

## **THE REVELATION OF BOBBY PRITCHARD**

### **A play in one continuous act**

**Synopsis:** Driven by dreams of the late Bobby Pritchard, Marta returns to her home town of Boiling Springs after forty years away to disclose the truth about Bobby's death and to marry her partner Cynthia in the conservative church in which she grew up. Marta's journey back home and the secrets she reveals trigger a flood of memories which mingle and merge as her life flashes before us. Traditional values clash with non-traditional relationships in both funny and frightening ways as a family finds a way to move forward into a brighter present.

### **Characters**

**MARTA, a dance professor and former dancer, a woman in her 50's**

**CYN, Marta's wife, a psychologist, a woman in her 50's**

**HANK, Marta's brother, a business owner and church deacon, a man in his 40's**

**POSS, Hank's son, a star baseball player, a young man of 18**

**KATHY, Hank's employee and girlfriend, a woman in her 40's**

**MARY CHARLES, Kathy's daughter, a strong student and videogamer, a genderqueer person of 18**

**BOBBY PRITCHARD, a young man, 18, played by POSS or MARY CHARLES**

**MARTHA, a young woman, 18, played by POSS or MARY CHARLES**

**CLEM, Martha's father, played by HANK**

**MARGARET, Martha's mother, played by KATHY**

**BOOZER, Clem's friend, played by CYN**

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Originally produced by Iron Crow Theatre on March 13, 2015.

THE REVELATION OF BOBBY PRITCHARD premiered at Baltimore Theatre Project, produced by Iron Crow Theatre. It was directed by Steven J. Satta. The cast was as follows:

Marta.....	Julie Herber
Cyn/Boozer.....	Susan Porter
Mary Charles/Martha.....	Heather Peacock
Poss/Bobby.....	Sean Kelly
Hank/Clem.....	Dave LaSalle
Kathy/Margaret.....	Sarah Lynn Taylor

## The Revelation of Bobby Pritchard

*We enter a church.*

*MARY CHARLES and POSS might welcome us, hang simple decorations, arrange some flowers, organize hymnals, etc.*

*CYN and MARTA arrive and stand near the altar and begin a wordless exchange of vows. No one officiates.*

*HANK appears. The others notice him. They are surprised, and happily surprised, to see him. POSS is especially happy.*

*After some time with the wordless vows...*

**MARTA**

I do.

*A single gunshot.*

**MARY CHARLES**

Holy crap!

**POSS**

What the –

**CYN**

My God!

**MARTA**

Lord Jesus!

**HANK**

O, Heavenly Father...

**POSS**

Everybody get down!

**CYN**

You said this wouldn't happen! Bluster!

**MARY CHARLES**

Who's shooting at us?

**HANK**

There it is. 830 feet a second headed straight for us.

*We see a bullet.*

**MARTA**

Why does it look like it's barely moving?

**HANK**

Our minds are racing faster.

**MARTA**

Daddy always said "Know how to calculate your trajectory." Remember, Hank?

**HANK**

Can't remember that now.

**MARTA**

Our lives depend on your memory.

**HANK**

There are no real memories. Only reconstructions based on how you feel now.

**MARTA**

How do you feel now?

**HANK**

Done for.

**POSS**

Just get down!

**MARTA**

Daddy must have taught you about speeding bullets.

**HANK**

Lessons learned on speeding bullets are recalled differently when one is on its way.

**MARTA**

Is your life flashing, Brother? Mine sure as Hell is.

**HANK**

Galoshes. Galoshes and the snowy day.

**MARY CHARLES**

Where did it come from?

**MARTA**

I reckon that shot started on its way that fourth frigid February midnight revelation of Bobby Pritchard that finally woke me up.

*CYN and MARTA reenact an earlier moment. CYN "sleeps" and MARTA looks like she's waking from a bad dream.*

No! NOOOOOOOOOOOO!

**CYN**

Wake up! Marta, wake up!!

**MARTA**

NOOOOOOOOOO!

Oh.

**CYN**

Bobby again?

**MARTA**

He was meaner.

**CYN**

You've never said he was mean.

**MARTA**

He wasn't till now.

**CYN**

Were you still eighteen?

**MARTA**

He was. But I was right now.

**CYN**

That's new.

**MARTA**

He gave me an ultimatum, Cyn.

*The actor playing POSS (or maybe the actor playing MARY CHARLES) has now transformed into BOBBY PRITCHARD.*

**BOBBY**

Tell your brother.

**MARTA**

I can't tell –

**BOBBY**

Tell your brother what you saw.

**MARTA**

I don't even know him.

**BOBBY**

Water shrouds and river rocks and thorny bush and “Oh Lord, dear Lord” and “DO YOU REPENT YOUR SIN?” and thundersnow and lightning truth and (*singing*) “Go down seven times!”

**MARTA**

I told Cyn!

**BOBBY**

Tell Hank!

**MARTA**

It's been forty years!

**BOBBY**

And you don't have much longer.

*BOBBY is gone and transforms back to POSS (or MARY CHARLES).*

**CYN**

I hope he's not right about that.

**MARTA**

Makes two of us!

**CYN**

Did he tell you how much longer? Because we are not going to one of those high-downpayment retirement villages if you're gonna croak on me // after the first month

**MARTA**

Especially if we get the pricey two-bedroom, which you'll insist on if I keep this up.

**CYN**

I told you that lemon torte would have its revenge.

**MARTA**

If you wouldn'ta made it so good I wouldn'ta been tempted to eat so much.

**CYN**

You just need to listen to Bobby, sweets.

**MARTA**

Stop talking about him like he's a real deal.

**CYN**

He was real.

**MARTA**

Forty years ago!

**CYN**

He's been in our bedroom four nights this week.

**MARTA**

He's just a bad dream!

**CYN**

Eighteen year old boys from Boiling Springs are not welcome in our bedroom under any circumstances.

**MARTA**

I'll get help.

**CYN**

You've already got it.

**MARTA**

You can NOT treat your wife.

**CYN**

Memories are like dead bodies. You can drown them, but eventually they'll float. Traumatic amnesia, which, granted, you were a little old to have, or some global memory impairment that is just now reassociating // in the form of Bobby Pritchard

**MARTA**

Why is he making me tell now, I wonder?

**CYN**

Ask Bobby when you see him next.

**MARTA**

I don't believe in that ...whuddya call it...lucid dreaming?

**CYN**

The article got you re-electrifying long dormant neurons, stimulating sensorimotor impulses saying get your body back to Boiling Springs to say what you should have said forty years ago. For us. Now get cracking!

**MARTA**

But Hank was only three then.

**CYN**

He's not three now.

**MARTA**

Sounds like another ultimatum.

**CYN**

One ultimatum a night is enough, I think.

**MARTA**

You reckon I'm dying?

**CYN**

Nothing I can't fix with a pumpkin roll. Let's pick a weekend to go there.

**MARTA**

Dead bodies sink again, eventually. Once the blowflies and the maggots and the vultures eat their way through all the rotten flesh // the bones'll just sink to the –

**CYN**

Pick a weekend!

**MARTA**

Forty years!

**CYN**

And I hope we have forty more. But profound sleep deprivation is guaranteed to make that insuperable.



**MARTA**

I wish you spoke English.

**CYN**

*(in Southern)* But that dawg won't hunt!

**MARTA**

Bless your heart!

**CYN**

We'll plan our trip tomorrow at ice cream.

**MARTA**

This is the last thing I want to talk about at ice cream.

**CYN**

We're going to talk about it at ice cream.

**MARTA**

I thought one ultimatum a night was enough.

**CYN**

Ice cream is tomorrow. So look forward. Rocky road.

*HANK interrupts.*

**HANK**

I think that shot started on its way the day Poss got redunked. Kathy was there.

*KATHY is there as she, HANK and POSS reenact an earlier moment. They are waist-deep in a river.*

**HANK and KATHY**

*(singing)* Lead us down by your gentle river  
Wash our sins away, Oh Lord!  
Goodness flows down your blessed river  
Goodness knows no sin, Oh Lord.

**HANK**

Nice turn out, huh son?

Well friends, least the river ain't completely dried up yet, right? Although I can't recall ever having to walk out to the very middle. Little rain prayer won't hurt while we're at it. Lake's down twelve feet // since August

**KATHY**

It's past 3, Hank. I got the windows to clean.

**HANK**

And I do thank you all for coming and for your support today.

Dear Lord, we ask you today to take your servant Oren back into your fold. To lift him up on eagles' wings. And to accept his repentance.

Oren, do you repent your sin?

**POSS**

Yes, sir.

**HANK**

And do you accept the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ?

**POSS**

Yes, sir.

**HANK**

Then I baptize you, Oren, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

*HANK baptizes POSS in the river.*

Thanks, folks. We surely do appreciate it.

**KATHY**

And we got a winter special at the marina, so come on by.

That was real nice, Hank. Although Reverend Wheeler says "Holy Spirit", not "Holy Ghost."

*HANK leaves the river with POSS. KATHY is gone.*

**HANK**

How ya feel?

**POSS**

Cold.

**HANK**

Inside.

**POSS**

Same.

You tell your Mama // about this?  
**HANK**

I want her to come back!  
**POSS**

Blessing she missed this.  
**HANK**

Blessing she did.  
**POSS**

Whole thing is a blessing.  
**HANK**

Doesn't feel like it.  
**POSS**

For this son of mine was dead and is alive again. He was lost and now is found.  
**HANK**

Wish I'd never met David.  
**POSS**

Temptation is part of // growing up  
**HANK**

They cheer when the methheads get redunked, but get caught like I did and they stand there  
 stone-faced // because my sin  
**POSS**

That boy was a temptation like any other, no better no worse, and they oughtn't to cherry-pick  
 their sins and they all know it deep down.  
**HANK**

Thought being a pitcher with a decent hanging curve and an eighty mile an hour fastball might  
 count for something.  
**POSS**

You get to ninety this season, that'll shut 'em up.  
**HANK**

Shit smeared on my locker!  
**POSS**

**HANK**

Christ taught us how to bear up.

**POSS**

I prayed to Christ on this since I was nine. Gettin' redunked one Sunday? Right.

**HANK**

Then what else do we do?

**POSS**

The Pritchard Facility.

**HANK**

Drought's killing the business.

**POSS**

Lake hasn't dried up yet.

**HANK**

And without your Mother's income // there's no way I can afford -

**POSS**

I'll pay you back // this summer after -

**HANK**

We'll talk after the season.

**POSS**

I want to go now.

**HANK**

Recruiters coming in two weeks.

**POSS**

But if I suck.... Poor choice of words.

**HANK**

You got the best arm in the county.

**POSS**

It's not my arm that needs fixing! Look, they passed the plate in church so Kathy Haggard could pay for Mary to go there, // they can do the same

**HANK**

Mary Haggard is a whole 'nother story. She may well be beyond prayer for what she did, but you are most definitely not. You're gonna have to let the Lord handle this one, Oren.

