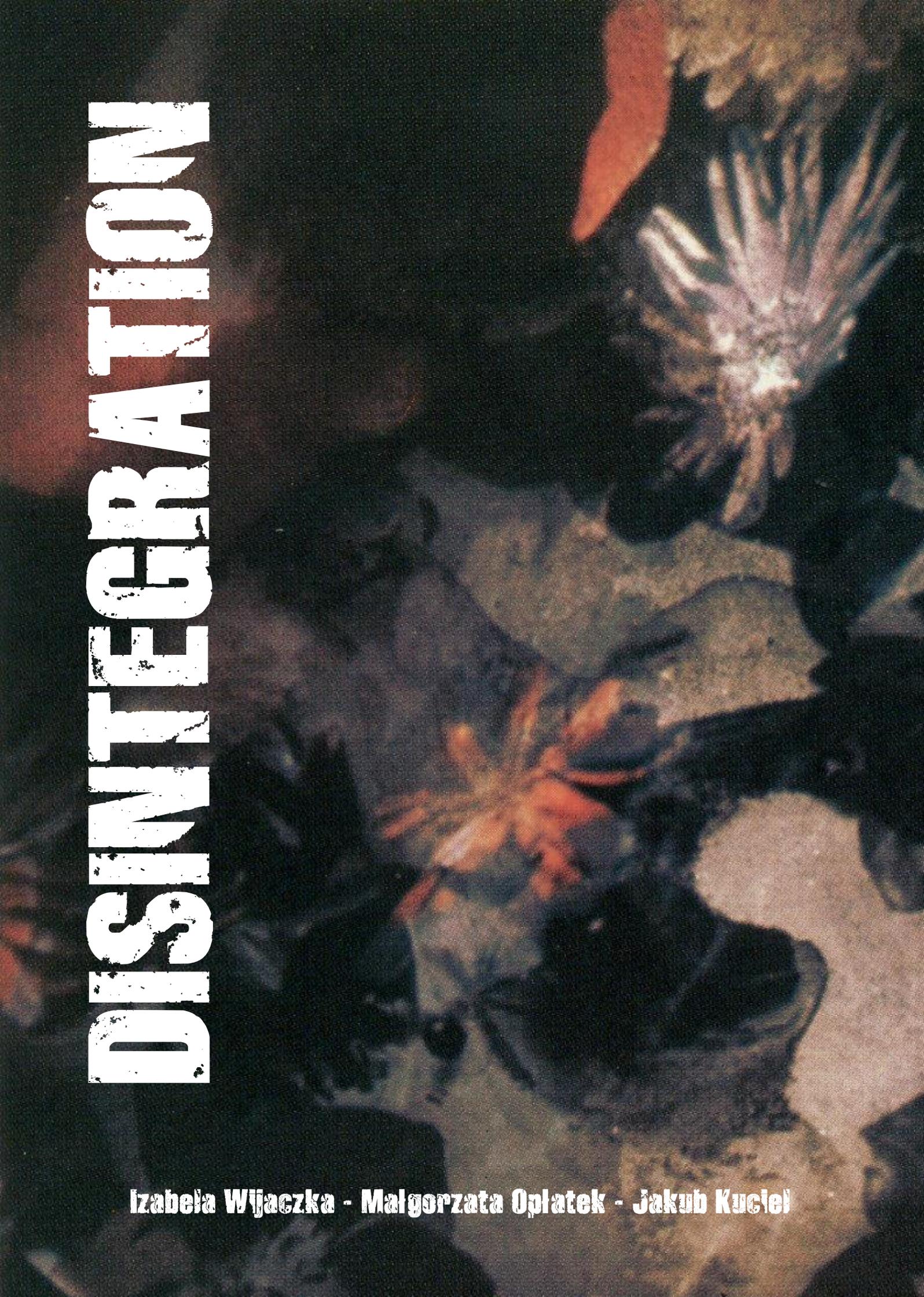


DISINTEGRATION



Izabela Wijaczka - Małgorzata Oplatek - Jakub Kuciel

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The play was inspired by Richard Matheson's novel *I Am Legend*.

