

*Setting: An empty theatre in an old building. The theatre has the feel of an attic; rafters crisscross above the former playing space and the stage is covered in dust and a hodgepodge of abandoned props. A solitary ghostlight sits unlit in the middle of the stage.*

*Enter two teenagers, JAMIE and CAM, carrying flashlights.*

Wow/This place is amazing./ CAM Take in/exclaim

Are you sure it's safe?/ JAMIE Hesitate

Relax, Jamie/It's, like, a million years old. The virus died out here ages ago./ CAM Dismiss/Comfort

Exaggerate much? This place is two hundred years old, tops/My grandmother used to be in plays here, when she was in college. You know...before./ JAMIE Educate/Brag

Your grandmother went to college? So did my grandad! / CAM Relate

Yeah, she was, gosh, like ten weeks away from graduating when.../ JAMIE Sigh

When it all started./ CAM Acknowledge

Yeah./ JAMIE Dismiss

*A pause. CAM spots an old trunk and rushes over to investigate.*

Look at this! So cool./ CAM Examine

Don't touch anything! / JAMIE Scold

Come on. It's no big deal/I promise. CAM Dismiss/Reassure

You don't know that, Cam. There could be germs all over that thing./ JAMIE Scold

Scene 1

Scene 1

*CAM starts to open the trunk.*

Don't open it! /

JAMIE

Reprimand

Why not? /

CAM

Discount

What did I just say about germs? /

JAMIE

Reprimand

Yeah, yeah, this is Pandora's Box ready to unleash the plague once more! /

CAM

Taunt

It's not funny, Cam. /

JAMIE

Lecture

Why not? /

CAM

Reject

You weren't there. You don't know... /

JAMIE

Lecture

Newsflash, Jamie, you weren't there either. /

CAM

Taunt

But my grandmother was, and the stories she's told me... /

JAMIE

Educate

Hey, what's that? /

CAM

Explore

*CAM shines light on a small bottle laying on the floor. It's a bottle of hand sanitizer, a tiny one, like the kind someone might clip onto a purse.*

I don't know. Looks like... /

JAMIE

investigate

*JAMIE picks up the bottle.*

What about, "oh no, don't touch anything, we're all gonna die?" /

CAM

Taunt

Shut up, Cam. *(examining it)* Do you know what this is? It's hand sanitizer! /

JAMIE

Barter, educate

Scene 2

CAM  
Wait...like the stuff they hoarded during the plague? /

question

JAMIE  
It wasn't a *plague*, Cam, it was a pandemic. There's a difference / (examining the bottle) This is  
crazy. I never thought I'd see one of these in real life. /

correct / investigate

CAM  
How much money do you think we could get for it? /

instigate

JAMIE  
Cam, this is a precious relic, we can't just sell it. /

scold

CAM  
What else are you supposed to do with a precious relic if not make money off of it? /

JAMIE opens the lid.

JAMIE  
Oh wow / Come here /

take in / encourage

CAM approaches cautiously.

CAM  
What? /

JAMIE  
Smell it. /

CAM  
Is that safe? /

hesitate

JAMIE  
Cam, it's fine, it's...wow, it smells like... /

assure

CAM sniffs.

CAM  
Oh my word. /

gasp

JAMIE  
I know, right? /

affirm

CAM  
What does it say on the bottle? What are the words? /

investigate

Scene 2

JAMIE  
(reading)  
Warm...vanilla...sugar. (a pause.) / Do you remember sugar? read / ask

CAM  
Not really. My mom says they still had it when I was little but then... / wonder

JAMIE  
Not after the war. Yeah. Crazy. / ignore

THEY take turns smelling it.

CAM  
Do you think you can eat it? / delight

JAMIE  
Cam, no, it's not food. It's like...soap. / scold

CAM  
I have never had soap that smells like this. / doubt

JAMIE  
Yeah, well...here. Hold out your hand. / insist

CAM does and JAMIE squirts a dab of hand sanitizer into their palm. CAM lifts it to their face.

JAMIE  
Don't lick it! / scold

CAM  
I wasn't gonna lick it / (CAM sniffs) So what do I do with it? / defend / regret

JAMIE  
Rub it into your hands. It's supposed to keep them clean and germ-free. / instruct

CAM laughs and rubs the sanitizer into their dirty hands.

CAM  
That seems unlikely. / doubt

JAMIE  
Well...at least it smells nice. / dismiss

Scene 2

Yeah./

CAM

I wonder what else is here./

JAMIE  
(pocketing the hand sanitizer)

explore

Can I open the trunk now? I mean, we have hand sanitizer, right? For protection?/

CAM

That's not really how it works, Cam./

JAMIE

Whatever; I'm opening it./

CAM

dismiss / instigate

*CAM opens the trunk.*

Well?/

JAMIE

Check it out! /

CAM

share

*CAM pulls out colorful costume pieces.*

They're beautiful. /

JAMIE

ignore

They smell bad. We should put some hand sanitizer on them. /

CAM

displeas

*JAMIE moves to examine the ghostlight, center stage as CAM continues to sort through the costumes.*

Oh wow. I think this is a ghostlight. /

JAMIE

observe

A what? /

CAM  
(looking up)

wonder

Theatres didn't typically have windows, right? Because they needed it to stay dark inside during a show. /

JAMIE

educate

Scene 3

Scene 3

CAM  
(losing interest)

Okay... /

JAMIE

But then, when they would leave at night it would be super dark, so they always had a single light that stayed on, to guide the last person out at the end of a show and to lead them back in the next day. /

