

Bethel Park Falls

by Jason Pizzarello

Synopsis: The residents of the small town of Bethel are facing a crisis: their beloved park has been sold out from under them and it's sending their lives into a tailspin. The sudden shift has also made them realize they're more connected to each other and the nature around them than they ever realized. Now they must act on it.

Cast of Characters:

June: 40's to 50's - a nature-lover and birdwatcher
Brooke: late 20's - early 30's; a corporate developer; married to Glenn
Glenn: late 20's - early 30's; married to Brooke
Lily: 20's to early 30's; new mom; married to Reed
Holly: 30's; teaches at a local college; married to Clay
Clay: mid 30's; married to Holly; the mayor
Gaia: early 20's; child of immigrant parents; student in Holly's class
Asha: late 20's; a bad fisherman; Fern's daughter
Dusty: late 30's - early 40's; homeless; Cliff's brother
Reed: late 20's - early 30's; soldier; married to Lily
Hazel: mid-late 40's; local park ranger/security guard
Garnet: early 30's; a cautious actuary; friend of Reed's
Dawn: early 30's; an un motivating motivational speaker; Brook's sister
Cliff: late 30's - early 40's; art dealer; Dusty's brother
Sonny: early - mid 20's; an aspiring outdoorsman; Hazel's son
April: early 20's; a student; Gaia's classmate
Fern: mid 60's; suffering from memory loss; former park maintenance supervisor
Park Rangers and maintenance staff: various ages

Scenes

Summer Prelude: Fern and rangers
Scene 1: June and Brooke (part 1)
Scene 2: Glenn and Lily
Autumn Interlude: Fern and maintenance staff
Scene 3: Holly and Clay
Scene 4: Asha and Gaia

Scene 5: Reed, Dusty, and Hazel
Winter Interlude: Fern
Scene 6: Garnet and Dawn
Scene 7: Cliff, Hazel and rangers
Spring Interlude: Fern
Scene 8: Sonny and April
Scene 9: June and Brooke (part 2)
Epilogue: Fern and Asha (and ensemble)

Genre:

This show is categorized as magical realism... which happens to be my favorite genre in literature. Imagine a world that seems 95% realistic but with a 5% dose of the fantastical. For the most part, the characters, setting, and plot are completely grounded in reality, but there are a few moments - including the overall web of connections that exist between people and park - that transcend reality.

The Set:

The scenery is simple but beautiful. We'll be using one, mostly-unchanging set. Lights will create much of the sense of mood and location. If circumstances permit, we'll do this black-box style.

Music:

You know I love my music. The playlist isn't very evolved at this point, but plan on acoustic songs played on a variety of stringed instruments, ranging in style from classical to country, jazz to Indian, folk to blues.

Monologue Choices:

Note: Monologues must be fully memorized and confidently delivered. It's wise to find at least a sample of the script online so you can get the flavor of the play. Do some character study, make some bold character choices, and perform without fear.

Brooke: The day I found out, I should have just went home. Instead I went out with my coworkers and got drunk. And then the mayor shows up, and, well, I don't need to tell you the rest. My husband couldn't care less even if he did know. He checked out of our marriage long before me. We both just go through the motions. You just keep doing the things you're supposed to be doing. Going to work, coming home, making dinner, going to meetings, throwing parties, buying stuff, talking about

nothing, nothing... Just constantly in motion, but meaningless motion. It's all so empty. I'm not connected to anything anymore. Not like you.

Lily: Yes you did. That's fine. Really. I'm sure he did the math too. And double, triple checked it. The timing works out, trust me. It just sucks. They never really show this part on the commercials, they just show the homecomings. And I'm sure it'll be great. For five minutes, and then it'll be... I think he'll be a stranger again, and I'm just trying to adjust my own expectations and needs because I don't talk to other adults that much - obviously you know that because I'm rambling on and on- and I just don't want to overwhelm him and scare him off, which seems likely at this point. Don't you think?

Clay: Okay, fine. I get it. That's fine. Keep doing yoga. I'll talk. You just. Good. I'm glad you're doing yoga. It's not my thing. But hey. You're happier when you're doing yoga. But I need to talk to you and I need to do it now. (checks his phone) - so I'm sorry for interrupting. I know you don't like being interrupted when you're - I'm sorry. That's it, really.

I mean there's more. I came to apologize. First let me say, it wasn't my intention, ever, to let things go on like this. To be absent. To be emotionally unavailable to you. For you. But that's exactly what I've been: absent. No, worse than that. It's... this is a confession okay and I really wish you'd stop Sun Saluting so I can talk to you.

Holly: You think this solves anything? What are you going to smash next? You want to bulldoze over me along with the rest of this park? Why not, right? That's what you do when things get complicated and difficult. When foundations start to shake. Anything decent in this world is built slowly, over time, to weather the storms. What do you do? You talk about tough decisions. You bulldoze. That's what you do. You rush over here, whining like a toddler, pulling on my sleeve. Do you realize I come out here for peace of mind? This is my sanctuary. Respect it. This tiny patch of grass is where we feel safe. This field is all we have on days like today to hold it all together. Do you realize that? This park. How much it means to people?

Asha: Last time we were here was maybe two years ago? Yeah about two I guess. That's when she caught the fish. That was about the time she stopped working in the park. She was a trail maintenance supervisor for forty three years. I don't think I ever saw her use a map - didn't need to. You could drop her anywhere in the park, blindfolded, and she'd know where she was by the smell. The smell - the pines, the grass, the dirt, whatever. I know it sounds crazy but we tested her all the time. She... we came to fish one more time last year, but she wasn't really here, if ya know what I mean. Physically yeah I brought her out here but her Alzheimers had completely... she wasn't here. So we didn't even fish. We just sat over there on that log. She thought we were fishing the whole time. And I guess, in a way, we were.

Reed: No, no. I'm not homeless. I mean I have a home. I've just been away since. Since... my wife let my dumb ass volunteer. Seemed like the right thing to do at the time. I guess it was, but now I got a kid I haven't seen and a wife that may or may not still love me. And now I'm back obviously, but uh... I don't know when I got back. I think I wasn't supposed to come back right now. You know that feelin like you're supposed to be somewhere but you're not there. Like you're late. Like you wake up late, that like "oh crap" moment, except I don't know where I'm supposed to be. Something's not right. I don't know what it is, but something's not right. And I don't know what time it is, or what day or anything.

Important Dates (tentative):

Auditions: Tuesday, August 24th and Wednesday, August 25th

Cast List Posted: Thursday, August 26th

First Read Through: Friday, August 27th

Rehearsals: Tuesdays and Thursdays in September and October: 2:30-5

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday in November 2:30-6

Tech Week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, November 15-17, 2:30-8

Performances: November 18, 19, and 20

Set Strike: November 21