

Magpie

An original play written by Niyazi Unugur

Created in collaboration with the Kensington Green Company 2022-23

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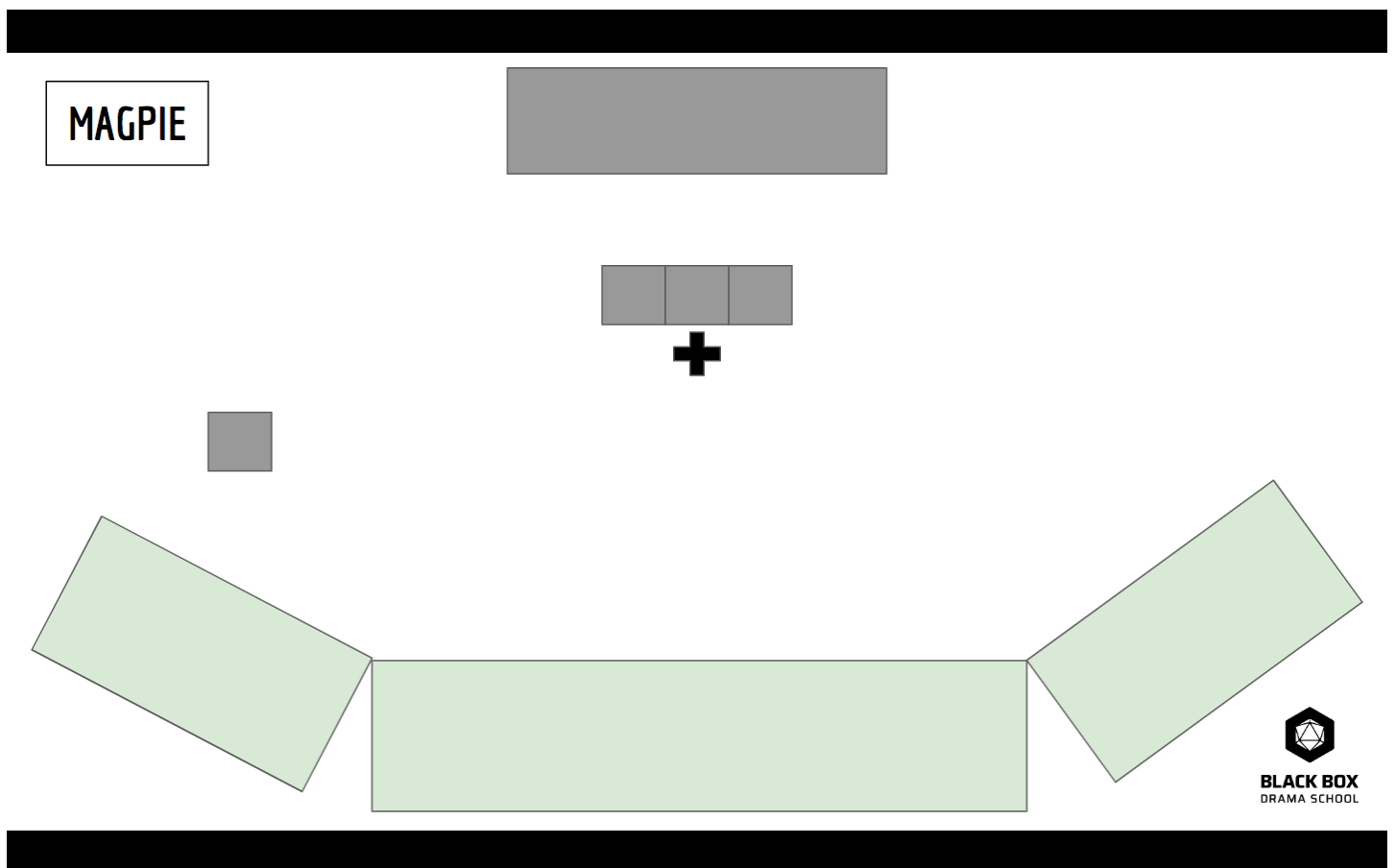
FOREWORD

Set in 1983, in the village of Sheldon, Derbyshire. A group of school children begin noticing peculiar behaviour from the adults in their lives. When their headmistress and local police officers declare a village-wide curfew, they suspect something strange. As they work together to solve the mystery and save their town, they uncover an unspeakable and unworldly being. A being that has been dormant and biding, hidden beneath the local mines.

This play was inspired by the role-play sessions with the Kensington Green Company of 2022-23.

Using the 'Role That Dice' system, the pupils explored an immersive world in an improvised drama setting. Through this process the pupils created the characters, lines and narrative for this play.

STAGING DIAGRAM



SCENE 1: CLASSROOM

SFX: SWEET DREAMS (ACOUSTIC GUITAR) plays as the audience enters.

THE PUPILS are sprawled out across the stage floor. **HASTUR** is knelt centre stage.

SFX: SWEET DREAMS (SLOW+REVERB) begins and a movement sequence depicting the **ENSEMBLE** yielding their souls to **HASTUR**.

LIGHTS UP and **HASTUR** exits quickly.

SHADLER

(Entering and moving downstage)

And that brings us to The End!

