

THE NIGHTSHADE FAMILY

by

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PRODUCTION HISTORY:

Developed at the University California, San Diego, 2005-06.
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New York, July 2007.

CHARACTERS:

HANNAH - F, 29. A dentist.

KEVIN - M, 27. Hannah's fuck-up younger brother. A saxophone player.

EMILY - F, 28. Hannah's next door neighbor and best friend. A divorced mother and scrapbooker.

HENRY - M, 30. Hannah's partner in the local dental clinic.

Played by the actor who plays Henry:

DR. PEDERSEN - M. A bio-resonance therapist.

SETTING:

Most of the action takes place in living room of Hannah's home in a small town near a Great Lake. It's the house she grew up in, which she's inherited following the death of her mother. We also visit Hannah and Henry's dental clinic, and Dr. Pedersen's office.

The realistic scenes of the play are punctuated with highly exaggerated dumbshows, in which we get to see the medical procedures of the play acted out. These scenes, while often frightening and grotesque, should above all be funny, keeping the feel of the entire play fast and light on its feet.

SCENE 1

In black, we hear a chorus of GURGLES, a drumroll to start the show.

Lights pop up Hannah in her dental clinic, where she dances to some very light and cheesy music as she prepares to clean Emily's teeth. Emily sits in the chair, nervously swaying to the music as well. The style of this scene is exaggerated to the point where it may feel like a dream sequence, but it is not.

Hannah takes her polisher out of a cupboard. Emily twitches a little in the chair. Hannah turns on the polisher. It PURRS. Hannah motions for Emily to open wide. Emily does. Hannah goes in.

ODD NOISES emerge from Emily's mouth, but Hannah continues to smile broadly. Henry enters, wearing a lab coat. Hannah turns off her polisher. Henry hands Emily a dixie cup with water.

Emily GURGLES and SPITS multiple times as Hannah twirls Henry around in her dance, reaching the cupboard and pulling out a new toothbrush, which she gives to Emily.

Emily takes the toothbrush, shakes Hannah's hand, and exits.

Hannah smiles proudly over her domain.

SCENE 2

Hannah's living room. The floor is strewn with National Geographic magazines. Stacks of boxes are packed against the walls. Whatever decor is left unpacked gives the room the look and feel of a home of a much older woman.

Kevin enters, an army surplus duffel bag over his shoulder. He throws the bag down and looks around.

KEVIN

Hannah! *(beat)* Hannah!

He waits for an answer but doesn't get one. He settles onto the couch and opens up a National Geographic magazine.

Hannah enters. The smile drops from her face.

HANNAH

What are you doing here?

KEVIN

Have I come at a bad time?

HANNAH

Yes. But don't wait for me to get home, just let yourself in.

KEVIN

If you don't want people to come in, why do you keep a key in the flower pot?

HANNAH

That's still out there?

Kevin produces the key for Hannah to see. She snatches it from him.

HANNAH

Another thing I can thank Mom for.

Hannah pockets the key.

KEVIN

"Welcome home, Kevin."

HANNAH

Right.

KEVIN

"How've you been, Kevin?"

HANNAH

What do you think you're doing here?

KEVIN

I can't just stop by to visit my sister?

HANNAH
It's not called stopping by when you're coming from...New Mexico?

KEVIN
You got my postcard.

HANNAH
Yup.

KEVIN
Cool. Nah, I blew that joint.

HANNAH
What a surprise.

KEVIN
You said I could crash anytime.

HANNAH
When?

KEVIN
At the funeral.

HANNAH
I can't imagine saying that.

KEVIN
You were probably drunk.

HANNAH
Right. Well, you can't stay here.

KEVIN
What do you mean?

Hannah indicates the packed boxes.

KEVIN
Spring cleaning? I won't get in the way.

HANNAH
I'm moving.

KEVIN
Right.

HANNAH
I'm moving, Kevin. In a week.

KEVIN
There's still a lot of stuff here.

HANNAH

I'm renting it furnished.

KEVIN

Oh. So a bunch of strangers are going to come sleep in our mother's bed? Sit in our father's chair? Urinate in our -

HANNAH

Stop it!

KEVIN

You would have told me.

HANNAH

I didn't.

KEVIN

So I was just supposed to come home and find strangers in the house?

HANNAH

Normal people call when they're going to visit.

KEVIN

What if I wanted to stay here?

HANNAH

It's not your house.

KEVIN

I know, I know, but technically.

HANNAH

Technically I own the house, you got the money. That was the deal.

KEVIN

Wanna trade?

Silence.

KEVIN

I'm hungry.

HANNAH

Then go get something to eat.

KEVIN

All that's open is McDonald's and the donut shop.

HANNAH

So?

KEVIN
I can't eat that shit.

HANNAH
Should have thought of that when the grocery store was open.

KEVIN
Hannah. Please.

HANNAH
I've emptied my cupboards.

*Kevin gives her a pitiful
expression.*

HANNAH
There's some cereal.

*Kevin wanders into the kitchen,
which adjoins the living room.*

KEVIN
What kind?

HANNAH
Raisin Bran.

KEVIN
Post or Kellogg?

