

Out of the Dark, Into the Light (Josie and Ely version)
By
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Characters

Ely: A young Monster, 12 human years old

Josie: A young Human, 14 years old, kind

Monster #1 (later Ely's Mother): One of the resistance force, Ely's mother

Monster #2 (later Ely's Father): One of the resistance force, Ely's father

Monster #3 (later Ely's Sister): One of the resistance force, Ely's older sister

Shadows

Other Monsters (the crowd and the rest of the resistance)

Setting

The forest behind JOSIE'S house, the Underground

Note

This version of the play uses the names Ely and Josie, but the two main characters can be played by any gender with any of the given names.

The nature of ELY'S "Monster-ness" can be determined by the director (i.e. unnatural skin color, texture, horns, etc.)—this logic applies to the other Monsters as well. A reveal is written into the play as a placeholder, but the director and creative team can do what they want with this particular scene.

The SHADOWS should be dressed in all black, faces obscured, but the design of the SHADOWS can be up to the director.

The set should not be elaborate, especially in the Underground but props and furniture should be used when necessary/felt to be necessary (i.e. benches, chairs, tree, a bush, etc.).

Scene 1

(A single spotlight comes up on ELY'S mother, holding a book. She opens the book and begins to read.)

MONSTER #1

Over 200 years ago, Monsters and Humans lived and worked together. There were leaders on each side that worked together in order to keep the peace. There were certainly hate groups on either side, but they were contained, or so we thought. No one could guess how much tension was growing until it was too late. Then, a rogue Human snapped and assassinated the Monsters' leader. War was declared. It lasted many years, with bloodshed on both sides.

(She sighs.)

Finally, the Humans declared victory, and banished the Monsters to the Underground. A barrier was created in order to keep them in their place and now, the only way out is through the power of Human souls.

(She closes the book and looks at the audience.)

There has been no contact between Humans and Monsters for almost a century. They stay away from us and we stay away from them. That is the way it is. That is the way it's supposed to be.

(She exits the stage, and the spotlight goes out.)

Scene 2

(Lights up on JOSIE, 14, Human, sitting against a tree, reading a book. We hear a HUMAN ADULT: a parent.)

HUMAN ADULT

Josie! Remember that you need to come inside soon! I don't like you being out after dark!

JOSIE

Okay!

(She goes back to reading her book, clearly getting more and more into it. It becomes darker very quickly.)

(After a while, a rustle is heard from a bush onstage. This is unheard by JOSIE. Then the bush begins to giggle. This gets her attention.)

(During the next exchange, the lights get even darker until only two spotlights remain, one on each person.)

JOSIE

(Scared, she stands) Is someone there?

(More giggling. The bush is shaking with laughter.)

JOSIE

(More confident, moving toward the bush) Who are you? Come out of the bush! This isn't funny!

(Slowly, ELY comes out of the bush, full on laughing and wiping tears away.)

ELY

Sorry...I was just...I mean...your face!

(Begins laughing again, holding stomach.)

JOSIE

(Over ELY'S laughter) What about my face! Hey, stop laughing!

ELY

(Finally calming down) I'm sorry; I've just never seen anyone make that face before!

JOSIE

(Clearly not amused) What face?

ELY

You know, this face.

(He proceeds to scrunch up his face to mimic JOSIE'S face while she was reading.)

JOSIE

(Realizing what he's referring to, calming down, but still not amused.) Oh, that face. I was just getting into my book. I was at a really good part. *Excuse me* if my face screws up.

(JOSIE turns around to walk away, embarrassed.)

ELY

(Apologetically) Wait. (JOSIE stops.) I really am sorry. I shouldn't have laughed. Sometimes I can't stop myself.

(JOSIE is silent, unmoving.)

Um...Hello?

(JOSIE takes a deep breath and turns around.)

JOSIE

(Calmly) It's okay. I'm sorry too.

(Awkward silence.)

So...what's your name?

ELY

(Smiling) I'm Ely. What's yours?

