

Pieces of Who I Lost

Fantasy

by
Michael Burger

Name

Address

Phone number

Agency Information

CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
Mom	A parent who hides a painful secret	40-50	Female
Riley	Young adventurer looking to discover a link to the father they never knew	12-17	Either
Meek	The smaller of 2 Furlings. Sibling to Yarrow. Protective.	Young	Either
Yarrow	The taller of the 2 Furlings. Sibling to Meek. Might be on stilts	Young	Either
Draak	Last of the Royal Guard. Loyal.	Older	Either
Zirta	An old sorceress that has lost parts of her memory, making her cruel	Old	Either
Migos	Zirta's servant. Kind, but has been to do cruel things by Zirta	Any	Either
Dark Riley	A mirror version of Riley	12-17	Either
Death	The guardian of the beyond. Can be portrayed by an actor or by a large puppet if resources allow. The appearance can be scary, but does not have to be.	Ageless	Either
Ensemble	To be trees, chess pieces and furlings mother		Either

Characters can be played by either gender. Gendered labels can be changed as needed (sister to brother, sorceress to sorcerer, etc.)

SCENE ONE.

AT RISE:

An old study. A desk and chaise are all that are needed. It is dark and rain and thunder can be heard outside. Suddenly, a scream in the dark.

MOM

Riley? (*RILEY screams again*) RILEY!?!

A flashlight illuminates RILEY'S face. And RILEY looks around quickly. MOM rushes in, also with a flashlight illuminated.

MOM

Riley? Are you okay?

RILEY

I'm fine Mom.

MOM

Are you sure? What happened?

RILEY

It was just a nightmare. I fell asleep. I'm fine.

MOM

What are you doing in here? You know you're not supposed to be playing in your Dad's study.

RILEY

The power went out. I was bored.

MOM

Then pick up a book, Riley. You know I don't want you going through your Dad's things.

RILEY

What's the point of having all this stuff if we never do anything with it?

MOM

They're memories. It's important to preserve someone's memories.

RILEY

Then why don't we talk about him anymore?

MOM

We do-

RILEY

No, we don't. You used to tell me stories about Dad's adventures all the time, but now you never even mention him anymore.

MOM

Not everything has to be a fight, Riley. Get to bed. This storm is just getting started. I need to go secure the gates and I don't want to be worrying about you. *(beat)* Please?

RILEY

Fine.

MOM

Thank You. Try and have a little faith in me kiddo. *(Kisses forehead)* Love you.

MOM exits and RILEY wipes the kiss away and then turns the light off. A few beats go by and RILEY's light goes back on. RILEY is again going through the desk. As RILEY pulls out a drawer a small journal falls to the floor. RILEY picks up the Journal and begins to flip through it.

RILEY

You did say to pick up a book....

RILEY begins to flip through the pages of the journal.

As she does so, the lights flicker and strange sounds fill the space. Light emanates from the journal.

What the???

A flash of light and sound.

Whoa

RILEY throws down the journal.

What the heck was that?

There is movement in the dark. Possibly a skittering and a thump.

Hello?

Another thump.

Is someone there? (beat) Mom?

The flashlight slowly sweeps across the stage until it reveals a tall, strangely dressed, inhuman figure, YARROW. (Possibly Yarrow has been there the whole time, but disguised as part of the room) both RILEY and YARROW scream in fear. Riley backs up across the room and bumps into MEEK, another strangely dressed, but much smaller creature. RILEY and MEEK now scream in fear at each other. RILEY backs away to the center of the room and picks up something to defend herself with. Possibly a lamp. It is at this moment the power comes back on and the room finally illuminates.

YARROW

Meek!

MEEK

Yarrow!

YARROW

I thought you were gone-

I was gone. MEEK

We both were. YARROW

No longer there. MEEK

Now we are here. YARROW

Where is here? MEEK

Here is not where we were. YARROW

But here is where we are. MEEK

Now. YARROW

But why? MEEK

And how? YARROW

They both stop and turn their heads and look toward RILEY.

We are not alone. YARROW

It is looking at us. MEEK

What do you think it wants? YARROW

MEEK

Maybe it is food.

YARROW

Maybe it thinks *we* are food?

MEEK

Can we eat it?

YARROW

It might want to eat us.

MEEK, an idea, steps forward.

MEEK

I propose, none of us eat each other. (*To YARROW*) I think that will do it.

YARROW

What if it does not understand?

MEEK thinks and then steps forward and repeats the sentence, shouting, and using exaggerated mime to emphasize their words.

MEEK

I PROPOSE NONE OF US EAT EACH OTHER!

