELINDA. You can wear my leather jacket.

TONI. What should I say?

MELINDA. Ask if she wants to come to the show. No, I know – tell her Mandy wants to talk to her.

HOPE. That's good. Her mom hates Amanda.

LAURIE. We can take her to the Witches' Castle.

MELINDA. Tell her Mandy wants to see her real bad and she asked you guys to come get her. OK, dial.

TONI. When are we goin' to the concert?

MELINDA. After. Just dial.

(Lights up on **SHANDA**.*)*

SHANDA. Hello?

TONI. Hey Shanda.

SHANDA. Toni-Roni!

TONI. How's "Our Lady?"

SHANDA. Don't even ask. I miss you, Toni. How you been? You goin' out with anyone?

TONI. I can't stop thinkin' about Nathan. I wish I never broke up with him.

HOPE. Tell her 'bout Amanda!

TONI. Shanda, Amanda wants to talk to you.

SHANDA. Really? She's with you?

TONI. She told me to tell you.

SHANDA. Where is she?

TONI. *(panicking)* Um, she just really wants to –

HOPE. *(grabbing the phone)* Hey Shanda, listen. Amanda needs to see you. She says it's important.

SHANDA. Hope? Where is she?

HOPE. She's waitin'. She told us to come get you.

SHANDA. Who?

HOPE. Me and Toni – and this chick I know with a car.

SHANDA. *(not convinced)* What's she wearin'?

HOPE. Oh you know – flannel shirt, baggy jeans and a baseball cap.

SHANDA. Come back around twelve o'clock when my mom's in bed. I'll try and sneak out for awhile. But don't beep, OK? Bye.

MELINDA. What she say?

HOPE. She can't come now –

MELINDA. Shit!

HOPE. – but she said to pick her up later.

MELINDA. What if she's not there when we get there? Or she's sleepin'? I had her right in my hands, Hope, and you blew it. Some friend.

HOPE. Relax, Mel – at midnight, she's all yours.

MELINDA. Why'd you tell her what Mandy was wearin'?

HOPE. She asked me.

MELINDA. *(deeply hurt)* Bitch. I want her dead.

TONI. Are we gonna get goin' or what?

MELINDA. I gotta get somethin' in the kitchen.

*(***MELINDA** *exits.)*

TONI. Hope, can I do the bra thing too? I don't want to copy you but it'd look cool with the leather jacket. If it's not OK, just tell me.

HOPE. Make sure you take those glasses off.

TONI. *(***TONI** *does the bra thing, and shoves her blouse in her purse.)* My mom and dad would kill me if they saw me doin' this.

LAURIE. They should kill you anyway.

TONI. *(to* **HOPE***)* I told them I was sleepin' over Leslie's. I'm not allowed to go to concerts yet – except in the afternoon.

MELINDA. *(enters with a butcher knife)* This is the knife I'm gonna use.

HOPE/LAURIE. Cool.

TONI. What're you gonna do with that?

MELINDA: Duh.

Scene Nineteen
Laurie's Car

(A few hours later. **LAURIE** *is parked near* **SHANDA***'s apartment building.* **MELINDA** *is in the passenger seat,* **TONI** *and* **HOPE** *are in back. Music: a song like Debbie Gibson's "Only in my Dreams".*)*

LAURIE. It's showtime.

MELINDA. *(to* **HOPE** *and* **TONI***)* You guys go get her.

HOPE. I can't wait! *(gets out of the car)* C'mon, Toni.

TONI. I'm not goin'.

MELINDA. You promised.

TONI. I said I'd call and I called.

LAURIE. Worm.

HOPE. Who's comin' with me? I'm not doin' this by myself.

LAURIE. Let's go, Hope. *(to* **MELINDA***)* You better hide on the back floor.

MELINDA. Don't scare her, Tuckett. Just be really nice and tell her Mandy's waitin'.

*(***LAURIE** *and* **HOPE** *exit.* **MELINDA** *hops in the backseat with* **TONI***.)*

MELINDA. *(takes out the knife)* I can't wait till Shanda sees this.

TONI. It looks like the one in *Friday the 13th.* You really gonna cut her with it?

MELINDA. Nah, it's too dull. I'm just gonna tease her a little.

TONI. D'you think Brandon was cute?

MELINDA. Who's Brandon?

TONI. The kid at the concert. The one I went out to Laurie's car with.

MELINDA. D'ya get laid, Toni-Roni?

TONI. You came bangin' on the window.

MELINDA. You still a virgin? What are you waitin' for – you're in junior high for Christ sake.

***See Music Note on Page 3**

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