

JRATW S3E13 - THE CHILDREN

Scene 1: BARN INT.

SOUND: THUNDER ROARS ABOVE AS RAIN COMES DOWN HARD ON THE BARN. THE SOUND OF CHILDREN FEET RUN THROUGH THE BARN. THUNDER CRACKS OUTSIDE IN THE STORM.

CHILDREN AND MARISSA:

(AT ONCE)

They invaded our home. They will not hurt us. Not again. They will pay.

SOUND: NICO RUNS AROUND A CORNER, HIDING BEHIND A BALE OF HAY AS SOME CHILDREN RUN BY. THEY RUN RIGHT BY AND DEEPER INTO THE FARM.

NICO:

(HOLDS HIS BREATH AS THE CHILDREN SEARCH FOR HIM, THEN RELEASES IT WHEN THEY'RE GONE.)

NICO: (cont'd)

(WHISPERING)

I think we lost them for now. I told all of you we needed a plan- (REALIZING NO ONE ELSE IS WITH HIM) Uhhh...hey? Tango? ... Frey? ... Jim? ... (BITTER AS BITTER CAN GET) I knew this wouldn't work, of COURSE it wouldn't! Why would anything work out for once? I mean really.

SOUND: AS NICO COMPLAINS A PAIR OF LITTLE FEET SLOWLY CREEP UP BEHIND HIM

NICO: (cont'd)

(STILL WHISPERING BUT A BIT MORE VIOLENTLY)

We should've actually been patient and found an actual solution! Billie even mentioned a spire, and WE DIDN'T THINK OF WHAT THAT MEANT! But no, we get distracted by body-switching, and aliens, and just being general idiots, AND the one time of year I get sick I get dragged out to this stupid farm and now all we're gonna do is just die... I mean this is IT THIS IS THE END-

BILLIE:

Um-

SOUND: NICO JUMPS BACK AND NEARLY TRIPS AS BILLIE GETS HIS ATTENTION

NICO:

(NOPE)

NOPE! NO, NO, NO, NO- (Oh wait, never mind Nico doesn't die... Yet) Hang on... B.. Billie? That was your name, right?

BILLIE:

(UPSET)

... You shouldn't have come. None of you should have!

NICO:

Um... Wait, why isn't Marissa using you to chase us through the barn? (BEAT/A LITTLE SKEPTICAL)...Oh no, she's possessing you right now? She's right there?

BILLIE:

(QUICKLY, ALMOST CUTTING NICO OFF)

No! No, I'm Marissa's best friend, she doesn't do that to me like the others unless I'm in danger or she needs to talk to me... (Frustrated) But why did you have to come??? Marissa wouldn't have gotten angry. She's so, so mad! And you'll all get hurt!

NICO:

What do you expect us to do, Billie? Keep letting kids get kidnapped? We don't tend to twiddle our thumbs and sit idly by while bad shi-... *stuff* happens. What Marissa's doing is wrong.

BILLIE:

(MORE UPSET)

I **know!!!** I know it's bad, but Marissa won't listen to me! She never listens to me! She doesn't listen to anyone! She used to be a good leader, but a lot of kids don't want to come here, and... I know she was good before, but what if her shadow is bad too?

NICO:

(ATTEMPTING TO BE COMFORTING)

Hey, hey, it's... It's okay... Um... The kidnapping and the attacking us isn't okay but- no. Ugh. Okay, Billie, you know what, I wasn't a good person for a while, either. I did some bad things too.

BILLIE:

... What did you do?

NICO:

... Some bad things. I.. I hurt Tango and Jim. I... I kind of kidnapped Jim. You know, the talking radio? I kidnapped-well, "radio-napped" him without telling Tango. I hurt Jim, and I hurt Tango... I hurt all of them, and they're never going to forget it. But I'm here now, and I... I think I'm getting better... You know, Everyone does bad things sometimes, but if they want, they can change that. That can change. You can get better too, okay?

BILLIE:

... I can't say no to Marissa. What if she gets mad at me?

NICO:

Then you need to talk to her and get her to understand that. I mean is she even your friend if she hurts you?

BILLIE:

(TAKES A DEEP BREATH)

SOUND: THE SOUND OF KIDS FOOTSTEPS COME CLOSER

BILLIE: (cont'd)

(QUICKLY AND PANICKED)

I-I can't- I can't! I don't know... (BEAT) We need to get to the rafters! This way.