HANNAH
(sigh)
It's the kind from the health food store.

KEVIN
(suspicious)
You normally eat Kelloggs.

HANNAH
I know.

*Kevin pours himself some cereal and
milk. He lets the cereal sit while
he thinks about the situation.*

KEVIN
Where is it that you think you're going?

HANNAH
Why should I tell you?

KEVIN
I've been everywhere. Maybe I could give you some advice.

Hungary.
HANNAH

KEVIN
(laughs)
What the fuck?

HANNAH
I'm moving to Hungary! I got a job.

KEVIN
Because there's some huge shortage of dentists in Hungary?

HANNAH
No. I mean, well. Probably. I don't know.

KEVIN
But you just decided you wanted to go there.

HANNAH
I decided I wanted to go somewhere. That's what they picked for me.

KEVIN
Who did?

HANNAH
The people who hired me!

KEVIN
Oh my god you've signed up with *them*, haven't you?

HANNAH
It's not like that...

*Kevin begins to go through the
kitchen cupboards, the fridge.*

KEVIN
That's why you're not eating Kellogg's cereal. Like Grandma White? And no...you're not eating meat.

HANNAH
They don't require you to be a vegetarian, I'm just trying it out.

KEVIN
I can't believe they got to you of all people, a scientist.

HANNAH
I'm a dentist.

KEVIN

But you don't believe in all that Seventh Day Adventist crap.

HANNAH

They have the best dentists in the world!

KEVIN

What's gotten into you?

HANNAH

Nothing! I just think it'll be a good experience for me. To travel.

KEVIN

You've never even been on a plane.

HANNAH

So it's about time. And I do believe in it. The whole religion is based on health. They minister medical care to people all over the world.

KEVIN

Did you just say "minister?"

HANNAH

I think it'll be good for me.

KEVIN

Come on, Hannah! This is too much. You haven't turned into a religious whacko.

HANNAH

Last I heard you'd become a Buddhist.

KEVIN

There's a difference between getting in touch with your spirituality and becoming a radical Christian missionary.

HANNAH

It doesn't matter what you say, I'm still going. I'm leaving a week from Monday. The house is rented and my bags are packed.

KEVIN

Did you lie to them about your beliefs?

HANNAH

It's not like that.

KEVIN

They just hired you, knowing you're an atheist.

HANNAH

I'm not an atheist! I'm an Adventist, okay? I was baptized.

KEVIN

When?

HANNAH

On the farm. Grandma White.

KEVIN

You were nine.

HANNAH

So? I'm doing this, Kevin. There's nothing you can say that's going to stop me.

KEVIN

I don't want to stop you.

HANNAH

Then what are you doing here?

KEVIN

It's not always about you.

HANNAH

You need something. You have to need something, or else you wouldn't just show up on my doorstep. Something you can't buy with all that money you have in the bank.

Kevin nods, mashes his cereal, which is almost soggy enough to eat.

HANNAH

Why aren't you eating that?

KEVIN

I can't, yet. It hasn't been fifteen minutes since I took my last pill.

HANNAH

What pill? What are you on?

Kevin reaches into his pocket and takes out a bottle of homeopathic medicine, shakes it at Hannah.

KEVIN

Chill, okay? It's just belladonna. For the inflammation.

HANNAH

What inflammation? What's going on? Are you sick?

Kevin grins. It's the first time in the scene she's gotten a good look at his teeth. They are a very dark, unhealthy brown. Hannah gasps.

HANNAH

Oh my god, Kevin!

KEVIN

You shouldn't take the lord's name in vain, you know. If you're really gonna...

Kevin checks the time, decides it's okay, then picks up his cereal and raises his spoon towards his mouth.

HANNAH

Stop right there! You are not putting those raisins any closer to your mouth.

Kevin stops.

HANNAH

Let me see.

Hannah sits Kevin down, looks inside his mouth.

HANNAH

What are you trying to do to me? I'm supposed to leave in a week.

Kevin closes his mouth and begins to eat his cereal.

KEVIN

I knew I could get your attention.

Lights.

SCENE 3

Hannah's living room, which looks much the same as the previous night, only bathed in morning light. Hannah and Emily pack the magazines into boxes.

EMILY

I thought you weren't going to let him come back.

HANNAH

I can't stand by and let him treat them like that!

EMILY
His teeth?

HANNAH
I care about teeth, is that so wrong?

EMILY
No, just weird.

HANNAH
Oh! I snagged a box of brushes and floss for Ruby. If you need them.

EMILY
She's probably going to start brushing on her own this year.

HANNAH
That puts her a step ahead of my brother.

EMILY
Yeah. *(beat)* Was he on anything?

HANNAH
Just belladonna, he says. Deadly nightshade.

EMILY
What?

HANNAH
Remember that homeopathic stuff that my mom gave me? Made my whole head swell up?

EMILY
Yeah.

HANNAH
It's supposed to have the opposite affect.

EMILY
Okay...

HANNAH
He's clean. The only self-medicating he's doing is homeopathic. And that stuff's mostly, like, sugar pills.

EMILY
And as his dentist you're going to let him take all that sugar?

HANNAH
Shut up.

They pack.

