



Witch Hazel

By Juliet Dempsey

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CONTENT WARNING:

This play contains strong language as well as references to and staged depictions of sexual assault. Appropriate for ages 14 and up.

Characters:

Sylvia: Female lead.

Elaine: Longtime friend of Sylvia. Always wishing for more. To experience more. To *be* more.

Matthew: Elaine's new boyfriend. Silver spoon between his teeth.

Kevin: Friend of Matthew. Navigates life via bubble; He also plays Sylvia's father for a beat.

Boy: A face at a highschool party.

Male Voice Over: The voice of systematic oppression and law. All lines taken directly from the hearing transcripts. (with an exception to names)

Female Voice Over: A voice of reason. Lines occasionally taken from the transcript as well though often from Sylvia's conscience.

This play was inspired by Dr. Christine Blasey Ford's testimony in the Kavanaugh hearings from September of 2018. The male voice over lines are all taken directly from the hearing. All other characters voices float in between and around the hearing.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/national/wp/2018/09/27/kavanaugh-hearing-transcript/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.5bfe277ef400



(This play exists within multiple locations, all of which exist at once. Time is not linear. Each location will only require simple sets. A long table with one chair sits somewhere central. A pitcher of water and an empty cup sit on the table. A couch will be necessary for a houseparty set as well as a bathroom, whatever that means. The television is playing- the news. We see a montage of news reports of rapes, politicians and reporters conversing on the female anatomy, etc, etc. Abruptly, the T.V. cuts out and after a moment of silence, soft music begins to play from the other room. With the music, lights rise. We are now able to see a teen girls bedroom. It is simple. A girl of 16 or 17, Sylvia, is standing somewhere inside. She looks around almost breathing in the environment. This next line plays over the following stage direction.)

FEMALE VOICE OVER:

The female body: A virtuous, ethereal being. Growth: Life forms within her hips. Carried in the stride of her step. The flow of blood and tissue hidden behind her eyes.

The arch of her back,
The sun of her smile,
The ride of her breasts,
The grace of her style.
A phenomenal woman.

Still, this power never seems to be enough. She never seems to be enough. Slandered in the public eye for its inconsistency or consistency to an ideal. Governed by something not herself. Outside of herself. Never truly belonging to herself. What is a phenomenal woman?

(Music plays. She sways her body along to the rhythm. Slowly, almost unconsciously, she raises her arm, allowing her elbow and wrist to bend, also swaying to the music. Eventually, the sound raises her from the bed. She begins to softly dance, her steps growing stronger and more passionate with each step. She does not have to be a very good dancer- she does not try to look impressive. She is simply feeling the music. This goes on for a moment until the T.V. turns back on or comes back into focus. The sound of her music is washed out, though, she tries to keep the moment alive with continued swaying. The news montage becomes louder and the pace speeds up- it grows more and more intense. At this point, Sylvia is almost fighting the presence of the noise around her until she can't handle it anymore and collapses- throwing her head into her lap. The news cuts out. We hear the music still playing as if it is unaware of what has happened. Lights and music fade. End of beat)

(Lights rise on a single table Sylvia sits behind it in some kind of dulled workplace/ formal wear. The table is consuming her, both for and against her sake. A voice over:)



VOICE OVER:

Ms. Fisher, do you swear that the testimony that you're about to give before this committee will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

SYLVIA:

I do.

VOICE OVER:

The entire country is watching how we handle these allegations. I hope the majority changes their tactics, opens their mind and seriously reflects on why we are here. We are here for one reason. I'd like to begin. Ms. Fisher.

SYLVIA:

Um, I. (Clears throat) Sorry, I um.

(The microphone has static)

Could I just have some- some um.

(She reaches for the jug of water and begins to pour into an empty clear glass.)

VOICE OVER:

Have you ever passed out from drinking?

SYLVIA:

I'm sorry? Oh, oh no. I don't believe so.

VOICE OVER:

You believe?

SYLVIA:

I have not.

VOICE OVER:

Would you please describe the encounter?

(For a moment, Sylvia thinks. She knew that this was going to happen- that she would need to recount her experience. Still, the question stirs her. Party music play- it is seeping into her bones. Slowly, party guests enter the 'party', she is aware of them. Sylvia is being haunted by that night.)