RILEY

OKAY!

YARROW

You did it!

MEEK

Delightful

YARROW

Masterful

MEEK

It goes to show what you can accomplish if you try.

RILEY

You're Furlings, aren't you?

YARROW

You... know of us?

RILEY

Only a little. My Mom used to tell me stories about my dad. He was an explorer. He told her about adventures he would go on in this magical world- Its why he wanted to be an explorer... but I thought it was just a myth... something he made up.

YARROW

I don't feel "made up," do you Meek?

MEEK

Decidedly not. I am known as Meek. This is my sibling, Yarrow.

RILEY

Riley.

YARROW

Did you bring us here Riley?

MEEK

And, where is here, exactly?

RILEY

I- I don't know. Maybe? I found this journal in my Dad's old desk. When I flipped through it... I think somehow I did bring you here. Umm, this is my Dad's study. I mean, it used to be his study.

MEEK and YARROW's eyes widen as they see the journal. They clearly recognize it.

YARROW

Where did you get that?

MEEK scurries over and grabs the journal and brings it to YARROW

RILEY

I think, maybe, it was my dad's? You recognize it?

YARROW

Only from legends. You say this belongs to your father?

MEEK

Does that mean-

YARROW

Shhh.

RILEY

Did you- Did you know my Dad?

YARROW

We never met your father. But, there are stories of one from beyond our world who once visited our land.

RILEY

Praxis?

YARROW

Yes, Praxis.

MEEK

The stories tell of great adventures and bravery.

YARROW

An explorer who found the Algosian treasure.

MEEK

A warrior who fought off the unseen army.

YARROW

A friend of the crown, who rescued King Zennig from Death itself.

MEEK

The savior of Praxis.

RILEY

Those are the same stories my Mom told me about my Dad.

MEEK and YARROW confer a moment.

It was all real. Everything..

MEEK

It would be a great honor for Yarrow and Meek to meet the Savior of Praxis.

MEEK and YARROW both bow in deference.

RILEY

You can't. He's... he's not here.

MEEK

Oh.

RILEY

But, can I meet the king?

MEEK and YARROW confer a moment.

MEEK

The king would likely welcome the chance to meet the child of the Savior of Praxis.

RILEY

Great!

YARROW

The journal, Meek.

MEEK takes the journal to RILEY

RILEY

What is this?

YARROW

It is how we get to the King.

MEEK flips through the journal and finds a page about the castle and gives it to RILEY

RILEY

What do I do?

MEEK

Read it.

As RILEY reads the next section, lights flash and sound swells around the trio. A flashlight on MOM, who takes over the dialogue, overlapping a little as it transitions. This is a story that Mom has told Riley before. The lights go out briefly, and when the lights return the trio stand in the throne room.

RILEY

The chamber smelled of honeysuckle and rain. Instinctively I looked up and as the walls of the chamber disappeared into the darkness above I thought for a brief moment that perhaps there was no ceiling at all,

MOM

that perhaps there was no ceiling at all, and that the throne room could look upon the stars themselves. The king sat waiting in his simple yet elegant throne and my footsteps echoed with each step as I approached the king, his smile as bright as the torches which flanked him-

BLACKOUT.

SCENE TWO

A simple throne room with a throne, upon which ostensibly sits the king, with a single guard, sleeping.

RILEY

Wow! How did we get here?

MEEK

The journal. Once a thing has been written it can be revisited.

RILEY

This is amazing. We're actually in Praxis.

YARROW

The throne room. I will have us announced.

YARROW goes and taps the guard on the shoulder.

Excuse me good fellow. We are here to see-

DRAAK

Intruders! Protect the king!

DRAAK draws his weapon and begins to attack the trio

YARROW

Help! Meek!

MEEK

Yarrow!

MEEK grabs a pole and blocks each of Draak's attacks. The fight does not go on long. In the confusion, Riley makes her way to the King's throne and speaks to the King while the fight continues.

RILEY

Your Majesty. We come seeking an audience with you. I beg of you, call off your guard. I am Riley. Child of the Savior of Praxis and I have come seeking your help. *(no answer)*
Your Majesty? I entreat you-

DRAAK

No! Don't touch that!

RILEY reaches out to touch the king, and the head rolls off. It is only now clear the king was a dummy.

DRAAK

Oh, darn it. Now you've ruined it. I mean... Oh my! What have you done to his highness?

*MEEK grabs the guard and restrains him.
RILEY picks up the weapon.*

RILEY

What have you done with the king?

DRAAK

The King? He's uh... napping?