**POSS**

Why am I not a huge embarrassment to you? Or am I, and you're just too good a man to show it?

**HANK**

Once we get dried off, let's have a catch. Some fishing, then? In what's left of Lake Love?

**POSS**

Gotta finish Great Expectations.

**HANK**

I could sure do with a catch this afternoon, Oren.

**POSS**

Please ask Reverend Wheeler to pass the plate for me next Sunday, Daddy. They'll fill it. Same ones who smeared my locker, probably.

*MARTA interrupts.*

**MARTA**

This all started a lot longer ago than that. You got to go way back, Hank. Back to Daddy. Back to Bobby. Back to me when I still had my H.

*POSS is gone. HANK transforms into his father, CLEM O'REGAN, who is there, forty years earlier, baptizing.*

**CLEM**

*(sings)* Go down by that river  
Go down seven times!  
Go down by that river  
Go down seven times!  
Hand of God gonna lead you down  
Hand of the Deacon won't let you drown!  
Go down by that glorious river  
Go down seven times!

*CLEM is gone, or maybe he's in the background. POSS and MARY CHARLES have transformed into BOBBY and MARTHA, who is MARTA, forty years ago. BOBBY has been beaten up.*

**BOBBY**

And on top of that, Martha? They smeared shit on my locker.

**MARTHA**

Assholes.

**BOBBY**

My nose got so swollen I couldn't even smell it though!

**MARTHA**

Figures they wore masks.

**BOBBY**

Smelled like Clinton Truth. You know. Hay and Old Spice. Whiff o' Harry Boozier.

**MARTHA**

Did they say anything?

**BOBBY**

"This fist taste as good as Michael Brooks?"

**MARTHA**

I think Clinton Truth has a thingading for Harry Boozier.

**BOBBY**

So far they have the good sense not to get caught.

**MARTHA**

How about we get caught?

**BOBBY**

Too late for that.

**MARTHA**

We tell them I turned you around. We'll go to the Spring semi-formal and slow dance. Even when everyone else is doing the Hustle. You're not going with Ella Fortney, right?

**BOBBY**

She dumped me as soon as she heard, of course.

**MARTA**

So we do some nice moves. Tango! Some sexy stuff. Your hands all over me.

**BOBBY**

Ella says, "I shoulda known all along. You dance too good."

**MARTHA**

OK. Then we tell them we found each other while praying together. You were so broken up after Ella dumped you that you asked me to join you in contemplation // so that you could heal

**BOBBY**

Don't lie about that.

**MARTHA**

I do sincerely pray for you each day for you.

**BOBBY**

To change?

**MARTHA**

To be smart. So let's both be smart. We dance. The way they want. Straight down the aisle.

**BOBBY**

They might fall for that.

**MARTHA**

Their prayers are answered! On both fronts.

**BOBBY**

You're lucky they don't have any idea about you.

**MARTA**

Girls who like to dance don't arouse suspicion. But I think Mama's starting to wonder. Not a bad life with me as your wife.

**BOBBY**

Not a real life.

**MARTHA**

But life. At least.

**BOBBY**

I think your father sent Clinton and Harry.

**MARTHA**

My Daddy's a preacher!

**BOBBY**

Hence the need for henchmen.

**MARTHA**

See, using words like "hence" ain't a smart choice.

**BOBBY**

You and me at the altar. Lotta head shakin'.

Lotta Hallelujah.

**MARTHA**

And after?

**BOBBY**

We know who we are.

**MARTHA**

Can't get caught.

**BOBBY**

We're married. Who's looking? Long as I do the cooking!

**MARTHA**

I imagine we wouldn't be the first ones.

**BOBBY**

Hardly. Hell, maybe Clinton's folks. Maybe Harry Boozer's. Seriously! You watch the way John Boozer gazes at Carl Truth at Fellowship luncheon when they put out the meatballs. God knows.

**MARTHA**

God knows.

**BOBBY**

Yes He does, Bobby Pritchard. Sure does.

**MARTHA**

*BOBBY sings a made up country tune and tries to get MARTHA to sing with him.*

**BOBBY**

*(sings)* God knows  
 How I'll ever get out from under  
 Your spell and the wonder-  
 Ful Hell that your draggin' me through.  
 God knows  
 How I'll free myself from the thunder  
 And lightning that you're  
 Frightening me with, you devilish you.

*MARTHA joins in.*

**MARTHA and BOBBY**

God knows



How I'm drowning each day  
 In a brimstony pool  
 Where you made me a fool for you.  
 God knows ...

**MARTHA**

I couldn't come up with any more.

**BOBBY**

We gotta finish it! We've only got three weeks until Loretta Lynn's // in Atlanta.

**MARTHA**

It's not like anyone's gonna//seriously listen to it.

**BOBBY**

Her manager's not going to give us five seconds if we don't have // a finished song.

**MARTHA**

How are we even gonna meet her manager // anyway?

**BOBBY**

I wrote to her agency and I said we were coming to the Atlanta show –

**MARTHA**

He don't know us from // a haystack

**BOBBY**

I sent // a picture

**MARTHA**

We can't even write down the music.

**BOBBY**

Which is why I've got to play it for him. Look, this is my best chance to get out of here!! Maybe my only chance. And let me tell you one thing, Martha O'Regan. We might fool them for a while, but do you really want to live like that for the next forty years?

**MARTHA**

We'll figure out the ending. Flash of inspiration.

**BOBBY**

Better. Your Daddy's looking to rebaptize me and it's a mighty cold river in February.

*CLEM's voice is heard, as he transforms back into HANK, and BOBBY and MARTA transform back into POSS and MARY CHARLES.*

**CLEM**

*(sings)* Go down by that river  
 Go down seven times!  
 Go down by that river  
 Go down seven times!  
 Hand of God gonna lead you down  
 Hand of the Deacon won't let you drown!

*A second gunshot. MARY CHARLES, POSS, CYN, MARTA and HANK are now frozen at the altar as before.*

**POSS**

Everybody get down!

**CYN**

You said this wouldn't happen! Bluster!

**MARY CHARLES**

Who's shooting at us?

**MARTA**

A second shot.

**HANK**

Traveling as slow as the first.

*We see a second bullet.*

**MARTA**

Maybe it's all the resistance. All the friction.

**HANK**

This church has sadly become a place of resistance and friction.

**MARY CHARLES**

Where did it come from?

**MARTA**

I think this shot started on its way at the Valentine's night revelation of Bobby Pritchard.

*MARTA and CYN reenact a scene from earlier. Again CYN sleeps and MARTA looks like she's waking from a bad dream.*

**MARTA**

No. NO. NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! NOOOOO! Oh. I'm sorry.

**CYN**

I was thinking you'd sleep through this one. You were singing there for a while.

**MARTA**

Singing? Oh. Not me. Bobby.

*BOBBY is there, with MARTA.*

**BOBBY**

When you go, you can't just leave it at Hank.

**MARTA**

Another ultimatum?

**BOBBY**

You've got to tell the whole town. The whole world! Interweb, twitface, linkpin, all of it!

**MARTA**

You really need to keep up. And what happens if I don't?

**BOBBY**

They're using my name. The Robert Pritchard Facility for Dejected, Rejected, Objected Subjected, Depressed, Repressed, Suppressed, Oppressed, Doubly Bubbly, Troubly, Struggly Youth!

**MARTA**

Just like Daddy said.

**BOBBY**

So the story goes his way for eternity? Waterwails and "Bobby struggled" and (*singing*) 'Hand of the Deacon // won't -

**MARTA**

You're not a friendly ghost.

**BOBBY**

You saw how I became one.

**MARTA**

They'll run me out of the place.

**BOBBY**

No they won't. They're more likely to crucify you. J/K as the kids say. I keep up.

I wouldn't be a bit surprised.

**MARTA**

You're the only one left who knows.

**BOBBY**

And I'm old as gold, thank you for reminding me.

**MARTA**

Hey, remember this one? (*sings*) God knows

**BOBBY**

Please, no.

**MARTA**

(*sings*) How I'll ever get out from under  
Your spell and the wonder-  
ful Hell that your draggin' me through.

**BOBBY**

You remember. Sure you do! Sing along! SING ALONG!! We got FIVE MINUTES!

(*singing louder and louder*) God knows  
How I'll free myself from the thunder  
And lightning that you're  
Frightening me with, you devilish you.

No. NO! NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

**MARTA**

Tell them all!

**BOBBY**

And if I don't?

**MARTHA**

I'll see you in your dreams.

**BOBBY**

*BOBBY is gone.*

Catchy tune.

**CYN**

**MARTA**

Hopefully the singing was better than the screaming.

**CYN**

Pick a weekend.

**MARTA**

You're so busy. All those seasonal affective disorders.

**CYN**

I have not seen a patient on a weekend in the twenty-odd years you have known me.

**MARTA**

It's at least two planes and a rental car.

**CYN**

Sweets...Mr. Lee just left his chocolate Valentine hearts in our mailbox. I desperately want him to find the both of us here next Valentine's Day.

**MARTA**

It was Valentine's Day when I left Boiling Springs. Three days after Bobby. The river must have been so cold.

**CYN**

Tomorrow at ice cream we pick a weekend.

**MARTA**

April is nice. Azaleas and all.

*HANK interrupts.*

**HANK**

I think that shot came from The Pritchard Facility for Struggling Youth.

*POSS and MARY CHARLES are there. MARY CHARLES now speaks in a British accent.*

**MARY CHARLES**

I say, why so downcast, old chap? Chin, chin! I say, // why so downcast old –

**POSS**

Give it a rest.

**MARY CHARLES**

You've no cause to fret so. Surely if I can keep a stiff upper biscuit you should be able to do the same. You'll find it's all quite pleasant after the initial rounds of probing psychiatric evaluation. // "Why do you make these choices?"

**POSS**

What is your problem?

**MARY CHARLES**

I can't for the life of me figure out how I, M. Charles Haggard, 7 Belgrave Square, London, SW1, am living in the Pritchard Facility for Struggling Youth in // Boiling Springs...what state is this?

**POSS**

You're not British, OK?! And you're not nuts, either, so quit that.

**MARY CHARLES**

And perhaps you can tell me why they have issued me this rather revolting SKIRT to wear?

**POSS**

You're a girl!

**MARY CHARLES**

So unstylish! Knee-length khaki ORLON! It's quite beyond the dark side of the –

*KATHY and HANK are there. HANK has a sports bag with POSS' baseball glove. KATHY has a box.*

Mummy! How delightful you've come! Give us a kiss! Mwah, mwah! We've been having ever so much fun! I'm off to the cricket pitch at half past Michaelmas, but there's just time // for a spot of tea

**KATHY**

Mary.

**MARY CHARLES**

You'll absolutely love the scones they serve here, and the clotted creamsickles are just // divine.