SYLVIA:

Yes. I was- It was pretty late. Maybe eleven or twelve. I'm not sure. We got there earlier... in the night... 7 I think. There was music playing. I felt uncomfortable. It was my friend Elaine- um- her "boyfriends" party. It was at his house. Anyway, um, *he* was at this party.



(Sensing that her voice is not being heard.)
(With power) I believed he was going to rape me.

(A gush of silence. Everyone at the party stares at Sylvia with the reaction they might have when the news of this trial would have been originally spread. The air is thick.)

(Elaine enters from offstage with car keys in hand. The remainder of this beat takes place in a section of the stage that it is clear the party is not taking place.)

ELAINE:

Dude, c'mon! Lets go! They're waiting on us.

SYLVIA:

(To the trial)
Elaine never wanted to go home. She could find plans anywhere.

ELAINE:

Sylvia! Lets go!

SYLVIA:

And I always went with her.
(Going to meet her, now back in that night)

ELAINE:

(Applying another layer of lipstick)
Matthew said the house is in Belleview so it's gonna be rich- rich. Oh, I meant to ask you earlier, you won't mind if they are drinking right? I told them you'd be cool with it but if you aren't we don't have to go ya know. It'd be cool.

SYLVIA:

Oh, no- no. It's whatever.

ELAINE:

(Barely attempting to hide her relief)
Okay good!

SYLVIA:

Are you gonna drink?

ELAINE:

Maybe, I don't know. Might make being around Matthew's friends a little bit more digestible. You don't have to.



SYLVIA:

No, I know. Are we gonna be out late? I'm only asking because we had soccer practice at 5 this morning and I don't wanna be the one to fall asleep at a party.

ELAINE:

Dude, c'mon, You'll be fine. Sleep is for little bitches and time is nothing but a concept, grasshopper. I think Gandhi said that. Oh hey! I can ask Matthew to introduce you to one of his friends if you'd like.

SYLVIA:

Oh, I don't know.

ELAINE:

(Winking) Okayyyyyyy.

SYLVIA:

What? No, I just-

ELAINE:

(Laughing) Okayyyyyyy..

SYLVIA:

Elaine! C'mon.

ELAINE:

Lets just see if there are any cute ones first, okay? Ooh, do you want me to do your makeup?

SYLVIA:

I have makeup on.

ELAINE:

No, I meant- *makeup*.

SYLVIA:

What's wrong with what I have on?

ELAINE:

There isn't anything wrong with it. It's just- nevermind.

SYLVIA:

What?



Nothing.

ELAINE:

No tell me.

SYLVIA:

No, its nothing I just thought-

ELAINE:

Thought what?

SYLVIA:

That you might like to spice it up a little, you know-

ELAINE:

Spice up my face?

SYLVIA:

Sylvia, you know that's not what I meant.

ELAINE:

What did you mean then?

SYLVIA:

Guys like it when girls look like they put some effort into it. Not too much effort but, just enough.

ELAINE:

You shouldn't be doing makeup based on what a boy might think. You should do it because you want to.

SYLVIA:

Who's saying I don't want to? Look, the way I see it is- I'm not the one thats gonna be looking at my face all night. And anyway, its empowering to me to know that he thinks I look good. That's what *I* want. Honestly, it's not very femminist of you to be judging why I do my makeup.

ELAINE:

I'm not judging you- I am a feminist.

SYLVIA:

Okay.

ELAINE:



SYLVIA:

Well, its not very feminist of you to suggest I might want more makeup.

ELAINE:

Fine.

SYLVIA:

Fine.

(Tense silence.)

ELAINE:

Your makeup does look nice though.

SYLVIA:

Thanks, yours too. What shoes are you gonna wear?

ELAINE:

I just brought my sneakers so probably these.

SYLVIA:

Ya know my boots might look cute with that

ELAINE:

The ones with the little buckles? Weren't those your ...

(She doesn't know how to finish her sentence appropriately)

SYLVIA:

They're just shoes. They would match your outfit. Plus you told me before that you-

ELAINE:

Would gouge my eyes out for a chance to own a pair of shoes like that.