(to audience members)

Take a bow. Another bow!

Round of applause from the audience.

House lights go up.

Thank you. Thank you.

You're too kind.

Thank you!

SFX: SCHOOL BELL and the **PUPILS** begin gathering their belongings to leave.

SHADLER

(Looks to sky and walks to desk)

That's all the time we have Drama Clubbers!

Remember, keep on top of those lines everyone!

(speaking across stage)

Your teachers and parents are in for a real treat next week!

GREYMOORE and **HOYT** enter.

The **ENSEMBLE** begin to notice them and exchange glances, confused.

GREYMOORE

Good afternoon, Miss Shadler.

Sorry to disturb your lesson.

SHADLER

Not at all Principal Greymore.

The pupils and I were just finishing up rehearsals for the play next week.

HOYT

A play?

Last I checked this was a school.

SHADLER

(sarcastically)

Thank you for the reminder, Mr Hoyt

The PUPILS snicker and break a smile.

GREYMOORE

Could I have a moment with you and the pupils?

SHADLER

Please Miss Greymore, whatever you need.

GREYMOORE

Very good.

Everyone, sit down.

Eyes forward.

Backs straight!

GREYMOORE walks across the stage and then coughs to cue, as KOBER and MILFORD enter.

GREYMOORE

Officers Kober and Milford have some very important information to share with you all.

Let's show what good listeners we are here at Magpie High.

KOBER

Thank you Principal.

Good afternoon children,

(Long pause)

Don't look so worried.

There is nothing to panic about, I assure you.

MILFORD moves downstage to look out of the window.

MILFORD

Now you will all be aware of a virus that has swept across Sheldon in recent weeks.

As a precaution, and on the advise of your Principal,

We have decided to put a curfew in place.

To protect all residents of our village.

KOBER

We aim to slow down the transmission of the virus.
Potentially, saving lives and giving us time to track down exactly what is causing this illness.
So, as of this evening the curfew will be in place.
All children must be inside their homes by sunset.

HOYT

This will be a short term measure.
A couple of days at most we imagine.

GREYMOORE walks down past the children and kneels to speak

GREYMOORE

Let me be quite clear, everyone.
You are to get yourselves home, **immediately**.
And you are **not** to leave your homes until sunrise the following day.

HOYT

Anyone caught breaking the curfew will find themselves in serious trouble.
Do you understand?

The PUPILS stare back in silence.

GREYMOORE

Good any questions?

JASMINE

Does this mean I don't have to attend your after-school detentions *mam*?

The PUPILS snicker with laughter.

GREYMOORE turns only her head to notice.

GREYMOORE

(to Jasmine)
Miss Eccles.

GREYMOOR clicks and points to floor, waiting for JASMINE to arrive

GREYMOORE

(to Jasmine)

I'm pleasantly surprised to see you **actually** attending a lesson.

I have become so accustomed to you sitting outside my office.

To answer your question. No.

You are relieved of all detentions - for the time being.

(to all pupils)

Now gather your things pupils and get yourselves home, immediately.

GREYMOORE quickly walks out the police officers with a smile and a hot handshake.

MILFORD pauses and notices the heat.

KOBER

Everything alright, Milford?

MILFORD pauses a moment.

MILFORD

It's nothing.

HOYT and MILFORD exit.

PUPILS begin to exit and GREYMOORE dismisses the pupils at the door.

BRADLY is last to leave.

GREYMOORE blocks the doorway as BRADLY exits..

GREYMOORE

(to Bradly)

Mr Brickenworth.

(leaning forward)

You have a safe and swift journey home.

GREYMOORE places a hand on BRADLY's shoulder.

BRADLY

(pulling his shoulder away)

Ouch.

(holding his ear)

Did you put something in my ear miss?

GREYMOORE

In your ear?

You are a strange one Mr Brickenworth!

GREYMOORE and HOYT laugh uncomfortably.

BRADLY exits.

SHADLER

Miss Greymore, a word if I may?

A curfew seems a bit extreme.

The pupils have their O-level exams coming up,
And then there's the matter of the school play next week -

HOYT

(Moving down stage)

Perhaps Miss Shadler, you should focus on your classroom.

And let us deal with the management of the school.

SHADLER

It's just very sudden and I don't want to unsettle them before -

GREYMOORE

Thank you for your concerns, Miss Shadler.

We will go over the finer details of operations at the Townhall meeting this evening.

Parents have been invited.

And, I expect your attendance.

Until then, be safe.

Exit HOYT and GREYMOORE.

SHADLER lingers looking out the window and then grabs her bag, leaving.

SCENE 2: GREYMOORE'S OFFICE.

SFX: SWEET DREAMS (VIOLIN INTRO)

PATRICIA and AGATHA enter, creeping in, centrestage.

AGATHA

Patricia, hurry up!

PATRICIA

My makeup bag is in here somewhere!

AGATHA

We are going to get in so much trouble
If Miss Greymore finds us in her office.

PATRICIA

Less talking then.

PATRICIA and AGATHA begin searching the room.

AGATHA finds GREYMOORES book and begins examining it.

PATRICIA

Found it. Let's go!

(pause)

Agatha?

AGATHA

Patricia, you really need to see this.

