

SCENE 1

DIRTY CITY

Dirty City is if Grand Rapids was entirely Frederik Meijer Gardens. The city is scaled down so that a single block takes a single step. Empty plots of land scatter about. It is between seasons. Any season.

RAU enters. Her hair is unearthly. Her tan gleams. She is expecting a new seed. She tries to plant herself in an empty plot of dirt.

A picket that reads "Curb the Herbs" projects upon that plot.

RAU moves to another empty plot of land. The same message projects. RAU repeats. The message repeats.

The Sun sets.

RAU collapses on the concrete with her body facing the sunset. She feels her belly.

RAU

Sun... A leaf is not meant to turn from this light.

MALUS enters, opposite of the sunset. They are barely clothed.

MALUS

Turn over to the night.

RAU turns away from the sunset.

RAU

Chào. Aren't you an angel?

MALUS

Hello. Aren't all Figs?

RAU

Any Fig is a malice!

MALUS

That's my name: Malus Crabapple. I am a Fig-

RAU

Ment of my imagination.

MALUS

Does your imagination include a better life for yourself here?

RAU

Any plant can imagine. A Cilantro can dream! This city needs its garnishes. Imagine Dirty City's first-ever tanning salon. I *dream* of a better life for my family here...

MALUS

You immigrants have wild dreams. *But imaginations*. You cannot imagine people like me living by your family, let alone amongst yours, wherever you come from.

RAU

You don't know where I come from.

MALUS

Like a leaf, my people are open enough to fly all around the world. You took a leave from Southeast Asia? All your last names are like... *Weed (re: Nguyen)?*

RAU

Răm. Rau Răm. There are more family names out there in Vietnam. And no. You don't know the daily life I came from.

MALUS

Well Rau, I won't judge your days if you don't judge my nights.

RAU

I don't know where your nightlife comes from.

MALUS

It stems from birth.

RAU

You chose this light. This lifestyle you have. It is not something you are born with. You are not natural. I cannot imagine a life without light.

MALUS

You keep this up and your salon stays an imagination.

RAU

I cannot keep this up. No plot of land in Dirty City will ever let me plant myself.

MALUS steps onto a colorful plot of land.

They push aside an adjacent block of concrete to unveil untouched soil.

MALUS

Make your roots at home.

RAU reluctantly plants herself next to MALUS.

RAU

(Relaxing)

Im lang. (translation: "Shut up")

MALUS

(Puzzledly)

Make your bed.

A tanning bed rolls out.

RAU

Shut up.

MALUS

I wasn't born with lightheartedness. *I chose it.*

SCENE 2

TAN SALONTRO

The heart of Dirty City lightly transforms into a tanning salon. An Open/Closed sign hangs. It faces "Closed."

RAU

Im lang. Im lang. Im lang! Im lang!

MALUS

Imagine Dirty City's first-ever tanning salon's first-ever customer!

RAU

Im lang. I refuse to imagine you Figs.

MALUS

I may be a Fig but not a figment of your imagination!

RAU

Figures...