Chronology of writing the play:

ACT I - Jakub Kuciel

ACT II - Izabela Wijaczka

ACT III - Małgorzata Opłatek

Characters:

ROBERT - rather raggedly looking middle-aged man with tangled hair, unfastened fly, slightly rolled up legs, holes in socks, red lipstick, wearing a coat too large for him. He is immune to the virus which makes him the only human survivor of the pandemics. In his free time, he listens to The Cure and drinks alcohol until he is drunk like a fish. He is convinced his wife is dead. He misses her terribly.

VIRGINIA - a brilliant scientist aiming to make the world a better place after having survived the pandemic. She was also Robert's wife in the life before the disaster. In her free time, she likes munching vampire snacks.

CORTMAN - Robert's friend from the previous life before the pandemic. As his goal in his new life as a vampire, he chooses to make Robert come out of his house. He has a typical sidekick syndrome, but with tongue in cheek. Cortman is a man who knows everyone that needs to be known in the new world. It is always good to have a friend like this, especially in the post-apocalyptic reality.

KRAKEN - a muscular vampire wearing a tank top and a leather jacket, he has one corner of his mouth lifted up involuntarily, since he has been wounded and now he has a permanent scar there. He tends to brood and sing sad ballads in his free time.

LYNCH - a vampire dwarf, he is short and sturdy. He has curly hair dyed green and yellow and he wears custom-made boots with heels in which he hides a knife and a vial of blood in case he is thirsty. He is a real brainy out of this trio as he speaks in many languages, has good memory and knows how to harvest weed under the fake sun.

BENDER - a short, middle-aged man with a rounded belly. He wears a vest with an embroidered garlic and leather boot and he has his ears and nose pierced with little aspen pegs made out of matches. He loves handicraft and in his free time he makes wooden figurines out of coffins for children. Officially, he is a tough guy.

*I'm so glad you came, I'm so glad you remembered
To see how we're ending our last dance together
Reluctantly, cautiously, but prettier than ever
I really believe that this time it's forever
The Cure - Last Dance*

ACT I

(lights in the theatre gradually fade away, yet the curtain remains closed)

A VOICE

The world has become a vast wasteland.
A pandemic swept away the whole of mankind out of existence.

Now, merely remnants of their former glory remained; like relicts of the past that are just to be buried
deep down the earth.

No trace of living is to be found here.
Not any longer.
That is the end of the world we knew.

Or... so it appears.

(the voice disappears, leaving the stage in silence for a few seconds)

*(an indistinct sound coming from behind the curtain, slowly getting louder; after half a minute, one
can say that there are, in fact, two distinct voices)*

*(one of these voices finally becomes clear; it is "Pictures of You" by The Cure; the second voice, a
male one, tries very hard to keep up with the song, but without much success)*

ROBERT

(mumbling)

Remembering you how you used to be
Slow drowned
You were angels
So much more than everything
Hold for the last time then slip away quietly
Open my eyes
But I never see anything

(the curtain goes up; lights are lit)

*(the scene is divided into two parts: the former, a broader one, is a part of Robert's room, while the
latter is the garden outside of his house)*

*(Robert's room: full of rubbish - empty bottles, clothes scattered all over the place, food scraps on the
floor; the music is playing from the gramophone; there is also a table on which there are: an opened
photo album, some old letters, and an opened bottle of whisky)*

*(Robert is circling around the room, like he is dancing with someone, he smiles and seems to enjoy
what he is doing; he is drunk like a fish; his favourite part of the song is about to begin)*

*Looking so long at these pictures of you
But I never hold on to your heart
Looking so long for the words to be true
But always just breaking apart
My pictures of you...*

*(Robert slows down his dance at this moment, holding closely to something unmaterialised,
which seems to exist only in his mind)*

(the song goes on)

ROBERT

Tutu tutu tutu tutu tu tu
Tutu tutu tutu tutu tu tu
Tutu tutu tutu tutu tu tu

(Robert starts spinning around faster and faster)

Tutu tutu tutu tutu tu tu
Tutu tutu tutu tutu tu tu
Tutu tutu tutu tutu tu tu

(He is probably spinning faster than a fidget spinner at this moment)

Tutu tutu tutu tutu tu tu
Tutu tutu tutu tutu tu tu!