RILEY

Napping?

DRAAK

Just a quick power nap. He said to me, Draak, you're in charge until I get back. So, as the one in charge I command you all to place yourselves under arrest.

YARROW

Riley, I do not want to alarm you, but I think it very possible he is lying.

RILEY

I think you're right.

MEEK

I agree.

DRAAK

Me too.

YARROW

Do you know who this is? This is Riley. Child of the Savior of Praxis. So if you have any sense, you'll tell us the truth.

DRAAK shakes off MEEK.

DRAAK

(To Meek) The Savior of Praxis?

MEEK nods. DRAAK bows and kneels to

RILEY.

My lord. I can only apologize for my ignorance. Name the punishment and I shall humbly accept. I shall drench myself in dung and crawl through the sewers. I shall press my tongue to barbs of the frozen Ossaka plant. I shall hurl my feeble form into the nearest volcano and flay-

RILEY

Just- apologize to my friends and we'll forget all about it, okay?

DRAAK

Right. Terribly sorry. My bad

RILEY

Sooooo, can we see the real King?

DRAAK

Ahh. No.

YARROW

Why not?

DRAAK

Because there isn't one anymore. King Zennig abdicated years ago.

MEEK

I never heard about that.

DRAAK

We kept it quiet. Can you imagine the chaos that would happen if people knew we didn't have a king?

RILEY

I can't believe it.

DRAAK

My apologies Sire. I have failed you again. Naturally, I shall go boil myself immediately.

RILEY

Stop, Draak. Sit down. You didn't do anything.

RILEY sits at the feet of the throne, defeated.

MEEK

Why would the king abdicate? After all the savior of Praxis did to bring him back from the other side...

DRAAK

That's why King Zennig left. You see, The Savior of Praxis had faced death itself to bring Zennig back from the grave. The way Zennig saw it, he was being given a second chance. His family had lost him once to his perilous adventuring. So when he got a second chance, he gave it all up in order to be with them. Can't say I blame him. But, my loyalty is to my oath, so I stayed here to protect the crown. And if anyone ever comes to see the king, well, I just try and tell them what I think the King would've wanted me to, and pretend the message is from him.

RILEY

You lie to them.

DRAAK

I do. But the lie protects them from the truth. They need to believe that someone is looking out for them.

MEEK

And nobody has noticed for all these years?

DRAAK

Its amazing how happy people are, just to be left alone most of the time. I'm very sorry Sire, that you will not be able to meet the king.

RILEY

Its not that. I was hoping he could tell me how my Dad brought him back from the other side.

DRAAK

Why don't you just ask your father?

RILEY

Because... he's dead.

MEEK, YARROW and DRAAK all react to this news.

YARROW

We are sorry Riley.

MEEK

Did he die in battle?

RILEY

I don't really know. I was a baby. My mom has told me stories about him my whole life. I get glimpses of who he was, but never really a full picture. I feel like there's this part of me that I'll never really get to know. That's why I wanted to talk to the king. Because-

YARROW

-because you hoped the king could help you bring back your father the same way he himself was brought back.

RILEY nods

YARROW

Then we shall help you.

RILEY

How?

YARROW

Our mother would tell us stories of the Savior of Praxis before she died. We dreamed that one day, when we were old enough, we would make the journey and bring her back. Now that we have the Savior of Praxis among us again, we might be able to succeed! Meek?

MEEK

I'm on it.

MEEK grabs the journal and starts looking through it.

RILEY

I appreciate the vote of confidence, but I'm not the Savior.

YARROW

You have the Savior's blood in your veins. If you possess one tenth their courage and strength, we will succeed.

MEEK

Oh dear. The sections that talk about where to find Death are scratched out.

RILEY

So how do we get there?

DRAAK

Why don't you talk to the sorceress, Zirta? It was her that first told the Savior of Praxis where to find death. You can find Zirta in the Swamp of Oblivion.

MEEK

The Swamp of Oblivion!?!

YARROW

Oh dear...

RILEY

Wait, Wait! I've heard of that!

MOM appears back in the study, reading to an unseen RILEY.

MOM

The Swamp of Oblivion was a place feared by those throughout the land, for one drop from the waters of oblivion could wipe away hours of memory. A splash could take away weeks, and if you ever fell in, you would forget your entire life and everyone you've ever known.

Light out on MOM

RILEY

If its the only way to find where to confront death, then its what we have to do. Are you all with me?

YARROW

Yes!

MEEK

Absolutely!

DRAAK

No! (*They all look at DRAAK*) Until relieved of my duty, here I must stay.

