

**COCKROACHES**  
**WORLD PREMIERE**  
By Emma Schillage Directed by Emerson Collins  
April 23-May 3, 2026

I am INCREDIBLY excited to bring this brilliant, and funny, and dark Southern gothic play into the world for the first time with Revolution Stage Company. Emma Schillage won the Del Shores Foundation Writers Festival Best Play Award and has created something beautiful for us to all make together. Emma will be joining us later in the rehearsal process as well! This is going to be a fun adventure to figure out the unique journey of this piece, and we're looking for open, creative actors to bring it to life!

Emerson Collins, Director

**AUDITION NOTES**

Please memorize the auditions scenes. If that is not possible, be as familiar as you can with them. I may only see one scene in the initial audition. The callback scenes for each character are also attached so you can be familiar with it if I need to see more from you.

**SISSY NOTES** – The second scene is a fun and bonkers bit of a fever dream monologue – have fun with it, use the space, let yourself play, make big choices and enjoy it!

**\*\*Because it is not published, we are not posting the entire script, but if you would like to read it, email me and I will send it to you.**

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**CHARACTER BREAKDOWN**

JENNIFER "JENNY" - 18; the eldest child; the caretaker; she is responsible and intelligent, but she isn't sure what her purpose is outside of taking care of her family.

CHARLOTTE "CHARLIE" - 15; sturdy, the middle child, the pot-stirrer, she is intuitive, yet deeply insecure; her love and intensity can quickly turn into violence (it's a defense mechanism.)

SAVINA "SISSY" - 12; small, thin, the youngest; the crybaby/peace-keeper; she is sensitive and joyful but somewhat disturbed; she feels everything with heightened intensity.

MR. SAM (M) – 35-48; the next-door neighbor

MOMMA (F) - 40; the human parts of her are fading

**NOTE ON CASTING**

-Charlie and Sissy are under the age of 18, but will be played by actors who are 18+.

## **REHEARSAL SCHEDULE**

Six days a week, tentative schedule below. \*\*If all actors are available during some day time, we will consider some daytime rehearsals.\*\*

### **WEEK ONE:**

3/24-27 - Tuesday-Friday 5-10pm

3/28-29 - Sat-Sun 10-3 or 11-4 daytime only

### **WEEK TWO:**

3/31-4/3 - Tues-Friday 5-10pm

Sat 4/4 - 10-3 or 11-4 daytime only

Sun 4/5 - EASTER OFF PROBABLY

### **WEEK THREE:**

4/7-4/10 - Tues-Friday 5-10pm

4/11-12 - Sat/Sun - 10-3 or 11-4 (leavening evenings for other shows/events)

### **WEEK FOUR:**

4/14-4/17 - Tuesday-Friday 5-10pm

### **WEEK FIVE:**

SATURDAY 4/18 – DAYTIME TECH 8-5

SUNDAY 4/19 – TECH ALL DAY, TECH RUN

MONDAY 4/20 – OFF

TUESDAY 4/21 – DRESS RUN

WEDNESDAY 4/22 – FINAL INVITED DRESS

THURSDAY 4/23 – PREVIEW

FRIDAY 4/24 – OPENING

SATURDAY 4/25 – EVENING SHOW

SUNDAY 4/26 – MATINEE

### **WEEK SIX:**

THURSDAY 4/30 – Performance

Friday 5/1 – Performance

Saturday 5/2 – Performance

Sunday 5/3 - CLOSING

Charlie pulls Sissy's hair. She yanks it hard, pulling her to the ground.

SISSY

She didn't take you with her! You were going to leave with Jenny, but she didn't take you, and now you know.

CHARLIE

Know what?

SISSY

Jenny is just as selfish as Momma.

Charlie pours her soda on top of Sissy.

*SCENE Transition: "His growing lack of concern for the others hardly surprised him, whereas previously he had prided himself on being considerate." - FK*

Time passes slowly.

