

## Characters

Sugar Ducharme

Grace Ducharme

Trout Stanley

Parents' imaginations build frameworks out of their own hopes and regrets into which children seldom grow, but instead, contrary as trees, lean sideways out of the architecture blown by a fatal wind their parents never envisaged.

– Elizabeth Smart, *By Grand Central Station  
I Sat Down and Wept*

The legend of the traveler appears in every civilization, perpetually assuming new forms, afflictions, powers, and symbols. Through every age he walks in utter solitude toward penance and redemption.

– Evan S. Connell Jr., *Notes from a Bottle*

We move between two darkneses. The two entities who might enlighten us, the baby and the corpse, cannot do so.

– E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel*

I would like to learn, or remember how to live.

– Annie Dillard, *Teaching a Stone to Talk*

Those

Boots fit like  
a glove



## Prologue

*Tumbler Ridge, B.C. House beside the town dump. A tidy and trinketful universe. Television, figurines, dinette set. Sugar Ducharme — track suit, crocheted slippers — prepares dinner. Small mutterings, in song form: ‘Sugar, sugar, sugar, sugar, sugar, Sugar. Dinner looks so good, it smells so good, it looks so good, you’re everything, what, what, what, you’re Sugar, sugar, sugar, sugar, Sugar . . .’ All finishings finished, Sugar looks out the window. She slinks to the record player. Puts on Heart’s ‘Magic Man.’ She dances — a sultry, buoyant secret. Sound of squealing tires. Needle is pulled, record player turned off. Sugar checks her reflection in the mirror. She straightens her track suit, her slippers, her self.*

*Enter: Grace Ducharme, through a cloud of dust, coveralls, sunglasses, hair sprayed into a sculpture. Grace and Sugar are twins — they look nothing alike.*

SUGAR: You’re home.

GRACE: I’m home.

SUGAR: I’m happy.

GRACE: I’m home Sugar, I’m home.

*Sugar opens the fridge. Pulls out a soda. She cracks it wide. Hands it to Grace. Grace guzzles.*

SUGAR: How was your day?

GRACE: Like the others.

SUGAR: Garbage pickers?

GRACE: No.

SUGAR: Illegal dumpers?

GRACE: No.

SUGAR: Nothin' peculiar?

GRACE: Nothin' peculiar.

SUGAR: I'm happy to see ya Grace. I'm happy you're home.

GRACE: I'm home.

SUGAR: I'm happy.

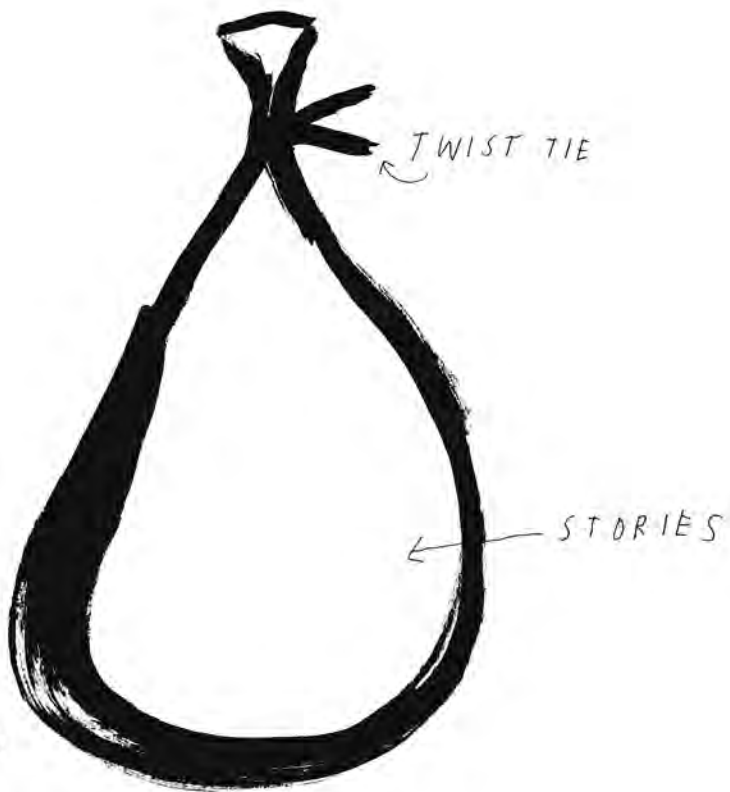
GRACE: I'm home Sugar, I'm home. (*Grace sniffs the air*) Gonna freshen up.

*Grace exits to their bedroom. Sugar is still for a moment, directionless. Sound of freshening up — mostly a keen hair dryer. Timer goes. Ding. Sugar pulls the roast out of the oven and places it on the table. Hair dryer off. To the world entire, Sugar announces:*

SUGAR: Roast.

*Blackout.*





## Act One

### Scene One

*Midnight. Grace and Sugar are asleep in their bedroom. Front door lock is jimmied open. A man enters. Bare feet. Bearded. Untended and overgrown. A filth to nest in. He closes the door quickly behind him. Eyes adjust. Moves immediately to the kitchen counter, the fridge — finds a half-eaten roast. Eats until he is licking bone. Some growling. Opens cupboard doors until he finds a bottle of something. Tips it back. Swoons a bit. Makes his way to the door: The television. Lured. He sits inches from the screen. Turns it on. Low volume. Switches through channels evangelical: nature, detectives, sports, news. He bangs the side of the television trying to get better reception, remembers where he is, realizes that he has made some noise and dives behind the couch — as Grace Ducharme comes out sleepy-eyed. Grace reaches for the converter to turn off the television, but she is drawn in by the news — as is he.*

NEWS: ... Was last seen when she left Rodeo Bob's Steakhouse Emporium and Nude Dancers in Chetwynd, BC, at approximately 3:30 a.m. yesterday morning. Co-workers say she insisted on walking home, refusing rides, despite the nearly torrential rain that night. Not odd behaviour for the independent and some have even said brazen exotic dancer and local Scrabble champion. Authorities have not ruled out foul play, adding that ladies of the night are prone to vanishing. In other news, the caterpillar population continues to —

*Grace thinks she hears something. She clicks off the television. Stands still. Scanning. She tiptoes around; the intruder dives and rolls stealthily. She opens the door to their bedroom.*

GRACE: Sugar.

*Asleep. Starts to close door. Swings it open again.*




GRACE: Sugar.

*Definitely sleeping. She closes it. Periscoping. Grace decides that there is nothing there. She gets a soda from the fridge, cracks it open and returns to their bedroom. The man comes out from behind the couch. He heads for the door, catches sight of Sugar's crocheted slippers languishing under a night light. He picks them up; he strokes them and sniffs them. Some growling. He puts them back where he found them. Bottle still in hand, he makes his exit.*



# SPELLS

  
REGULAR

  
BROKEN