RILEY

But there is no-one to wear the crown. You're oath is to a - a fancy hat. It's just metal and gems.

DRAAK

Not to me. That crown represents an principle. The idea that there is always someone looking out for the less fortunate. Someone that can be looked up to. Some ideas are worth protecting. But good luck to ya.

YARROW

Maybe it is time to give the people more than just an idea.

MEEK hands RILEY the journal and RILEY starts to read from the page indicated. Again, MOM takes over and a flashlight illuminates her as the scene changes from a throne room to the Swamp of Oblivion.

RILEY

The moonlight glimmered off the mossy green surface of the swamp. You could almost see the marsh gasses which emanated from beneath the surface, the same way -

MOM

-the same way you can see heat coming off the pavement on a hot day. Vines hung down from treetops above, inviting us to climb, but the boulders which permeated the surface of the swamp like crumbs scattered across a table seemed the surer route.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE THREE

A simple marsh. Maybe represented by nothing more than green light and mild fog. If elevated blocks can be used for stepping stones all the better. If YARROW is on stilts, they are furthest upstage to hide the fact that YARROW is unable to navigate the stones. Vines are possibly hung between actors wearing black. The trio carefully skip between stones.

YARROW

We have been searching for hours.

MEEK

How do we know we are going in the right direction?

RILEY

If we find Zirta, we're going in the right direction.

YARROW

And if we do not?

RILEY

Then we are going in the wrong direction.

MEEK

How long have we been searching?

YARROW

We have been searching for hours.

MEEK

How do we know we are going in the right direction?

RILEY

If we find Zirta, we're going in the right direction.

YARROW

And if we do not?

RILEY

Then we are going in the wrong direction. Wait. Something is wrong...

YARROW

What is it Riley?

RILEY

I just had Deja Vu.

MEEK

Ooo, may I have some. I have not eaten in hours.

RILEY

No, I mean, I feel like we just had the same conversation twice. Has anyone stepped in the water?

MEEK

I have not.

YARROW

I have been very careful.

RILEY bends down and examines her shoes.

RILEY

My feet are dry... Oh no! The air! The water is in the air! We are breathing it in! Its in our clothes!

YARROW

What do we do?

MEEK

Should we turn back?

MOM is illuminated in the study. Telling a story to a young RILEY.

MOM

There your father was, trapped in the Swamp of Oblivion. Many had entered before, but few had ever returned. As your father felt the dampness of his clothes he realized the swamp's terrible secret.

RILEY

(To mom) What's was it?

MOM

The swamps greatest victims were those whose confidence waivered. For as soon as they considered turning back, all would be lost.

Light goes out on MOM.

RILEY

We can't turn back. We might have already turned around and forgotten. That's how the swamp gets you. You forget you've turned around and you keep going back and fourth for eternity.

MEEK

So we must decide to keep going, no matter what.

RILEY

That's right. We have to remember why we're doing this. I'm coming Dad...

The trio trudge offstage and the sounds of the swamp fade as it goes to black. The flashlight is up on MOM, who reads to RILEY as the scene changes

MOM

We are the sum of our memories and experiences, both the good and bad. You take any of them away, and wouldn't be the same. Pain and sadness define us as much as any joy, but it can be hard to face sometimes.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE FOUR

The green from the swamp is still there, but it is less pronounced. The stones are replaced by a few old chairs and a small shelf or chest. YARROW, MEEK and RILEY are all unconscious as a figure, MIGOS, with its back to the audience toils at the shelf. The figure turns and brings a drink to RILEY's lips as RILEY sputters awake.

MIGOS

Drink it slowly. It will help counteract the effects of the Swamp.

RILEY

Who are you? Are you Zirta?

MIGOS

My name is Migos. I live here with Zirta. I led you and your friends here from the swamp.

RILEY

We came to find Zirta.

MIGOS

You don't want to speak to Zirta, trust me.

RILEY

We need information from her.

MIGOS

Nothing she has to say will be of any use to you. Zirta is not who she once was.

RILEY

What do you mean?

A noise.

MIGOS

Hide!

*RILEY goes and hides behind the shelf.
ZIRTA enters.*

ZIRTA

Migos! What are these furlings doing inside my home?

MIGOS

They were in the swamp. They would've been lost if I hadn't have brought them here.

ZIRTA

And what is this?!

*ZIRTA goes over to the shelf. Does she see
RILEY?*

ZIRTA

You've been using my memory potion, haven't you?

MIGOS

Just a little. Enough to restore their surface memories.