SYLVIA:

Right!

ELAINE:

It would be worth it.

(Pause)

Are you sure?

SYLVIA:

They're not doing any good in my closet collecting dust. I want you to wear them.



ELAINE:

You're so cool, I love you dude.

SYLVIA:

They're over there.

(They can be retrieved from off stage or maybe from a box under the chair Sylvia sat in for the hearing.)

ELAINE:

Duuuuuudddddeee! Wait, wait! I've gotta do a reveal! Cover your eyes! Close them!

SYLVIA:

Okay! Okay!

(Sylvia holds her hands over her eyes. Maybe Elaine helps her into position. The two laugh as Elaine slips off stage. Sylvia has not realized that Elaine is no longer beside her. When she finally lowers her hands-)

Elaine... Elaine?

*(She finds herself now at the party. Party music plays at an appropriate level. Elaine enters somewhere else- wearing **the** shoes- already present in the party. She is with Matthew. Time has skipped past Sylvia)*

VOICE OVER:

What was the atmosphere like at the gathering?

SYLVIA:

It was-

BOY:

(Laughter)

Yo- where the fuck is my juul?

SYLVIA:

A party. 7pm.

ELAINE:

(Motioning to her)

Sylvia! Sylvia, this is Kevin. He is a senior at Haverford.

KEVIN:



(Clearly trashed)

Sylvia! Sssssssssyllviaa. I like that. Soyur a sophomore, right?

ELAINE:

Junior.

KEVIN:

Cool. Do you wan a drink or sumthin?

SYLVIA:

No, I'm fine. Thank you, though.

(Kevin stares back at her with a confused expression)

ELAINE:

You can get her one of the raspberry beers if you want.

KEVIN:

Cool. Raz-in it up.

(He exits for the drink)

SYLVIA:

Dude, ?

ELAINE:

(Matthew is hanging over her shoulder. He is almost unaware of Sylvia's presence or he just doesn't care enough to be aware.)

C'mon, don't be so uptight? Dude, you don't have to drink it if you don't want.

SYLVIA:

Elaine, I think I wanna go home. This isn't- I don't know anyone here well enough.

ELAINE:

You know me?

SYLVIA:

You seem a little preoccupied.

ELAINE:

Well, you know Kevin now.

(Matthew is leading her off to another room by her hand)



SYLVIA:

Kevin? You want me to raz it up with Kevin?

ELAINE:

Dude, I don't know. Talk to him, or don't. It doesn't matter.

(They begin to exit but something draws her back.)

Shit, okay, I'm sorry. That came out wrong. Look, I just want you to have a good time, ya know? I'm having a good time! And Kevin seemed cool. Okay not cool but definitely not unbearable! Please, Sylvia? Just a bit longer?

SYLVIA:

... Fine. Sure, whatever. We can stay. Not long though!

ELAINE:

Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!! I owe you okay?

(She walks off again- To Matthew)

MATTHEW:

Nice shoes.

(Maybe he meant something by this- maybe he didn't It doesn't really matter. Either way, Elaine reacts.)

ELAINE:

Oh, no. I know. Right. So... weird. I don't know why I even wore them.

(Sylvia hears this. Elaine and Matthew exit.)

KEVIN:

(Reentering with the bottle)

Razzzzzzzzzzzzzzpberyyyy.

VOICE OVER:

Have you told us everything that you remember about the day leading up to that?

SYLVIA:

(Suddenly remembering the trial)

Yes, I think so. No- I mean, yes. Yes I have. That day was completely ordinary. Almost all of my days were mundane before then. Now, I mean, they are still ordinary but it's a new kind of ordinary. Anyway, Elaine was gone. Strung off somewhere with a boy that I was sure would discard of her in a week. It was okay, though, because she was happy for right now. Not her



leaving me, I mean. That wasn't cool. But she was my ride home so I kind of had to wait out her absence.

KEVIN:

You don't talk a lot do you?

SYLVIA:

I do. I mean, when I have something to talk about. If I don't have anything important to say I'd rather just keep my mouth shut than say something embarrassing.

