

S'LONELY

A short play by
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BIG HENRY and LITTLE HENRY sit across from each other, huddled close to a fire somewehre out in the middle of nature. They're dirty, tired, cold. Not just now, but always. They have a few belongings, maybe in small packs. Big Henry sits almost regal, self-satisfied.

Little Henry's curled up against the cold.

Hey, how come?
LITTLE

How come what?
BIG

You know what.
LITTLE

Things I seen.
BIG

Hm.
LITTLE

They sit for a while, warming their hands.

Sort of things?
LITTLE

All sorts.
BIG

Like what?
LITTLE

Don't wanna talk about it.
BIG

Hm.
LITTLE

They sit in silence again.

Don't mean I'm ashamed. I ain't. Done what I done.
BIG

Never said you was.
LITTLE

You never said, no. You was thinking.
BIG

Don't reckon I was.	LITTLE
Well I reckon.	BIG
	They sit in silence. Little huddles closer to the fire.
S'cold out.	LITTLE
Your sister, she done bad things.	BIG
I know, pa.	LITTLE
Unforgiveable. Can't ask me to forgive no unforgiveables.	BIG
I ain't, pa.	LITTLE
	A long beat.
S'lonely's all.	LITTLE
What you mean?	BIG
S'lonely.	LITTLE
I heard what you said. I'm asking what you mean?	BIG
Man got his needs, that's all.	LITTLE
Man got his hands too.	BIG
S'different.	LITTLE
Tis.	BIG

They sit in silence. Big Henry stares into the fire. Little stares off into the distance. He offers a small biscuit to Big Henry, who takes it, ravenous, but eating it slowly, to savor it.

LITTLE

Tell me about town.

BIG

S'bad place.

LITTLE

Tell me bout it.

BIG

Told your mama I wouldn't talk no such stuff.

LITTLE

Ma's not here.

BIG

No she ain't. She's up in heaven with the angels, looking down on us right now.

LITTLE

Right now?

BIG

Always.

LITTLE

Pretty boring.

BIG

What you know about the heavenly father? Bout his grand designs and the wants of the angels? Hm?

LITTLE

Naught but you told me. Sounds boring's all.

BIG

I don't know naught but she told me. She told me she'd be looking down on us. Watching us. Always.

They sit. Little watches Big eat. He looks off to some LIGHTS in the distance. A town.

LITTLE

Light's real bright over there.

BIG

Beacon of sin.

LITTLE

Seems brighter every night.

BIG
S'a wicked place, boy. You put it out of mind.

LITTLE
Pa? Was Sarah wicked?

BIG
By the end there, yes boy.

LITTLE
Is that why you done it?

BIG
Reckon so.

LITTLE
Gotta punish the wicked.

BIG
You know it.

LITTLE
Gotta punish em with splinters in their fingers?

BIG
Punish them however we can.

LITTLE
Rocks in their food?

BIG
If that's what the lord wants.

LITTLE
Chains wrapped around em? Carried out to the lake? Crying and pissing they selves? Gnashing they teeth til you throw em over?

BIG
S'the way of the lord.

LITTLE
They do that in town?

BIG
No, boy. They do not. And that's why they stay wicked. They ain't got the resolve. None of the resolve needed, you hear? You know what God asks of us, he asks a lot. He asks things, they seem too much sometime. And the wicked ones, the weak ones, they don't listen to his call. They say, "No, sir. I'm busy taking care of me, ain't got time for the heavenly father, to keep his land pure and punish the wicked, the vile, the evildoers as though they were Satan, the great devil, hisself." That's why we lives here, that's why they lives there. They's weak. But you and me, we gotta be strong.

I know, Pa. About being strong.

LITTLE

He watches Big Henry finish his biscuit.

Gimme another.

BIG

No sir.

LITTLE

Why not?

BIG

Only need one.

LITTLE

Only need one for what?

BIG

For you.

LITTLE

You trying to say something, you best say it, boy. And fast.

BIG

Sarah told me.

LITTLE

Told you what?

BIG

She's lonely.

LITTLE

She's dead, boy. Bottom of the lake.

BIG

Lonely down there in the cold water. All alone, just the fishes for company. They bites her nose, her toes. They nibbles, and it don't feel but right unpleasant.

LITTLE

Big looks terrified, but exhausted. He can't keep his eyes open.

BIG

Can't keep my eyes open.

LITTLE

Reckon not. Reckon they're closing for a long time now.

LITTLE

Little pulls some chains out of a bag.

BIG

Don't you do nothing.... Nothing....

LITTLE

I only doin' what I ought ta. Punish the evildoers. Like mama says. Like you says. Like Sarah says.

BIG

I ain't the evildoers. I'm your father.

LITTLE

Sh. You be quiet now. Don't you worry. Ain't lonely down there no more. You got Sarah keep you company.

He starts to wrap Big in chains.

LITTLE

If anyone'll be lonely, reckon it's me. Maybe I'll go to town. Maybe I'll punish the evildoers there. Yeah. I'll go to town. Punish the wicked. Bet it ain't lonely in town. Not like out here. Pa? You listening? You reckon it's lonely in town?

He shakes Big.

LITTLE

Aw, you're dead. Alright. Reckon I'll find out myself then.

LIGHTS OUT.