SOUND: BILLIE AND NICO HIGH-TAIL IT OUT OF THERE BEFORE THE KIDS CAN FIND THEM

Scene 2: BARN INT.

SOUND: THE SOUND OF CHILDREN CHASING AFTER THE WANDERERS

FREY:

HOW BIG IS THIS BARN?

JIM ROBBIE:

WHEAT PROCESSING HAS A LOT OF STEPS, ARE YOU COMPLAINING THAT WE HAVEN'T RUN OUT OF PLACES TO RUN?!

FREY:

I DON'T SEE YOU RUNNING, TIN MAN! TANGO, CAN'T YOU JUST GO WERE-BEAR ON THESE KIDDOS?

TANGO:

NO!

FREY:

WE'RE GOING TO DIE- SECOND OF THE DAY, I'M REALLY WINNING RIGHT NOW AREN'T I.

TANGO:

(PANICKING)

NO! NO, NO, NO! I CAN'T! I DON'T WANT TO HURT ANYONE! ESPECIALLY KIDS WHO DON'T KNOW BETTER!

JIM ROBBIE:

GUYS! OVER THERE!

SOUND: TANGO AND FREY DIVE THROUGH ONE OF THE DOORWAYS AND HIDE AS A MOD OF CHILDREN PASS BY. THEIR FOOTSTEPS FADE AWAY

FREY:

Okay, OKAY, Nico before you say ANYTHING, anything, even a little whisper of a word, alright, you were right, okay? You were super right, and we probably should have gotten into this whole situation with something that resembled a- (BEAT and realizing they're missing a party member)... guys, where's Nico?

JIM ROBBIE:

(... WELL SHIT)
... Oh no.

TANGO:

(OH SHIT)
We- WE HAVE TO FIND HIM!-

FREY:

(A BIT QUIETER)
Tango! Inside voice. Hiding... currently hiding from scary blood-thirsty devil children intent on killing us, so maybe we should lower our volume a little bit.

TANGO:

(QUIETER, BUT AS IF SOMEONE TURNED THE DIAL DOWN ONLY A NOTCH)
We have to find Nico! What if the kids got him? What if they're making him play musical chairs-

JIM ROBBIE:

(ALSO QUIET. IT'S QUIET WHISPERING TIME)
I-if they caught him the kids would've said something. Right? They don't... They wouldn't do anything to him.

TANGO:

What are we going to do? Even if we smash Marissa's necklace that might not free the kids, and even if I change into a bear that's not gonna help them.

FREY:

Yeah... Big scary electric spire was not in plans A through Z. We need to get out of here and make plans one through ninety-nine when we're not running for our lives.

JIM ROBBIE:

And which of those involve finding our morally ambiguous mess of a scientist?

FREY:

Didn't he used to travel alone He'll have to take care of himself until for like a hot second or something while we-

TANGO:

(INTERUPTTING AND PANICKING)

Y-yeah, but Nico had a **car** and he wasn't running from anything except **me** and now we're in a **barn** and being **chased** by Black-Eyed kids who are going to do who-know's-what to us-

SOUND: CHILDREN'S FOOTSTEPS CREEP CLOSER AND CLOSER IN THE BACKGROUND UNDER THE DIALOGUE

JIM ROBBIE:

(INTERRUPTING TOO)

Tango. I-... I know... We're going to find him.

FREY:

Listen, we're gonna get out of here, the kids, they won't catch us, alright, we have an advantage, our legs are larger, longer, stronger -

TANGO:

(DAMN RIGHT)

... I do have good calves. But we have other things to talk about right now.

SOUND: THE FOOTSTEPS STOP

JIM ROBBIE:

See, everything's going to be-

THE CHILDREN:

(ALL AT ONCE)

We see you.

JIM ROBBIE:

... Why do I bother?

Scene 3: BARN RAFTERS INT.

SOUND: WOOD AND METAL CREAKS AS NICO AND BILLIE CLIMB TO THE TOP OF THE RAFTERS, THERE ARE NO BIRDS, NO MICE, BUT THE STORM HOWLS OUTSIDE WITH RAIN AGAINST THE BARN'S ROOF AND THE ELECTRIC HUM OF THE SPIRE.

BILLIE:

The other kids won't find you up here. Marissa only lets them up here if the roof is leaking real bad.