(Feeling like she is talking too much)

You know how weird it can get when people just can't stop talking because they are trying to fill the silence? As if silence is a bad thing. You know, like- what was that line from 'The Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless mind'? "Constantly talking isn't necessarily communicating". I love that movie. Kate Winslet really has an artistic awakening.

KEVIN:

Uh-huh. So do you want a drink or sumin'?

SYLVIA:

Oh, you already got me the raspberry beer.

KEVIN:

Right.

VOICE OVER:

And you've described this as being near the country club, wherever this house was, is that right?

SYLVIA:

Yes. Next to the soccer field also. I could see them both down the road from the window on the right side of the house. My grandma works at the country club as a florist, so sometimes if I get out of practice early, I'll hang around the lobby while she is finishing her shift. A lot of the boys who were at the party have fathers that visited the country club often. I used to hide my face from them. I didn't want them to go home and tell their sons they "saw a girl from your school today.". I'd hate to be the subject of someone's conversation. Especially if it is about my awkward presence somewhere I am not welcome.



(Becoming aware of the party once again though still in a conversation with the trial. She is beginning to exist in one just as much as the other; she is sinking deeper into her memory.)

Oh god- I was just then realizing that when we went back to school on monday, I would again be condemned to conversations on my awkward presence. Kevin would be telling everyone:

KEVIN:

She was fucking weird. I don't know man, she just sat there and didn't say anything.

SYLVIA:

Or maybe he'll say:

KEVIN:

Yeah, I hit that.

SYLVIA:

I just never thought he'd be saying what he actually said:

KEVIN:

She's a lying bi-

(The sound of a gavel cuts him off)

VOICE OVER:

Ms. Fisher.

(Kevin, stares at Sylvia. She makes her way back to the table)

Have you told us everything that you remember about the day leading up to that?

SYLVIA:

Everything that I can remember.

VOICE OVER:

I'm sorry?



SYLVIA:

I have spent a lot of time trying to forget that night.

FEMALE VOICE OVER:

A polished liar can create a seamless story, but a trauma survivor cannot be expected to remember every painful detail.

SYLVIA:

I- I can try.

(Back to the party. Sylvia sits on a couch next to Kevin. He has placed himself there)

11pm. Kevin continued his um- advances.

FEMALE VOICE OVER:

The excuse offered by too many: just a high school incident. Boys will be boys.

KEVIN:

Yeah, If yu want, I could show you Star Wars sumetime. My mom is never really home so the house is pretty much always empty.

SYLVIA:

Oh, I've seen that movie already! "Help me, Obi- Wan Kenobi. You're my only hope!"

KEVIN:

Ohhh, cool. So are you into stuff like that?

SYLVIA:

Yeah, I guess so. Those movies, the 80's classics, defined my childhood. You know, like, 'Jaws' and 'Alien' and oh my god, 'Planet of the Apes'. I love that movie.

KEVIN:

Is your Dad really into them or something?

SYLVIA:

Oh, no. My dad isn't really into much of anything. I don't think I've ever seen him smile.



KEVIN:

(Joking)

Oh no, you're troubled.

SYLVIA:

I don't think I'm-

KEVIN:

No, I'm kidding. So who?

SYLVIA:

Who what?

ELAINE:

Who showed you the moviiees?

SYLVIA:

(The tone is much lighter between them.)

Why would it be impossible for me to have discovered and found interest in things all on my own?

KEVIN:

So true! Is yur family even into them like that orare yu a pioneer of shitty 80's movies.

SYLVIA:

You ask a lot of questions.

KEVIN:

I'm just tryna get ta know yu babey! Ya know, I think Iknow yur brother! Does he go to Haverford?

SYLVIA:

I don't have a brother.



KEVIN:

Oh... oh! Your mom is on the lunch staff! I knew I recognized yur eyes! Greeeeeen eyes.

SYLVIA:

(Pause, still light.)

I don't have one of those either.

(Pause)

A mom. I... have eyes.

KEVIN:

Oh, -. Shit, fuck, shit. I am sorry- dude

SYLVIA:

It's okay.

KEVIN:

I didn't know. I wouldn't have-

SYLVIA:

It's okay. She died when I was a baby so it didn't really- I never knew her.