EMILY

You'll be able to fix him this week, though, right?

HANNAH

I don't know. They look awful, and if you could smell them -

EMILY

Yeah?

HANNAH

It was one of the most disgusting things I've seen in my life.

EMILY

Well, get used to more of that in the third world.

HANNAH

Hungary is in the Second world. But we don't call it that anymore.

EMILY

Did you read that in one of these magazines?

HANNAH

You don't remember? We read that article together and then we had that joke about spheres of influence. *(she laughs)*

EMILY

I never really got it.

HANNAH

Oh.

EMILY

But...if he needs to stay here I guess Ruby and I are okay at my mom's for a little while longer.

HANNAH

No! He doesn't know it's an option.

EMILY

He knows you're leaving.

HANNAH

He doesn't know I'm renting the place to you.

EMILY

I'd hardly call it renting.

HANNAH

Whatever. He doesn't need to know.

EMILY

What if he comes by?

HANNAH

Do what you would if any creepy vagrant came around. Call the police.

EMILY

Maybe you'd better write up an official lease, then? You know, for legal purposes?

HANNAH

Sure.

EMILY

Thanks.

HANNAH

It'll be good to be in a new place. It's such a nice apartment, a clean, open space. View of the river.

EMILY

(whistful)

The Danube.

HANNAH

You do remember that article!

EMILY

I remember the pictures. It was beautiful.

HANNAH

Well, there's plenty of room for you and Ruby, if you still want to come along.

EMILY

I'm sure that would go over really well with Don's lawyer.

HANNAH

It's only for a year.

EMILY

Unless you decide to stay longer.

HANNAH

You could come for part of it. Travel now, before Ruby's in school and you have to settle down someplace for good.

EMILY

Yeah...I don't know.

HANNAH

Because when I started talking about applying for a mission, you seemed really excited.

EMILY

I know, and I still am. But I can't...what would I do there?

HANNAH

Be a mom.

EMILY

I want to start my business. I really doubt they're into scrapbooking in Hungary.

HANNAH

You never know.

EMILY

I think it's so great that you're going. I wish we could've done something like this years ago.

HANNAH

Me too.

EMILY

But now that you've paid everything off on this place, you can do anything you want. Doesn't that feel good?

HANNAH

It does.

EMILY

But I'm still stuck.

HANNAH

I'm sorry.

EMILY

No. Don't be. It's time to start doing things for yourself.

HANNAH

Right. But this isn't exactly for myself.

EMILY

Of course not, a mission benefits everyone. The church, the Hung- what are they called?

HANNAH

Hungarians.

EMILY

But it's for you most of all, right?

HANNAH

Yeah.

Hannah closes a box of magazines.

HANNAH

I pulled all the ones with pieces on Hungary in case you ever want to look at them.

EMILY

We don't have to pack up all your stuff.

HANNAH

Most of it is her stuff. I needed an excuse. A clean house! I'll go away and when I get back I won't even remember that anyone else ever lived here.

EMILY

I feel bad bringing my stuff over.

HANNAH

Except you. I want you to feel at home here.

EMILY

Thanks. *(beat)* I miss her. Your mom.

HANNAH

Really? That's nice of you to say.

Kevin enters, his hair a rat's nest, still in his PJs.

KEVIN

Hannah! Where did you put all my shit?

HANNAH

Good morning!

KEVIN

My shit, Hannah?

HANNAH

Are you looking for clothes? I think there's a box at the back of your closet.

KEVIN

But my music stuff. My instruments? My clarinet.

HANNAH

It's -

KEVIN

(finally noticing her)

Emily!

EMILY

Hi Kevin.

KEVIN

What are you doing here?

EMILY

Just helping with the packing.

KEVIN

That's cool. How's Don?

HANNAH

They got divorced.

KEVIN

What? Nobody told me.

EMILY

It's only been a few months.

KEVIN

Well, what can I say? I never liked that guy.

HANNAH

That's because you were jealous.

KEVIN

You look good, Emily.

EMILY

Thank you! I'm trying to, well... You look -

KEVIN

Like shit. Sorry. I'm... Hannah tell you about my teeth?

EMILY

I heard. What happened?

KEVIN

Life takes its toll, I guess.

HANNAH

Or you give it up willingly.

KEVIN

Hannah has to do everything by the book. Hannah can't imagine a day without flossing.

EMILY

She takes care of herself.

KEVIN

No doubt, no doubt. And now she's moving to Hungary, did you hear?

EMILY

Yes.

KEVIN

Cause I didn't.

EMILY

She's been planning to travel ever since she was a little girl.

KEVIN

Really? Cause I don't remember that.

EMILY

Always had her face in these magazines. Looking at the pictures, talking about the places she wanted to go...

KEVIN

Yeah, I remember that part.

EMILY

She always wanted to travel.

KEVIN

Then why do you think our mom gave her the house instead of the money?

HANNAH

You wouldn't have known what to do with a house.

KEVIN

I -

HANNAH

The rest of your shit is in the basement, I can't believe how much you left here.

KEVIN

You're supposed to be able to leave stuff at your parents' house!

HANNAH

You're supposed to, eventually, get a mini-storage unit.