ZIRTA

The memory potion is very valuable and we can't afford to waste any of it on idiots wandering through the swamp. Drag them out into the waters before they wake up.

MIGOS

Please. Can't we just feed them, and then help them find a safe way out of the swamp?

ZIRTA

You're not just content to waste my memory potion on them, but now you want to waste my time and food on them too?

MIGOS

But-

ZIRTA

You're *my* servant. Now do as I say. I'm going to pick some thistelberry fruit. I want them gone by the time I return. And don't give them any food!

ZIRTA exits and RILEY emerges from hiding.

RILEY

I see what you mean.

MIGOS

She wasn't always like that. She used to be kind, and wise... but the wisdom of the head is not the wisdom of the heart. When Zirta's heart was broken she couldn't deal with the pain, so she came to the swamp to forget... but in forgetting, she also forgot everything that allowed her to love in the first place.

RILEY

That's terrible. If she's so cruel, then why do you stay with her?

MIGOS

Because I've forgotten how to leave. Come, we must revive your friends before she returns. Her cruelty can get so much worse.

RILEY and MIGOS take a few moments to wake YARROW and MEEK

YARROW

Did we make it? Did we find Zirta?

MEEK

Maybe we already did and have forgotten.

RILEY

We found Zirta, but I don't think she'll help us. This is Migos. A friend.

MIGOS

Please. You must go.

RILEY

The journal Meek.

MEEK

Oh dear. I do not have it!

RILEY

What?

ZIRTA enters, holding the journal.

ZIRTA

Looking for this? I was about to leave and I found it by the water's edge.

MIGOS

I am sorry Zirta.

MEEK

Zirta I presume? We have been searching for you. We would like for you to tell us where we can-

ZIRTA gestures. A sound. MEEK is silenced and restrained by an invisible force. MEEK is pushed back and falls to the floor.

YARROW

Meek! What have you done?

MEEK

I am alright.

ZIRTA

For now. But you won't be once I drop you into the Swamp of Oblivion!

MIGOS

No! Zirta I beg of you, just let them go.

ZIRTA

And you. You worthless thing. I have protected you. Given you food and comfort. And you can't even give me a little loyalty in return?

RILEY

Zirta, Migos told me what happened to you. You're not this cruel. You've just forgotten who you are.

*Another magical wave and sound and now
RILEY is restrained as well.*

ZIRTA

I don't know what you're talking about.

RILEY

Because you've forgotten.

ZIRTA

Of course I've forgotten. Do you think I would live in the Swamp of Oblivion if I wanted to remember? And this! Memories? They have no place here. They belong where all memories should go- buried beneath the waters.

*ZIRTA throws the book and it lands with a
splash.*

YARROW

No!

*Another magical wave and now YARROW is
also restrained.*

MIGOS

Please. Zirta. Listen to them. If you hurt them, I'll leave. I'll leave and you'll be all alone.

ZIRTA

Oh, Migos, you've said that so many times before. You must've forgotten. And I shall make sure you do again. Now restrain the that one and bring them!

RILEY

We can show you how to leave, but *you* have to make the choice.

MIGOS

I'm sorry.

MIGOS goes and grabs MEEK. And brings her over to behind where ZIRTA is standing.

ZIRTA

Ready to forget?

RILEY

Please. You've been hurt. And its causing you to hurt others. But you can break the cycle. You have to remember the good.

ZIRTA

Those parts of me are forgotten.

RILEY

I wasn't talking to *you*.

MIGOS suddenly grabs ZIRTA

ZIRTA

What are you doing?

MIGOS

Grab her Meek!

MEEK grabs ZIRTA. As they do, YARROW and RILEY are released from the magical grasp. RILEY runs to the shelf and grabs the memory potion and pours it down ZIRTA's throat. The light swells brightly and then.

BLACKOUT.

Lights up on ZIRTA's home. Everyone is gathered around ZIRTA, who is unconscious.

YARROW

Do you think it worked?

MIGOS

What if it didn't?

RILEY

Then you'll come with us Migos.

MEEK

But how? Zirta threw the journal into the swamp. Riley, without it, we cannot get you home.

ZIRTA starts to awaken.

ZIRTA

What happened?

MIGOS

You don't remember?

ZIRTA

I remember... I remember, everything. The waters of oblivion! I need to forget. Please, I need to forget again!

MIGOS

No Zirta. You need to remember.

ZIRTA

But all those people I hurt. I remember all of them. They're all still out there, wandering around the swamp...Please, Migos, let me forget.

MIGOS

No. You mustn't. It has been the forgetting that has caused you to do harm.