FEMALE VOICE OVER:

The power of the uterus.

VOICE OVER:

Can you tell us what impact the events had on you?

SYLVIA:

The event? I try not to think about that one too I guess.

(She is stuck between both worlds once again- the trial and her memory of that night.)

My dad never really told me much- I don't think he liked to talk about it either. I don't really know how to explain it to people. When they ask, I say "I was just a baby" which is true, but I



don't say that I was what killed her. Maybe I'm afraid people will look differently at me because they don't know that my existence will always be stuck in the juxtaposition of my life and her death- one not possible without the theft of the other- and I feel *shame*.

(Pause)

Wow. I've never said that out loud before. Whenever the thought comes up I tend to bite then chew on my tongue and swallow it away. Digesting them further and further into my conscience until guilt begins to take over my body. It started in my toes, I lose my balance and I can hardly stand. Then it makes its way up- pouring into my stomach. Now spilling into my lungs and I am choking on thick, hot, guilt- I am drowning in what is eating me from the inside out but maybe I would be fine if I could talk to him.

(Pause)

Him. I think he blames me too. No, I know he does. He hates me. If he could have chosen, he would have taken her, he is just too afraid to say that. I am not your burden.

(Pause)

Do you remember the day I broke my foot? I was ten. It was the first time you took me hunting. The last time too. Maybe you thought that for once, just once, I could learn something useful. I could gain the discipline that I owed you as your daughter. You were so mad- I don't think I had ever seen you so mad.

KEVIN:

(Breaking his tableau; He is now her father: her manifestation.)

Sylvia Anne, stand here.

(He is unpacking a "hunting bag". Sylvia is taken off guard by his appearance as her father. She does not move)

Sylvia Anne, I will not repeat myself.

(With childhood fear, she obeys his command. KEVIN, pulling out a "gun"-)

This is a .458 winchester. I want you to hold it. No not like that. Sylvia Anne, Listen to me, follow my directions. You have to hold it-

(Restraining himself)



That's fine. Now look through this here. Close one eye- the eye outside of the sight, Sylvia Anne.

SYLVIA:

(She grasps the air where the gun should be, feeling its weight just as much as she did that day.)

We stayed there for a while. My father demanded I remained silent as to not disrupt the activity. I was frozen- I didn't blink, I didn't breath... until a rabbit softly jumped out of the woods and into the field before us.

KEVIN:

There, Sylvia Anne. Is the rabbit in your sight?

SYLVIA:

(Still speaking to the trial)

It was.

KEVIN:

Good. Now shoot.

SYLVIA:

This was my chance. My chance to finally make my father proud. All I had to do was shoot the rabbit.

(Pause)

I froze up. I hadn't realized before but in the time we had been waiting, my hands turned to stone and became one with the gun. I closed my eyes and prayed my whole body would follow. All stone so I could shatter. My dad would say something soon. I squeezed my eyes tighter and prayed harder.

KEVIN:

Sylvia Anne. Shoot.

SYLVIA:

Just do it, why can't you do it. Just shoot the rabbit and he will be happy. Shoot. Shoot. Shoot



KEVIN:

It is going to get away, shoot now.

SYLVIA:

Shoot. Shoot./ Shoot. Shoot. Shoot.

KEVIN:

Sylvia Anne!

(He grabs the gun from her hand- BANG. He shoots the rabbit. He looks back at her and she looks at the rabbit. When she finally meets his eyes and goes to speak but decides not too. He exits, she is broken.)

SYLVIA:

I am not troubled.

(Pause; Back to the trial)

I desperately wanted to make it up to him. While we were gathering our things to place back in the car, I tried to carry his ammo case by myself but it was heavier than I thought. My hands were sweaty and my arms were weak from the bugs that had been crawling through my stomach since the rabbit. I dropped the box on my left foot. I didn't even scream. The bugs inside of me drowned and fried in the acid inside of my stomach. I was numb. An ER visit concluded our night and left me in a cast for 2 month over a broken foot. Silence has been thick since that day.

FEMALE VOICE OVER:

The power of the female heart.