KEVIN

Oh.

HANNAH

That's what I was going to do with it.

Kevin heads towards the basement.

HANNAH

I made an appointment for you with Henry on Monday. He can do x-rays then, make a plan. He's going to see if he can get you done within the week.

KEVIN

No x-rays.

HANNAH

You're going to do what I tell you if you want my help.

KEVIN

But Monday's a little soon.

HANNAH

You're in pain!

KEVIN

Yeah, but I haven't used any allopathy since Dr. Pedersen finished my detox. I've got to check with him before I start anything.

HANNAH

You're kidding me.

KEVIN

I'm doing really well, Hannah, okay? My body's clean. So I can't just go sticking metal in my mouth without knowing how it's going to affect me.

HANNAH

It's going to affect you by ending the rapid decay of your molars!

KEVIN

My body's a very delicate machine. Gotta check with Dr. Pedersen. You have some samples I can take him?

HANNAH

No.

EMILY

Who's Doctor Pedersen?

HANNAH

The quack doctor that Kevin got my mother onto.

KEVIN

Added three years onto Mom's life.

EMILY

Really?

HANNAH

It could have been a lot of things.

KEVIN

But after one month with Doctor Pedersen, my mother's tumor was reduced in half. Can't say that chemotherapy ever did that for her, can you?

HANNAH

It might have if she'd given it a chance.

KEVIN

He's the one who got me clean, too. Hannah didn't believe it was possible, but he got me through detox. No shakes.

EMILY

Really?

KEVIN

You should come and get checked out sometime.

EMILY

Okay.

HANNAH

No, not okay! We don't have time to play around here. We're starting on Monday.

KEVIN

Then I'll go see him today. I'll just go over to your clinic and take what I need.

HANNAH

You will do no such thing.

KEVIN

Go ahead and stop me.

HANNAH

(beat) I can't.

KEVIN

That was easy.

HANNAH

I can't go to the clinic. It's a Saturday.

KEVIN

And you're afraid that the Seventh Day Adventist police will catch you? That's hilarious. *(to Emily)* Did Hannah tell you about this part?

EMILY

Yes.

HANNAH

Kevin, you know that Emily's a Seventh Day Adventist...

KEVIN

Oh yeah, shit. You are, that's right.

EMILY

Yup.

KEVIN

That's cool. But Emily's not going to tell on you.

HANNAH

That's not the point!

EMILY

My mom.

KEVIN

She's still sitting at her window watching everybody come and go?

EMILY

I'm sure that all the women over fifty already know you're back in town. The things I hear, staying over there.

KEVIN

Well, I guess I'll go give them another tidbit to call each other about. It was really nice seeing you, Emily. We need to catch up.

Kevin slips on his shoes, and gets ready to go out in his pajamas.

HANNAH

Come on, Kevin, stop. We only have a week.

KEVIN

You only have a week. I've got all the time in the world. I'll see you around, Emily?

EMILY

Yeah. Yeah, definitely.

Kevin exits.

HANNAH

I can't believe this shit!

EMILY

It's okay. He's not going to mess things up for you.

HANNAH

For either of us.

EMILY

Right.

HANNAH

I know. Don't worry. He won't.

Lights.

SCENE 4

The clinic. A dumbshow or dance with exaggerated movement. Cheesy music plays over the entire sequence.

Kevin skulks into the office and throws open the cupboards, sending DENTAL SUPPLIES soaring into the air. Henry appears in the doorway. Kevin tries to hide. Henry makes Kevin empty out his pockets. As he does, Henry grabs Kevin from behind and THROWS him into the dental chair. He drops a heavy x-ray apron on top of him, holding him down.

A snake-like machine emerges from the wall. Henry jabs cardboard into Kevin's mouth and moves the machine around to x-ray different positions.

Kevin struggles to get free and battles the machine. He escapes from the chair, grabs the samples from the counter where he left them and flees out the door.

Henry looks over the x-rays.

SCENE 5

The clinic. Supplies litter the floor. Hannah picks up as Henry sets up the room, preparing for a patient.

HENRY

He was on something.

HANNAH

He's not on anything, that's just Kevin.

HENRY

He burst in here, started going through cabinets, throwing things every which way. God knows what he was looking for, he should know we keep the hard stuff locked up after the last time he -

HANNAH

He wasn't after the hard stuff, he's clean.

HENRY

Well, he seemed the same to me.

HANNAH

He is the same. He's always been the same whether he's on something or not.

HENRY

He's been on something since high school.

HANNAH

Yeah, but. Everyone was on something in high school.

HENRY

I wasn't.

HANNAH

I know that, and I wasn't either.

HENRY

(smiling)

Most of the time.

HANNAH

We all had our moments.

HENRY

Your brother pierced his nose in the middle of a math test.

HANNAH

I know, I know. He's disgusting.

HENRY

He was on acid then, or at least that's what I heard. And then didn't he go to rehab after he graduated? What was that for? Oh. Right. Heroin.

HANNAH

I know, Henry. I'm not going to defend him.

HENRY

Probably what did him in. Narcotics cause xerostomia. Too much acidity, no saliva.