MEEK

Perhaps, the pain is there for a reason. Everyday Yarrow and I miss our mother, but we are who we are because of her. Forgetting her would betray what she has taught us.

ZIRTA

I can't ever begin to make up for what I have done.

YARROW

Perhaps, a place to start would be to tell us what we came here to learn.

MEEK

Yes. We wish to find the edge of the beyond, so that we may face death and return our loved ones.

ZIRTA

It is impossible. You would need the journal, but I threw it into the swamp.

YARROW exits to the swamp without a word.

RILEY

The section on getting to the beyond is scratched out. It wouldn't be of use to us anyway.

ZIRTA

A simple spell could undo that.

RILEY

It doesn't matter now. The journal's gone. And I'm stuck here.

MEEK

Where has Yarrow gone?

RILEY

Yarrow?

MEEK

YARROW?

YARROW reenters, but is wet. She appears lost and has the journal.

RILEY

YARROW!

YARROW

Excuse me, does this belong to someone here?

MEEK

Yarrow, what have you done?

YARROW

Did Yarrow lose this book? If you tell me where I can find them I shall return it.

MIGOS

She has soaked in the waters of Oblivion.

RILEY

The memory potion. You can brew another memory potion, right?

ZIRTA

It took me years to find the ingredients to make what I had.

MEEK

Yarrow...

MIGOS

She must not have known.

MEEK

She knew. She knew.

YARROW

You seem sad little one. Is there anything I can do?

MEEK

No. No, you have done too much all ready. You are going to come with us and I shall take care of you.

ZIRTA

Give me the book.

She casts a spell. Light and sound.

The book is readable again. Everything you need to know to reach the edge of the beyond is there.

RILEY

Thank You.

MIGOS

May I come with you?

RILEY

If you like.

ZIRTA

But Migos, I'm me again. I won't hurt you anymore.

MIGOS

That is probably true. But you have hurt me. I know why you did it, but it does not excuse it. You made me feel worthless. You cut me off from others and made me feel like I was nothing without you. But I have remembered how to leave. And although I don't remember what my life was before you, I think I should find out.

ZIRTA

I understand.

MIGOS

You won't forget again, will you?

ZIRTA

It will be hard, but I will try not to.

MEEK has found the passage and hands the book to RILEY

MEEK

Riley...

RILEY

As I stepped into the Living Forest, gateway to the beyond, a twig snapped beneath my feet. A dead part of a living thing. The perfect bridge between realms. The trees seemed to swat me back with their branches-

Lights up on MOM. As Mom speaks the lights flash and the light on our adventures goes dark as the scene changes.

MOM

With their branches, almost as though I didn't belong here. The forest was dense and an unnatural wind blew in all directions and in no direction all at once. The forest was the last thing separating me from the three challenges I needed to pass to face the guardian. Everything went silent. I admit I had never been so scared in my entire life.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE FIVE

A forest of living trees. Actors carry branches and hold them high and low, creating a moving maze our adventurers move through.

YARROW

I don't like this. I am afraid.

MEEK

Come Yarrow. Not much further.

YARROW

I wish to go home. Where is my home?

RILEY

I think I see the edge of the forest.

MIGOS

We made it.

RILEY

Next stop, the guardian.

The trees start to clear. The adventurers are now in a big open space. Light from flashlights illuminates them from the sides and below.

MEEK

We will not be going with you.

RILEY

What? Meek, What are you talking about? We're so close. This is what you wanted. To bring back your mother.

MEEK

Yes, but in the process, I have lost Yarrow. Look at her. She is terrified. I have no right to ask her to go further.

RILEY

But this is what Yarrow wanted for you.

MEEK

But it is not what I wanted. I have lived without my mother. She will always live on in my memories. But I do not know what to do without Yarrow. Whatever is left of her, I must protect. It has been an honor travelling with you Riley, child of the Savior. You must complete your quest. Mine ends here.

RILEY

Here, take this. If we don't come back, you'll need it to get Yarrow home safely.

RILEY hands MEEK the journal.

MEEK

But you will need it to pass the tests.

RILEY

Everything I need to know is up here. *(points to her head)*

MEEK

But how will you get back.

RILEY

If I don't pass these tests, I'm not coming back.

*MEEK and RILEY share a moment, then
RILEY and MIGOS exit as MEEK and
YARROW wave.*

BLACKOUT.

SCENE SIX

*Lights up on MOM in a spot in the study, reading to
RILEY.*

MOM

The first test was a leap of faith. As I looked at the chasm below me. I knew trust was the key. Trust what you feel, not what you see. Blind faith will lead you to where you must be.