PATRICIA kneels down to read the book too.

PATRICIA

It's an old book?

AGATHA

Yes, but look.

This symbol, it's everywhere?

PATRICIA

That is super weird and creepy.
Wait, I've seen this symbol before?

AGATHA

It kinda looks like a snake, eating its own tail?

(Suddenly realises excitedly)

Greymoore wears a necklace with this pendant on!

PATRICIA

Why would Greymoore have a book like this?

AGATHA

I don't know.

The words, they're written in a strange language.

AGATHA flicking through the pages of the book.

PATRICIA

Stop, go back.

There, this passage, it's been translated -

“Beneath an equinox sky,

Yield a harvest of souls,

Call thrice upon thy name,

And the Yellow Queen will rise once more”

They look at each other in fear.

AGATHA

That is super creepy!

(pause)

We really should get going.

GREYMOORE enters.

GREYMOORE

Yes. You really should.

Ladies, my instructions were quite clear.

Now, will you explain to me exactly what you are doing in my office?

PATRICIA

Umm -

I was looking for my makeup bag, miss.

My mum, she'll kill me if I forget to bring it home.

We did come looking for you, miss-

AGATHA

But we didn't want to disturb you.
We know you're really busy, miss.
With the virus and curfew and all -

PATRICIA and AGATHA smile cheekily.

GREYMOORE

Right.
Well, get yourselves home.
The sun will be setting soon.

PATRICIA

Absolutely.

AGATHA

Thank you, miss.

GREYMOORE looks at the book, closes it and watches the girls leave

SCENE 3: ARCADIA SKATEPARK.

SFX: SWEET DREAMS (ORIGINAL)

The PUPILS are sitting about the stage in conversation, some listening to the music.
A few on scooters and skateboards ride up and down. General noise and excitement.
BRADLY sits alone, downstage rubbing the shoulder that was hot-handed by GREYMOORE.

ELLA

I say no!
No to Greymoore.
And, no to Greymoore's curfew!

BURELL

I'm with you Ella.
This has to be the most interesting event to happen in Sheldon in the last hundred years!
No way am I staying locked inside!

ELLA

Down with the establishment!
Down with school!
Down with boring O-levels!

ALL cheer.

JESSY

Well actually, that's not entirely true.

BURELL

What's not true?

JESSY

Sheldon has a fascinating history.
Did you know that the Magpie mine in Upper Sheldon are one of the
Best surviving examples in the UK of a 19th century lead mine.
The mine has an intriguing past spanning more than 200 years,
Of bonanzas and failures, of bitter disputes and murder.
(pause)
There is even a Widows' Curse, that is said to remain to this day.

SNAP CUT on SFX: SWEET DREAMS (DARK PIANO)

Awkward silence.

JESSY sits awkwardly.

ALEX

I'm only messing, Jessy!
Seriously though, we are going to need your smarts,
If we are going to figure out what's *really* going on!

MILA

What's *really* going on?
Nothing is going on!
You've read one too many Stephen King novels, Alex.

ALEX

Mila, this might just be the most exciting,
And weird things to have happened in Sheldon, during our lives.
I am not spending it locked inside because of a curfew.
You don't have to come, if you're scared?!

THE PUPIL jeer and tease.

MILA

Hold on!
I didn't say I wasn't coming.

The **PUPILS** freeze suddenly. All except **BRADLY**.

SFX: SWEET DREAMS (DARK PIANO)

BRADLY gets up confused and moves over with caution to inspect closer.

BRADLY

Whoa!
That is awesome!
(pause)
Wait - did I do this?

HASTUR enters.

HASTUR

No.
Bradly Brickenworth.
It wasn't you.

BRADLY

How do you know my name?

HASTUR

We are connected now.

HASTUR touches BRADLY's ear.

BRADLY holding his ear.

HASTUR

I see you.

I feel you.

I know your fears, your desires, your pains.

BRADLY

Who are you?

HASTUR

Who?

No.

What?

First and foremost Bradly Bricknworth - I am a friend.

Ancient and magical.

(Gives Bradly a gift - a slingshot)

I have many gifts for those who honour and devote themselves to me.

Yet, I am Imprisoned, unable to move freely and gift you all that you deserve,

Until an event occurs that unbinds me.

BRADLY

What event?

HASTUR

You'll see.

Soon enough, you'll see.

The Yellow Queen will rise once again.

And, glory will be bestowed on those who worship my kinship.

Until then, I walk in the realm of dreams,

HASTUR guides BRADLY back to his starting position and then exits.

HASTUR

Bradly Bricknworth.

It's time that you -

PUPILS snap into life with a breath.

BLUE-WING

Wake up! Wake up!
Wake up!

BRADLY wakes with an intake.

BLUE-WING

Dude, you completely monged out.
Are you okay?

BRADLY

I was, dreaming -
There was this thing...

EMILY

It's okay.
You can tell us.

BRADLY

I saw this creature-

PATRICIA and **AGATHA** enter in a flurry, out of breath. Moving downstage left.

AGATHA

Guys something super weird is going on!

PATRICIA

We were in Greymoore's office and we found this, this creepy book!

KATIE

Oooooooo nooooo!

A creepy book!