START

Or maybe we are just seeing the world as Sissy sees it. Cruel and dark and lonely. A world with retreating light. But Sissy believes she is still fast enough to catch it. Something scuttles along the roof. Sissy tilts her head up to hear it. She begins picking at her skin, wiping the soda off with a towel. She takes a chair from the table. After a moment, she climbs up on top of the medicine cabinet. She grabs an orange pill bottle.

SISSY

*(Sing-songy)*

Pill bottle pill bottle pill bottle pillows make a good night sleep every night of the week.

The pill bottle spills out in front of her. Four have escaped. She picks all of them up contemplating for a moment. Then-

SISSY

Goodnight, Jenny.

She drops one pill in the bottle.

SISSY

Goodnight, Charlie.

And another.

SISSY

Goodnight, Sissy.

And another.

SISSY

Momma says goodnight. Have a goodnight sleep. Don't you worry. And don't you weep. Pill bottle pill bottle pill bottle pillows make a good night sleep every night of the week.

...

And what do you say? Tell your Momma goodnight.

~~Sissy cocks her ear out, waiting for a response.~~  
Sissy waits until she hears someone say  
goodnight. And she does hear it.

She swallows the last pill. The world turns the color of Vicodin. She begins dancing around the space, expressing what it is to feel heavy and light at the same time. She plays. She climbs up on the table and starts her own marching band. She crawls around like the creature on the roof. She hides in the curtains and scares us. She jumps in the piles of laundry, and throws it all over the space. She gathers the blankets strewn around the floor and begins running around with them. She runs back and forth across the stage with the sheets traveling behind her. She leaps with them in the air as she runs. ~~It's clumsy and silly, but she probably saw it in a movie once.~~ At some point she pretends to die. She is super overdramatic and she draws it out as long as she can. She feels tired and heavy. Her whole world turns into jello. The vivacity of before is long gone.

SISSY

Ugh! Calm down. Can I tell you something?

SISSY 3/3

Sc. 2

40

The sound scurries down now to the side of her head. Sissy looks directly out at the wall, past us, as if the creature is right behind us.

SISSY

What do you like so much about the wallpaper? What's so fun about hiding in there?

She crawls over to the wall, and puts her head against it.

SISSY

I still hear you.

Suddenly, her movement is fast. She sits up and makes a silly face at the face watching her. She stares at it. Finally, she sticks her tongue out at it. After awhile she collapses, in jello again.

SISSY

You can't have me. And you can't have my sisters. Because you are too ugly. Boo!

~~She startles.~~

SISSY

No fair! You scare me too easily.

~~She cocks her head to the side.~~

SISSY

What scares you?

~~She laughs.~~

SISSY

Sorry I called you ugly. I like it better when I can look at you. Even if you are...sorry-not easy on the eyes.

~~Sissy cries, a little overcome.~~

SISSY

Please leave me alone. I don't want to hear you anymore. Please. Will you stop? Will you stop, please? I'll eat you alive. I will. I promise I will. Please? Please?

---

END

Cockroaches

SISSY 1/4 Sec. 1

45

JENNY

Just. Can you not do that at like 11 pm?

SISSY

I was just having fun. It was also extremely important.

JENNY

...?

SISSY

I was having a conniption fit.

JENNY

Mmm. I don't think that means what you think it means.

SISSY

*(offended)*

I'm a feminist, you know.

JENNY

...

SISSY

...

JENNY

...

I'm like-

SISSY

...?

JENNY

I'm like really trying to figure out what you mean by that.

SISSY

You're an Ivy leaguer. You know what I mean.

JENNY

I go to a good school. I don't go to an Ivy League school.

SISSY

You go to Tulane!

SISSY 2/4 Sec. 1

46

JENNY

There are no Ivy League's in the South.

SISSY

*(just really, personally offended by this)*

WHY NOT?

JENNY

I don't know!

SISSY

Why are there no Ivy League's in the South, Jenny?!

JENNY

They are all in the North East.

SISSY

WHAT? Like that's- I don't know-but like, if you grow up in the South and can't afford to go up there, then you can't get a good education. And if you can't get a good education, it's like, like, like you are stuck in this like poor place for the rest of your life!