Why was it called a "ghostlight"? / CAM

listen

I don't know. I should ask my grandmother / (reaching for the light) I wonder if it still works... / ponder / search

Unlikely. There's no way this place gets electricity anymore. / CAM

doubt

*JAMIE clicks the switch on the ghostlight. The light flares on, illuminating the stage, along with a handful of ACTORS who were previously shrouded in darkness. The light surprises CAM and JAMIE, but THEY do not see the ACTORS.*

Jeez! How the heck? / CAM

shock

Maybe it's...battery powered? / JAMIE

doubt

But that thing's ancient. / CAM

explore

The ACTORS start to move in a circle around CAM and JAMIE. CAM steps toward the light; their foot catches on something that makes them stumble

Careful! Are you okay? / JAMIE

check-in

*CAM reaches down to pick up an old cell phone.*

Holy - / CAM

discover

Scene 4

Whoa. Is that what I think it is? / JAMIE

*The phone lights up, making them both jump.*

No way... / CAM

How does it still work? It's been up here for, what? Fifty years, at least. / JAMIE

distrust  
distrust

No idea. / CAM

shrug

*JAMIE and CAM gaze at the small phone screen while the ACTORS silently move closer. From the phone, we can hear music and chatter; it's a dance choreography rehearsal. Over JAMIE and CAM's shoulders, the ACTORS watch themselves from decades before.*

This is so weird...look! I think that's my grandmother! / JAMIE

ponder / be shocked

*JAMIE points to the screen. The ACTORS look to an empty spot on stage, which is lit by a spotlight ever so briefly.*

No kidding/What do you think happened to the rest of them? / CAM

affirm / question

*The ACTORS on stage begin to spread out. As the music plays on the phone, THEY move silently through their choreography.*

My grandmother is the only one left. / JAMIE

grieve

Oh. / CAM

pause

It's not like they all got the virus or anything/I mean, some of them did/but...the others...well, there was the war and everything../Gram doesn't like to talk about it/But she does like to talk about them. JAMIE

reassure/retract/grieve/

What does she say? / CAM

mourn/reassure

support

Scene 4

JAMIE  
That this was the happiest time of her life. /

Remember

CAM  
Why did they stop? /

Encourage

JAMIE  
Stop what? /

Hesitate

*CAM gestures to the small screen.*

CAM  
All this. The acting, the dancing. /

Perform

JAMIE  
I told you; there was the virus, then the war - /

Educate

CAM  
I don't mean just them / There were loads of people who did plays before, right? Why didn't any of them start up again? You know, when things got better? /

shrug off /  
excite

JAMIE  
I don't know / Maybe the world changed too much. Besides, technology does it better now. Well, cheaper and easier, anyway / There's no reason to get people all in the same room to tell stories anymore.

dismiss / argue /

CAM  
That's kinda sad. Isn't it? /

explain

JAMIE  
I don't know what to tell you, Cam. It's just the way things are. /

question

castigate

*The music coming from the cell phone stops abruptly, replaced by screams and sounds of general pandemonium. On stage, the ACTORS stop dancing. The phone glitches and dies as THEY fade back into the shadows.*

CAM  
Wow. /

Surprise

JAMIE  
Yeah / (a pause) We should go. I don't want my mom to worry / (pulls the hand sanitizer from pocket) Man, is she gonna flip when she sees this! /

calm down / snap out  
of it / rush

Scene 5



CAM begins to put the costumes back in the trunk. Then, CAM notices something else in the bottom.

Hey, check this out! /

CAM

Engage

CAM pulls out a script.

Is that a book? /

JAMIE

wonder

CAM  
(opening it)

Yeah, I guess. I mean, there are words, but they're organized kinda funny. /

ponder

It's a script! /

JAMIE

A what? /

CAM

CAM hands the book to JAMIE.

JAMIE

For a play, you know? / This is the story they must have been acting out / Wow. I don't think I've ever held a real book before / I mean, my grandmother has a few, but she won't let me touch them. / (examining it) This is crazy. (JAMIE laughs) I keep wanting to scroll up instead of turning the pages. /

CAM  
(reading the title)

A Midsummer Night's Dream / Never heard of it. /

read / dismiss

Slowly, the actors emerge from the shadows again, standing on the edge of the light. THEY watch JAMIE and CAM. A siren goes off.

JAMIE

Come on, Cam. (handing back the script) That's curfew. /

rush

Coming / (closing the trunk but holding onto the script) Hey Jamie? /

CAM

connect

Yeah? /

JAMIE

Scenz  
5

6

Scene 6

CAM  
Can I come over to your place for dinner? /

connect

JAMIE  
I guess so. /

hesitate

CAM  
Your grandmother lives with you, right? / Maybe she'd like to have this. /

honor

JAMIE  
Yeah. I think she would. /

relate

CAM  
And maybe... maybe we could read it with her. Out loud, you know? We could even act it out a little. /

perform

JAMIE  
Sure. It could be fun. /

connect

*JAMIE walks toward the ghostlight, to turn it off.*

CAM  
Hey, wait. /

JAMIE  
What? /

CAM  
Let's leave it on. / So we can find our way back. /

hope

JAMIE  
Cam, it's probably just gonna die. /

doubt

CAM  
Yeah, maybe / But maybe not. /

hope

*JAMIE shrugs and exits. CAM takes one more look around the abandoned theatre, then follows JAMIE out. The ACTORS watch THEM leave, waiting on the edge of the light.*

*End of play.*