HANNAH

He's also been living in the desert. Probably didn't drink enough water.

HENRY

Can you hand me a towel?

HANNAH

My hands aren't clean.

HENRY

It's a towel, Hannah.

*Hannah gets up and gets a towel,
holds it.*

HANNAH

You're still going to take him, right?

HENRY

No.

HANNAH

Tomorrow. After lunch. You have all afternoon free.

HENRY

I have paperwork and I have yoga.

HANNAH

I'll do the paperwork. You can skip yoga.

HENRY

I haven't been in here all weekend for fun.

HANNAH

I'll take this afternoon for you, then. What's the emergency?

HENRY

Loose tooth. Ciarra Rast.

HANNAH

Oh. That kid.

Henry takes the towel from Hannah.

HENRY

Don't worry. I wasn't going to trade you.

HANNAH

I could do it!

HENRY

No way. *(beat)* I'm not touching your brother after what he did to this place, whatever he was after. He's out of control.

HANNAH

He just wanted to get some enamel and stuff to test before you fill his teeth. He's afraid that the fillings will give him headaches or something.

HENRY

When in fact it's those baby teeth that he never had out.

HANNAH

What?

HENRY

A whole row of them, the adult teeth are underneath. I'll show you.

Henry looks for the x-rays.

HANNAH

He let you do x-rays?

HENRY

He sat in the chair so I threw the apron on him. He never knew what hit him.

HANNAH

You're my hero, Henry!

Hannah hugs Henry.

HENRY

Yeah. Well...the opportunity was there. *(beat)* But that's it. That's all that I'm doing. You can look at them if you want.

HANNAH

Do I?

*Henry hands the x-rays to Hannah.
She looks.*

HANNAH

Oh god.

HENRY

Yeah.

HANNAH

I can't do this, Henry, I -

HENRY

You can. It's not as bad as it looks, most of the really bad ones are deciduous, so you can just pop those babies out, let the grown-ups come in.

HANNAH

But it's too much! I don't have time for this!

HENRY

I'm already taking over all your patients.

HANNAH

Please. I need you to do me a favor.

HENRY

Does he even have insurance?

HANNAH

No, but he has money.

HENRY

I'll do you a favor, then. I won't charge you for supplies.

HANNAH

I can't fix my own brother's teeth!

HENRY

You did your mother's.

HANNAH

Her roots were all dead. It didn't cause her any pain.

HENRY

I'd think you'd enjoy causing your brother a little pain.

HANNAH

Funny, right, fine. I won't ask for a free favor. A trade. I'll take Mrs. Bauman on Friday. I'll do her whole bridge. I'll do Mr. Stephens' root canal.

HENRY

You're already doing Mr. Stephens' root canal.

HANNAH

Thought I'd try to slip that in.

HENRY

Uh huh.

HANNAH

Please. There's got to be something I can do for you.

HENRY

Of course there is.

HANNAH

What? (beat) Henry, no.

HENRY

I just don't see why you have to go.

HANNAH

I don't have to go, I want to. I don't want to spend my life pulling teeth for spoiled little kids. I want to do something...more challenging.

HENRY

Then you should be thanking your brother for bringing you a challenge.

HANNAH

I need you Henry.

HENRY

Well, I need a partner. Are you going to help me with that?

Lights.

SCENE 6

Hannah's living room. The shelves are empty of magazines.

Kevin has opened up a box of his instruments, and set out parts on the coffee table, cleaning them. He sits on the stack of National Geographics featuring articles on Hungary.

He puts together an old clarinet, and blows into it. It makes an awful squawk and obviously hurts his teeth.

Emily enters with a box of scrapbooking supplies. She doesn't see Kevin over the pile.

KEVIN

Hello to you, too.

EMILY

(startled)

Oh! Hi! I didn't- I was just coming over to do a little work. Hannah lets me work over here sometimes during the day. Ruby's with my mother and it's easier to work here -

KEVIN

It's cool.

EMILY

I'll go.

KEVIN

What are you working on?

EMILY

Scrapbooking. I...have a commission.

KEVIN

Cool. I'm working, too.

EMILY

Oh. Yeah.

KEVIN

Trying to see if I can fix any of this stuff so that it'll actually play music.

EMILY

I thought you would be at the dentist's.

KEVIN

This afternoon.

EMILY

Everything worked out with Doctor...Pedersen?

KEVIN

Nah, he wouldn't even look at me after Henry did those fucking x-rays. Says I have to come back later in the week, but Hannah can get started on me as long as she uses ceramic fillings.

EMILY

Right...

KEVIN

The metal ones interfere with the machine.

EMILY

Okay.

Yeah. KEVIN

Emily stands awkwardly with her box.

Well, I - EMILY

You were going to use this table! KEVIN

There's a card table. In the - in your mom's old room. I'll go work in there. EMILY

No! Bring it out here. I'm just fiddling with stuff. I'm making a little noise, but it mostly hurts. KEVIN

Okay. EMILY

It would be nice to talk to you. To someone, I mean. KEVIN

Okay. EMILY

Emily goes to the other room to get the card table. Kevin fiddles. Blows into one of his pieces and recoils in pain again.