JENNY

Yeah. I know.

SISSY

But that isn't fair!

JENNY

What does this have to do with anything?

SISSY

The thirteen colonies man. They get everything. All the glory. They think they are better than everyone else. I bet they all skate too! Like on ice! Can you imagine? Because they are educated and rich and drink their tea *hot* like it's Britain or something. The revolution is over!

JENNY

What is going on with you?

SISSY

I'm sorry you couldn't get into an Ivy League school, Jenny. I'm so sorry.

JENNY

I didn't apply to an Ivy League school. And Tulane is a great school.

# SISSY 3/4 Sc. 1

47

SISSY

Because you knew they would hold it against you. Being from here. They think they know you. They think they know Momma. Momma wanted to go to New York, but she couldn't, so now she hates the South, just like everyone else. Try not to sell yourself short, okay?

JENNY

I'm not.

SISSY

Good. That's all that matters to me. I'm protecting you, Jenny. I'm protecting you and Charlie. Don't worry.

JENNY

This conversation has gotten too far ahead of me.

SISSY

You should try it some time. Being a feminist.

JENNY

This was all about the feminist thing?

SISSY

And the conniption fits. I had a conniption fit because I am a feminist and I just don't think that anyone understands that part of me. I want to rage like the hulk. Or the monster. The monster, Jenny! My monster is so scary.

JENNY

I thought we were over this.

SISSY

And I thought we were over you and Charlie not believing anything I say. It's fine. It's on me and I get it. Maybe if you tried to see things like I see them...but you don't.

JENNY

I am sorry if I don't see the point in monsters. Is that actually what the conniption was about?

SISSY

You're the same as you were but different.

# SISSY 4/4 Sc. 1

48

JENNY

...?

SISSY

You just look like you don't roll around on the floor enough. You should roll around on the floor more.

END

JENNY

...thanks, Sissy. Maybe you should go to bed. Go lay in my room and get some sleep.

Jenny pushes Sissy towards her room. Jenny walks to Charlie's door and knocks loudly. Charlie swings the door open, ~~annoyed~~.

CHARLIE

What.

JENNY

What the hell is wrong with Sissy?

CHARLIE

What?

JENNY

She is acting insane. Calling herself a feminist-

CHARLIE

Nothing wrong with that, but, okay.

JENNY

She is dancing in the middle of the night, and obsessing over that damned monster.

CHARLIE

Shit. Shit shit shit. Yeah no umm, I think she is taking Momma's medication. After you left, Sissy would have these night terrors and Momma couldn't handle it, so she gave her some -

JENNY

Pill bottle pillows. Shit.

CHARLIE

She probably just took one for bed.

JENNY

Does she normally get all agitated like that?

Cockroaches

# CALLBACK #2 JENNY/SISSY/CHARLIE <sup>73</sup>

1/5

Momma! Stop! Let her go.

SISSY

The monster stops and turns to Sissy. Her beady eyes, unnerving.

I think you should go to bed.

SISSY

Sissy grabs the monster's hand. Momma sniffs at Sissy, burrowing her face in her hair.

I'll be right back.

SISSY  
(calling to her sisters)

Sissy leads Momma back to the bedroom, leaving Charlie and Jenny absolutely stricken in the middle of the room. Jenny runs out the room, gagging.

*SCENE Transition: "I cannot make you understand. I cannot make anyone understand what is happening inside me. I cannot even explain it to myself." - FK*

All three sisters sit numbly in the living room.

So...

CHARLIE

Yeah.

JENNY

That's pretty fucked up.

CHARLIE

Yeah.

JENNY

I mean, Momma is the monster.

CHARLIE

Yeah.

JENNY

START

CALLBACK #2 JENNY/SISSY/CHARLIE <sup>74</sup>

2/5

Momma is-

CHARLIE

Yeah.

JENNY

A fucking cockroach.

CHARLIE

I mean-what do we do? She can't- I mean she can't function, right? She's not-can she last like that? What can we do?

JENNY

Nothing. There is nothing to do.

SISSY

What do you mean?