JOSIE

Josie. Hi.

(Waves, then stops, realizing the awkwardness of the gesture in this situation.)

ELY

(Giggling, They also wave) Hi.

JOSIE

So...what were you doing in that bush, anyway?

ELY

(Avoiding the real answer.) Nothing. I was just watching you.

JOSIE

(Not believing him.) No. I-I mean, why were you in the bush to begin with? How long have you been there?

ELY

(Feigning confidence) I don't know. What time is it?

(ELY starts to walk away, but then howling is heard. He runs back and is stopped by JOSIE.)

(Scared) What was that?

JOSIE

It was probably a wolf. It sounded far away though, so there's nothing to worry about. Now, what were you *really* doing in the bush? Why are you so jumpy?

ELY

(Sighing, he gives in.) I-I was hiding.

JOSIE

From what?

ELY

(Whispering) The Monsters.

JOSIE

(Confused) The Monsters? What do you mean?

ELY

(More scared now) They were trying to get me.

JOSIE

Get you? What do you mean, "get you?"

ELY

(Exasperated) What do you *think I mean*? (Taking JOSIE'S face in his hands) They. Are. Trying. To. Get. Me.

JOSIE

O...kay...um...please let go of my face.

(ELY does.)

(JOSIE notices that ELY is genuinely scared. This isn't a joke anymore.)

Um...Alright, calm down, um, everything's okay. You're fine. No one ran by here. You're safe.

ELY

(Skeptically) How do you know no one came by? You were too busy reading!

JOSIE

(Almost defends herself, then realizes fighting won't do any good) Okay, you're right. I could have missed them before. But I think the important thing is that they aren't here now, right? You're safe with me, and we aren't far from my house, so you can come with me (taking ELY'S hand), and we can tell my parents what's happened—

(JOSIE starts to pull ELY with her, but he resists, scared.)

ELY

NO!

JOSIE

(Surprised) What do you mean, "no"? You just said there were *Monsters* after you! And you don't want help? Why?

ELY

No, it's not that I don't *want* help, but I don't think you're parents are the kind of people who would *want* to help me.

JOSIE

(Confused) Why? Why wouldn't they want to help?

ELY

Isn't it obvious? *I'm a Monster!* Your parents wouldn't want to help me! I'm not even supposed to be up here, no *Monster* is! They would just send me back Underground with the *Shadows!*

JOSIE

Wait a minute, wait a minute. You don't...you don't look like a *Monster!* You look as *Human* as me!

(ELY sighs, and then uses his hand to rub a patch of makeup off his arm, revealing skin that is decidedly *not human*. JOSIE backs away a few steps, obviously convinced.)

Okay, I believe you. But if you're so worried about getting caught, why did you show yourself to me?

ELY

Why do you ask? (Angrily) Are you gonna turn me in? Huh?

JOSIE

(Without hesitation) Of course not! But why are you so scared? They wouldn't hurt you; you're just a kid.

ELY

You don't know what I did. I—

(Rustling and shouting is heard in the distance. ELY grabs JOSIE.)

That's them! They *can't* see us; we have to run!

(ELY runs offstage. JOSIE hesitates, looks back toward her home, then makes a decision. She decides to run. She

follows after ELY The tree disappears but the bush stays onstage.)

Scene 3

(JOSIE and ELY run onstage from the opposite side. JOSIE stops to catch her breath.)

ELY

No! You can't stop now! We need to keep going!

JOSIE

What we need is a plan! We can't just keep running and running. We need someplace to run to.

(Voices and rustling is heard coming closer and closer. ELY pulls JOSIE into the bush, and the spotlights go out. SHADOWS enter, but are unseen by the audience. There should be four or five.)

SHADOW #1

I know he came this way! I can smell 'im!

SHADOW #2

We need to find him and bring him back! Fan out and check the trees and the bushes! And if you see any humans, you know what to do!

SHADOW #1

I think there's someone with him! (Sniffs) There are two scents now, not just one! Make sure you find his accomplice and dispose of them!