NICO:

(NERVOUSLY)

Hahahahah, yeah. I'm perfectly safe up here. You, know I'm great with developing a fear of heights that is becoming well acquainted with **all the other** phobias I've developed over the past few months, thanks for checking. Why are we **up here?**

BILLIE:

Too many kids hang around the Spire, this is the best place for you to see it close. We need to break it to let the others be themselves again.

SOUND: THE RAFTER OF THE BARN CREAK HARDER. THE SPIRE HUMS WITH A LOW ELECTRIC SOUND IN THE MIDST OF THE STORM.

NICO:

... That's a cute concept and all, but that thing is more than two stories of solid metal. Isn't there another way? Like maybe the big crystal back in the cave can do something?

BILLIE:

The crystals have power, but if it doesn't touch the Spire it doesn't do anything. It just shocks people and makes their heads hurt.

NICO:

(SCIENCEY-RANT TIME)

Hmm... well, we could overcharge it and it could short out the crystals the other kids use? ... We'd need a way to completely isolate the structure so that the electricity can't spread out from the base and diffuse, but I'd need a lot of insulation plus conductive cables. If I had some electric tape that might work, and hey this is a farm and they usually have supplies. Do you have any of that?

BILLIE:

(A VERY LONG AND CONFUSED UUUHHHHHHH)

Uhhhh... I don't know?

NICO:

... Right yep, you're a child. You wouldn't know.

BILLIE:

I-I help with stuff! Just not fixing things... I'm not good at much.

NICO:

No, it's okay. You're good at things. Marissa trusts you, sooo... So you can be good at being sneaky! If I ask you for supplies you think you can sneak around the other kids?

BILLIE:

Y-yeah! I'm good at that. I know how to walk around places without anyone seeing me or getting caught-

BILLIE: (cont'd)
 (STOPS SHORT WITH A STARTLED GASP)

BILLIE: (cont'd)
 The other kids are coming!

NICO:
 W-wait! Up here?

BILLIE:
 No, more near the Spire.

SOUND: THE KIDS MARCH INTO THE LARGE CHAMBER BELOW, AND THEY ARE DRAGGING A FEW TIED UP AND VERY, VERY FAMILIAR FACES

NICO:
 (OH NO)
 Is that? Oh, no. Oh, no, no, no, NO!

BILLIE:
 (OH NO)
 Wh-what is she doing to your friends? Sh-she can't-

NICO:
 (OH GOD NO)
 Oooohhh my god this is going to be stupid! This is going to be so stupid but I don't exactly have OTHER OPTIONS AT THE MOMENT. OH GOD OKAY, Billie, you need to distract Marissa and get the other kids away from the spire! NOW!

BILLIE:
 (FREAKING OUT)
 I can't! Marissa is angry, and she'll get angrier if I stop her! When people are angry at me bad things happen. Bad things always happen! Bad things always happen. I don't want to get hurt, or locked away, or go hungry, or-OR-!

NICO:
 (DESPERATE)
 Billie! Please! If you don't other people might get hurt too! Come on!

SOUND: THUNDER ROARS OUTSIDE AS THE RAIN HITS HARDER AGAINST THE ROOFTOP

Scene 4: BARN INT.

SOUND: THE WANDERERS ARE DRAGGED TOWARDS THE HUM OF THE SPIRE, STRUGGLING AGAINST THE MANY KIDS PULLING THEM CLOSER

FREY:

(FITE ME)

LET GO! UNTIE US YOU NIGHT-EYED LITTLE MONSTERS! IF YOU WEREN'T KIDS, OH MAN. I WOULD END YOU HERE AND NOW! YOU HEAR ME? END. YOU.

JIM ROBBIE:

WHY AM I TIED UP? I COULDN'T MOVE IF I WANTED TO! AND I REALLY WANT TO!

TANGO:

Let me go, we're not here to hurt you. We just wanted to stop you from kidnapping other kids and scaring people!

MARISSA AND CHILDREN:

ENOUGH!

SOUND: MARISSA WALKS TO THE BUNCH OF MEDDLING WANDERERS AND STANDS OVER THEM

MARISSA:

You shouldn't have come here. This is **our** home. Soon, everywhere will be our home.

TANGO:

Why are you doing this? Not everybody is a bad person!

MARISSA:

Everyone can turn bad. People's shadows change all the time! I won't let another kid turn bad or disappear because of **adults** who want to hurt us.

SOUND: MARISSA PLAYS WITH THE CRYSTAL ALREADY AROUND TANGO'S NECK

TANGO:

HEY!