You know, if you really want a harrowing, hair-raising experience.

I can take you both to this nightmarish and unearthly building.

It's called - the library!

The **PUPILS** laugh with him.

PATRICIA

Shut it, losers!

AGATHA

(Making an L shape with her hand)

Yeah! Losers!

PATRICIA

It's not funny!
Greymoore is definitely up to something!

AGATHA

There was this really old book.
With this creepy symbol.
There was this bit about harvesting souls.
And something about the Yellow Queen rising once more!

BRADLY

Did you say 'Yellow Queen?!'

PATRICIA approaches BRADLY.

PATRICIA

The grown ups are talking.
So quiet down yeh!

JASMINE

I don't know about harvesting souls.
But I wouldn't put it past Greymoore.
Hours of my life, she has had me sitting outside her office.
I've often imagined what she gets up to behind that closed door.
No doubt something mean.
Believe me, nobody wants to take down Greymoore more than me.
Me ma said she was having a meeting with Greymoore tonight at the townhall.
I'm going to check it out.

KATIE

I'm going to see what Shadler's up to.
She seemed just as shocked about the curfew as we were!
I think we can trust her.

JASMINE

For now.

ALEX

Super cool!
So the party is splitting up.
Awesome!
(Big air grab)
Here take this.

ALEX hands Katie a walkie talkie.

ALEX

I'm going with Jasmine to the Townhall.

JASMINE

Ermmmm, who said you could come?

BLUE-WING

It's best if we stick together.

Nobody out alone!

The PUPILS nod in agreement and begin to exit.

PATRICIA, AGATHA, JASMINE, ALEX, MILA, ELLA and JESSY exit stage right.

KATIE, BERELL, BLUE-WING exit stage left.

EMILY and BRADLY are last to leave.

EMILY

Bradly?

Are you sure you're okay?

EMILY places her hand on BRADLY's shoulder. He pulls away in pain.

BRADLY

Emily, It's nothing.

I'll be fine.

BRADLY exits stage left. Once again he is holding his ear.

EMILY watches him go, looks out into the distance, before following after him.

SCENE 4: SHADLER'S HOUSE.

MILA, KATIE, EMILY, BRADELY, BLUE and BERRELL creep in and kneel down peeping over the blocks as if looking through a window.

KATIE

Quickly, hide!
This is Shadler's house.

BLUE-WING

Get down!
There she is!

SHADLER enters and sits down-stage right on the block, watching TV and sipping her tea.

SFX: NEWS REPORT

THE PUPILS watch on through the window.

MILA

Is it creepy that Shadler lives all the way out here on her own?

BLUE-WING

Very.
(pause)

Remember, trust nobody until you're sure they're not working with Greymore.

BERRELL

I'm gonna hang back to keep a lookout.

BLUE-WING

Me too!

KATIE

Good idea!

BLUE and BERRELL move upstage back, climbing onto the raised stage.

A pupil taps on the window.

The first time **SHADLER** does not react, and continues reading her book.

The second time, she pauses for a moment and looks around, before returning to the book.

The third time she stops, closes the book and sees the pupils, standing in shock.

MILA, KATIE, EMILY, BRADELY smile back at her.

SHADLER

(approaching window)

What on earth is going on here?!

Children, why are you stood at my window this late in the evening?

You all need to be in your houses immediately. The curfew!

MILA

I got locked out of my house miss.

And, my Dad's at the townhall.

KATIE

Mine too, Miss Shadler.

EMILY

Me too!

BRADLY

Yep, and me miss!

SHADLER

Well you better come in.

The sun will be down soon.

And we don't want you breaking curfew on the first day!

MILA

(climbing though the window)

Thanks miss!

SHADLER

(shocked)

I mean Milla, you can use the door!

KATIE

(climbing though the window)

Thanks miss!

EMILY

(climbing though the window)

You're the best miss!

BRADLY
(climbing though the window)
Simply the best!

The PUPILS exit first.

SHADLER on stage alone a moment before quickly following after in a huff.

LIGHTS UP on RAISED STAGE.

BERRELL standing close to the edge of the stage looking out.

BLUE-WING sat watching the sunset.

BERRELL
Looks like they got in.

BLUE-WING
Okay. Keep out of sight.
We don't want anyone to see us.
(Long pause)
The sun is setting.

BERRELL sits with BLUE-WING and they stare out at the sunset together.

VERY LONG SILENCE.

BLUE-WING
Aren't you scared?

BERRELL
(pause)
Scared?
Of what?

BLUE-WING
Scared that Agatha and Patricia *aren't* lying.
I mean, if what they are saying is true.
What if - I don't know.
Principle Greymoore *is* trying to raise an evil entity called the 'Yellow Queen'.

BERRELL
(excited)
I mean, then that would be crazy!

BLUE-WING

That's my point.

I'm scared that things might get even crazier than they already are!

BERRELL

Well, you know you can talk to me.

I'm always here if you need.

BLUE-WING

(pause)

My parents, they just -

(Struggling to finish her sentence)

Things are already crazy enough.

BERRELL

(comforting)

It's going to be okay.

We will figure it out!

We always do!

BLUE-WING and BERRELL lookout at the sunsetting.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE 5: TOWNHALL.