Is that why you came back? EMILY

To talk...? KEVIN

Cause your teeth got to hurting so much you couldn't play your saxophone anymore? EMILY

No, my sax was too much to lug on and off the Greyhound. There's a reason people on the road play smaller stuff. KEVIN

Like harmonica? *(picking it up from the table)* EMILY

KEVIN

I play a mean harmonica.

He takes it from her and plays a quick tune, through the pain.

KEVIN

I mean when I'm not...

EMILY

When it doesn't hurt you.

KEVIN

I got this harmonica in Quebec. You remember that?

EMILY

No.

KEVIN

That trip we took when I was twelve? You were thirteen and Hannah was fourteen. Our Dad left and your mom thought we should all go on a trip.

EMILY

I remember the *trip*.

KEVIN

There was a guy playing harmonica outside of our hotel. I sat around all day listening to him. He gave it to me.

EMILY

I can't imagine...

KEVIN

You and Hannah were doing girl things. My mom and your mom off doing woman things. So I sat listening to street musicians. That's when I got bit by the bug.

EMILY

Wow. That's really - I didn't realize you were still doing it.

KEVIN

What?

EMILY

Playing music.

KEVIN

What else would I be doing? Only thing I know. It's what I studied in school.

EMILY

Yeah, but that was high school.

KEVIN
They made you pick a major.

EMILY
I know. I didn't mean -

KEVIN
Right. It doesn't mean you can still paint or anything.

EMILY
Excuse me?

KEVIN
I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that.

EMILY
No, it's okay. I can't.

KEVIN
When's the last time you tried?

EMILY
Don't try to take it back. You suck at that, Kevin. You're much better at just being honest.

KEVIN
Yeah.

EMILY
I make scrapbooks. And memory boards. That's what I do now, instead of painting.

KEVIN
What the fuck's a memory board?

EMILY
A scrapbook that you hang on your wall.

KEVIN
Why don't they call it a scrapboard?

EMILY
Why don't they call it a memory book?

KEVIN
Cause it's all shit. Memories. Why would you want to put them in a book?

EMILY
Why are you looking through a box of old instruments?

KEVIN
I'm trying to make something out of them.

EMILY

That's what I do.

KEVIN

But you're preserving things the way they were, you're not trying to make anything new.

EMILY

There are some parts of my life I'd like to keep the way they were.

KEVIN

Really?

EMILY

There are lots of things I like to look back on, now that I'm twenty-eight and unemployed and divorced and living at home with my mother and a two-year-old and no future. Sometimes I need to pick up a book and remember that I actually once was smart and beautiful. People did see me that way. I'm not lying to myself!

KEVIN

(beat) You hungry?

EMILY

I made you uncomfortable.

KEVIN

No. I'm just...all I can eat is things that are soft so I'm always hungry.

EMILY

Oh.

KEVIN

And all Hannah has in the way of food is cereal. And paprika, whatever that's about.

EMILY

She's trying to get used to it.

KEVIN

I heard on NPR that Hungary was in the middle of a huge paprika crisis. Paprika shortage.

EMILY

Oh. Well -

Kevin crosses to the kitchen.

Emily starts to unpack her box, then stops. She looks at the empty shelves.

KEVIN

I don't think she's going to Hungary.

EMILY

Why would you say that?

KEVIN

This whole packing thing is just for show.

EMILY

She was already packing when you got here.

KEVIN

Fine, but something's up. She's not really renting the place, she just doesn't want me staying here.

EMILY

She's rented it.

KEVIN

To who?

EMILY

How should I know?

KEVIN

You're staying with your mom. Hannah would take the tenant over to meet her neighbors.

EMILY

She didn't.

KEVIN

But your mom sees every person who comes in and out of this house. There's no way Hannah could have gotten away with renting the house without your mom knowing exactly to who.

EMILY

She's been watching Ruby.

KEVIN

She has excellent peripheral vision, and you know it.

EMILY

I'm sorry, Kevin.

KEVIN

(getting a little scary)

She thinks I'll be upset. And I am a little upset. Not that she's renting the place or going to Hungary, she has every right to do that even though I think she's cracked.

But she's clearly renting out our parents' house to someone like Jonathan Depper or Andrew Khoury or one of those assholes who's still hanging around this shit town. And she was just going to let me show up on the doorstep and see one of those douchebags in my doorway -

EMILY

It's me! It's me, okay? Are you happy?

KEVIN

You're renting the place?

EMILY

I'm staying here. At least until I find a better place for Ruby and me.

KEVIN

Oh. I guess that's cool.

EMILY

Yeah. I thought it would be.

KEVIN

Then why'd you let me get all worked up?

EMILY

I wasn't supposed to tell you.

KEVIN

I'm sorry I got like that. I don't normally like to do that, it's just that Hannah-

EMILY

You've always been suspicious of each other.

KEVIN

I wouldn't be if she didn't keep things from me. I mean, if you're going to be here, that's cool. It's better than Hannah being here in a way, isn't it?

EMILY

I don't know.

Kevin crosses back to his instruments with a bowl of something soft.

KEVIN

What are you making a scrapbook of now?

EMILY

What?

