

# FLUX

## by Autumn Faith Owens

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# FLUX

*A One Act Dramatic Fantasy*

**by Autumn Faith Owens**

**SYNOPSIS:** When three girls find themselves thrust into Flux—a world that lies in the gap between reality and oblivion—they must fight to uncover their lost memories and rediscover their own identities. There's only one way out: resolve the conflicts that put each of them into Flux. Just as friendship is beginning to blossom between them, a shattering revelation reveals a dark and interconnected past that threatens to keep the girls in Flux forever.

**DURATION:** 35 minutes.

**TIME:** Present times.

**SETTING:** An alternate reality.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(4 females, 1 male, 3 either, extras)*

AVERY (f)..... In her late teens/early twenties;  
 unsure of herself. *(93 lines)*  
 TABITHA (f)..... Mid to late teens; abrasive. *(101 lines)*  
 CAROLINE (f) ..... Mid to late teens; a peacemaker.  
*(80 lines)*  
 SHADOW 1 (m/f)..... Any age and gender. *(9 lines)*  
 SHADOW 2 (m/f)..... Any age and gender. *(7 lines)*  
 SHADOW 3 (m/f)..... Any age and gender. *(10 lines)*  
 SHADOW OF AVERY'S MOTHER (f)..... A middle-aged woman. *(8 lines)*  
 SHADOW OF AVERY'S FATHER (m) ..... A middle-aged man. *(7 lines)*  
 ADDITIONAL SHADOWS ..... Possible extras. *(Non-Speaking)*

## CASTING NOTES

Although there are three speaking shadows listed, you may add as many extra shadows as you'd like to your production. The lines can also be redistributed as desired to allow everyone a chance to speak.

## COSTUME SUGGESTIONS

Ideally, the shadows would be backlit and thus partially hidden behind a scrim, curtain, or ragged pieces of fabric. When that's not possible, the costuming should distinguish the characters in Flux from the Shadows. Avery, Tabitha and Caroline could wear plain neutral-color dresses, while the Shadows could wear muted everyday clothing.

## SET/LOCATION NOTES

The set can be as barebones or as nuanced as you'd like. In the original production, the only set piece was a bench. It is suggested that you have some way to divide the "real world" from the world of the characters in Flux—a scrim or curtain is the easiest way to do this, with back-lighting to make the Shadow characters look larger than life. To make Flux look more barren and desolate, you could scatter acting blocks around the stage or as a frame around the bottom of the scrim.

## PROPS

- A children's puppet

**DIRECTOR'S NOTES**

In this play, silence can say just as much as words, so encourage your actors to really hit the pauses in the script. If at all possible, enhance the shadows with sound and lighting effects—backlight them behind a scrim, curtain, or ragged pieces of fabric to make them appear larger-than-life. You could also record the lines of the shadows, distort or echo their voices, and play them as sound effects in lieu of (or in addition to) having actors onstage.

Other than the tech of the shadows, simplicity is key. The world of Flux is largely open to your interpretation, but it's intended to be a wasteland of sorts. Don't be afraid to throw your actors onstage with only a bench and a few set dressings—that's really all you need.

\*\*\*In the program, please list the following characters as shown below so as not to give away key plot twists in the show:  
Shadow of Avery's Mother – Female Shadow  
Shadow of Avery's Father – Male Shadow

**PRODUCTION HISTORY**

*FLUX* premiered as part of a twenty-four hour theatre experience at Bethel University in Mishawaka, Indiana. It was directed by Ethan Babler, stage managed by Hope Nofziger, and designed by Don Hunter. The original cast was as follows:

AVERY ..... Emerson Marshall  
 TABITHA..... Anne Garrett  
 CAROLINE..... Mikaela Schwartz

The one-act version was produced by Bethel University in Mishawaka, Indiana. It was directed by Derrick Null (assisted by Adam Foster) and stage managed by Ethan Babler (assisted by Jenna Sarrazin). Seth Cole was the video director and Derrick Null was the technical director. The original cast, designers, and crew was as follows:

AVERY ..... Emerson Marshall  
 TABITHA..... Elaine Hooley  
 CAROLINE..... Hannah Gamble  
 SHADOW MOTHER..... Morgan McDonell  
 SHADOW FATHER ..... John Njihia  
 SHADOWS ..... Jamie Lawson, Jenna Sarrazin, Ethan Babler

