

Scene 2

Lights up. Morning. Cassandra comes into the house, looks around quickly to see that no one is downstairs yet.

She is holding some odd Mardi Gras-like stick with colored streamers on it and is going around the room, shaking it. We can assume she's doing something magical or superstition-related, a "cleansing" ceremony.

Then she picks up a little Snow White doll — the doll is dressed pretty much the same as Masha was dressed last night.

Cassandra takes out a pin, and sticks the doll. From upstairs, Masha screams: "Aaaaaaaaaggghhh!" Cassandra is surprised and encouraged that the pin-sticking worked so quickly. She sticks the pin in the doll again. From upstairs, Masha screams: "Aaaaaaaaaggghhh!" Cassandra looks at the doll and gets close to its face. She moves the doll up to her forehead. She is visibly sending her thought waves to Masha through the doll.

CASSANDRA. Did your brain hear that, you sexy killer, you? (*Sends in some additional thoughts.*) "I do not want to sell the house, I do not want to sell the house. And whenever I *do* think of selling the house, I get a little pain." (*Sticks the pin in the doll again.*)

MASHA. (*Offstage.*) Aaaaaaaaaggghhhhh! Vanya! Vanya, come here.

CASSANDRA. Oh, it's bad to use voodoo, but it's for a good cause. (*Imparts this thought to the doll.*) Beware of selling the house. You have more money than you need, you greedy movie star. Don't toss your brother and your sister into the trash pile. (*Stern and said with a rhythm.*) It's a bad chile that puts its loved ones on the trash pile. It's a bad chile that puts its loved ones on the trash pile.

VANYA. (*Offstage.*) Masha, what's the matter?

MASHA. (*Offstage.*) There's something wrong with the bed. Or the sheets. There are pins in them.

CASSANDRA. Ooooh, I'm thinking of selling the house. (*Sticks pin in doll.*)

MASHA. (*Offstage.*) Aaaaaaaaggghh.

VANYA. (*Offstage.*) But you're not even near the bed.

MASHA. (*Offstage.*) I'm not making it up.

VANYA. (*Offstage.*) Wait, I need coffee, do you both want some?

SPIKE. (*Offstage.*) Yeah, man, that'd be good.

MASHA. I can't figure out what this is.

VANYA. (*Offstage.*) I'll be right back. (*Cassandra realizes Vanya is about to come downstairs, she looks at the doll and tries to hide it. Vanya enters and she quickly puts the doll behind her.*) Cassandra!

CASSANDRA. Beware!

VANYA. Of what?

CASSANDRA. Everything.

VANYA. Why are you here? This isn't one of your cleaning days.

CASSANDRA. I'm worried about you and Sonia. I had presentiments last night. Masha must not sell the house. The market is still soft anyway, doesn't she know that? But it's a bad thing for her to do, she needs to watch over you and Sonia. I'm tired of foretelling the future, but then the bad things happen anyway. I want to *change* the future, I want to *change* this situation.

VANYA. Well, goodness, that's very generous of you, Cassandra. I appreciate your concern.

CASSANDRA. You're welcome. Why don't I go make that coffee for you?

VANYA. That would be nice, thanks. (*The conversation has relaxed Cassandra and she forgets about the doll behind her back and lets her arms hang at her side as she starts to go to the kitchen.*)

VANYA. Wait a minute, what's that in your hand?

CASSANDRA. Nothing.

VANYA. What is that doll you're holding?

CASSANDRA. It came in a cereal box.

VANYA. Cassandra, is that a voodoo doll?

CASSANDRA. Good God, is that what this is?

VANYA. That's the exact costume that Masha wore last night. How did you know that?

CASSANDRA. I'm psychic. Also, I saw Spike hang it up in the bedroom yesterday.

VANYA. And is that why Masha has been screaming this morning?

CASSANDRA. I really couldn't say.