MARISSA:

... You went to Candlewick? That's one of my first crystals.

FREY:

So what? You up and abandoned that place!

MARISSA:

We left because it wasn't safe. Adults would find us, sometimes they would try to take kids back who came to Candlewick to be safe. We couldn't protect ourselves. But now we can, and we have a bigger place. We can grow, and grow, and grow.

JIM ROBBIE:

Okay, fine. Some of you had some awful parents, or relatives, or whatever, but you forced other kids to join even when they were happy! What about that one kid you dragged here? They were begging you to stop!

MARISSA:

THEY DON'T KNOW HOW THEY CAN BE HURT! (she takes a deep breath) I am protecting them. When they join all their shadows look the same. They get older, but they don't turn bad, they don't disappear. They just have the same eyes, and they're happy.

TANGO:

NO THEY'RE NOT! O-or they weren't!

SOUND: THE CRYSTAL DROPS OUT OF MARISSA'S HAND AND BACK AROUND TANGO'S NECK

MARISSA AND CHILDREN:

We are happy now.

SOUND: THUNDER ROARS ABOVE AND THE SPIRE HUMS A LITTLE LOUDER WITH THE SOUND OF STATIC ELECTRICITY. BUT THERE IS ALSO THE SOUND OF FAINT FOOTSTEPS IN THE LOFT HIGH ABOVE AND THE HEAVY CREAK OF WOOD.

MARISSA:

... Most adults get bad headaches when they wear the crystals. I bet you had a lot of those... I wonder what would happen if you joined us too? We never had adults and a **robot** with us.

FREY:

(NOPE!)

UHH, you know I would feel GREAT if we didn't do that? I think letting us go and just run off into the sunset would be great, yeah? We probably won't come baaaccckkk. Maybe we'll take a vacation really, really, really far away?? Hey, Tango? Hey guys, how do you feel about 'Attle? It rains all the time, and... but it's green.

TANGO:

Uhh?? A vacation does sound kind of nice? This is all really scary... But the mailkids need our help-

SOUND: WOOD CREAKS AGAIN ABOVE, A LITTLE LOUDER, ALMOST LIKE SOMEONE IS PUSHING A BEAM.

JIM ROBBIE:

(LOUDLY WITH EQUAL NOPE)

YOU KNOW WHAT, FREY? A VACATION SOUNDS GREAT! I WOULD LOVE-

MARISSA:

(ANGRY)

SHUT UP! All of you, SHUT. UP. None of you are leaving because you'll tell everyone! You'll ruin everything! We won't let you leave, but if you survive, maybe you'll be one of us.

SOUND: THE SPIRE SHOOTS OFF MORE ELECTRIC SPARKS

FREY:

OH GOD! OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD AM I IMMORTAL AGAINST HIVEMIND MAGIC? I DON'T KNOW MAYBE NOT!

TANGO:

I-IT'S OKAY! M-MAYBE THIS IS HOW WE STOP THEM! FIGHT THEM IN THEIR OWN MINDS?

JIM ROBBIE:

I DON'T THINK NOT SURE IT WORKS THAT WAY!

FREY:

OH MAN, COME ON I DON'T REALLY WANT TO FIND OUT IF THIS IS THE WAY I DIE. LIKE COME ON, I'VE DIED A LOT OF DIFFERENT WAYS, BUT IT'S ALWAYS A GUESSING GAME. EACH TIME I DIE IN A NEW WAY CAUSE MAYBE THIS IS THE WAY THAT WILL ACTUALLY KILL ME AND I'VE NEVER DIED THIS WAY. AND I REALLY ALSO DON'T WANT TO BE A PERMANENT INSTALLATION OF THE SPOOKY KIDS CLUB! YOU SEE, NO, IT MEETS ON SATURDAYS AND ARE MY SATURDAYS ARE INDEFINITELY BOOKED UNTIL THE EARTH LITERALLY EXPLODES IN A FIRE! OH GOD IS THIS REALLY THE END MAN? THIS IS IT ISN'T IT?!

TANGO:

(LESS OPTIMISM AND MORE PANIC)

NO IT'S NOT! W-WE'RE ALWAYS OKAY! IT WILL BE OKAY! FREY, C-CALM DOWN, WE'LL GET OUT OF THIS!

JIM ROBBIE:

OH MY GOD, TANGO PLEASE. FOR ONCE THIS IS THE TIME TO PANIC! THIS WOULD ACTUALLY BE A GOOD TIME FOR THE BEAR THING! A GREAT TIME!