Designers: Stacy Bone, lights/set; Elaine Hooley, graphics (mentored by Chad Jay); Elijah Bansen, props (mentored by Leah Jordan); Don Hunter, sound; Levi Lamberjack, composition; Claire Prins, costumes (mentored by Erin Bryant); Deb Swerman & Morgan McDonell, makeup

Crew: Levi Lamberjack, Don Hunter, Andrew Cora, Anne Garrett, Samantha Hirschy, Ashlee Grant, Ahmeria McDaniel, Zoey Belk, Emmalee McConnell, Emily Dougherty, Holly Lamphier, Luke Howard, Verna Wang

**DEDICATION**

*Dedicated to Claire Prins, who brought this play to life with her costume design. May our days of debriefing tech rehearsals in your car over cheap fast food never fade.*

DO NOT COPY

**AT START:** In "Flux," a barren wasteland in between reality and oblivion. Unnerving music plays. The SHADOWS, still in the "real world," appear behind a scrim or barrier, or maybe just far upstage, carrying an unconscious AVERY. The SHADOW OF AVERY'S MOTHER, SHADOW OF AVERY'S FATHER, SHADOW 1, SHADOW 2, and SHADOW 3 are present, but are not helping to carry AVERY. The voices of the SHADOWS sound almost unreal—too loud and too soft. The voices may be distorted, if possible. They should overlap one another.

**SHADOW 1:** Lots of things to learn, I'd say.

**SHADOW 2:** It's just a part of life.

**SHADOW OF AVERY'S MOTHER:** It's like a piece of me is missing.

**SHADOW 3:** It's hard to comprehend.

**SHADOW 1:** These are confusing times...

**SHADOW OF AVERY'S FATHER:** We'll find peace again. You just have to trust me.

**SHADOW 2:** Each neuron is tied in a knot, inside, out, and back again.

**SHADOW 3:** It's interesting, I think, how these things come to pass...

*The barrier is broken and SHADOW 1, SHADOW 2, and SHADOW 3 push AVERY, still unconscious, through the scrim. AVERY tumbles onto the stage. After a split second of scrambling, AVERY realizes she's alone and lets out a bloodcurdling scream. TABITHA is the first to come running to her rescue as the lights come up and SHADOW 1, SHADOW 2, and SHADOW 3 slowly filter offstage.*

**TABITHA:** What is it? What's wrong?! Tell me!

*CAROLINE comes running onstage from the opposite side. (NOTE: CAROLINE and TABITHA'S dialogue is encouraged to be slightly overlapped during the following section.)*

**CAROLINE:** What happened?

**AVERY:** (*Breathless.*) I was running—I don't know, I don't know, I don't know, I don't know—

**TABITHA:** Hey, it's okay, you're okay, take a deep breath...

**CAROLINE:** You're safe, you're safe.

**AVERY:** (*In tears.*) I don't know what happened... I was just—and then I was here... I don't remember where...

**TABITHA:** I know, it's okay... It'll come back to you.

**CAROLINE:** You're going to be alright. Shh, shh...

**AVERY:** I was just—I don't know how I could've done that—

**CAROLINE:** I know...

**AVERY:** I didn't want to do it and—and then—I was falling—

**CAROLINE:** It was scary, I know. But you're safe now.

**AVERY:** I just—

**CAROLINE:** You're safe now.

*A pause. CAROLINE shoots a sympathetic glance to TABITHA. AVERY takes a deep breath and manages to collect herself enough to speak.*

**AVERY:** I don't... Where am I, exactly?

**CAROLINE:** (*Kindly.*) It's sort of hard to explain, but... we're between reality and oblivion. We like to call it "Flux."

**AVERY:** This doesn't make any sense. In between—oblivion—?

**TABITHA:** (*Cutting her off.*) Nothing makes sense here.

**CAROLINE:** There's no hunger, no pain... our physical bodies barely exist.

**AVERY:** I'm dreaming. I must be. I was just... I don't get it.

**TABITHA:** If it's only a dream, we haven't woken up in a very long time.

*A pause. AVERY considers.*

**AVERY:** Well, if it's not a dream, how do I get back, then? To reality?

**TABITHA:** That's a good question.

**CAROLINE:** We've watched people leave, but we can't seem to leave ourselves. We have this theory, see?

**TABITHA:** Our theory is this: Everyone who's left Flux has done so because they remembered how they got here in the first place.