JENNY

She's dying. She has been since she came home from the hospital. It was slow at first, but now-you notice it, too.

SISSY

How do you mean she's dying?

CHARLIE

She can't eat. She can't drink. She can hardly breathe. I mean, she eats. She eats a lot, but-it's like she's starving. Like nothing will ever be enough. That's why there's no food in the fridge. That's why Max-

SISSY

No. Fuck. No. She ate-? God, Sissy, I'm sorry. I didn't-

CHARLIE

It was quick. Swallowed him whole. No blood. Never anything left. It's like she's some bottomless pit.

SISSY

Jesus Christ.

JENNY

# CALLBACK # 2 JENNY / SISSY / CHARLIE<sup>75</sup>

SISSY

She fights me, forgets who I am, tries to hurt me. It's like her body is shutting down. Everyday she becomes less and less herself and more and more that thing. Momma's a monster and she's dying, and we have no choice but to live with it until she dies.

3/5

CHARLIE

Did you try raid?

JENNY

Charlie.

CHARLIE

What? I'm serious. What are we supposed to do? Ignore it?

SISSY

You already have been. It shouldn't be that difficult for you.

JENNY

Sissy, I'm-we're sorry, okay? We didn't know.

CHARLIE

It's like a cruel joke.

~~Jenny and Sissy look to Charlie.~~

CHARLIE

It's my fault. I didn't know the stories would become...that thing.

JENNY

What stories? What?

SISSY

After you left, Momma got so much worse.

CHARLIE

It didn't matter what we did. If we were too loud, too upset, too curious, she'd-

SISSY

Hurt us.

CHARLIE

It was the normal, you know? Poking us, little smacks, the occasional spanking. Then, it was like something switched. She started using a belt. Putting hot sauce on Sissy's tongue. Hot oil on-

# CALLBACK#2 JENNY/ISSY/CHARLIE<sup>76</sup>

4/5

SISSY

We'd get welts all over. And if we said anything, talked back at all-she'd beat one of us and make the other watch before switching over.

CHARLIE

She threw Sissy across the room.

SISSY

I flew, Jenny. I swear. It was like she had this strength she'd never had before.

CHARLIE

I didn't mean anything by it, but before we'd go to bed, I'd tell these stories. About Momma. I was just trying to be funny, calling her a monster, and I'd describe her like-

SISSY

Like that.

CHARLIE

They just made us feel better. I made her that thing. I didn't mean to-

JENNY

No. There has to be some reasonable explanation, right?

CHARLIE

Nothing about this is reasonable! This isn't something you can fix, okay?

JENNY

We have to tell someone.

SISSY

You can't tell anyone. They won't believe us.

JENNY

Why the hell not? She's here. She's that thing.

CHARLIE

Sissy is right. They won't be able to see it like we can.

JENNY

What? We're all crazy? Suffering from the same delusion?

CHARLIE

Sissy, how long have you seen Momma like that?

# CALLBACK #2 JENNY/SISSY/CHARLIE

77

SIS

SISSY

Since the day after she came home.

CHARLIE

Six days ago. Jenny, how many times have you been in Momma's room to help her since then?

JENNY

...

CHARLIE

Exactly. Jenny, you're eighteen. You can't legally take care of us. And Sissy and I can't go live with our Dads. If we tell someone-anyone-we'll end up in foster care. Momma already has a couple of strikes with CPS.

JENNY

So what does that mean?

CHARLIE

It means it's our problem now. No one else's. Momma wants to die. And we should let her.

SISSY

What happens to us then?

CHARLIE

I don't know. But we'll have some time.

JENNY

No, I don't accept that. We have to do something now. We have to do something. Right?

END

*SCENE transition: " They had so much to worry about at present that they had lost sight of any thought for the future." -FK*

Jenny lays out blankets on the floor. Sissy helps Jenny by adding pillows. Charlie stands and watches with her arms crossed over her chest. She steals a pillow from Sissy and whacks Sissy with it, square in the face.

SISSY

OW! CHARLIE!

JENNY

What happened?

Cockroaches