Lights up on stage left. MOM stays illuminated. MIGOS and RILEY are looking across a wide chasm. This can be portrayed either by pure mime/acting or elevated edges, like UIL pylons, can be used.

MIGOS

That's a long way down, but at least there is a path.

RILEY

Wait!

MIGOS steps out onto the supposed safe path This can be portrayed by him stepping onto a block and it vanishing. The same actors who were the trees can manipulate and move acting blocks, but this is only one option. However it is done, MIGOS falls and is caught by Riley. RILEY pulls MIGOS to safety.

MIGOS

I should have known it wouldn't be that easy.

RILEY

Hold on... My mom told me about this test... what did she say?

MOM

Trust what you feel, not what you see.

RILEY looks at MOM and she nods. RILEY tears two strips of fabric from one of their costumes.

RILEY

Here, put this on.

MIGOS

A blindfold?

RILEY

We can't trust our eyes. I need you to follow me, okay?

MIGOS

Okay.

RILEY is about to take a step onto nothing, but a block suddenly appears before her. Another step, another block. The dialogue continues as they make their way across the abyss, actors continually moving blocks into their path and removing them once they have moved forward.

MIGOS

Riley, are we over the abyss right now?

RILEY

I think we are.

MIGOS

Is this a bad time to tell you I am afraid of heights?

RILEY

Just keep moving forward.

MIGOS

How did you know?

MOM

Lets call it blind faith.

They reach the edge and remove their blindfolds.

RILEY

One down, two to go.

MOM stays illuminated, but the abyss blacks out as the actors exit. The next scene sets up.

MOM

Pieces on a chess board stood before me. A game of strategy and cunning which could be found even in this realm. But this challenge seemed almost *too* easy.

Lights up on the ensemble posed as statues, like game pieces ready to execute the final moves. The White pieces vastly outnumber the black, and the game will be over in a few moves.

MIGOS

It is a game.

RILEY

You know it?

MIGOS

Very well. Zirta taught me a long time ago. I think I can win this challenge in just a few moves. (*To the pieces*) Knight to Queen six.

As he commands, the warrior piece moves to a new space. Black moves to retreat. As MIGOS calls out moves, the pieces respond, black always in retreat.

RILEY

Something isn't right.

MOM

You're right Riley. Something isn't right. Look deeper.

MIGOS

Rook to Knight five.

RILEY

It's a game. The point is to win. Migos can win.

MOM

Winning isn't everything.

MIGOS

Pawn to Queen seven.

MOM

Life isn't a game.

RILEY & MOM

Unlike chess, things aren't black and white. Sometimes winning does not make things right.

RILEY

STOP!

MIGOS

One more move and we have Black defeated.

RILEY

Yeah, but its not the right move. White, lay down arms!

MIGOS

I hope you know what you're doing.

RILEY

Me too.

A beat and all the white pieces lay down their arms. A long beat, and Black also lays down their arms. A light shines on from the side signaling they may proceed.

RILEY

Life's not a game. Not everything has to be a fight.

MOM

Good girl.

RILEY

Lets go.

They exit as the lights go to black, except on MOM.

MOM

Two challenges down. But even after all that, one thing still stood in my way. Myself.

Lights up on the final challenge. A frame stands held by two actors. As RILEY approaches it, a figure wearing identical clothing approaches it from the opposite side. This is DARK RILEY. Their movements should match each other as best as possible.

MIGOS

I don't understand. There is nothing here.

RILEY

My mom said the last challenge would be myself... but that's not me.

DARK RILEY

Oh no?

The mirror image is now moving independent of RILEY. RILEY and MIGOS are startled.

I'm more you than you are. At least I know who I am, unlike you.

RILEY

We're seeking my father, so I can find out who I am.

DARK RILEY

A waste. You know it won't make a difference.

DARK RILEY moves through the boundary of the frame and Riley stumbles back. DARK RILEY advances on her.

If you don't know who you are by now, what good is bringing back someone you've never known? Look at you. I can see by the look on your face you know I'm right.

RILEY

I- I-

DARK RILEY

Your mother lied to you. Your father never did any of the things she said he did. You put him on a pedestal, but its all a lie.

RILEY

That's not true.

DARK RILEY

I know it, which means, somewhere inside you, you know it too. How does it feel, Riley? To know your father wasn't the Savior of Praxis? You wanted to find out who you were? Where you came from? Be careful what you wish for. Poor little Riley. So alone.

MOM

You're not alone, Riley

DARK RILEY

You already cost poor Meek her sister. No wonder she left you. Who's next? This one? Or maybe your mother?