ELLA, PATRICIA, AGATHA, JESSY, ALEX and JASMINE creep in.

GREYMOORE (O/S)

Hurry along Hoyt!

JASMINE

Greymore and Hoyt!

They're coming!

Hide!

CHILDREN hide under the rostra.

GREYMOORE and **HOYT** enter.

GREYMOORE

Mr Hoyt?

HOYT

The children are safely in their homes.

Officers Milford and Kober are patrolling for any children not obeying the curfew.

And, the adults are gathered in the hall.

Everything is going according to plan.

GREYMOORE

Then, we are nearly ready for the harvest.

How are the tadpoles?

HOYT

The first batch have reached full growth.

And ready for distribution.

GREYMOORE

(Turns towards Hoyt, hand on shoulder)

Splendid.

(Pause)

Mr Hoyt.

(Raise hand towards the moon/audience)

Tomorrow night will bring the equinox.

Nothing must interrupt the ceremony.

HOYT

I will see to it.

(Pause)

The Yellow Queen *will* rise once more.

GREYMOORE

(Evil snake noise)

And at last, the head of the snake will eat the tail.

It's time.

(turning neck to audience)

Let's go.

GREYMOORE and HOYT exit.

JASMINE

Did you hear that?

They were talking about the harvest!

About the equinox!

Everything Patricia and Agatha said, it's true!

ALEX

Greymore is deranged!

This is really bad.

We need to tell someone?!

JESSY

Who is going to believe us?

We are just children!

I'm not even sure if I believe us!

ELLA

Greymore said the equinox would be tomorrow night.

And that nothing could interrupt their *ceremony*?

I agree, none of this makes sense,

But we don't have time to not believe.

Something really messed up is happening in Sheldon!

GREYMOORE (O/S)

That Shalder might be a problem!

HOYT (O/S)

Leave Shadler to me.

PATRICIA

Greymoore!

AGATHA

Hide!

The PUPILS hide, taking cover upstage.

GREYMOORE and HOYT re-enter and present to the audience.

GREYMOORE

Good evening everyone.

Thank you all for coming, especially at such short notice.

No doubt you are all aware of the deadly virus,

That has swept through Sheldon these past few weeks.

HOYT

Many members of the community have already been taken ill, or worse.

But, we have good news!

We have a vaccine!

GREYMOORE

Adults, you can get the vaccine, right here tonight!

(pause)

Having taken the vaccine myself,

I can assure you that it is a quick and painless process.

SCULLY

(From the audience, standing)

Have these vaccines been tested?

Are they government approved?

GREYMOORE

(Caught off guard)

Thank you for your question.

I don't recognise you, sir.

I didn't get your name?

SCULLY

(quickly)

I didn't give you my name.

Now, can you explain how the vaccine is administered?

HOYT

(over politely)

Of course, the vaccine is administered via one's ear duct.

(To audience)

And instantly protects you against transmission of the virus!

GREYMOORE

Yes, you have another question?

SCULLY

How do you plan on delivering the vaccines to the children?

GREYMOORE

The plan is that children will be given the vaccine tomorrow morning,
When they arrive at school.

HOYT

We advise not telling them.

We wouldn't want them getting upset.

We will handle that in the morning at school.

GREYMOORE

That will be all.

I'm sure you all agree, we are doing what is wise,

By tackling the threat head on!

(pause)

So if you could please join the queue here sir.

We can begin protecting ourselves and our loved ones!

SCULLY walks on stage, looks at GREYMOORE and HOYT then exits.

GREYMOORE and HOYT look suspiciously at each other for some time. Then, exit.

The PUPILS move upstage centre.

JESSY

Okay!

I've heard enough!

Something very strange is happening in Sheldon!

JASMINE

We need a plan.

We can't go home!

AGATHA

And we definitely can't go back to school!

ALEX

I have a place.

A hideout in the woods.

We can stay there tonight and come up with a plan.

The PUPILS make eye contact and nod in silence.

PATRICIA

Umm, no chance I'm going into the woods!

It's muddy, wet and cold!

ELLA

Stay here then.

I'm sure Greymoore and Hoyt will look after you.

The PUPILS leave, staggered exit, eye contact and silence.

PATRICIA watches them go, nervous and scared.

PATRICIA

Losers, who needs them.

(Pause. Agatha Leaves)

Agatha, wait for me!

PATRICIA exits quickly.

SCENE 6: SHADLER'S ROOF. NIGHT.

LIGHTS UP on RAISED STAGE

BERRELL and BLUE-WING sat looking out.

BERRELL

(Stands and moves to edge of raised stage)

It's been a while.

Something doesn't feel right!

BLUE-WING

(Stands slowly)

Let's go check on them.

(pointing)

What's that!

LX: RED & BLUE FLASHING

BERRELL

Police!

Kober and Milford.

Get down!

KOBER and MILFORD enter stage left and inspect the house.

MILFORD

What do we know about this, this Shadler then?

KOBER

(Checks notes)

She's a travelling teacher.

(pause)

Teaches a subject called Drama.

MILFORD

Drama

What on earth is Drama??

KOBER

Oh, It's one of those fancy subjects the last government introduced.