(The SHADOWS run offstage. The kids emerge from the bush. ELY is clearly in distress. He is frozen and begins to hyperventilate.)

JOSIE

They're gone for now, but they might come back. We need to come up with a plan, and fast. (Turning to ELY) Do you know of anywhere we can go—where you can go—where it'll be safe? At least for a little while? ELY? ELY!

(JOSIE goes over to ELY and shakes him. He snaps out of his daze.)

ELY

(Confused, scared) What? Oh, what did you say? I'm sorry; I just kind of froze up. (Beginning to cry) I just...I-I just—
(JOSIE takes ELY into her arms. She comforts ELY.)

JOSIE

Shh...Shh...It's okay. I was saying that I think we lost them— for now. We *need* to come up with a plan. Somewhere to go until we can find a way to get you home. Ely?
(By this time ELY has stopped crying. She pulls away from JOSIE and takes a deep breath.)

ELY

(Shakily) Okay...Okay...there's a cave near here. That'll lead us into the Underground. Follow me, but be careful.
(They run in the opposite direction of the SHADOWS. The bush disappears, leaving the stage bare and completely dark.)

Scene 4

(The children enter, now in the cave, their spotlights in tow.)

JOSIE

I can't see. It's too dark.
(She bumps into ELY)
Sorry.

ELY

Wait. I have a light. Hold on.
(He takes a ball out of their pocket. It gives off a faint light.)

JOSIE

(Surprised) What is—? You know what? I'm not gonna question it. This day is already weird enough.
(ELY laughs. They begin walking through the cave.)

Look. Why...why are they after you, exactly? I know you snuck up to the surface, but it seems like more than that. They only talked about killing me. I think they want you *alive*.

ELY

I want to know why you decided to come with me. You could have left me; I wasn't your problem. Why did you follow after me?

JOSIE

Well, I...I don't know. (Realizing her reasoning in that moment) I guess I didn't want to leave you in case you got hurt, or worse. (Pause) I answered your question. Now you need to answer mine. Why are they after you?

(Pause)

ELY

(Sighing) Well, I might have taken something from them that wasn't mine.

(He prepares to be yelled at, but...)

JOSIE

(Calmly) What did you take?

ELY

(Surprised) Oh, um, well I took this.

(They stop. ELY pulls a small gun from his pocket.)

JOSIE

What is that?

ELY

It's called a soul-catcher.

JOSIE

A what?

ELY

A soul-catcher. It's used to catch human souls to break the barrier.

JOSIE

The barrier?

ELY

(Confused) Um, how much do you know about the war?

JOSIE

We learned about it in school. There was a war between monsters and humans 200 years ago. The humans won, and the monsters were exiled to the Underground. What does this "soul catcher" have to do with the war?

ELY

Well, as a result of the war, a barrier was placed at the edge of the Underground, and ever since I can remember, we've been taught that the only way out was through that barrier, and the only way to get through the barrier is to collect 100 human souls, one for every year of the war.

JOSIE

(Shocked) Wait, they taught you this in *school*?

(ELY puts the gun away. They start walking again.)

ELY

Yeah. I also know that group, the Shadows, are the ones sent to collect the human souls. I followed a group of them back to the Big House one day, and I watched them use the soul-catcher on someone. (Pause) It was *horrible*. (Getting angrier) I watched a Human *die*. Then they just connected the gun to this-this *container* thing, and-and-

(He looks over at Josie. She looks concerned. He takes a deep breath.)

And there was a counter. It said 95. 95! They only need 5 more souls until they reach their goal! We *need* to stop them.

(JOSIE looks at ELY like he's crazy. ELY looks back.)

What?

JOSIE

You are completely insane. You're what, 8? And you just...ran up to a soldier and took a gun out of their hand. (Smiling) You're-

ELY

Okay, first of all, I'm probably 12 years old, by your years. Second of all, whatever you were about to say, watch it.

JOSIE

-Amazing. I was *going* to say, "You're amazing."

