

Shadow Play

by Laurita Miller

I'd seen the advertisements plastered about town: Santino's Shadow Company Spectacle. The flyers promised an unforgettable performance, and I, with nothing better to do on a cold winter evening, found myself strolling past the Shadow Company theatre. I use the word theatre in the loosest sense, as the building was little more than a shack with chairs set out for the audience and a white canvas tarp hanging from the ceiling near the front of the room. A potbelly stove crackled with heat, and that was enough to entice me inside.

I did not know what to expect from a "Shadow Spectacle" but was soon drawn in by the play. Displayed on the canvas in frightening silhouette - not actors but dark metaphors playing out a tale of secrecy and betrayal, violence and tragedy. I was enthralled and chilled to my very bones.

I lingered long after the show ended hoping to catch a glimpse of one of the persons responsible for my unsettlement. When no one emerged I cautiously made my way behind the tarp. There was no one. I stood, stunned by disbelief. There was no back entrance, and I was certain that no one had passed me, yet I was quite alone in this small room with the tarp and the dying fire.

I walked home, my mind still clouded with dark and obscure thoughts. As I turned onto Main Street I noticed my shadow, shifting erratically under the flickering streetlamps in a macabre display. I brought my hand to my face and felt immense relief that I was, indeed, still there.