KEVIN

Your commission.

EMILY

I don't really have a commission. I was just bringing my things over. I got scared.

KEVIN

Of me?

EMILY

Of having to lie.

KEVIN

Yeah. You're better with that honesty thing, too.

EMILY

These are my books. I've done one for each year of my life. It goes back to fourth grade. There's one with pictures of Quebec in the next box. I'll bring it over tomorrow.

Kevin inspects the books.

KEVIN

Where's this year?

EMILY

What?

KEVIN

I want to look at this year's.

EMILY

Oh, I haven't - I've decided not to do them for a while. This isn't exactly a time a want to look back on.

KEVIN

But you can't just stop.

EMILY

I have. It's no big deal. I'm...trying to start a business. I should be focusing on that.

KEVIN

Then I'll commission you.

EMILY

Oh! You have pictures of your travels? I'd love to see them.

KEVIN

No. Not for me.

What? EMILY

I'll pay you. KEVIN

To do what? EMILY

I want you to make a scrapbook of your divorce. KEVIN

Lights.

SCENE 7

The clinic. A dumbshow or a dance in the style of the previous. Music plays over the whole scene, still upbeat but ominous this time, perhaps a tango.

Hannah enters her office, pushing Kevin ahead of her. She sits him in the chair and begins laying out her tools. She pulls on her latex gloves with a loud SNAP.

Henry steps inside in time to see Kevin starting to get up from the chair. He THROWS Kevin back down, and, using some nearby tube, straps Kevin to the chair. Hannah thanks Henry with a smile. He exits.

Kevin fidgets under his restraints. Hannah presents an enormous needle, and he shakes his head and his arms as he sees it. She pulls out a MASK and throws it over his face before he can say no. Kevin STRUGGLES as one being suffocated, then stops.

Hannah lifts the mask off the heavily sedated man's face. She pries open his mouth wide and REVS UP HER DRILL.

SCENE 8

The living room.

Hannah enters with groceries. Kevin sits in the dark in front of his instrument parts. He has taken a bottle of rubber cement out of Emily's box, and applies it to his hands, letting it dry, and then peeling it off, the way we all did as kids. He looks remarkably good, considering.

KEVIN

Hey.

HANNAH

(surprised)

Gah! *(beat)* What are you doing in the dark?

KEVIN

Working on my instruments.

HANNAH

You'll ruin your eyes.

KEVIN

I'm taking so much belladonna that my eyes will last forever. And eating orange vegetables.

HANNAH

What orange vegetables?

KEVIN

I went out and bought some baby food. All they had was carrots and sweet potatoes.

Hannah turns on a light.

KEVIN

(shrugs)

Your electric bill.

HANNAH

What is all that shit?

KEVIN

Things that I bought at garage sales over the years. Thought maybe I could fix them up to sell them.

HANNAH

Why? You don't need the money.

Kevin shrugs.

HANNAH

I bought you some ice cream.

KEVIN

Dr. Pedersen wants me to avoid refined sugar.

HANNAH

I guess as your dentist I shouldn't recommend it either, but I thought I might, you know, make peace. Rocky Road...your favorite...

KEVIN

How could you bring something called "Rocky Road" to a man in my condition?

HANNAH

You can eat around the almonds.

KEVIN

No thanks.

Hannah puts down her grocery bag and takes out the ice cream carton and a spoon, begins to eat. Kevin shoots her a look.

KEVIN

"How are you feeling, Kevin?"

HANNAH

Yeah.

KEVIN

I mean, considering that you gassed me, after I specifically requested that you not use any chemicals that Pedersen hadn't approved of.

HANNAH

Don't be dramatic.

KEVIN

God knows what was in that needle. I couldn't talk all afternoon.

HANNAH

How come I couldn't have been around for that?

KEVIN

Ha.

Hannah scratches her hands.

KEVIN
What's wrong with your hands?

HANNAH
Nothing.

KEVIN
Looks like you've got hives or something.

HANNAH
Just a little...latex allergy. From the gloves. Happens every once in a while.

KEVIN
Don't they make non-latex gloves?

HANNAH
It hasn't happened in a while.

Hannah starts to unpack the groceries.

HANNAH
Are you hungry? I got some other food. I was going to try making goulash.

KEVIN
Without meat?

HANNAH
It might not be the same.

KEVIN
Emily brought over some soup for me to eat with the pureed carrots.

HANNAH
You called her?

KEVIN
Nope. She just comes over here from time to time, unannounced. Didn't you know? Seems you gave her a key.

HANNAH
Seemed safer than the flower pot.

Hannah takes out the goulash ingredients she has purchased, and begins to chop some peppers. The irritation in her hands grows over the next beat.

KEVIN

She brings lots of stuff with her. Scrapbooks.

HANNAH

What?

KEVIN

Hannah, I'm not an idiot. She's moving in.

HANNAH

Why would you think that?

KEVIN

She told me everything.

HANNAH

It's just until I can get a real tenant! It was too hard dealing with finding someone at the last minute, and Emily-

KEVIN

It's okay, it's fine. I'm cool with it.

HANNAH

Yeah. That's what I was hoping to avoid.