TANGO:

NO! NO, NO, NO, NO! I DON'T WANT TO HURT THEM!

JIM ROBBIE:

TANGO BE A BEAR!

MARISSA:

(WITH VENOM)

You are all the same.

SOUND: A SMALL SET OF FOOTSTEPS RUSH THROUGH THE CROWD OF CHILDREN GATHERED NEAR THE SPIRE.

BILLIE:

MARISSA! YOU NEED TO STOP!

MARISSA:

(SURPRISED)

Billie? Where were you? Did you find that other adult?!
Did they hurt you?

BILLIE:

N-no, I'm fine! Th-that doesn't matter! We all need to
leave! Uhh... ADULTS! A LOT OF THEM ARE COMING!

SOUND: THERE IS A BEAT OF TENSE SILENCE.

MARISSA:

... No there isn't. You didn't warn me of anyone
coming.

BILLIE:

(SOMEONE'S A BAD LIAR)

Uhh... I saw them from the... THE WINDOW!

JIM ROBBIE:

Maybe you should go check on that, huh? Away from us-

SOUND: FREY KICKS JIM WITH ONE FREE FOOT

JIM ROBBIE: (cont'd)

HEY!

FREY:

(SOFT BUT ANGRY WHISPERING)

EVER HEARD OF SUBTLY, JIMBO?

MARISSA:

(CONFUSED)

Billie, what's going on?

BILLIE:

I... Marissa, please. We need to get away from here.
Everyone will get hurt!

SOUND: THE WOOD BEAMS ABOVE, CREAK LOUDER AND LOUDER AS NICO
PUSHES AGAINST THEM

MARISSA:

But we're not in danger! We just have to take care of
these three, find the last one, and-

BILLIE:

WE'RE BAD!

MARISSA AND CHILDREN:

(EXCUSE ME)

What did you say?

BILLIE:

I... I want this to stop. I should've said something,
but I didn't! The Spire is going to go down! The others
need to get away!

MARISSA:

(ENRAGED)

WHAT? NO! NO!

SOUND: THE OTHER KIDS SCURRY AWAY, BUT MARISSA STANDS
AGAINST BILLIE AND THE WANDERERS

MARISSA: (cont'd)

Why are you doing this!?

BILLIE:

These adults aren't bad!

MARISSA:

They need to be punished, Billie!

JIM ROBBIE:

Or not! Not would be nice!

MARISSA:

SHUT UP! SHUT UP! Billie, if we don't punish them
others will come! Other adults will come and hurt us.
They've *always* hurt us. They hurt ***you!*** They're the
reason why some of us don't have shadows, or why their
shadows become bad people.

BILLIE:

But those three aren't the ones who did it! Not
everyone in the world wants to hurt us! There's bad
people, but there's also nice ones who want to help!

(MORE)

BILLIE: (cont'd)

Those three, Tango, Frey, Nico, and Jim, they helped me before! One walked me out of the cave and kept me safe. They... They're nice to me.

MARISSA:

(IN A RAGE)

NICE PEOPLE CAN TURN BAD! THEY DECIDE ONE DAY TO HURT YOU! I DON'T CARE! I DON'T CARE! I DON'T WANT TO BE HURT AGAIN-

SOUND: WOOD SNAPS, AND IT ALL STARTS COMING DOWN

BILLIE:

MARISSA!

SOUND: THE BEAMS OF THE ROOF COME CRASHING INTO THE SPIRE. THE METAL GROANS AND SPARKS IN AN ALMOST SCREAM BETWEEN STEEL AND THE SOUND OF A THOUSAND VOICES IN AGONY FROM THE PAIN OF SEPARATION. THE ROOF COLLAPSES.

Scene 5: BARN INT.

SOUND: DUST SETTLES OVER THE BARN, A FEW OF THE KIDS COUGH, BUT THEY ARE DISORIENTED, SOME OF THEM TERRIFIED, SOME OF THEM CRYING, SOME OF THEM TRYING DESPERATELY TO REACH OUT TO A CONNECTION IN THEIR MINDS THAT IS GONE.

SOUND: NICO GETS BACK ONTO HIS FEET, LIFTING BROKEN PIECES OF WOOD

CHILDREN:

(COUGHING)

NICO:

(COUGHING AND GROANING)

Oooohhhh my back and general everything. I tally for me on the stupid ideas count. Tango? Frey? Jim? You alive?

