

The Moors

by Jen Silverman

Please prepare one of the following sides for your first audition. Make choices and be willing to take risks. I'd like to see you LIVE the words, not just speak them. This is a tremendously passionate play where every character has a BURNING desire within them as they catapult through the action of the play. Their desire is truthful and powerful, human or animal. These characters are not cartoons or caricatures.

AGATHA.

I cannot stand weakness. I cannot stand it in myself, and I cannot abide it in others.

There is no weakness in the moors.

When I come out here, I am surrounded by merciless strength.

I left him with a loaf of bread.

Of course, one loaf of bread does not last for three months.

No. You see, that is a common fallacy. That strength on the part of humans is cruelty. Here upon the moors, do you think one is coddled? No. A bird or a fox or a dragon-fly, it must survive from sheer strength and will alone. And does one call the moors "cruel"? "Heartless"? No. One accepts them for what they are. Inhospitable, perhaps. But that is their nature. One accepts that nature - and only by accepting, nay, embracing it, can one truly be at home here.

EMILIE.

I see the way you look at me. And when you see that I see, and you become cold - that doesn't escape my notice either. You wanted a sweet young governess and you summoned one, that's true. But out on the moors, it wasn't just a governess you wanted. It was me. I've never felt the way I felt when I read your letters. I've never felt that way in my whole life. You are very much like the man you pretended to be in those letters. The man in the letters was merciless, and you are merciless. He was overly bold, and your eyes are bold. He doled out kindness sparingly so I was hungry for it, and this is what you do as well--I know you are doing it and yet I still find myself willing to do almost anything for a moment of that kindness. The man in the letters was a strategist, Agatha, and that is exactly what you are.

HUDLEY.

Kill. I... Kill?

I'd be the sister who killed her sister. It would be shocking and horrible and nobody would stop talking about it. I'd be infamous. *IN...famous.*

People always do seem to want to know these things. And I of course should feel very strongly about my privacy, and wouldn't want any of that sort of vulgar crowd in my parlor. Drinking my tea and asking me such intimate questions.

(Dreaming a little) How I feel. What it all means. Where I think I'm going in my life next, and do I think it was because I lacked love as a child, which of course is true, I *did* lack love as a child, what an astute question.

Everything around here is so bleak. So loveless and bleak. And if I were to kill Agatha -- and I'm not saying I would, of course -- but if I *were*, it would sort of be a... splash of color. Monday: Everything was gray and cold and then all of a sudden -- BAM!

(A revelation) They might write a song about it!

This is the best day I've ever had.

MARJORY.

Monday: I polished.

Tuesday: I polished and I cooked.

Wednesday: I cooked more things and afterwards I scrubbed.

Thursday: It rained and Miss Emilie tracked mud everywhere and I cleaned it.

Friday: I told Huldey to murder Miss Agatha.

(Musing.)

I should like to be in charge. Why should everybody else have a say but me? I'm the one with ideas. And my diary is full of action verbs. And if people were to ask me questions, I should have a lot more to say for myself, because I've done a lot more, I've considered a lot more, and I have a lot of thoughts about the moors and manual labor and the typhus, and also child-rearing, and if Huldey does not kill Miss Agatha soon, I shall have to murder them both, although I would much prefer someone else to do it.

MASTIFF.

I want us to talk.

Because nobody ever talks to me, and I never talk to anybody.

And I have so many thoughts.

I stay up late at night. With all my thoughts. They echo around inside my head.

Until it gets so everything seems terrible and sharp edged and awful.

I can't remember that there was ever anything good at all.

And people look at my face. They look at my face and

they see nothing.

They think there are no expressions on my face,
just because they don't know how to look for the
expressions that are on my face.

They think I'm guarded. But actually, if anybody truly
asked me anything, I would tell them! I don't want to be all alone with my thoughts! It's
like being in a dark room all the time and you don't have any hands and nobody thinks
to open the door for you!

(Deep breath.)

Sorry.

I'm sorry.

I didn't mean to say all of that.

I'm just not used to anybody listening.

MOOR-HEN.

When I'm with you I feel like the space between taking off and landing. The sort of rush.
The part before everything hurts.

It's not forever though.

It's just for now. Right?

Everything is a season. The rains are a season

and the cold is a season and the heat is a very short season. Everything happens and
then something else happens.

Listen. You're wonderful.

But you're a very large dog, and your diet generally

consists of ... well. Things like me. And I know I'm not incredibly intelligent, and my
short-term memory is - well. Short - But I don't really see this ending well.

Every time I get up into the air, there's a moment in which all I feel is the wind rushing
past me. It's very exciting and it feels very good. And I believe that it is good. But even
though I intend to stay UP UP UP, the DOWN always hits eventually.