(pause)

But, don't worry Milford.

This Drama thing won't last.

Not with Maggie Thatcher in charge!

MILFORD

Drama?!

SHADLER enters.

SHADLER

Good evening officers

Thank you for answering my call.

(pause)

Children come outside, please.

KATIE, BRADLY, EMILY, MILA enter.

SHADLER

I'm sorry to report that these children have broken curfew.

And, they wouldn't explain to me why?

MILA

(sarcastic)

Wow!

Thanks miss!

KATIE

(shocked)

How could you miss?

SHADLER

I gave you many chances to explain why and what you were doing?

EMILY

(Upset)

I take it back!

You're *not* the best miss!

MILFORD

Right children, you better come with us.

KOBER

And don't try any funny business.

KOBER and MILFORD lead KATIE, BRADLY, EMILY, MILA off stage.

SHADLER sits for a while alone.

BERRELL and BLUE-WING get SHADLER attention, kneeling at the edge of the raised stage.

BERRELL

Pssst

SHADLER remains seated looking around.

BLUE-WING

Pssst

SHADLER stands looking around.

BERRELL + BLUE-WING

Pssst!

BERRELL

It's just us miss!

SHADLER

Berrell!

Blue!

What on earth are you doing on my roof?!

BERRELL and BLUE-WING climb down.

BLUE-WING

We've got a *lot* to share with you, miss.

Let's get inside and keep warm.

BLUE-WING exits.

BERRELL

I'll put the kettle on miss.
Trust me, you're gonna need it.
This is one hell of a story!

BERRELL exits.

SHADLER waits a moment before she exits.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE 7: SHELDON POLICE STATION.

FROZEN TABLEAUX of KATIE, BRADLY, EMILY, MILA are in a holding room.

SFX: SWEET DREAMS (DARK PIANO)

HASTUR enters.

MILA stands confused moving upstage left.

MILA

No.

No!

Not again!

This is not real!

HASTUR

(Moving centrestage)

Hi Mila.

So good to see you again!

MILA

You're not real!

None of this is real!

HASTUR

Why haven't you told your friends about me yet, Mila?

MILA

Because.

Because -

HASTUR

Because, they'll laugh at you.

(Moving to face audience)

Call you crazy.

You're not crazy, Mila.

Soon, everyone will see me.

I will rise once more.

MILA

My friends!

We're gonna stop you!

HASTUR

(Turns quickly to Mila)

Stop me?

You and your pathetic friends can't stop me!

But, I'd love to see you try, Mila!!!

(casting spell, choking Mila)

HASTUR releases the spell and MILA falls to her knees.

KATIE, BRADLY, EMILY spring to life.

HASTUR exits quickly.

KATIE

Mila, are you okay?

MILA

Fine!

(pause)

Look, I have to tell you something -

MILFORD and KOBER enter stage right. The children stand.

MILFORD

Right children. I hope you've had some time to think about your actions.

(Pause)

We know there is something you're not telling us.

And we will find out!

(Pointing to blocks centre stage)

Sit!

KOBER

(Walks behind the children)

So, let me get this straight.

You children were out breaking the curfew,

Because you *each* got locked out of your *individual* homes.

Quite the story.

(pause)

Start talking!

(Pause)

Or else!

LONG SILENCE.

SHADELR, BLUE-WING and BERRELL enter, all three out of breath.

SHADLER

In loco parentis.

In loco parentis!

KOBER and MILFORD look at each other confused.

KOBER

Sorry, what?

SHADLER

In loco parentis!

As these children have not yet seen their parents since leaving school,
They are still *legally* in loco parentis.

MILFORD

(gulps)

Did she say *legally*?!

SHADLER

These children remain in loco parentis.

And in my duty of care,

As the adult responsible for them whilst their parents are absent.

KOBER and MILFORD whisper aside.

KOBER

Very well Miss Shadler.

The children are yours.

THE PUPILS smiling and winking at SHADLER.

KOBER

(moving downstage)

But!!!

(pause)

We will be keeping a close eye.

LONG PAUSE.

MILFORD

A very close eye!

KOBER hand on face.

KOBER

I was trying to build tension!
Honestly, Milford!

MILFORD

Sorry boss.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 8: ALEX'S HIDEOUT.

LONG SILENCE as ELLA, PATRICIA, AGATHA, JESSY, ALEX and JASMINE sit on stage.

JESSY, sees AGATHA drawing.

JESSY

Cool symbol.

(Pause)

What is it?

AGATHA

It was written all over that book in Greymoore's office.

JESSY

Wait, I've seen that symbol before!

(finds book in her bag and looks through pages)

Look, it's here!

(reading)

Hastur.

The Unspeakable One.

The Whisperer in The Darkness.

(pause and then read more)

Hastur is a creature of unspeakable power.

Moving in secret,

Often concentrating her efforts,

On corrupting the heart and mind of a single individual.

PATRICIA + AGATHA

Greymoore!

JESSY

Once a connection is forged with her host,

Hastur will continue to corrupt a collection of individuals,

Forming a high-functioning network hive mind.

ALEX

The adults!

This is not good at all.