ELY

(Surprised, he stops) Oh. Okay. Thanks, I guess.
(He smiles.)

I think we've reached the entrance now.

JOSIE

(Sudden realization) Wait! I just realized. If the only way to get out of the Underground is by using human souls, how—

ELY

I never said it was the *only* way out, I said we were made to *believe* it was the only way out. My family has been finding other exits for years now. We think it's how the SHADOWS have been able to lure Humans to the Underground. Someone gets close enough, the SHADOWS grab them, and they're never seen again.

JOSIE

Why didn't you ever tell anyone about them? Why did you hide this information from the rest of the Monsters?

ELY

No one would believe us. This story about the barrier has been a part of our kind for generations. We need to have proof to give to them in order to make any difference. My father has been making maps of the exits, but anytime we try to tell anyone, we either get laughed at or they threaten to report us to the Shadows. (Sighing, tired) We don't have many options left.

JOSIE

(Takes a moment to process the information, then—) Okay, I'll help in whatever way I can.

ELY

Thank you. (Smiling) I think we've reached the entrance. Now, come on, let's go.

(They walk down into a tunnel, leading them to the Underground.)

Scene 5

(The Underground. JOSIE and ELY run down a tunnel, which deposits them into an empty room.)

JOSIE

Where are we?

ELY

My parents' base. I hope they're here.

(He pockets the light-ball. Then, ELY opens a door leading to another room.)

Mom? Dad? I'm back! You will not believe the night I've had—

(The SHADOWS appear and the lights go dark, except for two spotlights, one on JOSIE and the other on ELY. The SHADOWS surround the children.)

SHADOW #2

Hand over the soul-catcher, Ely!

(The children look around them, then back at each other. ELY becomes angry.)

ELY

Where. Are. My. Parents? Where are they!

(He lunges for the SHADOWS, but JOSIE holds him back.)

JOSIE

Hey! You need to calm down. (Softly) Now, I know you're emotional, but we need a plan. We need a way to escape. Give me the gun.

ELY

What? No! Why? I'm not giving—

(JOSIE shushes them. She looks at ELY'S pocket, the one with the light ball in it. She winks. ELY gives a look of understanding.)

JOSIE

ELY. You *need* to give me the gun. I don't want anyone else to get hurt. Maybe it's better this way.

ELY

(Feigning defeat) Yeah, maybe you're right.

(He takes the ball out of his pocket. There is a flash of light, incapacitating the SHADOWS. The children run offstage.)

SHADOW #1

Get them!

(The SHADOWS run after the children. The children enter from the opposite side. There are other Monsters now, civilians. They are in some sort of market. The lights come up, and the

SHADOWS can be distinguished from the crowd by wearing all black. The children run past them, quickly followed by the SHADOWS. The crowd becomes denser they try to get away, and eventually, ELY is separated from JOSIE.)

ELY

JOSIE! JOSIE! Where are you! Where are—

(Desperate, ELY tries to get the Monsters around her to help. During the next line, every Monster either turns away, disgusted or annoyed, or they laugh at ELY'S accusations. Some even look fearful and walk away quickly.)

Please! The SHADOWS are trying to kill us! They might have my friend! Someone help! Someone, PLEASE!

(ELY is caught by one of the SHADOWS and taken offstage.)

SHADOW #3

Gotcha!

JOSIE

ELY! EL—

(A MONSTER grabs JOSIE. She is dragged offstage.)

Scene 5

(The empty room again. The lights come up.)

JOSIE

(Confused) What? Where am I? Is anyone there? Hello?

(A small crowd of MONSTERS enters. The light in the room is low, but it can be seen that these MONSTERS are cautious of the HUMAN.)

MONSTER #1 (ELY'S MOTHER)

Who are you, human? Why are you here?

MONSTER #2 (ELY'S FATHER)

What were you doing with ELY?

(JOSIE does not answer, but they stand their ground, at least pretending to be unafraid.)

