

The States Collection – South Dakota  
The Sunflower Field  
By Claudia I. Haas

All rights reserved.

CAST: 2 female, sisters

Mariah (f) 20 – elder of the sisters, the “smart” one

Sondra (f) 18 – the “pretty one”

Lights up in the middle of a sunflower field.  
SONDRA has a makeshift urn.

MARIAH

This is worse than a corn field.

SONDRA

It’s pretty.

MARIAH

From afar. All I see are long stems.

SONDRA

Look up. It’s like a million suns are greeting you. It’s the prettiest sunflower field in the county. Can’t you enjoy anything?

MARIAH

No. Just dump everything here and let’s go.

SONDRA

We need a ceremony.

Beat.

MARIAH

Dear Mom: I am here. Even though you never liked me and Sondra was always your favorite. I’m still here. For you. Amen.

SONDRA

Well, that was ... uninspiring.

MARIAH

Do better.

SONDRA

Dear Mom: You will always be like a sunflower to me. You will never fade away in time.

MARIAH

But sunflowers do fade. And die. (Beat.) Just like Mom.

SONDRA

But they drop their seeds and return year after year.

MARIAH

Sometimes they do and sometimes they don't.

SONDRA

You won't.

MARIAH

What?

SONDRA

Return.

MARIAH

No.

SONDRA

We're her seeds.

MARIAH

I'm the seed that got carried away by the wind. You're the seed that got planted.

SONDRA

You were always "smart Mariah."

MARIAH

And you were always "pretty Sondra." And "pretty" Sondra always got the goods.

SONDRA

I'll share. You know I will.

MARIAH

You can have it. The land. The farmhouse. I am done with South Dakota.

SONDRA

It's a pretty state.

MARIAH

Pretty is as pretty does.

SONDRA  
Come home for my wedding.

MARIAH  
I never hear from you.

SONDRA  
You're all I have left.

MARIAH  
You're only eighteen.

SONDRA  
Have to get married before my looks fade.

MARIAH  
Ahh! The infamous Mom quote. Can we just dump the ashes? I have a bus to catch.

SONDRA  
Mom said that when I was born you tried to swap me for a rabbit.

MARIAH  
Not an entire rabbit. Just a lucky rabbit's foot.

SONDRA  
Want to know a secret? I always wished I was the smarter one.

MARIAH  
And I wished I was the prettier one.

(The SISTERS smile at each other.)

SONDRA  
Shall we?

MARIAH  
Together.

(And together the SISTERS open the top of the container to spread the ashes as the lights fade to black.)