*(he is spinning so fast that eventually he stumbles over the table, knocking it over along with
everything that was on it, scattering the letters and photographs all over him; the bottle falls over,
breaking up and spilling its contents)*

*(the song is coming to an end, but the gramophone stutters at the very last note, repeating it over and
over and over again)*

*(Robert sways as he gets up, cursing; then he begins to clean the mess he did; while doing so, he picks
up a photo in which he and his wife are presented; holding it in his hand, he goes to the armchair and
sits there)*

ROBERT

(after vomiting behind the armchair frame)

Over, and over, and over again! I have been caught in this vicious cycle for months now!

What is the point of living, anyway? Day by day I live my memories, trying to reproduce them. It makes me feel like I am whole again. But how long can I fool myself? The world is dead. And so are you, my dear Virginia!

It is true that my love for you exceeds all limits, even those set by nature itself. It seems that it is the only thing that keeps me going. But maybe, just maybe, you await me in another life? How could I be sure? Oh, if you could give me a sign!

CORTMAN

(shouting)

Come out Robert, oh please, come out!

ROBERT

Oh no, not this again! My love, be glad you died in a traditional way. To live in endless misery, such as this fellow! The others seem to finally disappear, yet he still comes here, night by night, shouting at me to come out, like an evil spirit waiting for my doom!

CORTMAN

Come out! Come out!

ROBERT

I pity him. He was a good fellow. Remember, my love, how we used to visit them every first Sunday of the month to play Scrabble?

CORTMAN

Come out, oh, Robert!

ROBERT

(speaking to the picture of Virginia)

I would get rid of him, but I cannot do so! Though he had been infected with the disease, he remained human-like. There must be something left in his brain... from the previous life.

(sighs)

Oh, just when I think of it... If they finally manage to reach me, I will also turn into an aimlessly walking, and always flesh-hungry creature like Cortman! I shiver at the mere thought of it!

(Cortman keeps shouting in a distance like a madman; he is still not present on the scene)

ROBERT

(shouting)

Wouldn't you just shut up, man?

CORTMAN

(in a distance)

But, Robert, I have to see you, I really do!

(Cortman decides to approach the house closer, from the other side)

ROBERT

(to himself)

What a terrible disease it is. I would rather die instantly than walk these streets forever, being burned by the sun. What kind of Purgatory is it?

A body. Both dead and undead. Seemingly immortal, but so fragile in substance! What is it that drives these disgusting creatures? Is it lust? Or simply the will to live? Perhaps it is the soul, trapped in the body, being unable to flee?

CORTMAN

(knocks politely at the window)

Oh, Robert, Robert! Are you afraid? Let us see whether this self-imposed house isolation did not affect your condition that much. Show me what you got, old pal!

ROBERT

(shouting)

Enough is enough!

(to the photo of Virginia)

I am sorry, my love, for what is about to happen. Do not watch. Let us both remember him the way he was back then.

(Robert hides the photo in his pocket, puts on his shoes and goes to the kitchen to pick his excessively long double-barreled shotgun; then, he begins unlocking the door)

CORTMAN

It is happening!

ROBERT

Just you wait.

(Cortman quickly rushes into the garden to surprise his friend)

(Robert opens the door aggressively)

ROBERT

What the fuck?

(Cortman stares at Robert, holding a badminton racket in his hand)

CORTMAN

There you are! Jeez, I thought you will never come out of this house.

(notices the double barreled shotgun)

Uh-huh, buddy, are we going duck hunting? I am afraid they are all asleep now.

ROBERT

What?

CORTMAN

It is too dark now. They sleep.