**KATHY**

Mary!

**MARY CHARLES**

But you simply must give them your Yorkshire pudding recipe, Mummy! They can't make a Yorkshire pudding WORTH SHIT!

**HANK**

That's enough, Mary Haggard! You talk to your mother like a normal person.

**MARY CHARLES**

So now I'm a normal person?

**KATHY**

Mary.

**MARY CHARLES**

Charles!

**KATHY**

MARY!

**MARY CHARLES**

CHARLES!

**KATHY**

I could have killed your father for that middle name.

**MARY CHARLES**

Ah, but it was the gin what done 'im in!

**KATHY**

I drove all this way to see you, // the least

**MARY CHARLES**

Congratulations on getting your license back.

**HANK**

I was happy to drive your Mama.

**MARY CHARLES**

Yes, well what with your own flesh and spawn here, too, Deacon. We're thriving, as you//can see.

**HANK**

How are you, son?

**MARY CHARLES**

Aw shucks, I'm fine, Pop. I'd much rather be here addressing my disgusting flaws than back home being star pitcher for the Bruins –

**HANK**

That's enough out of you!

**MARY CHARLES**

Easy, Deacon.

**KATHY**

Makes me sick to see you like this.

**MARY CHARLES**

Then why look if I make you ill?

**KATHY**

I'm sick for you, not because of you.

**MARY CHARLES**

Must've made you near puke when Reverend Wheeler passed the plate for us. "Surely you can open up your wallets and give up your booze bucks to allow these children the chance to have the bourgeois life that you all enjoy! Dig deep, people!!"

**HANK**

People gave 'cause they want the best for you.

**POSS**

You're not even trying.

**MARY CHARLES**

Mummy, I've been waiting all week for you to pinch my new skirt. Do you like it? DO YOU LIKE MY SKIRT?

**KATHY**

It's real nice.

**MARY CHARLES**

How about you, Deacon? Isn't it grand? Come on and pinch it. It stretches real good!

**KATHY**

I wrote sixty-five handwritten thank-you notes to people who care enough about // you to

**MARY CHARLES**

"Let's dig deep so they can put Mary Haggard in a goddamn stretchy orlon khaki skirt so she can spread her legs real easy and take ALL your gentlemen's donations!"

**POSS**

Don't talk to my father // like that.

*MARY CHARLES rips off the skirt.*



**MARY CHARLES**

The next person who forces me to wear one of these things had better be prepared to die.

*MARY CHARLES is gone.*

**KATHY**

Told you she wouldn't try. Talk to her, will you, Oren? I think she respects you.

*KATHY is gone.*

**POSS**

I'm trying, Daddy.

**HANK**

Brought a glove. There a place we can have a catch?

**POSS**

They say you're supposed to hug me more. That I'm actually craving undelivered paternal masculine touch.

**HANK**

I told them I rebaptized you.

**POSS**

You're only a Deacon.

**HANK**

If you want me to get Reverend Wheeler...

**POSS**

He's been here. Twice. Mary spat on him. Don't know if he's coming back.

So I guess we should hug.

**HANK**

A hug? Could have done that for free.

**POSS**

There's a lot of hugging here. Oddly large amounts. Doctor Parker's the worst. He smells like cheese and he's got a gut.

**HANK**

And that's supposed to help?

**POSS**

Robert Pritchard was deprived of paternal masculine touch.

*A hug. HANK and POSS are gone. KATHY and MARY CHARLES are there.*

**KATHY**

Reverend Wheeler buried your Daddy for free.

**MARY CHARLES**

Ah, what a kind and humble old vicar he is.

**KATHY**

You don't spit at anyone!

**MARY CHARLES**

He prayed for my sanity!

**KATHY**

After what you did, so do I. Here. I brought you these.

*MARY CHARLES opens the box and takes out a girly-frilly Easter hat.*

**MARY CHARLES**

You promised you'd watch // the video!

**KATHY**

You don't look like those girls. You could tell just by looking at them // there was something wrong with them.

**MARY CHARLES**

People, not girls.

**KATHY**

You put any of those girls in an Easter hat and they'd look ridiculous, whereas you'd look // so lovely

**MARY CHARLES**

I'd feel ridiculous.

**KATHY**

You used to love nothing better.

You completely missed what else is in the box.

*MARY CHARLES pulls out a handheld gaming device.*

Completely against the rules, of course. But now you can kill all your dragons or warlocks or whatever's on there if that makes you happy. And I knew they wouldn't look under the hat.

They say I'm to hug you more. I thought I hugged you a lot.

*A hug.*

**MARY CHARLES**

Just let me come home with you. Please. All I hear is how I'm wrong.

**KATHY**

We paid for the full month.

*MARY CHARLES throws the gaming device.*

Least you could do is apologize to Reverend Wheeler for what you did. Like a bullet right through me.

*MARY CHARLES is gone. KATHY plays a game on MARY CHARLES' gaming device and sings a hymn.*

*(sings)* The waters of Bethesda's pool  
Were to the outward eye as clear  
And to the outward touch as cool  
Before the Visitant drew near.

*During this, MARTA interrupts.*

**MARTA**

It didn't start that day.

**HANK**

But the next day...

*We're now at HANK'S marina; KATHY's still playing the game.*

**HANK**

Mama loved that hymn. Although I doubt she ever sang it while playing Zombie Invasion.

**KATHY**

Doctor says it's an acceptable compulsion. And I finished the invoices. Wish there were more. Ben Connor came by. Bought a filter he didn't need. So that was nice.

**HANK**

If I had a dime for every time some neighbor did a mercy purchase...well, I guess I do!

**KATHY**

And Sally Marshall's trying to convince her cousins in Michigan to come for a long weekend.

**HANK**

Bless her.

**KATHY**

That's all you. Thank you for driving yesterday.

**HANK**

She'll come around. They both will.

**KATHY**

I used to wish for peace and quiet in the house. After two weeks of spending the night alone I know what they mean by "careful what you wish for."

**HANK**

I never wished for it. Never.

**KATHY**

Thank God for the church. Tuesday's hymnal dusting. Six wipes on each side. That's a good hour and a half. Wednesday's window night. Two hours at least. Six wipes on each pane. From Gabriel to Balthazar, the Nativity window's thirty minutes alone. But Monday's vacuuming. Six times down the aisle's still only twenty minutes or so and then what do I do? What then?

I made a lasagna. As thanks for yesterday. I'd love it if you'd stay when you drop me off home. And don't tell me you have a lot of work to do.

**HANK**

It's just...Pamela. If she calls.

**KATHY**

When's the last time she called? When's the last time she did anything for you?

**HANK**

How about we swing by and pick it up and take it to my place. My car in your driveway and all...

*HANK and KATHY kiss.*

Yes, I do believe that was Mama's favorite hymn.

*MARTA interrupts.*

**MARTA**

It was Mama's favorite. She always sang it when she sewed.

*KATHY transforms into MARGARET, HANK's mother. She is now sewing a wedding dress but singing the same hymn. HANK watches her.*

**MARGARET**

*(sings)* A glimpse of glories far more bright  
Than earth can give is mirrored there  
And perfect purity and light  
The presence of its God declared.

Oh my goodness! It's snowing! Martha! Get Hank! It's snowing!

*MARTHA is there.*

**MARTHA**

Snow! Real snow!

**MARGARET**

Get Hank's galoshes!

**MARTHA and HANK**

Martha leaves.

**MARGARET and HANK**

Mama stays. Mama gets angry. Mama gets sad. Mama leaves.

*MARGARET is gone.*

**MARTHA and HANK**

Martha comes back with the galoshes. Martha sings some made up tune. *(singing)* "Drowning each day...I'm drowning each day..."

**HANK**

What happened next??

**MARTHA and HANK**

Six clicks. Click click click click click click...just like Daddy's –

*A third gunshot. MARY CHARLES, POSS, CYN, MARTA and HANK are frozen at the altar as before.*

**POSS**

Everybody get down!

**CYN**

You said this wouldn't happen! Bluster!

**MARY CHARLES**

Who's shooting at us?

**MARTA**

A third shot.

*We see a third bullet.*

Dear Lord, if we get out of this I will never ever leave clothes on the floor again and I will stop all electronics at 10 p.m. and I will stop pouring delivery boys the fine wine.

**HANK**

Remember I was here for my son.

**MARTA**

Remember there's no such thing anymore as a true memory?

**HANK**

Then my son will have the first one!

**MARTA**

Hank, I never in a million years meant for this to happen.

**HANK**

These shots would have been fired eventually.

**MARY CHARLES**

Where did it come from?

**MARTA**

I think that shot started on its way from my early March online message.

*MARTA and CYN and HANK and KATHY reenact online moments that took place in their different homes.*

**MARTA**

Dear Hank. Or are you Henry now? I found you on the Internet. Henry O'Regan Boating and Watersports. How many others could there be, right? I know this'll hit you like a hot shot. I'm your sister Martha. And even though it's been forever, I'm hoping you'll remember me.

**CYN**

Not hoping. Needing. I need you to remember me.

**MARTA**

You can't say that in Southern.

**HANK**

Martha. Bless your heart.

**KATHY**

Maybe she thinks your Mama left you some money.

**MARTA**

There's something I need to tell you.

**CYN**

About our father.

**MARTA**

When we get there.

**CYN**

About our father!

**MARTA**

About Daddy.

**HANK**

He's twenty years gone.

**MARTA**

Oh, I know. Mama wrote me a birthday card every year.

**KATHY**

Made us some chili for when we get back.

**MARTA**

I missed her card this year. Did she...

**HANK**

We all miss her.

**MARTA**

I figured. Last year's handwriting looked like Daddy stumbling up the drive on the way home from McCaffrey's.

I don't recall my father ever drinking.

**HANK**

Mama did say he stopped after I left. And she kept me up to date about you, your son.

**MARTA**

We best be on the road.

**KATHY**

Minute.

**HANK**

The Facility closes to visitors at 5:30.

**KATHY**

This is a real stressful time for our family.

**HANK**

I'm your sister.

**MARTA**

For my family.

**HANK**

I don't mean to cause you any distress.

**MARTA**

There is no statute of limitations on this!

**CYN**

We'll be there just after Easter.

**MARTA**

I thank God for you every second, Hank O'Regan.

**KATHY**

You got family?

**HANK**

My wife.

**MARTA**

**HANK**



**KATHY**

But if we don't get going!

**HANK**

They just renovated the motel. Here's the link.

I'd best be going.

**MARTA**

This was our worst ice cream ever.

**CYN**

My fudge ripple was divine.

*MARY CHARLES interrupts.*

**MARY CHARLES**

No. The third shot came from the third week in The Pritchard Facility for Struggling Youth.

*MARY CHARLES and POSS are there.*

**MARY CHARLES**

*(sings)* And did those feet in ancient times  
Walk upon England's mountains green.  
And was the holy lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

What kind of a name is Oren?