MIGOS

That's enough! Riley may not be sure who she is, but I am!

MOM

Get up kiddo.

RILEY stands. DARK RILEY is being forced back. Back into the mirror.

MIGOS

Riley is someone who gives her only way home to her friends to protect them. Riley Is who saved me from a distress I could not escape alone. So Riley may not be the Savior of Praxis, but she is my savior, and wherever she comes from, she is certainly not alone.

The light goes out on mom. A shattering sound as the "mirror" breaks and DARK RILEY and the frame holders exit. Blackout. Lights up on Center stage. Death stands alone, flanked by MIGOS and RILEY. If a puppet is used, the DEATH lines may be recorded.

DEATH

Well done. You have done admirably.

RILEY

You're Death I take it?

DEATH

I am. You have passed many challenges to meet me.

RILEY

Truth be told, I thought they'd be much worse.

DEATH

I don't just mean my challenges. I mean everything you have faced since entering Praxis.

RILEY

You've seen all that?

DEATH

I see everything. I am thought, memory, I am life, and death.

RILEY

So you know why we are here?

DEATH

I do.

RILEY

Well?

DEATH

You must still ask the question.

RILEY

Why?

DEATH

Because until you do, the story can still be changed.

RILEY

Well, I came here to ask for my father back-

DEATH

Yes?

RILEY

But I changed my mind. Instead... can you restore Yarrow's memories?

DEATH

What makes you think I can do that?

RILEY

Well, if you are thought and memory and everything else you just said, then you should be able to, shouldn't you?

DEATH

It is done.

MIGOS

Don't I get a wish as well?

DEATH

You do.

MIGOS

Then I wish for you to you return Riley's father.

DEATH

I cannot.

RILEY

But why? You just said-

DEATH

I cannot return those that I have not taken. Your father is not dead.

RILEY

What? But then why did my mother tell me he was?

DEATH

Perhaps that is something you should ask her. Farewell.

RILEY

Wait! Since you cannot return my father, Migos still gets a wish, right?

BLACKOUT.

SCENE EIGHT

Lights up on the study. MOM enters, looking around for RILEY. She sees the journal on the floor and picks it up.

MOM

Riley? (*beat*) Riley??

RILEY enters and stares at mom for a moment. It is unclear if she is angry or exhausted.

MOM

Riley?

Riley runs over and hugs her mom.

Well, this is a nice change.

RILEY

I missed you mom.

MOM

I've only been down at the end of the driveway. When did that become enough time for you to miss me? Hey, I found this on the floor. You haven't been reading this, have you? It's very important you never read this-

RILEY

Mom, why didn't you tell me Dad was alive?

MOM

(beat) You found out...

RILEY

Kinda, yeah. Why didn't you tell me?

MOM

Your father left when you were a baby. I was ashamed. I thought you'd blame me for him leaving. Or to blame yourself. Plus I didn't want... I didn't want you to feel alone. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have lied.

RILEY

No, you shouldn't have-

MOM

I know you're mad. I always meant to tell you when you were older, but then it got harder to tell you the truth and it hurt to-

RILEY

Its okay mom. I understand why.

MOM

I thought you'd be furious with me.

RILEY

A few days ago I probably would have been. But I've done a lot of growing up since then. So... all of those stories about Dad... they were really your stories, weren't they?

MOM

Yeah, they were. How did you know?

RILEY

I think somewhere, deep down, I've always known.

MOM

I wanted you to feel like you had a father you could look up to.

RILEY

Mom... I don't need a father to look up to. I have you. And I always will. I'm who I am because of you, and you're always with me.

MOM

I love you kiddo.

RILEY

I love you too mom. And I don't want you to have to pretend these things didn't happen to you. They're part of who you are. You don't have to hide it from me anymore.

MOM

So, do you want to hear a few stories?

RILEY

How about I tell you a story.

*As RILEY reads, we see the actions played
out on the opposite side of the stage.*

After Zirta had regained her memory, she spent her days helping those she had cast into the Swamp of Oblivion. No longer running from her pain, but using it to make things better. Migos returned to check on her from time to time, but was busy, serving as advisor to the new King, King Draak the Loyal. Yarrow had her memories back, and because of one great adventure, and a wish from Migos, Meek, Yarrow and their mother were closer as a family then they had been in a long time.

*YARROW and MEEK's mother appears
from light and joins them. The two sides of
the stage balance, The furlings together as a
family again, MOTHER, YARROW and
MEEK and RILEY and her MOM.*

MOM

The end?

RILEY

For now.

BLACKOUT