VOICE OVER:

Were you on any sort of medication?

SYLVIA:

For my foot?

VOICE OVER:

The night of *the incident*, Ms. Fisher.

(It is clear what incident he is referring to)



SYLVIA:

Oh, no. Definitely no.

VOICE OVER:

OK, please continue.

(Elaine enters from from offstage with her sleeve down, revealing her bra strap. She adjusts this upon her realization)

ELAINE:

Sylvia!

SYLVIA

11:30. It had been a few hours. The party was dead now.

ELAINE:

Do you think you could find another ride home? I wanna stay with Matthew longer.

SYLVIA:

Dude, what the hell?

ELAINE:

I'm sorry-

SYLVIA:

No, c'mon. We really should leave.

ELAINE:

Sylvia-

SYLVIA:

You lied. You said we would leave-

ELAINE:

I didn't lie! I just... adapted!



SYLVIA:

Adapted?

ELAINE:

Adapted! New events have come to light and I ... want to stay! I never do anything like this!
What if tonight is my only chance with him?

NICK:

(Nick enters TRASHED and sings a line from some overplayed pop song about “tonight”)

SYLVIA:

Dude, who’s gonna drive me home? My grandma would beat my ass if she knew I was at a party with boys. It’s getting late, we should seriously be going. We’ve been up since like 4 anyway, c’mon.

ELAINE:

Sylvia, I’m not tired and I wanna stay. You just don’t understand.

SYLVIA:

What don’t I understand?

ELAINE:

That when a boy asks you to stay a few more hours, you stay a few more hours.

SYLVIA:

Or you do what you want to and leave when you want to.

ELAINE:

Sylvia, c’mon.

SYLVIA:

Why wouldn't I be able to understand that?



ELAINE:

I am not doing this right now.

(Matthew enters from 'the room')

MATTHEW:

C'mon Elaine. Oh hey Sylvia, you're still here?

(Pause)

Cool.

ELAINE:

I'll be right back Matthew.

(He exits back into 'the room')

Dude.

SYLVIA:

Tell me. What wouldn't I understand?

ELAINE:

Sylvia, -

SYLVIA:

Why wouldn't I-

ELAINE:

Because you're a virgin! Jesus christ, Fisher. You are so difficult sometimes. There are just some things in life that girls like me get, and girls like you, don't. And that's not necessarily a bad thing. Look, I am going to go back into that room. Stay, leave, I don't care. Just figure it out yourself.

FEMALE VOICE OVER:

The power of the female voice.



(Kevin enters from offstage)

KEVIN:

(Clearly more intoxicated than previously)

Heyyy, partyy gurl. How yu doin?

SYLVIA:

Kevin, I'm really not in the mood.

KEVIN:

Inn the mood fur what?

(walking towards her)

Shhhhhh, babey gurl. Its alll rite.

(He steps face to face with her, she is too frozen with fear to move. After a tense moment)

I think I'm gonna go vomit in the closet. Toodaloo, space-ape-shark-girl.

(He exits into the back closet)

FEMALE VOICE OVER:

Sexual violence is a serious problem and one that largely goes unseen. In the United States it's estimated by the Centers for Disease Control one in three women and one in six men will experience some form of sexual violence in their lifetime.

VOICE OVER:

And then- Ms. Fisher?

(The door to 'the room' quietly opens.)

SYLVIA:

11:59pm.

(Soft music with an intense build begins to play. Sylvia is frozen, stuck between the two worlds yet again)



VOICEOVER:

Ms. Fisher, you do remember what happened, do you not?

SYLVIA:

I do. I do.

(Matthew enters from 'the room')

MATTHEW:

Hey, Sylvia.

FEMALE VOICE OVER:

According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, 60 percent of sexual assaults go unreported. In addition, when survivors do report their assaults, it's often years later due to the trauma they suffered and fearing their stories will not be believed.

MATTHEW:

Is this seat taken?

SYLVIA:

Where is Elaine?

MATTHEW:

Don't worry about Elaine.

SYLVIA:

What?

MATTHEW:

She fell asleep.

SYLVIA:

I told her that would happen.