ROBERT

No. I surely had too much whisky that night.

CORTMAN

What is it, dry-mouth? Have you been drinking without me again? I knew it! Have you invited anyone to the party? Had some fun today, huh? You look terrible! Put a smile on this face. Have you seen your hair? A complete chaos! Let me handle it.

(begins to move towards Robert)

ROBERT

(flinched)

Don't you dare make another step!

(points the shotgun at Cortman)

CORTMAN

Did you get off on the wrong foot? Where is your hospitality, man? You have surely changed a lot since the last time we met.

ROBERT

(stares at Cortman in silence)

CORTMAN

Hey, look. You are the only one that is still sitting here. I have been coming here for months. Not really sure why. Some voice in my head had told me so. It all started during the match of dodgeball with my boys. I got hit right in the head. Since then, I have been hearing many things. I remember you, but the problem is that I do not remember whether we have actually met before. Who was your wife?

ROBERT

How dare you?

CORTMAN

Huh? You had a wife, no? Stop, please stop, saying these things, they insult my friend!

(Cortman begins hitting his head with his fists)

ROBERT

Stop doing that! I mean, I had a wife once. And you were my neighbour. I suppose you should remember her.

CORTMAN

Should I? I don't remember anything since the awakening.

ROBERT

What?

CORTMAN

You know, I woke up like this one day, in a basement of some sort. Like, I have been dreaming for so long. The thing is, I don't remember what I was dreaming about. Not a single thing. Or do I? They told me to pick myself up and go with them to the underground. It is no use in living here. So I went with them.

ROBERT

Them? You are telling me there are others of your kind?

CORTMAN

Of my kind? Man, but I am like you!

ROBERT

You are infected.

CORTMAN

I am what?

ROBERT

Nevermind. You made me curious. Tell me more about your... people.

CORTMAN

Don't be a fool. Come with me. You will meet them by yourself. See how we live. Then, we will play some badminton. And leave this weapon behind, you will scare the others.

ROBERT

I don't trust you. I don't think I will.

CORTMAN

Maaaaan, do not act like this!

ROBERT

That is it, I go back to my house. I must be fucking dreaming.

(Robert turns around and heads back to the house; the photograph falls out of his pocket)

(Cortman picks up the photograph)

CORTMAN

Man, so you do know some of us!

ROBERT

What?

CORTMAN

Look, you have lost something. That's Virginia!

ROBERT

What? You said that you have no memory of... what you have been dreaming about.

CORTMAN

And I don't.

ROBERT

But you know her?

CORTMAN

Why, yes, of course. She did many things for us, for which reason our underground society is prospering as ever. Recently, she invented an artificial sun that does not burn us! Now we can clearly see where exactly the ball goes during our games. It was a bit more problematic back then, you see.

And lately...

ROBERT

Oh, shut it! Where is she?

CORTMAN

Down below, buddy. So you do know her, eh? Leave this house. Come with me.

ROBERT

With you shall I go, then

CORTMAN

Do you believe me?

ROBERT

No. But I have nothing to lose.

CORTMAN

Oh, okay, mister dramatic. See for yourself.
(Cortman opens up the entrance to the sewer)

ROBERT

Are you serious?

CORTMAN

No, no, we do not live like that.

ROBERT

I mean... Whatever. But go first.

ACT II

(Robert and Cortman walk through the sewer; they can barely be seen since the lights are dimmed; they do not say a word to each other; after a while, Robert, with a pouty look on his face, stops and breaks the silence)

ROBER

That's it, Cortman. I've had enough. You can kill me now. We don't have to pretend anymore.

CORTMAN

(stops and sighs)

You really are a miserable bastard, aren't you? You're about to reunite with the love of your life, buddy, and yet, you can't get rid of your funny little conspiracy theories. Dude, she's dying to see you! Oops, my bad. Anyways...

ROBERT

(in an irritated tone)

Cut the bullshit. Drink my blood and I think we're done here.