**CAROLINE:** The only problem is that the longer you're here, the less you're able to remember. Your own mind slips out of your very grasp. Your identity. Your name.

**TABITHA:** People only come here when they're conflicted. That's why it's called "Flux." It's a place of conflict. When you resolve the conflict... you get out.

**CAROLINE:** It's like we're so stuck, so... broken, that time just freezes for us and for us only.

**AVERY:** This can't be right... I mean, like, how long have you been here?

**TABITHA:** A long time.

**CAROLINE:** It feels like ages, but time doesn't exist here, not really.

**AVERY:** *(Not believing.)* And you remember nothing? Not even what your "conflict" is?

**CAROLINE:** I remember some things. Like... the way cake tasted. Just cake, nothing else. I couldn't tell you if apples were sour or if carrots were sweet. I used to sit and let the buttercream frosting melt like snowflakes on my tongue. But I couldn't tell you my name. I couldn't tell you anything.

**TABITHA:** I remember things that won't do me any good. Like how my favorite color used to be purple. What does that tell me about myself? *(Laughs sadly.)* Nothing. It tells me that I was like every other twelve-year-old on the planet.

*A pause.*

**TABITHA:** *(Suddenly starting and looking up at CAROLINE.)* Wait. The puppet!

*TABITHA runs offstage. AVERY looks confused.*

**AVERY:** The puppet?

**CAROLINE:** The puppet. You'll see. It's a silly little toy that she brought with her.

**AVERY:** But you said nothing exists in Flux except for us.

**CAROLINE:** Us, and this puppet.

*TABITHA enters with a small puppet in hand. It looks reminiscent of a baby toy, but not quite. Perhaps it rattles.*

**TABITHA:** Most people come into Flux empty-handed but look at this puppet. It's mine. I don't know how, but I must've brought it with me somehow.

*AVERY stares at it. To lighten the mood, TABITHA slips the puppet on her hand:*

**TABITHA:** Look, I'm a silly little puppet in a vague other-world and nobody knows why I'm here! Ambiguity is fun! Ho-ho-ho!

*No reaction. TABITHA is slightly embarrassed.*

**TABITHA:** Well, anyway...

**CAROLINE:** Tell her about the memory!

**TABITHA:** Oh, yes.

*TABITHA sits, and so does AVERY. CAROLINE stands by, listening with interest.*

**TABITHA:** So, the only actual memory that I do still have left is of this puppet. It was very important to me—as a child, as a teenager, as something. I don't really know. But I do know this: it was a gift.

**AVERY:** That's it? It was a gift?

**TABITHA:** Yeah. *(Pause.)* What do you mean, "That's it?"

**AVERY:** Well, I mean, it doesn't really tell you much of anything—does it?

**TABITHA:** *(Defensive.)* It tells a lot. There was someone out there who loved me—someone who gave me this. That's important, you know—I'm going back to someone who loves me. Here. Just-just—hold it. *(Holds the puppet out towards AVERY. AVERY takes it, unsure.)* So. Go on. What do you feel?

**AVERY:** I don't—What?

**TABITHA:** *(Demanding.)* What does it make you feel?

*AVERY closes her eyes, squeezing the puppet like it holds a secret. A long pause. She opens her eyes and looks sadly at the puppet.*

**AVERY:** Nothing.

*EVERY hands the puppet back to TABITHA, who looks like she wants to throw it on the ground. She lets it hang from her hand instead. The puppet looks weaker somehow, no longer the exciting symbol of remembrance it was a moment ago. TABITHA drops it onto the bench and begins to walk away.*

**TABITHA:** Well, that doesn't make you the first.

**CAROLINE:** *(Concerned as TABITHA continues to walk away.)* Hey...

*TABITHA sits downstage right, hugging her knees.*

**EVERY:** *(To CAROLINE.)* Is she like this often?

**CAROLINE:** What—the outbursts, or the stillness?

**EVERY:** Either, I guess.

**CAROLINE:** She kind of... simmers. Quietly; very quietly. It comes out in rude remarks every once in a while. And sometimes, she'll just... break.

**EVERY:** I didn't mean to make her upset.

**CAROLINE:** It's not you. It's not you at all, it's just... she's been here even longer than I have, waiting and waiting. It's hard not to be upset when you're waiting and you don't know what you're waiting for.