TANGO, FREY, AND JIM:

(ALL GROANING IN PAIN)

BILLIE:

You're okay! Oh, the ropes! Hang on.

SOUND: THEIR ROPES ARE UNTIED, BUT MARISSA STANDS UP, AND SHE IS NOT HAPPY.

MARISSA:

(COUGHING)

Wh-what... What did you do? What did you do? WHAT DID YOU DO?

BILLIE:

(TENTATIVE)

They didn't do anything wrong! I did this! I helped them! Marissa, this... This is wrong. Everything we did is wrong.

MARISSA:

(UPSET)

NO IT'S NOT! I SAVED EVERYONE! I SAVED YOU! If you stayed at home you would've been gone! A lot of kids would've been gone!

BILLIE:

No, the crystals were wrong. We... Marissa, I'm done playing with crystals and towers. I want to go home.

MARISSA:

No, we're not-

BILLIE:

(UPSET)

I want to go home! Back to Candlewick! I want to plant nice flowers in the garden and play outside with kids who **want** to be there. I... I don't like this game anymore... I never did, but I didn't want you to hurt me.

MARISSA:

(HORRIFIED)

I-I would- I **wouldn't!** I'm not like those adults! I'm not like them! I'm not!

BILLIE:

(SOFTER)

... Marissa, can... Can you see your own shadow?

MARISSA:

(NEAR CRYING)

I'm not bad... I'm not, I'm not. I'm not! I want everyone to be okay! I-I just want everyone to be safe, and happy, and not disappear.

BILLIE:

You're not bad. But their shadows can change if you let them... You can change too.

MARISSA:

... I want to go home. I-...

SOUND: MARISSA TAKES OFF HER CRYSTAL AND DROPS IT ONTO THE BARN FLOOR. IT SHATTERS ALMOST TOO EASILY.

MARISSA: (cont'd)

(QUIETLY AND EMOTIONALLY EXHAUSTED)

... I want to go home, too... We can all go home.

FREY:

What's gonna happen to the mailkids?

MARISSA:

The Spire's gone. Their eyes aren't black anymore. They can go. They can all go where they want now.

TANGO:

But your eyes are still black.

MARISSA:

They've always been like this. I've always been able to see what other people become or what happens to them.

NICO:

Their shadows? ... Wait, hold on. Hold on. You can see people's futures? Can you see people's futures... Can you see mine?

MARISSA:

... Yeah. You're still there. You look... Sad.

NICO:

(WELL, NICO DOESN'T LIKE THAT)

... Okay I don't like that. But like, do you see any sound equipment? Anything involving new technology? Maybe a radio station? Anything?

MARISSA:

... Nothing like that.

NICO:

(GRUMBLING)

Fantastic.

FREY:

Umm, I don't really think my future would be that interesting, so I'll pass on the shadow reading, thanks.

MARISSA:

(YO WHAT THE HECKO DAWG? BUT IN A TIRED WAY)

You... You don't change. At all... You don't grow, you don't... What's wrong with you?

FREY:

(UNSURPRISED)

Rats, and here I was hoping to finally get to know about my love life.

TANGO:

Oh! OH! What about me? Can you tell me what my future is?

MARISSA:

You-

MARISSA: (cont'd)

(SHE GASPS IN TERROR AND PAUSES, AS IF SHE'S ACTUALLY LOOKING AT TANGO INSTEAD OF AN ENEMY)

MARISSA: (cont'd)

(IN A TERRIFIED WHISPER)

Sickness.

TANGO:

(SAY WAHT NOW?)

... What?

MARISSA:

(GETTING MORE AND MORE UNSETTLED)

It floats around you like dust, but... It's not. It's like it moves on its own. And it makes a sound, I... I never heard a shadow before. I-It sounds angry...

I- I-... No-... (she pauses for a long, long time) I don't want to see bad things anymore. I want to go home. Billie, can you take us home?

BILLIE:

I-I can't lead! I-I'm not-

MARISSA:

Please?

BILLIE:

... Only if you help me.

MARISSA:

(WITH A SMALL, TIRED LAUGH)

Yeah. Yeah, I can do that.

TANGO:

... Sickness? I-I'm not sick! I don't think I am... I feel fine. What did she mean by that?

FREY:

(REASSURING)

Tango, Tango, she's a messed up kid, don't let her get into your head, she's dealing with a lot of stuff and that can cause you to project. Okay? Take it in stride, it's gonna be fine.