JESSY

Imprisoned in a void, Hastur may only walk in the world of dreams.
In order to ascend, Hastur will need to Harvest many souls.

ALEX

(Moves to Jessy, hand on shoulder)

It's okay, Jessy.
I'm scared too.
Keep reading.

JESSY

Hastur, attempts to rise every four decades.
In line with the apogee solstice.

(long pause)

Once she has reached full ascension,
She takes on the title of,
(pause)
The Queen in Yellow.

ELLA

The Queen in Yellow!
(pause)
We can't just sit here.
Waiting.
For what!
This creature to rise?!
To take our families.
To take our friends.
Sheldon may be a small town,
But it's our town.
And it's up to us to protect it.
Yes, we may be children,
But we should use that to our advantage!
This equinox, this harvest of souls,
Whatever it is - it needs to be stopped!
I don't know about you,
But there is no way I'm standing by
And letting this happen to my town!

JASMINE stands in agreement.

JASMINE

Ella is right.

This could be bigger than Sheldon.

This creature,

Hastur, it could be a world ending event!

SCULLY

(clapping and entering)

Great speech!

(sarcastic)

Really!

JASMINE

(Approaching SCULLY)

Who are you now?!

SCULLY

You can call me Scully.

(pause)

And, I am here to help you defeat Hastur.

SCULLY moves downstage to investigate cabin

JASMINE

What do you know about Hastur?

(pause)

Hello?!

SCULLY

(investigating the space)

This place hasn't changed much.

I'm glad to see she is still being used.

ALEX

Wait, I know you!

(finding photo frame)

Is this you?

SCULLY

Wow, I haven't seen this photo in over 40 years.

(taking photo frame)

Yep, that's me and my friends. That was the year we defeated Hastur.

ELLA

You defeated Hastur?
So she is real.

SCULLY

“She that Sleeps Beneath”
“She Who Is Not to be Named”
Yeah, she’s *very* real.

SCULLY continues to examine the space. The PUPILS watch on scared.

SCULLY

I knew that one day someone would try to bring her back.
But, I never thought it would be Greymore.

JASMINE

You know Greymore?

SCULLY

(pointing to photo frame)

We were classmates.
She hasn’t changed.
Still a bully!

JASMINE

That’s, Greymore?

SCULLY

Yep.

(reminiscing)

Look there’s Officers Kober and Milford.

We were just like you guys once.

A group of misfits!

(melancholy)

But we grew up. Grew apart.

PATRICIA

Sorry grandad!

But we don’t have time for this trip down memory lane.
An ancient monster is about to wake up and destroy our town!

SCULLY

Hastur intends to destroy more than your town.
She wants to end this world and all worlds.

(Pause)

Have any of you seen her in your dreams yet?

ALEX

In our dreams?
What do you mean?

SCULLY

As her strength grows.
Hastur will start making connections,
Via the dream world.

ALEX

(standing on block)

Listen up everyone.
This is now officially the most interesting thing,
To happen in Sheldon in our lifetimes!
From this point forward.
We stick together.
And work together!
(pause)
If anyone has seen Hastur,
Been visited by her,
Or spoken with her.
Then you need to speak up!

A LONG SILENCE.

SCULLY

(outward to self)

Surprising.
Then we may have more time than I thought!
Either way we better hurry!
To the Mines we go!

PUPILS

Mines?!

ALL shocked.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 9: TOWNHALL

SFX: TERROR

SHADLER leads **KATIE, BRADLY, EMILY, MILA, BLUE-WING** and **BERRELL** as they enter quickly on stage. **CHILDREN** ad-lib “Hello!”

BLUE-WING

They said they’d be here, miss!

At the town hall!

(Announcing)

Guys it’s us!

SHADLER

Hello?!

Children?!

Where are you?!

A cloaked GREYMOORE enters stage left and stands completely still.

A cloaked HOYT enters stage right and stands completely still.

SHADLER

(Loud but scared)

Who-

Who are you?

Hello?!

(pause)

We’re looking for a group of children.

Six of them.

GREYMOORE

(cloaked and entering)

It just so happens that we too are looking for children.

Are you not supposed to be in your homes, for the curfew?

SHADLER

(Ushering pupils behind her and moving towards Greymoore)

Principal Greymoore is that you?

GREYMOORE

(Lowers hood)

Miss Shadler,

I was disappointed you were absent from the emergency meeting.

I didn't receive your apologies.

(Places hand on shoulder and pushes SHADLER to the floor)

Children, get yourselves against the wall - NOW.

Eyes forward. Backs straight.

HOYT approaches SHADLER from behind and moves her to the centre block.

SHADLER

(Struggling)

Have you lost your minds?

What are you doing?

Get off me!

You're hurting me!

GREYMOORE stood to the side over SHADLER plants an earworm in SHADLER'S ear.

GREYMOORE

Welcome to the Kinship of Hastur.

SHADLER screams, falls to floor and slowly begins to transform and connect with Hastur's hive-mind. The PUPILS watch on with fear.

BERRELL

(Scared)

Miss Shadler?

Are you okay?

SHADLER stands and turns her neck to the PUPILS.

SHADLER

(Menacing)

Never - Been - Better.

(Moves to pupils and pointing off stage)

Move.

Now!

