

This one is done. You can see that, can't you?  
 We're caught in the web of a thing our parents built  
 our grandparents and the grandparents of our  
 grandparents  
 and so we're building it now too.  
 We don't know how to do anything other than keep  
 building  
 even as the strands wrap tighter and tighter around  
 our necks,  
 we keep building.  
 So if there's no stopping, no changing, no way to escape  
 then you have to wipe the slate clean and start again.

*(She takes his face.)*

Let's start again. OK?

SCRATCH. I love you.

ELIZABETH. I believe you.

SCRATCH. Can't that be enough?

ELIZABETH. For what?

SCRATCH. You and me, fuck the rest of them.

ELIZABETH. I can imagine we'd have some real fun. But  
 then one day, maybe a hundred years from now...  
 One day we'll notice that nothing around us seems  
 to have changed, everyone is just as vicious and  
 frightened and banal as they were before. We'll think:  
*Shouldn't anything at all have changed?* And then at  
 that moment, whenever it comes, we'll think of this  
 moment, right now. We'll think: *Oh, We had the chance  
 to change all of this. We did have it. We just said No.*

Scratch -  
 Aria

(SCRATCH, alone. In a narrow, focused light.)

*(Similar to the way Elisabeth was in the beginning. His aria.)*

SCRATCH. I really appreciate everything you've done for me?  
 but I think I just  
 am maybe having a little difficulty  
 at the moment  
 in this particular industry  
 and  
 I don't want this to be like, I'm quitting  
 but  
 maybe I just  
 need to take a time-out...?

*(Beat.)*

I've been thinking about, you know,  
 what I want to do instead and  
 I'm not, let's face it, the most organized [person]  
 which is why, you know, that paperwork... [wasn't  
 on time]  
 (so sorry about that)  
 uh  
 but maybe I just wanna travel for a while.  
 Like, see the world, and not have to engage in any kind of  
 transactionary thing, but like  
 have some croissants and go whale-watching...  
 And I know things are all falling apart, the whole thing is  
 coming apart at the seams  
 which is rife with opportunity, I mean I understand  
 what kind of  
 moment we're in  
 so maybe I'll just go on vacation for a little bit

and then if I start to feel better, maybe I can come back then  
and we can talk about resuming on a part-time basis?  
Or like a freelance thing, or...?

*(Beat, without meaning to.)*

I'm having a really hard time sleeping.  
I just lie awake all night and  
there's a particular color that exists  
in the span of time right before the sun comes up  
this particular shade of blue that's almost bruise  
and I see that color every morning now.  
And I try to do all these exercises, like I take deep  
breaths  
or I do the thing where you relax your muscles in  
groups  
your feet, then your calves, then your thighs,  
like you work upward until your brain is relaxed and  
you fall asleep -  
but every time I get to my heart area, I start to feel like  
I'm having a  
sort of slow-motion panic attack  
for hours  
so I never get to the part where you fall asleep.

*(Beat.)*

I know you can't really answer this, because  
we just should do our jobs, and I get it, entropy is the  
point anyway,  
but  
I have no idea if there's anything better coming down  
the pike  
or if *this is it*, if this is what it is forever -  
but then also,  
if this *is* what it is  
then shouldn't we just learn to live with it?

Be happy in small ways  
Be lucky in small ways?  
A person could love a person and  
that could be enough  
couldn't it?

*(Beat - raw, from the heart.)*

But  
what if there is something *amazing* ahead  
and all we have to do  
is burn down everything we know  
to get to it?

But maybe these aren't the right questions.

There is a single question that I have been asking myself  
over and over again  
all night, until everything turns that one alarming color  
and all day,  
I keep asking myself this question, and...

*(Beat - raw, anguished - a question of sorts.)*

I find it so hard to have hope right now.  
I just find it so hard to have hope.

*(Blackout.)*

*end*

End of Play