CORTMAN

(his voice echoes down the tunnel)

Jesus! Why are you being so dramatic?!

ROBERT

(mumbles under his breath)

What am I even doing down here with this lunatic? Must've been the booze. I took it too far this time...

CORTMAN

(shakes his head, giving Robert a reprimanding look)

You have plenty of time to sober up before we get to your lady. The last thing she needs right now is her husband who questions her genius. How many times do I have to tell you that we don't drink human blood because, well, there are *no* humans left? Except you. You would know about it if you hadn't locked yourself in the house, and got wasted every night. Living like a hermit never did anybody any good, and you decided to go full Robert Smith. Luckily, you're still her type.

(quietly)

I mean, I hope so.

ROBERT

(looks at Cortman as if he was going to murder him)

Fuck you. You have no idea what The Cure meant to us.

(snorts)

You wouldn't understand.

CORTMAN

(amused)

Seriously...? Do you think no one ever heard of them? Everyone knows that your wife listens to them on a regular basis. She says their music heals her mind and makes her more creative at work. She even put up a Cure poster in her office.

ROBERT

(shocked)

No way.

CORTMAN

I wouldn't bother coming for you if it wasn't for her. She deserves to be happy again as she still believes in the love-is-forever thing. She remembers The Cure, but doesn't seem to remember you. She will, though. She will be your Mary Poole¹ as soon as you meet her.

ROBERT

(cheers up immediately)

Let's go, then!

CORTMAN

(pats Robert on the back)

Now we're talking!

(they take up walking down the tunnel; Robert looks much more relaxed. The corners of his lips are curled up in a little smile. He even hums some melody. Suddenly, distant noises and steps can be heard)

CORTMAN

(rubs his forehead)

Shit. The guards.

(Robert looks at him in confusion)

ROBERT

What?

CORTMAN

(clearly uneasy)

We might be in trouble.

(the steps intensify; Robert begins to laugh bitterly)

¹ Mary Poole is Robert Smith's wife. They have been together for more than 40 years. Most of Cure songs are inspired by her.

ROBERT

I knew it! I knew it was too good to be true. But you know what? Whatever happens, screw it. And screw you, Cortman!

(he evidently wants to keep talking, but before he has a chance, Cortman covers Robert's mouth with his hand; Robert is somewhat surprised and tries to protest first, but Cortman ignores him; finally, Robert becomes quiet)

CORTMAN

(angry; whispers quickly)

Shut up and listen to me, for God's sake. We aren't allowed to use this tunnel. Just don't say anything stupid. No, actually, don't say anything at all.

(he removes his hand from Robert's mouth; Robert stares at Cortman, a hollow look in his eyes, as the steps get even louder)

ROBERT

(unimpressed)

Why?

CORTMAN

(rolling his eyes)

Because. I'll take care of it.

ROBERT

(sneers)

Now, who's dramatic?

(Cortman shoots daggers at him.)

(enter: Kraken, Lynch, Bender.)

KRAKEN

(in a low voice)

"All hope abandon ye who enter here!"

(They stand in awkward silence. Robert and Cortman exchange looks, both clearly puzzled. After a few seconds, Kraken bursts into laughter.)

KRAKEN

Just kidding! *(to Robert)* What's gotten into you, buddy?

ROBERT

(looking at Kraken suspiciously)

I... What do you mean?

KRAKEN

(grinning)

You look like you've seen a ghost, but *we're* supposed to be thrilled to see you. You smell. You're a human.

(He turns back to Lynch and Bender who nod their heads.)

CORTMAN

(to Kraken, Lynch, and Bender)

It's my friend who has survived the plague, drinking his ass off. But more importantly, he's Virginia's husband. I am taking him to her.

LYNCH

Virginia's husband?

BENDER

(in a grave tone)

You could tell by the hair. No one does their hair like this. You must be either Robert Smith or Virginia's husband.

ROBERT

(to Bender)

Yeah, it's been mostly months of losing my mind, but thanks. I'm sure she will appreciate it.