Exit ALL.

SCENE 10: MAGPIE MINES

GREYMOORE enters with the **TOME OF HASTUR** and stands centre to blocks.

KATIE, BRADLY, EMILY, MILA, BLUE-WING and **BERRELL** enter and placed in a semi-circle downstage by a cloaked **SHADLER** and **HOYT**.

MILA

Don't touch me!

BURRELL

Get off me!

BLUE-WING

Leave me alone!

HOYT and **SHADLER** stand in their positions besides the blocks.

ALL look to the sky.

HOYT

The equinox is here!

SHADLER

The Yellow Queen *will* rise!

KATIE

(On walkie talkie, talking fast)

If anyone can hear me!

We are in the mines!

Greymoore, Hoyt and Shadler have lost it.

They are starting some ritual now -

GREYMOORE walks over and snatches the walkie talkie from **KATIE**.

GREMOORE stares at the walkie talkie for some time, hands to **SHADLER**, before moving to kneel over **EMILY**.

GREYMOORE

(To Emily)

You.

GREYMOORE moves **EMILY** centrestage.

GREYMOORE

Let us begin.

HOYT

Hastur - We Welcome You!

GREYMOORE, HOYT + SHADLER

Hasturi Grata!

SHADLER

Hastur - Rise!

GREYMOORE, HOYT + SHADLER

Hasturi Ortum!

HOYT

Hastur - Show Yourself!

GREYMOORE, HOYT + SHADLER

(giving earworm to Emily)

Hasturi Ostende Te!

SFX: THUNDER

ENSEMBLE FREEZE.

KOBER, MILFORD, SCULLY, ELLA, PATRICIA, AGATHA, JESSY, ALEX and JASMINE enter with FLASHLIGHTS, finding their positions upstage.

SCULLY

We're too late!

Hastur is already here!

MILFORD

(gun pointed)

Stop - Right - There!

SFX: GUN SHOT

ENSEMBLE falls to the floor and FREEZE.

SFX: SWEET DREAMS (DARK PIANO)

EMILY, BRADLY and MILA begin to UNFREEZE noticing each other and moving closer together.

Enter HASTUR, sits on the block, the children realise and gather.

HASTUR

Mila.

(pause)

Bradley.

(to Emily)

And you must be -

EMILY

(quickly)

Emily.

HASTUR

So.

(pause)

Mila

(pause)

Who first?

MILA

What do you mean?

HASTUR

Quickly!

Or I'll have to choose myself!

HASTUR places her palm over the back of HOYT'S head.

HOYT stands on his tiptoes, holding his throat and falls to the floor.

BRADLY

Please!

stop!

HASTUR

But I'm having so much fun Bradley Brickenworth.

HASTUR places her palm over the back of MILFORD'S head.
MILFORD stands on his tiptoes, holding his throat and falls to the floor.

EMILY

Why are you doing this?

HASTUR

Why does the Winter wind blow so cold?
Why do leaves fall in the Autumn?
It is in their nature to do so.

EMILY

Your nature is to destroy.
For what purpose?
To what end?

HASTUR

For - The - End
(Move to Kober and takes KOBER out too)

BRADLY

Stop this!
How about a challenge?

HASTUR

Challenge?
Me?
How?

HASTUR moves downstage to meet them.

EMILY

A riddle.
If we get it right.
You go back to the void!

HASTUR

(smirk)

Okay. A riddle.
(pause to think, sits back on block)
If you have me, you want to share me.
If you share me, you no longer have me.
What am I?

THE CHILDREN discuss for a moment, before returning face to face with HASTUR.

EMILY

If you have me, you want to share me.
If you share me, you no longer have me.

What am I?

(pause)

A secret.

HASTUR

(smirk)

Very good Emily.

HASTUR places her palm over the back of SHADLER'S head.

SHADLER stands on her tiptoes, holding her throat and falls to the floor.

MILA

You lied!

HASTUR

I did.

(standing over Greymoore)

No longer shall I be a prisoner in the land of dreams.

Thanks to my host, I will walk in your world, as her.

HASTUR's moves behind GREYMOORE and connects to her and begins embodying GREYMOORE.

HASTUR disappears and GREYMOORE climbs on blocks to show her power

EMILY

(Moving stage left)

The stone around Greymoore's neck!

MILA

(Moving stage right)

Take the shot Bradley!

BRADLY, slingshot drawn, holds for a moment and fires.

SFX: SOULS SCREAM

HASTUR begins to wither and falls completely still on blocks.

MILA, BRADLY and EMILY stand alone.

One by one the PUPILS begin to wake coughing.

The ADULTS now begin to wake, but GREYMOORE lays still.

ALL stand to face her body.

PAUSE before:

LX: SPOT LIGHT DOWNSTAGE

BLUE-WING stands and enters the centre of the spotlight.

BLUE-WING

I will never forget that Autumn.

My friends and I saved the world.

Hastur was gone - for now.

They say, she will rise again in 40 years,

In the year of 2023.

But that's a long way away!

(pause)

And, that's our story.

A story about how we defeated Hastur, in the Autumn of 1983.

SFX: SWEET DREAMS (VIOLIN)

BLACKOUT

- END -

