

SCENE 1

Synopsis-

Penelope was in a Chuck E. Cheeses. Now she is not. You were not supposed to remember this dream.

Cast

PENELOPE- (She/Her) Female. Old enough to be a mom.

UNSEEN/UNKNOWN- Unseen and unknown.

WHITE CUBE- At first Morgan Freeman. At second electronic. At last Morgan Freeman.

JILL- (She/Her) Female. On the “acceptance” stage of grief.

Note on style.

You were not supposed to remember this dream.

The characters speak with a sincerity that exhaustion brings. No hidden motives. Some of this play may be funny because the world is odd. That’s good. Please let the audience laugh. The only way we can conquer the void is to laugh at it.

Some of this play may be sad because the world is odd. That’s good. Please let the audience frown. The only way we can conquer the void is to frown at it.

Funny. Sad. Good.



Note on set.

This is the world of memories or dreams. Dreams that become memories and memoirs that haunt dreams. As images are spoken they can materialize as light projections or if you have the ability three dimensional objects.

There is darkness. A glitch brings light. Penelope is there. You are not supposed to be here. A place you've been before. Fake grass. This is an accident. Fake sky. You were not supposed to remember. Fake play ground. A mistake like how evolution was a bunch of mistakes. Little plastic playsets. A mistake that is supposed to be dead but, forgot to die. Liminal. a glitch. Penelope is grateful for the light. Every word is painted by exhaustion. She had been wondering, crawling, in darkness.

PENELOPE

(Looking and grabbing at the grass.)

I can't eat this.

(She notices the small playset. Desperate sweating, she starts to bite it. The realization that it's not eatable crushes her.)

Oh no no no no no.

(One more bite.)

Wait wait!

(A lick.)

It tastes like cheese? No, it tastes like. It tastes like sweat!

(Manic celebration.)

Sweat! Sweat! Yes oh God yes Sweat!

(Pause. She licks her arm. Back to celebrating.)

It's not my sweat! It's different sweat! Different sweat!

Penelope goes to hug and lift the playset as apart of her celebration. When she tries to pick it up the world glitches. There is a deep bass digital "thud" sound. The playset cannot be moved.

PENELOPE

Okay.

(She looks around.)

Can you hear me? Anyone? Please.

(Listens. Nothing.)

I'm hungry. I'm so so sweaty. Why is it this hot?

An piece of audio plays from the film *101 Dalmatians* (1961).

UNSEEN UNKNOWN

"I'm tired and I'm hungry and my tail is froze and my nose is froze and my ears are froze and my toes are froze..."

PENELOPE

You bastard you can hear me!!!

Penelope walks around. She thinks about moving on. She doesn't want to crawl in darkness again. Penelope lays down in the pool of light.

PENELOPE

The sky is blue here. The grass is plastic. I was at Chuck E. Cheese. I was at Chuck E. Cheese pizza. I I think I think.

(She looks down her pants to her lower abdomen.)

I think I'm a mom. I must of been there with my kid. Chuck E. Cheese is a place with kids inside of it. Gross there was a kid inside of me? My uterus is a Chuck E. Cheese with out the pizza. I'm glad it's out so it's not here. I hope the kid I made is happy. I'm going to die. I don't want to die. Not while I'm sad. Can't I die when I'm at least full of food!? Well shit... if I was full of food I wouldn't be dying. How many days can you live without food? It's like sixty days.

(Pointing to the playset.)

But you. You, taste like sweat. That's nice.

(Breath. She pokes at her stomach.)

Nothing has changed except for sweat. My body hasn't gotten thinner.

(An idea, she lifts up her arm and examines her armpit.)

What the hell?

(Shooting up in panic.)

My my hair hasn't grown. It should be. It should be longer. I can't shave now and I shave when I can. I'm a lady mom who shaves at home! This is not home it so it should be longer. The hair should be longer. It shouldn't be smooth!

(Shouting to the Unseen Unknown)

How long has it been?!?! I shouldn't be this hungry with my armpits this smooth! What game game what game are you playing?!?

She collapses in on herself. A white cube enters. Penelope doesn't fear the cube. It doesn't sound like a white cube. A voice spawns from it. It sounds like a kind old man/Morgan Freeman.

WHITE CUBE

You can rest darling. You can sleep.

PENELOPE

I went through one room. It was musty and had yellow walls and yellow carpet. It had white ceiling tiles. I don't know the name for the material. What you see in public schools.

Images of the backrooms appear.

PENELOPE

The carpet smelt gross. I walked and I kept walking and walking and I would end up in another room the same room all the same rooms. I started running like something was following me.

WHITE CUBE

Nothing was following you.

PENELOPE

Correct.

WHITE CUBE

Running is foolish.

PENELOPE

Now, I wish I was being chased. Instead of this. This. Whatever this is.

WHITE CUBE

Isolation.

PENELOPE

Correct.

WHITE CUBE

I am here.

PENELOPE

You say that but, I have a feeling you are not.

WHITE CUBE

Correct.

PENELOPE

Sleep. Rest. That hurts now. I sleep I try to wake up from this dream. I don't dream. I wake up and I'm still lost.

WHITE CUBE

Look at your hands.

PENELOPE

(She does.)

I have ten fingers, no matter what.

WHITE CUBE

So, you already know about that. You must be an experienced dreamer.

PENELOPE

It sucks but, I know this is real. As real as Chuck E. Cheese but, at the same time this isn't the way/

WHITE CUBE

(Interrupting. Suddenly angry Morgan Freeman.)

/THIS ISN'T WHAT?

PENELOPE

This isn't the way REALITY works!

WHITE CUBE

(Calm again like nothing happened.)

This seems nice enough. Sky. Grass.

Jill enters. She is dirty and wise.

JILL

Ew.

PENELOPE

Oh hell. What what what? (etc.)

Penelope runs to Jill and grabs her wrist.

JILL

Do I know you?

PENELOPE

No, I don't know much. I used to know things- now I know less.

WHITE CUBE

Bummerrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr.

UNSEEN UNKNOWN

Dumbass.

JILL

You're new here.

PENELOPE

I've been here too long to be considered new.

JILL

I can't die from hunger but I'm still hungry. Part of me really wants to eat you.

PENELOPE

Go for it.

JILL

I want to stop being alone.

PENELOPE

Me too.

JILL

I was at a hotel. I went to get ice. Then I walked back to my room. Then I walked back to my room. Then I walked back to my room. Then I walked back to my room. Then I walked back to my room. Then I walked back to my room. Then I walked back to my room. Then I walked back to my room. Then I walked back to my room. Then I walked back to my room. The ice bucket melted but not the ice.

PENELOPE

I love ice. I love water.
I was at a Chuck E. Cheese. Here look.

Penelope stretches out the waistband of her pants. Jill looks down them.

PENELOPE

I'm a mom.

JILL

Congratulations.

PENELOPE

What are you?

JILL

A person who was staying at a hotel. I'm scared but, I'm less scared now.

PENELOPE

Let's be friends.

JILL

No. You may die. I'm already very sad. I know where we are.

PENELOPE

Where are we?

JILL

It's called the backrooms. We no clipped out of reality.

PENELOPE

Ouch.

JILL

You're stupid so I'll tell you. No clipping is when in a video game where your character passes through a solid object off the map. It's a mistake.

PENELOPE

This is real life.

JILL

We no clipped real life.

Penelope holds out her hand Jill takes it.

PENELOPE

Let's keep walking.

They hold hands. They destroy the cube. The song "Daisy Bell" by tamachang plays starting at 1:40. They laugh.

END OF PLAY

Emma Grace Imes