(Bender pulls a flask out of his vest pocket and takes a sip. Then, he offers it to Robert.)

BENDER

Want some? It was made thanks to your wonderful wife. It's the only thing we've been consuming lately.

ROBERT

(looks at Cortman, not knowing what to do)

Uh... Is it safe for me?

KRAKEN

We'll see.

(laughs)

LYNCH

He's messing with you. You don't have to drink it if you don't want to.

CORTMAN

(looking at Robert)

Actually, if you want to live in the underworld, you won't have much of a choice, but don't worry about it now.

(to Kraken, Lynch and Bender)

Now, when all of you can see that he is not a danger to our society, let alone Virginia, can you please show us a shortcut to the place where she is?

LYNCH

Of course!

KRAKEN

Sure thing!

BENDER

(pulls out a joint and offers it to Robert)

Here. This will chill you out.

ROBERT

(wide-eyed)

How is that even...? No, thanks. I think I'll pass.

KRAKEN

(puts his arm around Robert's shoulder enthusiastically; Robert looks rather uncomfortable)

Let's not waste any more time!

(They leave.)

ACT III

(Kraken, Bender, Lynch, Cortman and Robert walk down the corridor; the corridor looks shabby and it's dark; Cortman and Robert look around with interest and caution; Lynch and Bender walk in front, Kraken walks behind them and hums; they enter the elevator; everyone looks at each other while the music plays from the broken speakers)

*Whenever I'm alone with you
You make me feel like I am free again
Whenever I'm alone with you
You make me feel like I am clean again*

*However far away
I will always love you
However long I stay
I will always love you
Whatever words I say
I will always love you
I will always love you*

CORTMAN

For all your advancement, you did not bother to hire some interior decorator to make the place of your boss pretty, eh?

ROBERT

(hisses)
Cortman!

CORTMAN

(looks surprised by Robert's reaction)
What?

(Cortman and Robert exchange looks)

LYNCH

(shrugs)
Oh, you mean this?

(Lynch makes a gesture at the elevator)

This is just a cover not to attract unnecessary attention from the likes of you.

(points at Robert)

Although, everyone who needs to know the location of this place knows where to find it. It's no secret around here. Virginia together with others work hard day and night to make our society a better place. They should not be disturbed.

ROBERT

I see. I wonder what kind of inventions they have come up with.

LYNCH

(makes a small smile)

They are most wonderful.

(the door of the elevator opens. They step outside and regular, heavy thumping comes from the distance. Robert looks around nervously)

ROBERT

What is it?

(a big pink unicorn runs from behind the corner and heads towards them at great speed)

LYNCH

(screams gleefully)

Glitter!

(Glitter trots towards Lynch, stops and lowers her head. Lynch pets her, pulls weed out of his pocket and gives it to her. Glitter happily accepts)

ROBERT and CORTMAN

What?!

(Bender comes closer and looks at them)

This is one of your wife's inventions.

ROBERT

A unicorn?

BENDER

No! It's not a unicorn, not a real one, at least. Your wife used horse cells and after playing with some synthetics, she has created a horse with a thorn on its head.

LYNCH

See what kind of wonders these geniuses are able to make out there?

(keeps petting Glitter and giving her weed)

ROBERT

(still shocked)

Now, I see.

(after a moment)

Although, it is not a wonder, it is an invention of science. It's not a real...

(Kraken, who has been standing there completely silent the whole time, steps in and puts his hand on Robert's shoulder)

KRAKEN

Shhh.

(puts a finger on his lips and points at Lynch with his chin)

He has always dreamed of befriending a real unicorn.

CORTMAN

Who hasn't, hehe!

(Robert gives him a look)

(a voice coming from afar)

Glitter, come back here!

(a woman runs out from behind the corner; she has her hair reaching her shoulders and a few strands are falling into her face; she is pale and she breathes heavily; even though she walks fast towards them, there is no blush staining her cheeks from the effort; she shouts)

Glitter, Glitter!

