

Begin

late August

of the blue heron as a harbinger of good luck. *(Enter Cassandra. She's 30 to 60, dressed comfortably for cleaning. Or maybe a colorful dress, an exotic style, something she actually looks good in.)*

CASSANDRA. Beware the ides of March!

VANYA. What?

CASSANDRA. Beware the ides of March!

SONIA. March? Isn't it late August?

CASSANDRA. Beware the middle of the month! Beware of Greeks bearing gifts! *(Suddenly she feels inspiration from above, or from somewhere — her psychic powers suddenly turn on, maybe her head moves, or her eyes flutter; she is visited by visions/thoughts, and what she says she dramatically intones, sounding a bit like a speech in Greek tragedy. We should hear her words, she should make sense of them, but they should also be said fast, her mind and psyche are receiving thoughts quickly.)*

O wretches!

into the Land of Darkness we sail

in a pea green boat;

all around us is full of fire,

and the Delaware River overflows its bank,

and dismal moans rise from Bucks County,

where amity and enmity intermingle.

Portents of dismay

and calamity

yawn beneath the yonder cliff.

O fools looking behind but not looking ahead,

Dost thou not sense thy attendant doom?

VANYA. Cassandra, I have asked you repeatedly to please just say "good morning." Alright?

CASSANDRA. I see visions. Shadows of what lies ahead. It is my curse to see these shadows and my duty to warn you.

VANYA. Cassandra, I think you take your name too seriously.

CASSANDRA. My name? What do you mean?

VANYA. You know. Greek mythology. Apollo gave Cassandra second sight, but then cursed her so no one ever believed her.

CASSANDRA. Oh I know that. *(Sudden psychic thought pops into her head.)* Oh my God! I see something imminent. It's going to happen any moment. One of you is going to take two cups of coffee, and smash them onto the floor. *(She looks between them.)* It will be you, Vanya. Don't do it!

SONIA. It already happened.

CASSANDRA. Then I was right!

SONIA. No, you said it was GOING to happen, and it already has happened.

CASSANDRA. But I am correct you will want me to clean it up. Right? Where are the broken cups?

SONIA. *(Pointing.)* Right over there.

CASSANDRA. *(Looks.)* Oh my God! I was right. You did this, you, Vanya, broke the cups.

SONIA. That's right, he did.

VANYA. Just clean it up, would you please?

SONIA. Clean it up, clean it up!!!

CASSANDRA. Fie on you both! I see doom and destruction swirling around you.

VANYA. No, just say good morning. Try it.

CASSANDRA. Good morning.

VANYA. Thank you. Good morning.

SONIA. Good morning.

CASSANDRA. And yet, what's good about it? Beware of Hootie Pie.

SONIA. Who?

CASSANDRA. I don't know. Just beware of her. Or it.

VANYA. Hootie Pie. We need to keep a small notebook nearby and write all these things down. For your sanity hearing later.

SONIA. Hootie Pie. Is that a first name, "Hootie Pie"? Or is "Hootie" the first name, and "Pie" the last name?

VANYA. Or maybe Hootie Pie is a pie. And you can order it at a restaurant.

CASSANDRA. I don't know what Hootie Pie is. I just know you must beware it. *(She feels another psychic message. Maybe her head moves or maybe her eyes flutter. Something.)* And also beware of something happening to this house. *(Walks toward them, or walks in a bit of a circle.)* The house, beware. Be wary. Something bad is coming. You may lose the house.

VANYA. Lose it?

CASSANDRA. Someone will sell the house right from under you and you will become homeless. You will walk many miles to the poor house.

SONIA. Surely someone would give us a ride.

CASSANDRA. No, you will walk.

VANYA. And I don't think there are such things as the poor house anymore.

End