MONSTER #3 (ELY'S SISTER)

Why don't you tremble? Aren't you scared? We could report you to the authorities and you'd have your soul taken in an instant. Yet still you stand tall. Why?

JOSIE

I'm not afraid of you. All I want to do is help. I met ELY on the surface, and we've been running from the SHADOWS. He has one of the soul-catchers—

MONSTER #2 (ELY'S FATHER)

We know! That's why we've been trying to find him. We want to make sure he's safe from harm—

JOSIE

—So do I! That's why I came with him!

MONSTER #3 (ELY'S SISTER)

It's your fault he was taken! A human, running around with a Monster; did you think you would be hard to spot?

JOSIE

Hey! That wasn't my fault! We were separated in the crowd! If you wanted to keep him safe, why didn't you go after him as soon as you saw him? Huh? WHY?

MONSTER #3 (ELY'S SISTER)

We were trying, until you got in the way—

MONSTER #1 (ELY'S MOTHER)

ENOUGH! No one's going to be safe if you don't stop fighting!

MONSTER #3 AND JOSIE

Sorry.

MONSTER #1 (ELY'S MOTHER)

Now, Human, who are you? What is your name?

JOSIE

I'm Josie. I'm a friend of Ely's. Who are you?

MONSTER #1 (ELY'S MOTHER)

I am Ely's mother, and one of the leaders of our resistance group.

ELY'S FATHER

I'm ELY'S father. And this is—

ELY'S SISTER

I'm his sister! (Frustrated) Can we skip the introductions, please? We need a plan to get Ely back from the Shadows!
(Bitingly) Any ideas, Human?

JOSIE

I HAVE A NAME!

ELY'S MOTHER

Everyone calm down, now! Now, Josie, you asked why we took you instead of Ely.

JOSIE

Yeah. Why?

ELY'S MOTHER

You have something we need.

(ELY'S MOTHER keeps talking but cannot be heard by the audience. The lights go down as the group prepares for their rescue mission.)

Scene 7

(The Big House. The lights come up and the room is dimly lit, but we can clearly see that this is a lab of some sort.)

(ELY wakes up, violently.)

ELY

(Sitting up quickly.) What? Where am I? (Holding his head.) Oh, ow.

(He notices the SHADOWS and gets up quickly.)

Why am I here? What's going on?

SHADOW #1

You know very well why you're here, Ely. You have something that belongs to us. Give it back, and maybe (holding out their hand) we won't kill you.

ELY

No! I will *not* give it back! You don't have the right to lie to us! Those people out there have the right to know that a peaceful return *is* possible!

(The SHADOWS stand silent.)

Why are you doing this when you know there's a better way?

(The Shadows begin to laugh. The sound is very disconcerting.)

SHADOW #2

Why? Why? Why do you think? The Humans sentenced us to this hell, so they should suffer in order to ensure our freedom. The story was spread in order to cultivate a hatred that would give us the numbers to rise up at the perfect moment. And that moment is coming very soon. There is nothing you can do to stop us, so hand. It. Over!

(SHADOW #2 lunges at ELY, but the MONSTERS and JOSIE run into the room, attacking the SHADOWS. Not in order to kill them, but to subdue them. ELY'S MOTHER has her hands free, and ELY'S FATHER is holding SHADOW #1.

(JOSIE runs over to ELY. They hug.)

ELY

JOSIE! You came back!

JOSIE

Of course I did! I couldn't leave you behind!

(They separate.)

SHADOW #1

You idiots! Can't you see we're doing this for the good of all Monsters? We are exacting revenge on those who wronged us!

ELY'S MOTHER

We don't need revenge! We need *compromise* with the Humans. There are others on the surface who share our beliefs, and we think we can make a difference. Open up the exits to the public. The time for fighting has passed.

ELY'S SISTER

And without your precious soul-catcher, you can do no more harm to the Humans. ELY, hand it over.

(ELY looks over in confusion.
His sister winks at him.)

(SHADOW #1 elbows ELY'S FATHER,
lunges at ELY and grabs him, putting
him in a chokehold.)

