

PARKER: I was developing a pheromone to increase birth yield in cattle.

MEREDITH: It would have been a windfall for him if it had been successful.

PARKER: We were working late one night in my laboratory.

MEREDITH: And that's when the accident happened. (*Parker spills the contents of the test tube on Meredith. Parker and Meredith talk to each other.*)

PARKER: (*Cleaning the spill off of Meredith's lab coat.*) I'm so sorry.

MEREDITH: It's all right.

PARKER: I'm such a klutz.

MEREDITH: It's not a problem, really.

PARKER: (*To audience.*) The pheromone was designed to be rubbed into the hide of the cow to stimulate sexual arousal in the bull.

MEREDITH: (*To audience.*) But he'd had no success with his experiments. In desperation, he explored beyond the bounds of accepted scientific practice. (*Parker sniffs the air.*) Into the bovine solution, he introduced the pheromones of a dozen other animals. Some endangered. Some human. The result had properties greater, and more universal, than he had intended.

PARKER: (*Grabs Meredith.*) You are so beautiful. (*He kisses her roughly.*)

MEREDITH: (*To Parker.*) Dr. Parker! What are you doing?

PARKER Love me, Meredith.

MEREDITH: Thomas, no!

~~PARKER:  
—— DANCE WITH ME DARLING,  
—— DANCE WITH ME, DARLING  
—— LOVE ME, LOVE ME, MEREDITH!~~

~~MEREDITH: Thomas, no!~~

PARKER: LOVE ME!

*(Parker lifts Meredith onto the table and begins roughly loving her. He suddenly shifts to slow motion as Meredith speaks.)*

MEREDITH: *(To audience.)* To say that he took me would be romanticizing the act. To say that he raped me would be unfair. He was beyond his own control, acting on an impulse of his own creation that I'm sure he didn't understand. It was the most painful experience I had had in my young life... But, of course, I had no idea what was about to happen as I tried to walk back home. *(Lights out. Shadow Play: Young Meredith walks home sobbing. A bat flutters by too close to her head. She ducks. The bat returns and attaches itself to her dress. She struggles to pull it off. Another bat flies on and attaches itself then another, and another. Young Meredith runs off screaming. Lights up center stage: Young Meredith, covered head to toe in bats, writhes uncontrollably. She screams. Lights up on Meredith.)* The bats were attracted by the pheromone. They were everywhere. They bit, they burrowed — they burrowed... everywhere. They violated me. I ran. They followed me as I ran for home. I hoped my parents would know what to do.

~~FATHER: (Offstage.) Dear God! Meredith!~~

~~MOTHER: (Offstage.) What's going on? Oh my Lord!~~

~~FATHER: (Offstage.) Bats! Help me get them off her.~~

MEREDITH: I felt the bats release. Were they done with me? Was this horror finally over? I looked up. The bats went after my parents. *(Parker enters.)*

PARKER: The next morning I found Meredith barely alive between the dead bodies of her parents. I took her to my home. I still loved her, though we were both so ashamed that we couldn't even look at each other. When I discovered, two months after the incident, that Meredith was pregnant with my child, I begged her to marry me. I hoped that she would love me again.

MEREDITH: In my heart, I knew that I could never love him again, but wanted my child to have a father.

PARKER: We moved to Hope Falls, where I was sure with time we could put the horrors of the past behind us. But the true horror was yet to come.

~~(Lights out. Shadow Play: Young Meredith's legs up in the air. She is huffing and puffing.)~~

~~DOCTOR #2: Just one more push. That's it. Good Wonderful. Congratulations Meredith, you are the mother of a baby girl.~~

~~YOUNG MEREDITH: She's beautiful. Can I hold her?~~

~~DOCTOR #2: Let's just clean her off for you and we'll... wait a second, what's this? Hang on.~~

~~YOUNG MEREDITH: (In Pain.) Ahhh! What is it?~~

~~DOCTOR #2: Give me one more little push would you, Meredith? There seems to be... something else-~~

~~YOUNG MEREDITH: (Pushing.) What is it?~~

~~DOCTOR #2: I'm not sure. May just be the placenta—Oh, my God!~~

~~(We hear the bat cries, and the Doctor holds up a small wriggling bat baby. Lights out on the shadow play. Lights up on Parker carrying a bundle and a shovel.)~~

PARKER: The job fell to me. I took the bat child out to the woods. I had put to sleep countless animals in my work, so killing the thing should not have been a problem. I dearly hoped that this act would finally convince Meredith of the depth of my love for her. *(Parker sets the bundle on the ground; he raises the shovel to kill the thing.)* But I found that I couldn't do it. I felt, to my horror, that I would be killing my own creation. Nonetheless, I couldn't take such a monster back into my home, to my wife, and have it serve as a reminder of the past we'd worked so hard to erase. *(Picks up the bundle.)* So I left you at the mouth of a cave, certain that time or predators would do what I couldn't do myself. *(Sets the bundle at the front of the shadow-play screen.)* But I was wrong...