**POSS**

What kind of a name is Mary Charles?

**MARY CHARLES**

Prescient. Evolving. Oren's just –

**POSS**

Team calls me Spice.

**MARY CHARLES**

'Cause they all think you're cool hot?

**POSS**

My name's Oren O'Regan. Now call my name like it's written on the roster.

**MARY CHARLES**

O'Regan, O.

**POSS**

The apostrophe always gets left out. Say it again.

**MARY CHARLES**

Oregan, O. Oh. Ha ha.

**POSS**

What's with the British boy aristocrat act?

**MARY CHARLES**

What's with the straight jock act?

**POSS**

I am a jock.

**MARY CHARLES**

And I'm a boy. And a girl. Both at once. And neither ever. Like Schrodinger's cat – one hundred percent alive and one hundred percent dead at the same time.

**POSS**

I didn't understand that in Physics, and I don't understand what you're talking // about now.

**MARY CHARLES**

I have a way out.

**POSS**

I don't want out.

**MARY CHARLES**

We pretend to have sex and let them catch us. "We're cured! We're cured!" Spy camera's right behind us, you know.

**POSS**

They don't buy it when people try that.

**MARY CHARLES**

Because they zoom in. And the boy isn't hard. But if they see how stiff you are when I'm sucking you off...

**POSS**

There's only two weeks left.

**MARY CHARLES**

Next week they make me walk around like I'm pregnant so I can feel the fulfillment of a divinely-filled uterus. God knows what they're gonna make you do. And I miss Physics. So... you pretend I'm your hot and eye-easy Calhoun Falls shortstop.

**POSS**

I am gonna beat the crap outta you, boy, girl, shim, sheman, whatever // you are -

**MARY CHARLES**

Don't you make fun of me, God damn it!

**POSS**

Don't take the Lord's name // in vain like that!

**MARY CHARLES**

Do you believe there are things God means for us to not understand?

**POSS**

Yes, physics.

**MARY CHARLES**

Be serious! Do you believe there are things God means for us to not understand?

**POSS**

Yes.

**MARY CHARLES**

Then I am one of them. And so are you. What's that longhair shortstop's name? David? How come he's not here?

**POSS**

His parents are hippies from Atlanta. Moved out here to be off the grid.

**MARY CHARLES**

I hope he's on the grid enough to have sexted you so you can get it up when we make out.

**POSS**

Um, they took our phones?

**MARY CHARLES**

Oh, so you did have some sexy pixels!

**POSS**

Whatever.

**MARY CHARLES**

And wait...you honestly gave them your real phone? See, I was smart enough to bring along my circa 2010 flip phone. "Oh yeah, sure, take it if you must. But I REALLY need it back." Idiots.

**POSS**

Does it not bother you that you're wasting church money? Especially after what you did.

**MARY CHARLES**

If they were serious they'd feed us hormones and ecstasy. Hey, what if I showed you my tits?

**POSS**

My Daddy says he thinks you're gonna drive your Mama crazy.

**MARY CHARLES**

Look at these. 'Stead of prayer sessions and hugs from Daddy they ought to prescribe an hour or two a day with these babies.

**POSS**

Stop.

**MARY CHARLES**

Touch therapy. Full immersion. Guard on camera duty is jerking off right now. What about you? Don't you want to get hard from a nice soft pair like mine?? You want to want these. Even if you don't want 'em now, you want to want these, right? Right? RIGHT??

**POSS**

RIGHT!

**MARY CHARLES**

Then have at 'em! Go to town! Get to know the pleasures of soft female fleshiness. Show the world how much you like 'em, Spice man! There we go. Now let me get to what I'm supposed to want! Let me see that Spicy stick! Point it towards the camera and show 'em how you're cured!

*MARY CHARLES pulls down POSS's pants.*

**POSS**

I don't lie!!

**MARY CHARLES**

Yes you do.

Pull up your pants.

**POSS**

It's a family name. Oren. Buried middle name for most. Not for me.

**MARY CHARLES**

Spice works.

**POSS**

A man can't be called Spice.

**MARY CHARLES**

Time to pick your own name.

**POSS**

They forgot the apostrophe in O'Regan here, too. On my door, on my charts, on my freakin' uniform. Freakin' therapist calls me Oregon, like the state. "Time for reimaging and desensitization, Oregon." "Time for recite the story of Robert Pritchard, Oregon." It's O, apostrophe, R, E, G, A, N. O APOSTROPHE!! He says, "Why are you flipping out about an apostrophe?" "Cause it's a huge part of who I am! You can't just ignore it! APOSTROPHE!!"

**MARY CHARLES**

Call yourself Apostrophe then. Make them acknowledge.

**POSS**

Poss.

Poss.

**MARY CHARLES**

Hey, Poss.

**POSS**

Hey, Marycharles.

**MARY CHARLES**

I'm thinking "Marychuck". Southern and all.

**POSS**

Hey y'all. This is my friend Marychuck! She's awesome. Oops.

**MARY CHARLES**

They. They're awesome. That'll do until I invent more satisfactory pronouns.

Schrodinger was uneasy with the wave-particle duality of quantum theory. To prove its absurdity he imagines a cat is trapped in a box with a decaying radioactive particle and a cyanide flask. If the atom does decay, the cyanide is released and the cat dies. But if the atom doesn't decay, the cat lives. Quantum theory says the cat can be both alive and dead at the same time.

**POSS**

I still don't get it.

**MARY CHARLES**

Schrodinger was hung up on duality. Didn't think two states could co-exist.

**POSS**

I still don't get it.

**MARY CHARLES**

Either do I. Which is why I don't want to miss any more Physics.

**POSS**

Why'd you poop on the church lawn?

**MARY CHARLES**

Because I had to go.

**POSS**

There are bathrooms.

**MARY CHARLES**

And I went down the hall and I looked at the icons on the two doors and I saw the choice that lay before me. And I struggled, as always, with a forced choice that does not reflect the way I feel. And I refused to choose.

**POSS**

Couldn't you have waited 'til you got home after the service?

**MARY CHARLES**

Couldn't you have waited till you were sure you were alone before you started kissing on the other team's shortstop?

**POSS**

Can I use your phone?

**MARY CHARLES**

They catch you texting your boyfriend –

**POSS**

I can smell Doctor Parker a hundred feet away.

**MARY CHARLES**

You wanna pray or something?

**POSS**

Don't make fun.

**MARY CHARLES**

I'm not. It's the one part of here I like.

**POSS**

What do you pray for?

**MARY CHARLES**

To be 100 percent alive when I get out of the box. And for somebody who understands.

**MARY CHARLES and POSS**

*(singing)* Lead us down by your gentle river  
Wash our sins away, Oh Lord!  
Goodness flows down your blessed river  
Goodness knows no sin –

*KATHY and HANK are there with a chess pie.*

**KATHY**

Don't let us stop you! We just brought you this. You sound real pretty...Mary Charles.

*Better hugs. MARTA interrupts.*

**MARTA**

Why do some people think there are choices when there aren't choices? Mama knew.

*KATHY and HANK transform into MARGARET and CLEM. MARGARET hands off the chess pie and sews a wedding dress.*

**MARGARET**

Four chess pies. That'll have to do it. No time with this dress to finish.

**CLEM**

I could throw one together for you.

**MARGARET**

Clem O'Regan, the last thing I need is you in my kitchen.

**CLEM**

Better'n me sewin' that dress. It's real pretty, Margaret.

**MARGARET**

I'm worried it's gettin' too frilly. Good thing it's gotta be done in two days or it might be all lace and no Martha.

**CLEM**

She'll stand out. Don't worry.

**MARGARET**

Gotta leave myself time tomorrow to take in George's tux or Bobby'll be swimming in it.  
Drowning in it // he's so

**CLEM**

Told you not to let them run you ragged.

**MARGARET**

Well, Clem, what do you expect with such short notice?!!! I do apologize.

**CLEM**

Long engagements just leave time for the Devil to plant second thoughts.

**MARGARET**

They ought to at least look pretty.

**CLEM**

Taking Bobby down to the river tomorrow.

**MARGARET**

Awful cold snap.

**CLEM**

No choice but to do it.

**MARGARET**

There's always a choice, isn't there?

**CLEM**

And some choices are bad.

**MARGARET**

Grandma Kate always said, "an inconvenient truth always beats a pretty // lie in the long run

**CLEM**

Truth is I've never seen Martha so fired up. Boy's gonna do right by her. If any woman could set a man straight it'd be Martha.

**MARGARET**

I don't know how they're gonna survive. That Bobby is thin as a pin and Martha can't cook enough to fatten him up and neither of 'em knows a thing // about how to take care of



**CLEM**

You make sure you take some time so you can be your prettiest. Lotta eyes on you Saturday.

River gonna be like ice bullets.

*MARGARET sews and sings.*

**MARGARET**

A glimpse of glories far more bright  
Than earth can give is mirrored there  
And perfect purity and light  
The presence of its God declared.

*A fourth gunshot. MARY CHARLES, POSS, CYN, MARTA and HANK are frozen at the altar as before.*

**POSS**

Everybody get down!

**CYN**

You said this wouldn't happen! Bluster!

**MARY CHARLES**

Who's shooting at us?

**HANK**

A fourth shot. Nothing more to say.

*We see a fourth bullet.*

**MARY CHARLES**

Where did it come from?

**MARTA**

This shot started on its way the night of the final revelation of Bobby Pritchard.

*MARTA and CYN reenact their first night in the Boiling Springs Motel. CYN "sleeps", and BOBBY is there.*

**BOBBY**

Welcome back to Boiling Springs. Good lookin' motel, huh?

**MARTA**

Please don't make me scream. If I wake Cyn up again she might take off and not look back.

**BOBBY**

You scream, I scream, who's she going to eat ice cream with every afternoon at 4:30?

**MARTA**

It doesn't taste so good when you're up at 4:30 a.m. and can't get back to sleep 'cause your heart's pounding from being freaked out by a screamin' dreamin' madwoman //who's remembering her –

**BOBBY**

Then don't scream. Sing.

**MARTA**

Not again!

**BOBBY**

*(sings)* God knows  
How I'm drowning each day  
In a brimstony pool  
Where you made me a fool for you.  
God knows ...

I know you finished it that night but I can't remember how it ended.

**MARTA**

I don't remember either. And even if I did, I'd probably remember the song all wrong.

**BOBBY**

I think you remember a lot. Tap dancing at Sunday School and mint chocolate chip at McGraw's and the smell of my mother's peach cobbler and I think you remember enough to // tell your brother and this town -

**MARTA**

We shoulda left that night. If I'd come five minutes earlier, we'da been off to Atlanta // and met with Loretta Lynn's manager -

**BOBBY**

He'd have laughed in our faces.

**MARTA**

It would have been a first step.

