

I couldn't.

I had to keep myself numb just to get through it.

(Bill turns around and looks in the direction of the hills.)

Maddie?

(She doesn't answer.)

(Bill turns around and looks at the women.)

I ... I'm sorry ...

I ...

Oh God.

God.

I don't know what to do.

(He sits on a rock by the stream. Olive gives Bill her candle. Then, she pulls a small book out of her pocket. She opens it and reads. The following Ode is addressed to Bill.)

THIRD CHORAL ODE

"FAITH"

OLIVE.

(Reads.) The dark forest leads to an open field.

The dark valley rises to a mountain

where the sun shines bright.

Spring follows winter

and morning, the dark night.

WOMAN 1.

There's an order in the world.

An order behind the chaos and the violence.

WOMAN 2.

And there's a purpose.

WOMAN 1.

Yes.

WOMAN 2.

If the sun never set
we would find no beauty in the sunrise.

WOMAN 1.

If the night was full of light
we would not see the stars.

OLIVE.

And if hatred never pierced our hearts
we would not know the power of love.

WOMAN 1.

These things are given to us for a reason.

OLIVE.

Though the reason is never made fully clear.

WOMAN 1.

They are given to us so we may learn and grow.

WOMAN 2.

And no one is given a burden that they are unable to bear.

WOMAN 1.

You have to trust in this.

WOMAN 2.

Yes.

WOMAN 1.

Trust in the rising sun
and in the stars that shine at night.

OLIVE.

Trust in the strength of love
to overcome the awesome power of hatred.

WOMAN 1.

Trust.

WOMAN 2.
Yes, trust.

OLIVE.
And believe
that behind the suffering of the world,
there is a purpose
to everything.

FOURTH DIALOGUE
"THE AGON"

Bill responds to the women.

BILL.
I want to believe that.
I want nothing more than to believe
that this has happened for a reason.
But I can't.
I just ... *can't*.
To believe that would mean that Adam died
just so I could learn and grow.
And that's not true.
There is no lesson so important
that it was worth the price of his life.
To believe that would mean
that I am at the center of the universe
and that all things happen for my benefit.
And they don't.
The events of the world ...
the horrors ...
just happen.
And they happen for *no reason*.
The only thing you can do is accept that