**EVERY:** I suppose.

*CAROLINE looks sympathetically at TABITHA for a while, sizing her up.*

**CAROLINE:** *(To EVERY, with an apologetic smile.)* Will you excuse me a moment?

*CAROLINE walks to TABITHA. EVERY absentmindedly picks up the puppet and toys with it.*

**CAROLINE:** May I join you?

*TABITHA has been crying, but quickly wipes her eyes.*

**TABITHA:** Do I have a choice?

**CAROLINE:** (*Sitting with her.*) I just want to make sure you're alright.

**TABITHA:** How can I be alright? How can anyone be alright here?  
(*Looks down.*) It's just—I don't understand why I bother anymore.

**CAROLINE:** I know.

**TABITHA:** People come in. People go out. This new girl—she'll probably be gone before we know it. (*Pause. Shakes her head.*) I don't understand what's different about us. I don't understand why we can't find our missing pieces.

**CAROLINE:** The only thing we can do is help others find their way, and hope that someday, someone comes along and helps us find ours.

**TABITHA:** But what's the point?

**CAROLINE:** The point of what? Flux?

**TABITHA:** No, of helping others.

**CAROLINE:** (*Somewhat appalled.*) What do you mean?

**TABITHA:** I mean people like her. She's not my missing piece, and she doesn't seem to be yours, either.

**CAROLINE:** And what else do you suggest? We can't leave her to suffer. We've been here longer; we know the ropes. The pitfalls. The way this place can suck you up like a black hole.

**TABITHA:** And what good does it do us?

**CAROLINE:** Why do we have to get any good from it at all? There'll be others, so many others that could be our missing pieces.

**TABITHA:** Really? Because we've helped so many people out of here during our... imprisonment that I'm starting to think that we'll never escape at all. It's like every time someone else takes a step forward, we take a step back.

*Silence. TABITHA realizes that AVERY has wandered off with the puppet. AVERY looks stoic.*

**TABITHA:** You remembered something.

*AVERY doesn't notice or hasn't heard.*

**TABITHA:** You remembered something. (*Scrambling to her feet. CAROLINE follows.*) What did you remember?

**AVERY:** I think I know this... this puppet.

**TABITHA:** What about it? Quick, tell me. Before you forget.

*TABITHA and CAROLINE wait in anticipation.*

**AVERY:** ...I don't know. It just... looks familiar. I don't know. Maybe it's just being hopeful.

*TABITHA and CAROLINE are let down.*

**TABITHA:** (To CAROLINE.) What did I tell you?

**AVERY:** I shouldn't have said anything.

**CAROLINE:** It's not your fault.

**AVERY:** Here...

*AVERY awkwardly extends the puppet to TABITHA, who points at it accusingly.*

**TABITHA:** (Angrily.) What good does that thing do me if it can't even—

*All of a sudden, there is commotion outside of Flux. SHADOW 1, SHADOW 2, and SHADOW 3 are keenly surreal. They are too loud, too quiet, too exaggerated and elongated. The three figures are seen behind the main action behind a scrim. They are lit, but heavily shadowed. AVERY is clearly frightened and backs up, running into the bench or blocks and falling. TABITHA and CAROLINE are unfazed and roll their eyes.*

**SHADOW 1:** Did you remember to take the trash out today?

**SHADOW 2:** I was late to work this morning.

**SHADOW 3:** She'll be gone at a conference tomorrow.

**AVERY:** Who are those people?

**CAROLINE:** (Bored; shouting over the residual dissonance.) Just ignore them. They exist outside of Flux. They're still a part of reality.

**AVERY:** I thought you said time stopped in Flux.

**CAROLINE:** For us, it does. But they aren't in Flux. They're in the real world.

**SHADOW 2:** (*Cackling.*) Can you believe that?

**SHADOW 1:** Thank you so much.

**SHADOW 3:** On the up-and-up, I know!

**AVERY:** So they're... real?

**TABITHA:** Of course, they're real.

**SHADOW 3:** It truly is amazing...

**AVERY:** They're real.... They're real! (*Rushing to the scrim.*) HEY!  
Hey! Help me! Let me out of here!

*TABITHA and CAROLINE glance at each other and run after AVERY.*

**SHADOW 3:** I know, I thought the same thing myself.

**AVERY:** (*To SHADOW 3; desperate.*) Help me! Please!

**TABITHA:** They can't hear you!

**SHADOW 3:** When she brought in the reports—

**AVERY:** Hey! HEY!!

**SHADOW 3:** —I just couldn't believe my eyes, I mean, it was  
astounding. Articulate, dynamic...

**SHADOW 1:** It was an interesting day at work today.

**AVERY:** (*Running to SHADOW 1.*) Get me out of here!

**SHADOW 1:** Yeah, that's what my manager said. I disagreed, but of  
course I couldn't say anything about it.

**TABITHA:** (*Yelling over SHADOW 1.*) Hey! I said they can't hear you!

*As SHADOW 1, SHADOW 2, and SHADOW 3 continue talking, TABITHA and CAROLINE pull AVERY away from the scrim. AVERY fights them.*