**BOBBY**

You took the first step and a whole lot of others for both of us. And now you're finally back.

**MARTA**

Telling Hank tomorrow. Then going to the place with your name where they claim you died of shame.

**BOBBY**

You've got to take one final step for me.

**MARTA**

One at a time with the demands, please! Or at least no more than two!

**BOBBY**

You were only sixteen hours from your wedding. From our wedding. But it never happened.

**MARTA**

I was the one willing to go through with it!

**BOBBY**

I never lied in church.

Remember the stained glass window.

**MARTA**

There were a lot of // stained glass windows –

**POSS**

The one with the Nativity scene.

**MARTA**

I don't remem...Oh. Right after your service...they're cartin' you down the aisle and I look in the stained glass window with the Nativity Scene to make sure my hair is OK.

**BOBBY**

Can't figure that. You never cared about your hair.

**MARTA**

It matters to me that I look good when we bury you. And when I look, I see Gabriel and the manger and the Virgin Mary...Balthazar...but I don't see my own reflection.

*CLEM is there. MARTHA is there.*

**CLEM**

You coming, Martha? I said, you coming?

**MARTHA**

I prefer to ride with the Pritchards. If they'll have me.

Suit yourself.

**CLEM**

*CLEM and MARTHA are gone.*

I had forgotten that.

**MARTA**

Get married while you're here.

**BOBBY**

Me and Cyn are already married.

**MARTA**

I was watching. Not the same as getting married in Boiling Springs.

**BOBBY**

From the way the motel clerk looked at us I'd say we'd have an underwhelming reception.

**MARTA**

And get married in the church.

**BOBBY**

We got married in a church. One that likes us.

**MARTA**

You loved our church. Get married there. Where we almost got married.

**BOBBY**

You are the funniest man alive, Bobby Pritchard!

**MARTA**

How many truths have you told in Boiling Springs?

**BOBBY**

No you're not. You're the funniest man dead!

**MARTA**

How many truths, Martha?

**BOBBY**

You never told a lie?

**MARTA**

**BOBBY**

Told my mother I just had to go see Loretta Lynn because I had such a big ol' crush on her. Told Ella Fortney how much I liked it when she stuck my hand up her dress at the semi-formal. Told Michael Brooks I wasn't no queer while we were putting our pants back on.

**MARTA**

Why confess your lies to me now?

**BOBBY**

I told the truth once.

**MARTA**

I was there.

**BOBBY**

One more time than you ever told the truth in Boiling Springs.

**MARTA**

I am telling Hank tomorrow.

**BOBBY**

You're older than me.

**MARTA**

And I am going to the place that's misusing your name after that.

**BOBBY**

That's two. You're way more than three times older than me.

**MARTA**

Barely!

**BOBBY**

Eighteen times three is –

**MARTA**

I don't need to copy your math homework anymore! And they will never let that happen.

**BOBBY**

Tell the Goddamn truth!

**MARTA**

I never heard you swear.

**BOBBY**

I've never been this angry.

**MARTA**

Cyn says you're my brain telling me things.

**BOBBY**

Then your brain's never been this angry.

**MARTA**

Why not?

**BOBBY**

Because it's just waking up.

**MARTA**

When will you go away?

**BOBBY**

On the way out, in the recessional, you take a look in that same window and see your reflection. Will you do that for me?

**MARTA**

If I don't?

**BOBBY**

Do that for me. Then I'll be gone.

*BOBBY is gone.*

**MARTA**

Cyn? Wake up. He was here.

**CYN**

I didn't hear you scream.

**MARTA**

There's something else we gotta do when we're here. We gotta get married.

**CYN**

We're married, sweets.

**MARTA**

In the church. Their church. My church.

**CYN**

Shall we do a little cost-benefit analysis?

*MARY CHARLES interrupts.*

**MARY CHARLES**

No. That shot started on my mother's next to last visit to the Pritchard Facility.

*KATHY is there with a box.*

**KATHY**

Thank you for apologizing to Reverend Wheeler. Even if you just texted him, it was still nice.

**MARY CHARLES**

I'm not trying to hurt people. That's a big chess pie.

**KATHY**

Now before you go getting' upset, they say you have wear this when you graduate next week.

*MARY CHARLES opens the box; it's a dress, maybe the same one MARGARET was sewing for MARTHA.*

They won't let you leave unless you have on a white dress. Facility rules.

**MARY CHARLES**

Then I'll just have to stay.

**KATHY**

I found it in Miss Margaret's things. I always thought you liked her.

**MARY CHARLES**

She never gave me a hard time about my hair, at least.

**KATHY**

Dress is their rules, not mine. Take it off as soon as we're in the car, I don't care. I just want you home.

**MARY CHARLES**

I'm not trying to drive you crazy.

**KATHY**

I know you're not trying.

**MARY CHARLES**

Mary...Mary is gone. Dress or not.

**KATHY**

What were you praying for last time I was here?

**MARY CHARLES**

Someone to understand.

**KATHY**

Do you like praying? Or do you do it just 'cause.

**MARY CHARLES**

It makes me feel better.

**KATHY**

Glad it's workin' for you.

*HANK interrupts.*

**HANK**

That shot started the day Marta and Cyn showed up at my house.

*MARTA, CYN, KATHY and HANK reenact a scene  
in HANK's home.*

**MARTA**

I don't suppose McGraw's is still there. We have an ice cream party every afternoon at 4:30.

**CYN**

Just a little.

**MARTA**

It's our thing.

**KATHY**

How sweet.

**MARTA**

I used to take Hank to McGraw's. Do you remember that?

**HANK**

McGraw's is gone.

**KATHY**

They got a nice selection at the Shop'n'Save.

**MARTA**

Well, we shall definitely have to check that out.



**HANK**

Noticed your email is Marta instead of Martha.

**MARTA**

Name got printed wrong in a program once. I liked “Marta”. Sounds more like a dancer anyway.

**CYN**

I thought it was Martha, too, when I met her. It was after one of her performances and I said, “Martha, you make beautiful lines in space,” and she said

**MARTA**

“No, it’s Marta. My parents couldn’t afford the “H”.

**KATHY**

Your parents did the best they could!

**HANK**

Please...

**KATHY**

Your Mama never got over you running away.

**CYN**

How could Marta not leave?

**MARTA**

I’m glad she had Hank here.

**KATHY**

She had me, too.

**MARTA**

Mama and I stayed in touch best as we could. I sent her programs from my performances. Even joked about losing the “H” on my way out of Boiling Springs.

**KATHY**

Hank doesn’t even remember you.

**HANK**

I remember one thing.

**MARTA**

What do you remember?

**HANK**

Galoshes.

Your Mama didn't leave money.

**KATHY**

That's not why we're here.

**CYN**

This is a hard patch for Hank. His wife's run out // on him

**KATHY**

They don't need to know that.

**HANK**

Oh, I thought you were // Pamela

**MARTA**

Kathy's just helping out.

**HANK**

I work for Hank at the watersports. I brought over baked ziti when Pamela left.

**KATHY**

I'm sorry.

**MARTA**

And we're both active in the church.

**KATHY**

So was I back then.

**MARTA**

I take care of it. Mondays I vacuum, Tuesdays I dust the hymnals, // Wednesdays I clean the

**KATHY**

They don't need to // know all this.

**HANK**

My, I'm sure Mama rests easy knowing her chores continue to be carefully performed. Hank, can I meet your son?

**MARTA**

Oren is...away for a while.

**HANK**

Not that we're not delighted, but why are you here?

**KATHY**

**CYN**

This is about your father. And it's not easy for Marta to be here. If you want to blame someone, blame me. I insisted she come. If it were up to her -

**KATHY**

She'd leave it lay where Jesus flang it.

**MARTA**

Good lord, you knew my Mama.

**KATHY**

Miss Margaret was good to me.

**CYN**

Marta has no choice in this.

**KATHY**

Sounds like whatever it is you want it more than her.

**MARTA**

It has been forty years.

**KATHY**

Then why bring it up now.

**CYN**

Maybe if we left Marta and Hank alone -

**MARTA**

We should just go.

**KATHY**

It was just lovely meeting you.

**CYN**

We are not going back now!

**KATHY**

We should all stay in touch. Are you on any of those // Internet things?

**MARTA**

Cyn, there's no point.

**KATHY**

That's a name. Cyn.

**CYN**

Bobby Pritchard in our bedroom.

**HANK**

Bobby Pritchard? Mama said you ran away 'cause of Bobby Pritchard. Never made sense. (*eyeing CYN*) Now I get it.

**MARTA**

I never told Mama about Cyn. Never told her about me. I wrote Mama I left 'cause I was a free spirit and she wrote back "Free spirits can't live in the slave states" which I thought was very odd but was her way of telling me she understood me.

**HANK**

What does any of this have to do with Daddy?

**MARTA**

Do you remember that day it really snowed? It snowed so much one afternoon.

**HANK**

The day it snowed.

**MARTA**

I helped you with your galoshes.

**HANK**

I don't recall.

**MARTA**

I took your picture. Maybe if you // can dig it out

**KATHY**

Why are we reminiscing about precipitation?

**CYN**

Sweets...just say it.

**MARTA**

Later that night, after you were long asleep, I snuck out of the house and went over to Bobby Pritchard's.

*BOBBY and MARTHA are there.*

**BOBBY**

Your folks know you're here?

**MARTHA**

Mama's dog tired from sewing my dress and Daddy's out at McCaffrey's.

**BOBBY**

My mother's a light sleeper.

**MARTHA**

Oh, Hell, we'll tell 'em we couldn't wait, that's how hot to trot we are for each other. Hey, I think I finished the song.

**BOBBY**

Seriously?

**MARTHA**

And I didn't want to wait until tomorrow night. We probably should hold off on the singing tomorrow night. Your mama ain't gonna expect to hear guitar chords coming out of this room.

**BOBBY**

She's going to stay over at John and LaVerne Boozer's. "Y'all need your privacy!"

**MARTHA**

*(sings)* God knows  
How I'm drowning each day  
In a brimstony pool  
Where you made me a fool for you.  
God knows  
That if you are my sin  
Then I take it all in and I gladly say I do! You devilish you.  
There, it's finished.

**BOBBY**

I can't do it. I won't do it.

**MARTHA**

You have to. We have to.

**BOBBY**

I won't lie like that.

**MARTHA**

I don't care!

**BOBBY**

I do!

**MARTHA**

You said “I do” pretty good just then.

**BOBBY**

I like it in the song. Let’s go to Atlanta. Tonight. One chance. Five minutes with Loretta Lynn’s manager. We’re free.

**MARTHA**

Atlanta’s no better.

**BOBBY**

It’s just the first step.

**MARTHA**

My things.

**BOBBY**

There’s things in Atlanta.

**MARTHA**

My Mama.

**BOBBY**

Miss Margaret loves the truth.