(Elaine enters from offstage to reenact her first appearance in the play)

ELAINE:

Dude, stop stressing, You'll be fine. Sleep is for little bitches and time is nothing but a concept, grasshopper.

SYLVIA:

Maybe I should go wake her up and we can go home.

MATTHEW:

What's the rush?

SYLVIA:

Nothing, I just- it's getting late.

MATTHEW:

12 is late for you? You really don't know how to have a good time, do you? I can help you with that if you'd like-

(He makes an advance towards her)

SYLVIA:

Woah, what are you doing? I have to go home.

MATTHEW:

Lets just calm down, okay.

SYLVIA:

No, I'm sorry, I have to- Elaine, Elaine!

MATTHEW:

Didn't I just say she was asleep.



SYLVIA:

Matthew, stop-

MATTHEW:

Elaine fell asleep and I didn't get what I wanted. You're not going to leave me unsatisfied.

SYLVIA:

Matthew! Stop!

(Some kind of physical encounter takes place here. A slow uncomfortable struggle for power is ideal. The memory of Elaine speaks over this.)

ELAINE:

He is just so cool! God, I would have never thought a senior would even look at a junior. Sylvia, he has a car too! Did I tell you he lives in BelleVue? M. O. N. E. Y. Maybe he will introduce me to his family... is that too soon? Ugh! I am just so head over heels! You've gotta think this is so cool! You're happy for me, right Sylvia?

SYLVIA:

Stop!

MATTHEW:

Shhhh!

ELAINE:

Right Sylvia?

(By this point, Sylvia has broken free from Matthew and ran into a 'bathroom'. The two stand next to one another on either side of the door)

MATTHEW:

Come out, Sylvia. C'mon.

(He begins to laugh to himself)



Ready or not here I come.

VOICE OVER:

What is the strongest memory you have, the strongest memory of the incident, something that you cannot forget? Take whatever time you need.

SYLVIA:

Indelible in the hippocampus is the laughter, the laugh — the uproarious laughter- having fun at my expense.

MATTHEW:

C'mon Sylvia.

VOICE OVER:

You previously said that there was music coming from that room, is that correct?

SYLVIA:

(Trying to remember)

Yes. There had been music playing- he turned it up while I hid in the bathroom. He was dancing. And laughing. This was a joke to him.

VOICE OVER:

Was it loud?

SYLVIA:

Deafening. I could feel it in my bones. I thought it would break all of them. Each one of my bones- just crack right through my skin. I sat on the ground and placed my arms over my head and tried to wait for the destruction to go ahead and take me.

(Pause)

It never came though. Eventually he got tired and went to sleep on the couch. When I could finally hear my heartbeat, I got up and left. I walked home that night.

(Elaine and Matthew look at Sylvia for a moment before exiting.)



VOICE OVER:

Ms. Fisher, we are grateful that you came through it and that you shared your account with us and the American people. And I think you've provided important information. I'd like to thank you for your — meeting your civic duty.

SYLVIA:

That's all, its over?

VOICE OVER:

Your time is up. Mr. Georgston, please come forward.

(Matthew enters from off stage now in a presentable suit.)

Do you swear that the testimony that you're about to give before this committee will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MATTHEW:

I do.

VOICE OVER:

Tell us about your experience.

MATTHEW:

Of course. I would like to start by thanking the courtroom for coming out today, it truly means so very much to me. I will admit that while the aftermath of this event has caused me great grief, the comfort and kind words from strangers around the country who have kept up with the case have made everything worth it. Thank you. I think it would be notable to mention that the incoherent words you just heard from Ms. Fisher were all lies. I hope that I will be able to clarify the events for the courtroom and untangle the story Ms. Fisher has created. I am a victim. Ms. Fisher has powers unknown to godborn men. Sorcery that can only be from the devil himself. No one in the courtroom tonight has been blind the the stories that have been growing in numbers in the news. Those of satanic women who force their sexuality onto men, godborn men, in attempts to steal their souls, or to recruit them as sacrifice to their covens, or any of the many things witches would do with the men they destroy. Witches. They are living among us, just as they did in the trials of Salem. There has been a hellish resurrection of their spirits.