(the unicorn raises her head and walks slowly to the woman approaching them)

BENDER

We were looking for you, Miss Virginia.

VIRGINIA

(petting Glitter, still not noticing Robert)

Is that so?

ROBERT

Virginia?

VIRGINIA

Ro...Robert?

ROBERT

Virginia!

VIRGINIA

Robert!

CORTMAN

Cortman!

(everyone looks at each other deeply shocked and confused)

ROBERT and VIRGINIA

You are alive! What are you doing here?!

ROBERT

I came here looking for you.

CORTMAN

And he's gone through a lot of trouble to...

(Kraken approaches Cortman and unceremoniously puts his hand on Cortman's mouth)

KRAKEN

Our loverboy Robert's found his Mary at last. Let them be...

(they step aside and Kraken starts to sing "Lovesong")

*Whenever I'm alone with you
You make me feel like I am home again
Whenever I'm alone with you
You make me feel like I am whole again*

*Whenever I'm alone with you
You make me feel like I am young again
Whenever I'm alone with you
You make me feel like I am fun again*

VIRGINIA

(takes a closer look at him)

I thought you were dead.

ROBERT

I've survived. I'm immune to the virus and I was trying to find a cure for... the condition of people like you.

VIRGINIA

My condition?

ROBERT

Yes.

VIRGINIA

Have you managed to do it?

ROBERT

No, not yet, at least.

VIRGINIA

Robert...

(she takes a step closer towards him)

Now, I am one of them. I do not wish to change back. I want to help people here.

ROBERT

People?

VIRGINIA

Yes, people.

(she points at Cortman and the vampire thugs)

CORTMAN

And the right people we are, aren't we?

(the vampire thugs nod in solemn agreement)

VIRGINIA

See?

ROBERT

I see...

VIRGINIA

(comes closer)

Come, stay with us. There are so many things to do, you could help us.

ROBERT

What about my humanity?

VIRGINIA

What about it?

ROBERT

I am still human. Am I supposed to leave it behind? To give it up and be one of you?

VIRGINIA

If you only wish...

ROBERT

No! I don't! I... I don't... know, actually.

VIRGINIA

(her features soften)

Nobody tells you to give up your humanity...

ROBERT

(suspiciously)

Really?

VIRGINIA

Really. You can keep your humanity or you can choose ours. You do not need to be just one thing. You can live as a human and choose to become one of us whenever you want. Or do not choose at all.

It does not matter. We can still live together and support each other... If you only want to?

(looks at him: first with shyness, then with open affection and determination)

Do you want to?

(Cortman and the others keep their fingers crossed and chant silently in the background)

Say yes, say yes, say yes!

CORTMAN

I do.

(Cortman and the thugs are doing high fives with each other in the background)

VIRGINIA

Come and kiss me!

(smiles and stretches out her arms widely; Robert takes a few steps towards her, but he hesitates when he sees that there are droplets of blood in the corner of her mouth)

ROBERT

(stands there rather shy and not sure how to deliver this fact to her)

Um...

VIRGINIA

(confused)

What is it, love?

ROBERT

(scratches the back of his head)

Nothing... You...

(points at the corner of her mouth vaguely)

You have... something there.

VIRGINIA

(touches her mouth and her eyes go wide)

Oh, shoot, that must be my lunch!

(turns around, pulls out a handkerchief and wipes her mouth discreetly)

I had no idea it was there! You could have told me earlier! I must have looked so silly!

ROBERT

(smiles and takes her hand)

You look perfect.

(takes both of her hands in his and leans down, looking her in the eyes)

I have missed you so much. With you, I feel young and clean again.

(he is serious and his words are barely more than a whisper)

Regardless of what has already happened and what will happen in the future, I promise we will face it together, you and I... I love you, and I always will.

(bends to kiss her, but before he has a chance, Virginia puts her hands on both sides of his face and kisses him like the world was meant to end. Who knows, perhaps this will be the case some day, but not today. Definitely not for this happy, reunited couple)

VIRGINIA

I bet you will!

THE END