**MARTHA**

Our wedding wouldn’t be a lie. Love, honor, cherish, ‘til death us do part?

*CLEM is there, and CYN has transformed into CLEM’s buddy BOOZER.*

**CLEM and BOOZER**

*(singing)* Go down by that river  
Go down seven times!  
Go down by that river  
Go down seven times!

**MARTA**

Then Daddy was there. With a drinking buddy. I hid under Bobby’s bed.

**CLEM**

Bobby, Bobby, Bobby. Time to get yourself cleansed.

*MARTHA hides. CLEM and BOOZER take BOBBY to “the river”. MARTHA follows.*

**CLEM and BOOZER**

*(singing)* Hand of God gonna lead you down  
 Hand of the Deacon won't let you drown!  
 Go down by that glorious river  
 Go down seven times!

**MARTA**

I followed them down to the river.

**CLEM**

You cold, Bobby?

**BOBBY**

No sir.

**CLEM**

Hell, even I got cold feet night before I got married. But you a pure boy, right?

**BOOZER**

Let's just get on with it, Clem. I'm freezin' my ass off here.

**CLEM**

Easy, Boozer. This a sacred moment. The moment when Bobby Pritchard renounces his sin and agrees to live a life devoted to the Lord.

**BOOZER**

You said it wouldn't take five minutes.

**CLEM**

You'll be back on your barstool in less than ten.

**BOOZER**

Just start it, for Chrissake.

**CLEM**

Guess we better 'fore you ladies get yourselves all overwrought. Hold him, Boozer. Oh Lord, dear Lord, please take your servant Robert into your fold. Show him the way! Robert, do you now repent your sin?

**BOOZER**

Come on, Bobby, just say it.

**CLEM**

I say once again, Robert, do you now repent your sin?

**BOOZER**

Aw, Jesus Christ, kid, don't keep us here all fuckin' night!

**CLEM**

I say for the third time, Robert Pritchard, do you now repent your sin and accept the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ?

**BOBBY**

I accept the teachings of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**CLEM**

And do you repent your sin?

**BOBBY**

I do not feel –

**CLEM**

Do you repent your sin??!!

**BOBBY**

I do not –

**BOOZER**

Jesus, Bobby! Just say it!

**CLEM**

Do you repent your sin??!!!!

**BOBBY**

NO!

**MARTA**

NO!

**MARTHA**

NO!

**CLEM**

Oh Lord, dear Lord, please take your servant Robert into your fold. Show him the way! I baptize you, Robert, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

*CLEM forces BOBBY into the river. There is darkness and an enormous storm, then silence. Lights rise on CLEM at an altar. MARGARET has an envelope full of money.*



**CLEM**

Lord, we ask you to accept this troubled soul and give him peace. Let's not forget Bobby Pritchard. Let's make sure no young man feels the need to take his own life because he is struggling with demons he cannot subdue.

You coming, Martha? I said, you coming?

**MARTHA**

I prefer to ride with the Pritchards. If they'll have me.

**CLEM**

Suit yourself.

*CLEM is gone.*

**MARGARET**

Martha? I made supper. I thought it was a real nice service. He looked real handsome.

**MARTHA**

Mama? Today at church...I was checking my hair in the stained glass, and...

**MARGARET**

You haven't eaten for three days!

**MARTHA**

Mama, Daddy...

**MARGARET**

Wasn't he great? You know what he told me? He's gonna personally raise money for something to really honor Bobby. He doesn't know what yet, but something really great so that Bobby Pritchard lives on forever.

**MARTHA**

Mama, Daddy...

**MARGARET**

We already got over two thousand dollars just from passing the plate today.

**MARTHA**

Down by the river. In the river. Mama, // I saw -

**MARGARET**

It was so much money I was afraid to leave it in the church. Look at it all, Martha.

*MARGARET hands MARTHA the money.*

**MARTHA**

Look at all that. I'll...take it to the bank if you think that's a good idea.

**MARGARET**

You do that, Martha. That would be the best thing, I think. The best for all concerned.

*MARTHA is gone. MARGARET, CLEM and BOOZER transform back to KATHY, HANK and CYN.*

**HANK**

My father was a good man. He tried to help a troubled boy, and that boy drowned himself. And then his daughter stole from the collection plate and ran away.

**MARTA**

Mama wanted me to have that money but couldn't find another way.

**KATHY**

Miss Margaret never forgot that.

**CYN**

It was that money that kept Marta from being the next one killed.

**MARTA**

Hush, Cyn, I never thought that.

**KATHY**

That's way over the top.

**HANK**

To her credit, Mama was never angry.

**KATHY**

She talked about the money her very last day!

**HANK**

And she talked about her chess pie and Grandma Kate's icebox cookies and the way Daddy dribbled in bed. Look, Daddy worked on the Pritchard Facility the rest of his life. Cheap vacations // used cars

**KATHY**

He kept his promise.

**HANK**

John Boozer left a helluva lot in his will and that finally got it opened.

**CYN**

We read about that online.

**MARTA**

John Boozer. That's who that was. He was there that night.

**HANK**

And he was mightily affected, too.

**CYN**

I'm sure he was.

**HANK**

As anyone would be who had watched a boy drown himself. Daddy told that story a hundred times. Nothing new here, sister.

**MARTA**

Daddy killed Bobby.

**HANK**

**KATHY**

You weren't in the river with them.

**CYN**

Were you even born?

**KATHY**

It's a scientific fact that there are no such things as real memories. Our brain recreates images from scratch every time we conjure them up. We remember what we want to remember. And how we want.

**CYN**

I'm a psychologist.

**KATHY**

This was on the Science Channel.

**MARTA**

I hate saying this!

**KATHY**

Then why say it?

**CYN**

Some things have to be said.

**KATHY**

And what business is this of yours?

**CYN**

We share a bed.

**KATHY**

Well. Y'all have a wonderful evening. It has just been so lovely to meet you.

*KATHY is gone.*

**HANK**

I believe you should leave now.

**CYN**

How else could he have told the story?

**MARTA**

It isn't fair teams anymore.

*CYN is gone.*

**HANK**

That's not the father I remember.

**MARTA**

Then I'm glad of that.

**HANK**

Why wait till now to spring this on me?

**MARTA**

You'd think I was crazy.

**HANK**

I already do.

**MARTA**

That place can't continue to misuse Bobby's name, saying he drowned for shame. That horrible place. Place of disgrace!

**HANK**

My son is in that place.

**MARTA**

Then I will get to meet him after all.

**HANK**

Don't you dare tell him // what you just told me

**MARTA**

I have no choice!

**HANK**

My Daddy was a good man! Thank you for the visit.

**MARTA**

That day...you said you remembered galoshes. Remember it was snowing and // I helped you -

**HANK**

No.

**MARTA**

I helped you.

**HANK**

I don't recall.

**MARTA**

You must. Please.

*MARTA is gone. MARGARET is there, sewing the wedding dress.*

**MARGARET**

*(sings)* A glimpse of glories far more bright  
Than earth can give is mirrored there  
And perfect purity and light  
The presence of its God declared.

Oh my goodness! It's snowing! Martha! Get Hank! It's snowing!

*MARTHA is there.*

**MARTHA**

Snow! Real snow!

**MARGARET**

Get Hank's galoshes!

**MARTHA and HANK**

Martha leaves.

**MARGARET and HANK**

Mama stays.

**HANK**

Daddy's there.

**MARGARET and HANK**

Mama gets angry.

**HANK**

Daddy yells. Daddy rages.

**MARGARET and HANK**

Mama gets sad.

**HANK**

Daddy says "Not in my house. Not ever in my house."

**MARGARET and HANK**

Mama cries.

**HANK**

I cry.

**MARGARET and HANK**

Mama leaves.

*MARGARET is gone.*

**MARTHA and HANK**

Martha comes back with the galoshes. "Drowning each day...I'm drowning each day... I'm drowning each day" "Little H. Stop your snivelin', Little H." Six clicks. Click click click click click click...just like Daddy's –

*A fifth gunshot. MARY CHARLES, POSS, CYN, MARTA and HANK are frozen at the altar as before.*

**POSS**

Everybody get down!

**CYN**

You said this wouldn't happen! Bluster!

**MARY CHARLES**

Who's shooting at us?

*We see a fifth bullet.*

**MARTA**

We know. Five shots. One for each of us.

**CYN**

If I hadn't called her stupid.

**HANK**

If I hadn't said Poss could go with David.

**MARY CHARLES**

If I hadn't torn off the dress.

**POSS**

If I hadn't read David's text.

**MARTA**

If I hadn't interrupted Poss.

*We are in the Pritchard Facility on "Graduation Day". MARY CHARLES wears the dress.*

**POSS**

*(mocking the speech he gave that day)* We are gathered here today, our last day at the Robert Pritchard Facility, to pay our last respects to the unwanted feelings of // desire and abnormality

**MARY CHARLES**

That's not how you read it. You sounded like you almost believed it.

**POSS**

*(more earnestly)* We are gathered here today, our last day at the Robert Pritchard Facility, to pay our last respects to the unwanted feelings of desire and abnormality that have possessed us until now, that have paralyzed and shamed us. We will bury them and not let them suck us under like they did Robert Pritchard.

That's when you interrupted.

**MARTA**

*(quietly)* Bobby Pritchard was not ashamed. Bobby Pritchard knew who he was and that God loved him. And Bobby Pritchard was murdered.

**CYN**

You screamed it!

**MARTA**

*(loudly)* Bobby Pritchard was not ashamed. Bobby Pritchard knew who he was and that God loved him. And Bobby Pritchard was murdered. I'm sorry. But an inconvenient truth always beats a pretty lie in the long run.

**HANK**

*(quietly)* I told you to keep your // mouth shut

**MARTA**

You were furious with me!

**HANK**

*(loudly)* I told you to keep your mouth shut about that!!

**POSS**

That's a Grandma Margaret line. Who are you?

**MARTA**

And I introduced myself to you. And I introduced my wife.

**MARY CHARLES**

And my mother objected loudly to your use of the word "wife".

**CYN**

It's the proper term, Mrs. Haggard. We are legally married.

**MARY CHARLES**

That's not all you said.

**CYN**

It's the proper term, Mrs. Haggard. We are legally married, you stupid woman.

Whereupon I proceeded to describe in great detail to the crowd in the facility the ridiculous and dangerous practices their children had been subjected to, aversion treatments, forced erotification of others, discredited psychoanalytic maneuvers. Whereupon I was dragged from the room by Security.



**MARTA**

Whereupon, with Security otherwise engaged, I told the true story of Bobby's last hours to a surprisingly attentive audience.

**POSS**

Whereupon the crowd left, quietly. And I realized all those prayers had worked out.

**MARY CHARLES**

Whereupon I ripped off the dress. Whereupon my mother left in a state I had never seen her in before. Not even her.

**POSS**

Whereupon you got a text from David for me, and you showed it to me. I smiled. For the first time since I got caught with David.