**SHADOW 2:** Listen, I had a good reason for it. If you'd just be quiet  
for a minute, maybe I could tell you!

**SHADOW 1:** There was something just... weird about it all. It was so  
uncomfortable.

**AVERY:** Let me go!

*AVERY breaks free from TABITHA and CAROLINE'S grasp just as SHADOW OF AVERY'S FATHER and SHADOW OF AVERY'S MOTHER, emerge from the rest. Time and sound are suddenly hyper-focused on SHADOW OF AVERY'S FATHER and SHADOW OF*

*EVERY'S MOTHER, and their voices are clearer and more distinguished than those of the previous SHADOWS.*

**SHADOW OF AVERY'S FATHER:** I just don't think that's what she would've wanted.

**SHADOW OF AVERY'S MOTHER:** Just consider it, alright? That's all I'm asking.

*AVERY stops, shocked.*

**AVERY:** Those voices...

**SHADOW OF AVERY'S FATHER:** I know that's what you're asking, but that doesn't mean it's what we should do.

**SHADOW OF AVERY'S MOTHER:** How can you even say that to me?

**SHADOW OF AVERY'S FATHER:** What do you mean?

**AVERY:** I know those voices!

**SHADOW OF AVERY'S MOTHER:** She ran away from us; don't you understand? She ran away!

*AVERY runs full-force towards the scrim, but it is electric to the touch, and she falls down, knocked out. The scrim lights up brightly with her touch (An electrical sound may be added for effect.), and then falls dark, removing all sight of the shadows as it does. AVERY falls unconscious on the ground.*

**TABITHA:** *(Shaking her head and looking down at AVERY.)* That's what you get.

**CAROLINE:** *(Rushing towards AVERY and examining her.)* Is she hurt?

**TABITHA:** She touched the border. I tried to warn her.

**CAROLINE:** Oh, poor thing.

**TABITHA:** Don't baby her. She's gotta learn somehow if she wants to survive here.

**CAROLINE:** *(A pause. Looking at AVERY; not paying attention.)* It's strange, isn't it?

**TABITHA:** What? The shadows?

**CAROLINE:** No, just... having another person here with us again.

**TABITHA:** I guess.

**CAROLINE:** It's been awhile.

**TABITHA:** At a certain point they all just start to blend together.

*A long pause. CAROLINE strokes AVERY's hair. TABITHA plops down next to them, considering.*

**TABITHA:** Do you think she really remembered something?

**CAROLINE:** What do you mean?

**TABITHA:** The puppet. She said it was hopeful thinking. But...  
(*Hesitates.*) Maybe it's silly. But her face... she was concentrating so hard. It had to be a memory.

**CAROLINE:** Maybe.

**TABITHA:** Why just "maybe?"

**CAROLINE:** We've thought everyone who has come to us was one of our missing pieces at one time or another. I don't want to jump to conclusions. We've both been hurt too many times.

*AVERY stirs and sits up.*

**CAROLINE:** You're awake.

*AVERY makes some kind of incoherent noise and looks around. It takes her a second to realize where she is, and once she does, she looks crestfallen.*

**AVERY:** Yes, I am.

**CAROLINE:** How do you feel?

**AVERY:** Empty. (*A pause.*) Will the shadows come back?

**TABITHA:** Probably. They always do. Whether we want them here or not.

**AVERY:** (*Thinking of SHADOW 1, SHADOW 2, and SHADOW 3.*)  
Their voices...

**TABITHA:** Did you remember anything else while you were out?  
(*Debates, then adds:*) Anything about the puppet...?

**AVERY:** No. (*Sees TABITHA's face; is genuinely hurt for her.*) I'm sorry.

**TABITHA:** It's okay.

*Silence.*

**CAROLINE:** Let's play a game.

**AVERY:** A game?

**CAROLINE:** An imagination game. Let's imagine we have memories  
—of a perfect life.

**AVERY:** But the memories aren't real.

**CAROLINE:** Exactly. That's what will make it so freeing. I'll start. I need  
a name.

**TABITHA:** Eden.

**CAROLINE:** Eden.

**TABITHA:** Eden. I always liked that name.

**CAROLINE:** (*Pleasantly surprised.*) Alright. Eden. Eden... Smith.

**TABITHA:** No, Eden Monet.

**CAROLINE:** Why Monet?

**TABITHA:** Monet's the name of someone important out in the real  
world, right? A musician? No wait—a painter. Something like that...