Begin

VANYA. I don't approve of voodoo. Though I admit I'm sort of impressed. You stick the pin in the doll and Masha feels it?

CASSANDRA. It's just a pin prick, but it makes its point.

VANYA. Well don't do it anymore.

CASSANDRA. Alright, I won't. You wanna try?

VANYA. No.

CASSANDRA. You sure?

VANYA. No I don't want to try.

CASSANDRA. Go ahead, try.

VANYA. Well ... It doesn't hurt much, right?

CASSANDRA. That's right. I send her thought waves about the house, then I zap her. I'll tell you when. "I want to sell the house."
(Cassandra points, and Vanya sticks a pin in the doll. No noise upstairs.)

VANYA. Oh, it didn't work.

CASSANDRA. That's odd. Well, it just proves my other worldly powers. Here, let me do it. Masha, listen to my brain: "I want to sell the house."
(Sticks pin in the doll.)

End

MASHA. *(Offstage.)* Aaaaaaaaagghhhh! *(Vanya is amazed, and Cassandra is pleased. They look excited and happy, maybe laugh even. Or do a happy celebration dance. Right at this moment, Spike comes in wearing a T-shirt and underpants, and wearing untied sneakers. He's amused that they seem so happy.)*

SPIKE. What are you two so happy about?

VANYA. Nothing. *(Cassandra realizes she's holding the doll, quickly puts it behind her back.)*

SPIKE. What's behind your back?

CASSANDRA. *(Pretending to see something behind him.)* Oh my God! A bat! Look out! *(Cassandra dramatically points behind him. Spike turns around. The second he does Cassandra throws the doll to Vanya, who hides it behind his back. Spike turns back, a bit confused at their motion. Vanya suddenly waves the Mardi Gras streamer stick up and down in front of Spike's face, and surreptitiously throws the doll to Cassandra, who quickly puts it in her bag. Spike is slightly confused but still amused at their seeming playfulness.)*

SPIKE. What bat?

CASSANDRA. It must have flown upstairs.

SPIKE. I hope Masha doesn't see it. She's already hysterical about whatever these weird pin-prick things are.

CASSANDRA. Oh, she's having trouble with pricks? Women often do.

SPIKE. Ha, ha. *(To Vanya.)* Is the coffee ready?

VANYA. No, I was talking. *(Enter Masha in a somewhat elaborate dressing gown, like a movie star of an earlier era. She looks stressed and disheveled though.)*

MASHA. Is the coffee not ready? I need to call Hootie Pie this morning, and I really need my coffee first. And Spike, darling, you forgot your running shorts. You can't go running in the neighborhood in your underwear. *(Hands him the shiny running shorts she's carrying.)*

SPIKE. Oh, right.

CASSANDRA. I'll make the coffee, but before I do, I have a morning warning to impart. *(Said with conviction and dramatic intoning:)*

O Citizens of Athens,

the temple of Athena

rocks with ages of wines long past their vintage.

Our vines have tender grapes.

Do not stamp on these grapes.

Or on the hearts of your flesh and blood

Beware the nocturnal flying creatures

Beware the hawk, the eagle, the vulture.

Beware the Hootie Owls of Bucks County.

Avoid all real estate transactions for the next twenty years.

You will sell at a loss!

Wait 'til the market improves, you foolish citizen of Athens!

And ponder on proximity, how close one thing is to another.

Young men are meant for young women.

Or at least women whose decades are within hailing distance.

You can't hail a taxi that is thirty miles away

So why then hail a young man who is but ten and twenty,

while you are ten and twenty and twenty and a whole

bunch of change.

(Masha looks furious at Cassandra.)

These words come not from me but from the Goddess Athena,

And from the Furies who are furious.

Beware, one of you in this room, I'm not quite sure who.

But the initial is M.

I will go make coffee.

(Exits.)

MASHA. God, I just can't stand her. *(Feels pin prick.)*
Aaaaaaaaagghh! What is that??? These pin-prick things. Are they in the air?