

Planet A

Frozen Figures

Woman, center stage, curled up in a ball. Behind her are five actors in an arc around her, each in a static pose of aggression, or dismissiveness or neglect.

Woman: It hurts. Oh, it hurts. It's like a dagger made of ice, stabbing into the center of my brain, freezing my brain to death from the inside out. But it's not just one dagger. It's five cold, hard daggers made of ice, trying to kill me, freeze me to death, make me cold and hard like them.

She stands up, and speaks of each frozen figure in turn.

Woman: Here he is, my beloved uncle, who raped me.

Here she is, my mother, who believed my uncle's lies, called me a liar, and rejected me—threw me out of the house when I was still only a teenager.

And here *she* is, my “best friend,” who decided it was a good idea to become friends with my mother, and then believe her lies, and also call me a liar.

And you, you evil bastard, my boss who fired me because I wouldn't have sex with you. Asshole.

And finally, here he is, the man I still love, the man I still want, who was so good to me right up to the time he left me because he said I cried too much.

She is now standing behind the frozen figure on the far right, who has his back to her, and one arm held up in a dismissive gesture of departure.

Woman: Oh Jake. Jake, please don't leave me.

She moves toward him, puts her hands on his arms, her face against his back.

Woman: You know I still love you.

She suddenly starts back, holding up her hands, which are now like frozen claws.

Woman: Oh my God! My hands are frozen! It hurts! Fuck!

She rubs her hands in desperation in her armpits, trying to thaw her hands.

Woman: It's always like this—again and again. God damn it! I try to be good to them, to thaw them with the warmth of my heart, the warmth of my love, and they just try to freeze me, try to kill me again.

Mood changes to happy, contented.

Sometimes I'll be in a good mood, happy, warm, when things are going well. Then the frozen figures begin to melt bit by bit, just melt away...

The actors who are the frozen figures begin to slowly melt, getting smaller, losing their hard edges.

Woman: And then I'm very happy, because I think they will just melt away completely, and I'll be safe from them forever.

But then something harsh happens, or someone else is mean to me, or I just don't get a good night's sleep, and they just grow back again, bigger and colder and more evil than ever.

The frozen figures grow back, attaining even more threatening proportions.

Woman: This has to stop. Somehow, it has to stop. I can't take it anymore. I can't take the pain, and the sorrow and the poisonous disappointment. I can't take not knowing whether each day, each today, is the day their coldness will finally kill me.

I have to rise above this somehow, or end it all.

Pause.

During the next section, she mimes going up to the roof.

I'll go to the roof. Yes, I'll go to the roof and make a decision. Either I finally rise above this, or I end my life just to escape this torment. From the roof it's six stories down, with concrete below—just a few seconds of free fall,

and then my brain is smashed apart on the concrete, and all my pain stops forever.

She takes a step up onto a black wooden cube, about one foot tall.

Only a few seconds of delicious weightlessness, and then I don't even feel the impact. It's all over, and I am free. Just one more step, and all my pain ends forever.

Pause, while she takes a couple of hesitant, false steps, then stumbles backward off of the black wooden cube.

Woman: BUT I DON'T WANT TO DIE! I **DO NOT** WANT TO DIE! FUCK! FUCK IT!

She collapses into a pile, sobbing.

Woman: Can I pray for peace? Can I pray for my pain to cease? No, there is no God. There is no one listening. There is no one in this world who cares about me. I am completely broken...completely broken.

But I have to pray, to save myself, because I do want to live. I do.

She looks up.

Woman: Stars. I see some stars! I will pray to these stars to help me. I will pray to the Universe to fill me with love, and generosity, and wisdom. I know no one is listening. But I want and need the wisdom of the Universe to heal me, and set me free.

She prays, kneeling, her hands folded, looking up to the stars.

Please, please give me wisdom to free myself from these frozen figures who torment me. Help me, heal me...please...please.

She stretches her arms out to the heavens, completely exposed. She closes her eyes, and very slowly bends over until her forehead is against the ground.

Gradually, the frozen figures melt completely, and crawl away offstage.

Long pause. (Count silently to thirty.)

The woman opens her eyes, confused, surprised.

Woman: I feel different. I don't know how, but I feel different. Something has changed. I'm going back downstairs.

She rushes back down the stairs from the roof. She returns center stage, and looks around, astonished.

Woman: They...are...gone! There's no trace of them! But the floor must be wet, and then they'll grow back.

She gets down on the floor, feeling all around.

Woman: It's dry! It's completely dry everywhere! They really are gone, and they're never coming back...never coming back.

She stands up. Pause.

Woman: But who am I now? I lived my whole life so far in relation to them. *Who am I?* I'm really not sure. But I *am* sure I want to find out. I need to find out who I am now.

She turns and begins to exit upstage right but stops, then turns around. At this point the audience will probably be applauding.

Woman: Oh my God. Am I a frozen figure to someone else? Have I done the same kind of thing to anyone else? Yes, I've been bad too. I have hurt people too.

Woman: I have apologizing to do. There is love I must give to anyone I have ever harmed.

I need to melt the whole world with my love.

Exit.