**CAROLINE:** Maybe Eden Monet could be a painter, too. An important  
painter.

**TABITHA:** Wait, wait, let's have her be a teacher. A math teacher. She  
has this beautiful poetic name but spends her life teaching math.

**CAROLINE:** Math, okay.

**TABITHA:** Her dream is to become a painter, but she couldn't afford  
to go to a fancy arts school. So, she studied math instead.

**CAROLINE:** She'll use her meager teacher's wage to buy herself a  
one-way plane ticket to... (*Losing the flow.*) Oh... um.... what's the  
name of that place?

**TABITHA:** What place?

**CAROLINE:** The art place, in the real world... the museum. The fancy  
one.

**TABITHA:** (*Crestfallen.*) Oh... I don't remember.

**CAROLINE:** (*Trying to pick things back up.*) It's okay. We don't have  
to remember! Eden Monet buys herself a one-way ticket to Artville.  
Where else should Eden Monet go?

**TABITHA:** Will she get married?

**CAROLINE:** Oooh, what's the name of her lucky husband?

**TABITHA:** Or maybe she's a young widow.

*Both of the girls are giggling now. AVERY looks and feels awkward and lonely next to this moment of innocent, sweet connection between two friends. She moves to the bench. TABITHA is too enthralled with the game to notice, but CAROLINE catches it out of the corner of her eye.*

**CAROLINE:** *(Distracted; with her eye on AVERY.)* ...oh?

**TABITHA:** Her husband died her first year of college. He heard she wanted to live off of a math teacher's salary and he passed away on the spot.

**CAROLINE:** *(To AVERY.)* Hey, why don't you join us?

*TABITHA eyes AVERY, who is still feeling awkward.*

**AVERY:** That's okay.

**CAROLINE:** No, really. *(Giving TABITHA a pointed look.)* She should join us, right?

**TABITHA:** *(Reluctantly.)* Yeah...! She should.

**CAROLINE:** Come up with your dream job. Or wait, no—name first. What's your name?

*AVERY furrows her brow and picks up the puppet.*

**CAROLINE:** You don't have to play if you don't want to...? *(Silence.)*  
Are you okay?

**AVERY:** *(A moment of realization.)* Avery.

**CAROLINE:** *(Relieved and encouraging.)* That's, that's a pretty name!  
*(Turning to TABITHA to help her hype up AVERY.)* Right?

**TABITHA:** Yeah, it's pretty.

**AVERY:** No, I mean... it's Avery. My name is Avery.

*Silence.*

**TABITHA:** *(Matter-of-fact.)* No.

**AVERY:** I still have a name...! Oh, oh, I still have a name!

*Suddenly changing her mind, TABITHA shoves past CAROLINE to get to AVERY. CAROLINE follows.*

**TABITHA:** (*Scared, but still demanding.*) What else? What else do you remember?

**AVERY:** The shadows... something about the shadows?

**TABITHA:** The shadows don't know you, they can't talk to you. What do you remember that's real. (*AVERY hesitates. TABITHA grabs AVERY by the shoulders and shakes her.*) Come on, talk to me!

**AVERY:** I remember you.

**TABITHA:** You know me... You know me! Quick, tell me before you forget.

**AVERY:** We were... related, somehow. Cousins, or, or... sisters!

**TABITHA:** Sisters. I have a sister! (*Embraces AVERY, who does not embrace her back as readily.*) What's wrong?

**AVERY:** There's more.

**TABITHA:** What is it?

**AVERY:** I don't know... it's just parts, pieces. Feelings.

**TABITHA:** Feelings of what?

**AVERY:** Shame. Guilt. (*Pauses; reflects.*) I must've done something horrible to end up here.

*AVERY looks down at the puppet quizzically. TABITHA turns to CAROLINE, seeking help.*

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