(The voices of the Voice over, Female Voice over, Elaine, and Kevin- both as himself and her father begin to insert themselves into Matthew speech. Notable lines that may have struck Sylvia. Ex: “You’re a virgin!” “She’s a lying b-” “Were you on any sort of medication?” “Sylvia Anne, shoot the rabbit!. The rabbit line should be the final closing sentence, echoed by the gun shot.)

(The music that had played in the beginning of the plays is heard once more. A spotlight is brought to Sylvia. She is looking into the audience as if she is looking into a mirror She has a bottle of witch hazel- either real or pantomimed. Throughout the beat she begins the process of washing her face and toning with the witch hazel.)

FEMALE VOICE OVER::

Witch hazel- from the genus Hamamelis.

MATTHEW:

I say with complete conviction that Ms. Fisher is among these women. I hope that the jury will be able to find a verdict to convict Ms. Fisher of her crimes against mankind because she *is* a witch.

FEMALE VOICE OVER:

Leaf, bark, and twigs. It’s origins dating back centuries.

MATTHEW:

She attempted to deceive me- to stray me from my honor and break my character.

(The pieces begin to overlap. The lines can run in anyway seen fit, though, the underlined words at the end should be said in unison.)

MATTHEW:

My character.

She wishes to use all of you.

To use all of you as pawns in

her twisted games of black magic.

FEMALE VOICE OVER:

Native American tribes were noted to have boiled the roots for medicinal and therapeutic healing.

Puritans adopted the



I have seen the witches-
seen what
Madness
they can create.

I was subject to this.
Good men and women of this country-

you must see through the web of lies
she has created.
None of it is true.

They want agony and hell at their fingertips.
Miss. Fisher and these women must
be punished by

DEATH.

I'm holding you in the light of God,
Ms. Fisher. Do you believe in God?
Thank you.

SYLVIA:

(Some kind of reenactment should take place alongside this monologue.)

They say that I am a witch. I can tell you that's not true but I think those words mean nothing at this point. They have their story, that's not going to change. They wanted to spark fear and they

technique years later-
propelling it into the product
we know today.

Commercially produced as a
remedy for cosmetic
ailments.

Its golden sprouts bloom in
the dead of winter.

Unforeseeable beauty in the
face of barren destitute

Life in the heart of frigid

DEATH.



needed someone to be their example. I don't know. All that matters anymore is that they think they know the truth- the court- everyone! They don't they don't know anything! I-

(Stopping herself)

I bite my tongue.

I didn't talk to Elaine for a long time after that night. I don't think she wanted to talk to me either. I racked my brain endlessly but I still don't know if she knew. I don't know what she thinks now. Matthew didn't want anything to do with her after that night. When she woke up, he handed her the shoes- my shoes- and told her to go. No explanation. I think she resents me for ruining her chances with him. Cold glances met me in the halls at school. I resent myself too. I left her there. My whole walk home, I wanted to turn back and wake her up and make her leave with me but I didn't. I just kept on walking. Maybe things would be different now if I had. I would have a friend at least. I could never muster the courage to tell her what happened before he told his story first.

I saw Matthew a month later at the country club. He was carrying in his father's leather golf bag. Our eyes met. I thought I would lose my lunch right there on his feet. But... his eyes. There was nothing there. It was like he had never met me. For a moment, I thought, maybe- just maybe- I dreamt all of this. And all of my nightmares were just extensions from a dark, twisted part of my brain. I was still some nothing girl and he had no idea who I was.

But I could tell soon enough by the way his eyes wouldn't let go of mine- that he knew. He leaned over to his father and whispered something quick. I watched as his father tightened brow turned to look shallowly at my face.

The next day, they came for me.

They think they know everything but the truth is, no one does. Their power is in our silence. And they know that so they have a hold on the throats of the people who scare them. They are scared of what they don't understand or doesn't fit into the world as they see it. The world that they have held power in for so long. Times are changing though. Always is. Sometimes it seems like for the worse but we are more than a few people in cages. We are a movement. And as much as they might like to, they can't control us. We exist in the shadows. They just can't see us yet. And that is okay. The time will come.

Our time will come.

I have my goodness now, God forbid they take it from me.