**HANK**

Whereupon I said, "Let's go home, Oren. I paid your coach special to come work with you tomorrow to get your arm in shape. Lotta season left."

**POSS**

Whereupon I said, "I've got plans with David tomorrow. And it's Poss."

**HANK**

Whereupon I accepted my son's smile, and I accepted what was before me.

**MARY CHARLES**

Whereupon I posted Marta's story on every online social medium I could find.

**POSS**

Whereupon Aunt Marta and I were alone.

**MARTA**

I took a memory from you today. Of your grandfather. I am sorry.

**POSS**

I never knew him.

**MARTA**

But I took something.

**POSS**

You called her your wife like it was easy to say. Is it easy where you are?

**MARTA**

Easier.

**POSS**

Guess I'll have to go there.

**MARTA**

You might be able to stay here.

**POSS**

Right.

**MARTA**

Bobby Pritchard wants me to do one more thing so that someday you might be able to stay here. For which I need your help. And for which I might get killed.

I do believe that was my dress I never wore.

*(sings)* A glimpse of glories far more bright  
Than earth can give is mirrored there  
And perfect purity and light  
The presence of its God declared.

*MARGARET is there.*

**MARGARET**

Dear Martha,

The card from up north was real pretty. We're all fine. I told Hank you went away to school. He's stopped asking.

I won't lie to you. Daddy is still mad.

I miss you.

I realize it will cost a lot to come back, even for a visit. So I do not expect you to. You are a free spirit, and free spirits can't live in the slave states.

No rain to speak of for months. I wonder how the river can keep going when there's no rain. People say our river has been there since creation and will flow to eternity. It is a sign of God's love for us that our river flows, no matter what.

I'm glad you said you feel safe where you are. That's the best news I could hope for.

*A sixth gunshot. MARY CHARLES, POSS, CYN, MARTA and HANK are frozen at the altar as before.*

**POSS**

Everybody get down!

**CYN**

You said this wouldn't happen! Bluster!

**MARY CHARLES**

Who's shooting at us?

**MARTA**

A sixth shot.

*No new bullet is seen, however.*

**HANK**

I don't see it. I heard it, but I don't see it.

**MARY CHARLES**

Where did it come from?

**MARTA**

That shot started on its way the day I made my final demand.

*MARTA and CYN are there with HANK and KATHY in HANK's home.*

**HANK**

Unlock the church and open it to you for your wedding? Stand at the altar while you and her... Are you that crazy?

**MARTA**

I once thought maybe I was. Now I think this is the best thing I will ever do.

**KATHY**

*(reading from a phone/device)*

"Mary Haggard is obviously very sick."

**HANK**

How do you know what you saw?!! It was dark, you were hiding in the bushes!

**MARTA**

I saw what I saw! I think...

**HANK**

You think?

**MARTA**

I know!

**KATHY**

*(reading)*

“Posting a lunatic lady’s lies. And after we passed the plate to fix her!”

**HANK**

How do you know?

**MARTA**

Bobby told me!

**HANK**

My God you are insane.

**MARTA**

I remember that day! I know what I felt! I know it as well as I know anything!

**KATHY**

Here’s a good one. “The First Amendment does NOT give you the right to make stuff up. Even on the Internet.”

**CYN**

Maybe this is a way to atone for what happened.

**HANK**

Not even Daddy at his blind rage drunkest would have drowned // a kid who was

**MARTA**

All right. Let’s just say Bobby did drown himself!

Should he have had to?

**HANK**

**HANK**

**HANK**

Kathy, would you get us some tea, please?

**KATHY**

Oh. Certainly, Hank. Certainly.

*KATHY is gone.*

**CYN**

Do I leave now, too? I don't speak Southern.

**MARTA**

No, you stay. And now Hank tells us what he's really thinking. Hank?

**HANK**

Why her? No offense.

**MARTA**

Cyn?

**HANK**

She's full of abruption, as Mama would say.

**MARTA**

She bakes me pumpkin rolls for no reason.

**HANK**

Aren't you and her already married?

**CYN**

Please don't talk about me like I am not here.

**MARTA**

Didn't you get married in the church you were raised in?

**HANK**

First you tell me some story about Daddy, then you get Mary posting that crap online...what in God's name possessed you to think that I would ever not only unlock the church but stand up there with the two of you and...and...

**MARTA**

If Mama were here I think she would tell you to do it.

**HANK**

**HANK**

What life will I have left here if I do this for you? You will go back up north to Chardonnay and chintz and I will stay here and be...I don't even want to think // about what will happen

**MARTA**

I think you will be a hero.

**HANK**

I think I will be crucified.

**MARTA**

To the kids in that place, probably to a lot of scared adults.

**CYN**

To your son.

**MARTA**

Brother, I've had years to reflect on my last moment in that church. And I do not believe God wants that to be my last moment in that church.

*MARTHA is there.*

**MARTHA**

I prefer to ride with the Pritchards. If they'll have me.

*MARTHA is gone.*

**MARTA**

And chintz? Chintz?

**KATHY**

*(offstage)*

Die! Die you motherfuckers!

**HANK**

I don't have a choice.

**MARTA**

Then we'll have to do it just outside. Close as possible. Public property.

**HANK**

Then God bless you with that. And watch where you step.

**KATHY**

*(offstage)*

Why the hell are there zombies on Level 2? There aren't supposed to be zombies until Level 4!

**MARTA**

I do believe Mama will be present.

**KATHY**

*(offstage)*

WHAT THE FUCK IS THE GOING ON HERE????????!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**HANK**

Kathy, come say goodbye to our guests.

*KATHY is there.*

**KATHY**

Well it's been so nice to have you over.

**CYN**

Before we leave, we wanted to give you this. It's for the church. I think this should cover it.

*CYN holds out an envelope.*

**KATHY**

Cover what?

**CYN**

The money Marta took. That you said she stole.

**KATHY**

Huh.

**CYN**

I believe that should pay it back. With interest.

**HANK**

The full-court press.

**CYN**

I beg your pardon?

**HANK**

Look at all that. I guess I ought to take it right to the bank. Well, I've seen quite enough for one evening. Good night, ladies.

*HANK is gone.*

**MARTA**

Hank –

Let's go.

**KATHY**

One minute? No, just you, Miz...

**CYN**

Mrs. Wallace-O'Regan. But you can certainly call me Cyn.

**KATHY**

One minute of your time.

**MARTA**

Suit yourself.

*MARTA is gone.*

**CYN**

Whereupon I should have left, too. Whereupon my staying set those shots // in motion

**KATHY**

You must think I'm a troglodyte.

**CYN**

I really don't...

**KATHY**

It means someone who's old-fashioned, out-of-touch.

**CYN**

I'm aware of the definition.

**KATHY**

Course you are. Just as you are aware that it's a scientific fact that the amygdalas are larger in people who have Conservative beliefs.

**CYN**

They are more prone to fear of difference.

**KATHY**

We are. It is how we are born. We have no choice in the matter. And no amount of rational discourse will ever change the fact that when you two refer to sleeping in bed together it makes my intestines recoil and squirm. My amygdala activates my vagus nerve which sends waves of peristalsis through my duodenum causing their normal forward contractions to reverse until I empty their contents onto my right-wing linoleum tiling.

**CYN**

Bless your heart.



**KATHY**

You learn fast. I have learned about the brain because of my own struggles with...I clean the sanctuary. As Miss Margaret did. But when I clean I need to vacuum six times, polish six times, wipe each stained glass window six times...and I strive to understand why.

And I have learned because I want to help Mary.

Who is smart and who was perfect.

But who now feels she is a not a girl.

You are a psychologist.

Hank could drive you over to my home to see her. To talk to her.

**CYN**

There's nothing wrong with Mary Charles.

**KATHY**

Six minutes with her and you will see that she is desperately confused // and in serious need of

**CYN**

She needs for you to show some open-minded understanding // and to recognize

**KATHY**

She defecated on the church lawn!

**CYN**

Just give Hank the cash.

**KATHY**

I'm scared to death of her.

**CYN**

You will give Hank the cash.

**KATHY**

Please. If you could just take a few moments to talk to her, to help her see that she // needs help

**CYN**

Then use it to pay someone else who wants to brainwash her.

**KATHY**

Thank you so much.

Wait. Why did Mary do what she did on the church lawn?

**CYN**

Because it was the only choice they felt they had.

I'm no gamer, Mrs. Haggard. But the thing about Zombies? You can't kill them. You just have to learn to live with them.

Whereupon I left.

*CYN is gone. HANK is there.*

**HANK**

Whereupon I came back.

Two thousand was a lot of money back then. But if she thinks she can buy her way in // to stand up at

**KATHY**

It's a scientific fact that giving to others releases dopamine, giving the giver a feeling of pleasure. Why we put money in the plate each week. Same burst of pleasure you get from sex or Jack or meth or cheesecake or blowing a zombie's head off. Your brain gives you the same reward for doing something nice for someone else.

Maybe they just wanted to feel good.

I asked that Cyn to talk to Mary. Likely as a blizzard in Boiling Springs.

There's another facility in Marshalltown. I hear it's much better.

**HANK**

Let it go, Kath.

**KATHY**

It's different techniques, I asked. No hugging. Well, some, but not as much.

**HANK**

I said, let it go.

**KATHY**

This would almost cover two weeks.

**HANK**

You've got to be kidding.

**KATHY**

I prayed on this.

**HANK**

Are you listening to // yourself, Kathy?

**KATHY**

That Cyn practically told me to take it!

**HANK**

I will put that in the safe right now.

**KATHY**

Don't you see, Hank? It's a perfect circle! The original stolen money was from donors who wanted to help people like Bobby. And now God has returned it so it can help people like Mary.

**HANK**

Let it go!

**KATHY**

And Oren.

**HANK**

Give me the money.

**KATHY**

Hank, I gotta tell you something. You letting him keep on seeing that David boy? I'm not gonna tell you how to raise your son // but I just think you need to put your foot

**HANK**

Give me the money!

**KATHY**

People are starting to say things // about us

**HANK**

I think I'd best drive you home.

I just think that would be best right now.

You got anything to say?

Whereupon Kathy said nothing.

*KATHY is gone. MARY CHARLES interrupts.*

**MARY CHARLES**

The shots came from me posting the invitation to be here today.

Create event.

Name. Martha O'Regan's better late than never church wedding to the woman she loves, Cynthia Wallace.

Details. It's a wedding, just like any other.

Where: The church she was raised in.

When: Saturday at 1.

Privacy: Public. In front of God and all assembled.

**CYN**

Whereupon the gun was loaded.

*MARY CHARLES is gone. CYN and MARTA are there at the motel, earlier. CYN reads from a device.*

"It's time we stood up to sin."... "One of them's name is Cyn. Ha ha."... "They should be shown the business end of my twelve gauge."... "I'd be happy to acquaint them with the oak branch over my back porch."