SHADOW #1

Now, be a good boy and give me the gun. Or I'll snap your neck.
(ELY makes no attempt to move.
Frustrated, SHADOW #1 rummages through
his pockets, finding nothing.)

WHERE IS IT? WHAT DID YOU DO WITH IT?

ELY'S FATHER

Josie, NOW!

(JOSIE takes out the soul-catcher.
Before she can throw it on the ground,
one of the SHADOWS snatches it out of
her hand and points it at her.)

(SHADOW #1 lets go of ELY, who runs
over to his sister, who puts her arms
around him.)

SHADOW #1

(Triumphantly) Finally! Now, *Human*, take a look at this.
(SHADOW #1 throws a switch, and a
counter lights up. The counter reads
"99.")

Do you know what this means? You are going to be our salvation!
(The SHADOW who grabbed the gun points
it at JOSIE, preparing to fire.)

SHADOW #1

Any last words before you die?

(JOSIE, looking terrified, glances back
at ELY. Then, as the SHADOW prepares to
pull the trigger, she smiles and begins
to giggle. SHADOW #1 looks confused,
then angry.)

What? Why are you laughing? You're about to die!

JOSIE

(Giggling, then calming down) Oh, I am, am I? I just—(laughs)—I think that's very unlikely.

SHADOW #1

And why is that?

JOSIE

Because, with the help of Ely's parents, we were able to remove the main power cell.

(She takes the power cell out of her pocket and smashes it on the ground. Suddenly, the room is filled with light.)

And since we figured out that you're connected to that power cell, you should be losing that connection in 3, 2, 1. (She smiles.)

SHADOW #1

NO! What have you done?

(All the SHADOWS fall to the ground, their connection to the weapon severed.)

(JOSIE runs over to ELY while everyone else begins to celebrate.)

JOSIE

Are you okay?

ELY

Yeah, yeah, I'm okay. How did you—

JOSIE

Get the soul-catcher? Remember the burst of light from the warehouse? (He nods) I took it before we started running.

ELY'S MOTHER

I was able to track the soul-catcher. That's how we knew JOSIE had it.

(After some hugging and cheering, the room becomes quiet.)

MONSTER #4

What do we do now?

ELY'S FATHER

Now, we take the information we have and the maps we've made and show the others that there *is* a way out, and that they will be welcomed back on to the surface, should they wish to leave.

ELY

Well, then, let's go!

(Smiling, he grabs JOSIE'S hand.)

ELY'S MOTHER

Ely. Josie. I think you two should be the ones to show them. You are the living proof we need that Monsters and Humans *can* coexist. We don't have to hate or live in fear of one another. We can be allies. We can be *friends*.

(JOSIE takes her hand out of ELY'S and puts her arm around his shoulder in a side hug. She squeezes tightly.)

You think you're up for it?

ELY

(Smiling, looking at JOSIE) What do you think, Josie? Are we "up for it?"

JOSIE

I think after the day we've had, this should be a walk in the park.

ELY'S MOTHER

Alright, then. Let's get to it. We have a lot of work to do.
(They all smile. The Monsters walk through the door upstage center, leaving Josie and Ely alone. Josie grabs Ely's hand. They turn to each other.)

ELY

Ready?

JOSIE

Ready.

(They walk through the door, and the lights slowly fade.)

Scene 8

(The lights come up, and we are back where we started, with the tree and the bush and the light of day. ELY'S MOTHER comes out with her book again.)

ELY'S MOTHER

And, in the end, it was the cleverness of two friends that set us free. We gradually made our way up to the surface, and ELY finished his schooling with JOSIE. They never forgot their terrifying but amazing adventure, and they have been inseparable ever since.

(JOSIE, ELY, ELY'S FATHER, SISTER, and the rest of the Monsters come back onstage.)

There was still a lot of work to be done, but thanks to the cooperation and determination of beings on both sides, we were able to, once again, live in peace.

(ELY'S MOTHER closes the book, smiling wide, as the lights fade out.)

The End