JIM ROBBIE:

Let's not upset the cult-creating kid more than we have to, **especially** if said cult is now gone.

TANGO:

(UNSETTLED)

I don't know. She saw something. What about that thing she said about it making a sound? Dust doesn't make sound, but people who are sick do! I really, **really** don't like it.

NICO:

Tango, let's just get out of here. I've had it up to here with all these crystals and these kids ughhhh.

JIM ROBBIE:

We **really** need to have a day of doing nothing, or something at least not involving us screaming for a very VERY long time. I for one want something fun, non-stressful, non-lethal, with no kids around.

FREY:

Like a craft fair-?

JIM ROBBIE:

(HELL NAW)

NO. ESPECIALLY NO CRAFT FAIRS! I DON'T WANT TO SEE ANOTHER FANCY ROCKS ON A STRING.

TANGO:

(SHE LAUGHS FOR A MINUTE)

SOUND: BETWEEN THE FOUR OF THEM THERE'S A MINUTE OF SILENCE IN THE NOW DESTROYED BARN, SOME WOOD STILL SMOLDERING FROM THE SPARKS.

TANGO: (cont'd)

... What about a party?

FREY:

Party?

TANGO:

Y-yeah! I thiiinnkkk it's nearby. I heard about it from someone a while ago and I think maybe spending time with people who don't want to kill us would be a good thing.

NICO:

Umm, not exactly the "party" type. More like the, "I stand by a wall with my drink and feel awkward" type.

FREY:
Not the rager type?

NICO:
(DEADPAN)
No. Definitely not.

JIM ROBBIE:
I for one could go with the rager. Eighteen plus. No kids.

NICO:
I get a vote in this, I saved all of your hides from whatever hive minded singularity you would've spent eternity in!

JIM ROBBIE:
And we appreciate your contribution to nearly killing us, but you're still going to be outvoted... thanks for saving us though.

NICO:
... Uh... Thanks? ... Okay. Fine. Fine! Maybe it wouldn't be too bad to cut loose for a bit. Even if it's a bust I can go be a wallflower and get back to work on trying to make you at least semi-functional... If that's okay with you.

JIM ROBBIE:
Just don't mess with my head too much. I'm done with that for a while.

TANGO:
It's not going to be a crazy night party! I think we're all done with the night for a bit. It's just a little get together with food and drink. Like... Like a potluck! Anyway, We can bring entertainment and play for them!

FREY:
You know come to think of it, I can't remember the last time I actually heard you play an instrument. When was the last time you guys bothered to practice?

SOUND: A BEAT OF DEAD SILENCE AS THE RAIN BEGINS TO LIGHTEN UP

TANGO:
I can cook! How about peanut butter, tuna, and okra sandwiches, garnished with a little crawdad on top!

FREY, JIM, AND NICO:

(TAKES DON'T HAVE TO BE CLEAN. EVERYONE IMPROV THE
TERROR OF TANGO'S NEW COOKING MONSTROSITY)

END.

NARRATOR:

Hi there folks and welcome to another episode of Jim Robbie and the Wanderers created by Iri Alexander. I hope you're all having a blessed day. Now today I'm going to showing you have to make a happy little episode titled "The Children". We're gonna start with an 18-page script written by Jack Pevyhouse and Shannon Sawyer, with some editing by Laura Bramblette, some directing by Zoe von Embler, the theme by Tom Rory Parsons, and music by Rosemary Derocher. Now first up we're gonna have some Iri Alexander as Tango to give some energy and drama to the script, we're gonna follow that up with Jake Song as Nico to add a bit of dry wit and sarcasm to balance things out a little, and of course, we can't have Jim Robbie and the Wanderers without Daniel Lehnen as Jim Robbie. And while we're at it let's balance out the wanderer crew with some Zoe von Embler as Frey. Then we're gonna need an antagonist to get that drama going in the script so let's get a balanced mix of Shannon Sawyer and Laura Bramblette as the Black Eyed Children and then to round our characters lets add Emma Sherman as Billie, and then a little dab of Clara Ng as Marrisa. I hope you all enjoyed yourself and as always I'm your host Gavin Waters. If you'd like to support our show please visit our official website at jimrobbiewanderers.com, or visit our patreon at patreon.com/jimrobbieandthewanderers, or visit our store at crossroadstations.com. And remember to subscribe to and rate our episodes on itunes or your podcatcher of choice.