**MARTA**

At least that one spelled "acquaint" right. And you're being very selective, I might add. Here. (*reading*) "I think it's nice." ... "It's time Boiling Springs joined the 21<sup>st</sup> century."... "It's time Boiling Springs joined the 20<sup>th</sup> century."... "It's time for the hate to stop."... "How can anyone deny two ladies who have an ice cream party every afternoon at 4:30 the right say their vows in church?" OK, so I posted the last one, but the others prove that not everyone hates us.

**CYN**

This is deadly serious.

**MARTA**

And to think you had to twist my arm to get me down here.

**CYN**

What has he done to you?

**MARTA**

Who?

**CYN**

Bobby Pritchard!

**MARTA**

Woke me up.

**CYN**

You didn't say there'd be guns.

**MARTA**

It's Boiling Springs, Miss Thing! Did you expect pepper spray? Whole lotta bluster. Trust me.

**CYN**

What if it's not?

**MARTA**

You saw how they spell.

**CYN**

I imagine they can shoot better.

**MARTA**

Let's say we treat ourselves to some nice new rings. Gawdy big rings! // Lotta sparkle!

**CYN**

Telling Hank is one thing. And so is getting Mary Charles to tell the twitterverse. But going into their church...

**MARTA**

It was my church.

**CYN**

It's their church now.

**MARTA**

I didn't leave willingly!

**CYN**

It's not ours!

**MARTA**

Maybe I miss it!

**CYN**

We've already said our vows, sweets. And you've told the truth. You're giving Hank an impossible choice.

**MARTA**

His son is making him choose.

**CYN**

Once again, eighteen year old boys from Boiling Springs // do not belong in our -

**MARTA**

Bobby had to choose. I had to choose. Mama had to choose.

Bobby called me back to Boiling Springs so that someday such impossible choices will no longer have to be made. And the long march to that day begins with me and you on Saturday, in the place where I first met God, in a moment of glorious truth that may, in some way, atone for a falsehood that I would have perpetrated were it not for a snowy night "NO".

Big-ass rings.

**CYN**

Are you truly prepared to die here?

**MARTA**

I already died here a thousand times. Every time Daddy got on a hellfire tirade. Every time Mama caught me swaying alone in my room to Patsy Cline or Dolly Parton. Every time Tommy Baxter kissed me and I got through it by pretending he was Ella Fortney.

I need to do one honest thing to live in Boiling Springs before I die. One. Honest. Thing. To live. Before I die. And for that to happen...I must have you.

*POSS interrupts.*

**POSS**

It's my fault. The shots came from my ultimatum.

*HANK is there praying, silently.*

They're gonna have it on Saturday at 1.

They'll do it outside.

But they want to be inside.

No preacher. Just to stand at the altar.

They need your key.

They need *a* key.

I told them I could get them a key.

Aunt Marta said she wants yours.

That she wants you.

There.

I said I'd ask.

But I'm not asking.

I'm telling you.

The key. And you.

Or I leave with Aunt Marta.

Forever.

Their mailman leaves two chocolate hearts in their mailbox on Valentine's Day.

*POSS is gone.*

**HANK**

Whereupon I prayed.

*MARGARET is there, sewing a wedding dress.  
HANK watches his mother sing and sew.*

**MARGARET**

*(sings)* A glimpse of glories far more bright  
Than earth can give is mirrored there  
And perfect purity and light  
The presence of its God declared.

Oh my goodness! It's snowing! Martha! Get Hank! It's snowing!

*MARTHA is there.*

**MARTHA**

Snow! Real snow!

*HANK transforms into CLEM.*

**CLEM**

You act like you never seen snow before, girl!

**MARTHA**

Not like this.

**MARGARET**

It's Hank's first snow. Clem, where's the camera?

**CLEM**

It's just snow, woman.

**MARTHA**

It's in the hall closet.

**MARGARET**

Why in heaven is it in the hall closet?

**MARTHA**

I don't know, it just is!

**MARGARET**

And get Hank's galoshes, too!

*MARTHA is gone.*

Oh, I hope it doesn't ruin your wedding!

**MARTHA**

*(Offstage)*

Are you kidding?! It'll be beautiful. Man, I hope it'll stick around and still be pretty. I remember the last time when I was about ten and it snowed for an hour and then got all mushy and brown and then froze // at night and was so ugly. I hope it doesn't do that tonight.

**MARGARET**

*(to us)* Now hold it right there, Henry James O'Regan! Don't you even think about going outside without your galoshes!

**CLEM**

*(to us)* Get on out there boy! Ain't no telling when you'll see snow like this again.

**MARGARET**

It's wet. You'll catch your death!

**CLEM**

It'll be gone before you know it!

**MARGARET**

My grandfather died from influenza!



May be your only chance!  
**CLEM**

Galoshes or else!  
**MARGARET**

Live it up!  
**CLEM**

Your future!  
**MARGARET**

Great memories!  
**CLEM**

Responsibility!  
**MARGARET**

Joy!  
**CLEM**

Mama pleads!  
**MARGARET**

Daddy cusses!  
**CLEM**

Mama shouts!  
**MARGARET**

Daddy roars!  
**CLEM**

Mama slaps!!  
**MARGARET**

Daddy stares. Daddy stares. Daddy stares.  
**CLEM**

Mama cries.  
**MARGARET**

Daddy says, "Not in my house. Not ever in my house."  
**CLEM**

*MARTHA is there.*

**MARTHA**

Martha says “Here’s the camera! And Hank’s galoshes.”

**CLEM**

Daddy throws the galoshes against the wall as hard as he can! As hard as he can!! And Hank cries.

*MARGARET is gone. CLEM becomes HANK.*

**MARTHA**

Don’t cry, Little H. You might never see snow like this again! But you need galoshes.

You just click these thingies over. Click. Click. Click. Click. Click. Click.

Six clicks. Like Daddy’s pistol.

Only not so loud, right!

There, I did one, now you do the other.

Course you can do it! Well if you’d stop sniveling and start clicking like I just showed you!

Don’t let Daddy make you cry! Tell you what. You ever need anything, I mean anything, you just come on over to me and Bobby Pritchard’s and we’ll take care of you. He’s gonna be your brother! Bobby Pritchard is the best man I know.

*(sings)* God knows  
How I’ll ever get out from under  
Your spell and the wonder-  
ful Hell that your draggin’ me through.

There you go! That’s one click!

*(sings)* God knows  
How I’ll free myself from the thunder  
And lightning that you’re  
Frightening me with, you devilish you.

That’s two! Keep going!

*(sings)* God knows  
How I’m drowning each day  
In a brimstony pool  
Where you made me a fool for you.

Three. Four. Almost there!

*(sings)* God knows ...

That's five! Now if you can finish your galoshes, surely I can finish this song.

*(sings)* God knows...

That if you are my sin  
Then I take it all in and  
I gladly say I do!  
You devilish you!

All six! Good boy!

Bobby'll be so happy I finished the song. God knows that if you are my sin then I take it all in and I gladly say I do. God knows that if you are my sin then I take it all in and I gladly say I do. God knows that if you are my sin -

Wait, Hank! I gotta get a picture!

There. Hank in his galoshes on the snowy day.

Don't ever forget this, Little H. Not many days like this in Boiling Springs!

Bobby and I will always take care of you. You remember that. Always.

*MARTHA is gone.*

**HANK**

Whereupon Mama made a surprise visit.

*KATHY is there with the wedding dress and a chess pie.*

**KATHY**

I mended this after Mary...I'm not as good a seamstress as your Mama. It belongs in your family, so...

I made you a chess pie. Made two, actually. One for Mary. She won't touch it. Miss Margaret's recipe. Hope I'm not twice rejected.

**HANK**

Thank you.

**KATHY**

Not that one thing has anything to do with another, but I was hoping you could still take me to pick up the new cushions on Saturday.

**HANK**

I can take you Monday.

**KATHY**

We said the cushions would be on the pews this Sunday.

**HANK**

The old cushions are fine for another week.

**KATHY**

What's happening this Saturday? Huh?

**HANK**

I got plans.

**KATHY**

What plans?

**HANK**

With Oren. I mean Poss. My son.

And Marta. Who is no longer Martha. But who is my sister.

**KATHY**

And that Cyn.

**HANK**

And Cyn.

And then I will take you to pick up the cushions on Monday.

**KATHY**

No you will not.

You will not be doing anything with me on Monday or any other day.

**HANK**

I pray you will one day understand.

**KATHY**

Or anyone else. You think Ben Connor's gonna buy another filter just to help you out? You think Sally Marshall's gonna beg her cousins to come down for a weekend to rent a boat from YOU?

You think anyone would ever let you baptize them or let you set FOOT in that church or even TALK to you again // if you let them do this

**HANK**

I'm sure they won't.

**KATHY**

Then why, Hank?? WHY??

**HANK**

An inconvenient truth always beats a pretty lie in the long run.

**KATHY**

If you soil my church on Saturday... if you contaminate...

**HANK**

Then what? What happens, Kathy? The river will keep on flowing. Just like it has flowed since creation, just like it flowed the night a good man named Bobby Pritchard died, just like it flowed forty years since, and just like it will flow to eternity.

Thank you for the pie.

*KATHY grabs the pie.*

**KATHY**

You don't deserve to eat your Mama's chess pie!

**HANK**

Perhaps you're right, Kathy. Perhaps you're right.

**KATHY**

Hank! Hank!! What the hell am I gonna do with two whole chess pies? WHAT THE HELL AM I GONNA DO??

**HANK**

You could bring them to the church on Saturday for fellowship.

*KATHY is gone.*

*MARY CHARLES and POSS are there as at the beginning. CYN and MARTA arrive and stand near the altar and begin a wordless exchange of vows. No one officiates.*

*HANK appears. The others notice him. They are surprised, and happily surprised, to see him. POSS is especially happy.*

*After some time with the wordless vows...*

**MARTA**

I do.

*KATHY is there. She may hold a gun. We hear five gunshots in rapid succession.*

**MARY CHARLES**

The first shot lands in the stained glass window with the Nativity scene, just below the Star of Bethlehem.

**POSS**

The second shot lands in the stained glass window just above the manger.

**CYN**

The third shot lands in the stained glass window right below the Magi.

**MARTA**

The fourth shot lands in the stained glass window right through the Virgin Mary's heart.

**HANK**

The fifth shot lands in the brass collection plate.

*There is a gunshot. We may see that KATHY has turned the final shot on herself.*

**MARY CHARLES**

The sixth shot.

**KATHY**

Die zombies.

**MARY CHARLES**

The sixth shot hits its intended target.

*KATHY is gone.*

Sleep well, Mama. Have a good rest.

*(sings)* But when the troubled waters own  
A Savior's presence in the wave

The healing power of grace is known  
And found omnipotent to save.

**END OF PLAY**