KEVIN

No, I mean it. I think having her stay here is a really good idea.

HANNAH

No, Kevin.

KEVIN

What did I say?

HANNAH

You're not going to take advantage of her.

KEVIN

When did I ever say that?

HANNAH

Emily is going to stay in this house. Emily and Ruby. No one else. That's what I promised her, okay? They don't need my homeless brother lurking around their door.

KEVIN

I'm not homeless.

HANNAH

Great. Then where can I send your shit?

I'm itinerant.

KEVIN

Right.

HANNAH

If it's going to be Emily's house, then I think it should be Emily's choice if she wants me to stay.

KEVIN

No. Absolutely not!

HANNAH

She's a grown woman.

KEVIN

And she's too nice and she lets men walk all over her. That's how she got into this situation in the first place.

HANNAH

Hannah's chopping reaches a frenzy.

Okay, okay, Hannah. Calm down. I'm not the bad guy.

KEVIN

But you broke her heart once, too.

HANNAH

I know. Please stop.

KEVIN

What?

HANNAH

Look at yourself. Look at your hands. You're allergic to something.

KEVIN

Latex. I told you.

HANNAH

I think it's the peppers.

KEVIN

Don't worry about it.

HANNAH

You should get that checked out, Hannah.

KEVIN

It's fine. I took an antihistamine, it should clear up.

HANNAH

KEVIN

Come with me to see Dr. Pedersen.

HANNAH

There's no way you're getting me anywhere near that doctor. For his sake, and for mine. After what he did to Mom -

KEVIN

Hannah.

HANNAH

I'm keeping my religion to myself, you keep that new-age bullshit to yourself, okay? And we both leave Emily out of the discussion. That's the only way we're going to make it through this week.

KEVIN

Okay, okay. It's cool. You don't have to be so protective... I just came home to get my teeth fixed. It's just nice to know that there's somewhere -

HANNAH

No.

KEVIN

That I can come home to.

HANNAH

No! I'm doing this for your teeth Kevin. Don't get the wrong idea. I am fixing your teeth! This week. And then you are gone.

KEVIN

But what if it takes a little longer? I don't want to stand in your way. If it takes a little longer maybe Henry...

HANNAH

I made another appointment for you tomorrow.

KEVIN

But I haven't recovered!

HANNAH

You seem fine to me.

KEVIN

I've just had major dental work, Hannah. The body takes time to recover from that kind of trauma.

HANNAH

All I did was fill a bunch of your pit cavities in the front. Never seen such corrosion on incisors. You'd think you'd been doing this to yourself on purpose.

KEVIN

My teeth weren't my top priority.

HANNAH

Ever since Dad told you that in primitive cultures they just cleaned them with a stick.

KEVIN

It seemed so much more natural.

HANNAH

He forgot to add that in primitive cultures their teeth all rotted and fell out by the time they were thirty. Was that your plan, Kevin?

KEVIN

No!

HANNAH

I'm sorry. (beat) But you can understand why I'm mad, can't you? We got some fucked-up ideas put in our heads about dentistry. You saw what I went through after Dad wouldn't let them give me braces.

KEVIN

(laughs) Yeah. That headgear -

HANNAH

I had to live on slim-fast milkshakes for a whole month.

KEVIN

Those things were disgusting.

HANNAH

They tasted like chalk. But it didn't have to be that way! It's not like we didn't have access to medicine, our crazy father just withheld it from us. There was no reason for me to go through that, and there's no reason for you - my own brother - not to take care of yourself. These are your teeth, Kevin. They were trusted to you-

KEVIN

By God?

HANNAH

By whomever. They're your tools. They can do so much for you if you take care of them. Charm women, chew food...

KEVIN

Open bottles...

HANNAH

But you only get one set.

KEVIN
You get two.

HANNAH
As an adult.

KEVIN
Right.

HANNAH
Look. I don't care whatever weird idea you have in your head about the chemicals-

KEVIN
Flouride is a carcinogen.

HANNAH
You're not going to get cancer.

KEVIN
Just like mom?

HANNAH
Mom had breast cancer. I'm the one who should be worried about that.

KEVIN
And you're not?

HANNAH
No, because I go to the doctor, and you should, too. But you...what am I supposed to do with you?

KEVIN
Help me. I'm trying to get better.

HANNAH
If you really wanted to get better you wouldn't give me conditions.

KEVIN
I didn't spend the last two years getting clean for nothing, Hannah! I want to get better. I want to be healthy, and happy, and productive, even.

HANNAH
Sure.

KEVIN
You don't believe me.

HANNAH
I believe you.

KEVIN

But you're not taking me seriously. Just come with me to see Dr. Pedersen, that's all I'm asking. I go get tested properly for the dental stuff, you come and get that allergy checked out.

HANNAH

And then what?

KEVIN

Then you can do whatever you want to me.

HANNAH

And?

KEVIN

And I'll stay away from Emily, if that's what you need me to do.

HANNAH

It's a start.

KEVIN

Fine, then. I'll leave. I'll leave and you'll never have to deal with me again. Okay?

HANNAH

Okay.

KEVIN

That's really what you want?

HANNAH

And you'll never come back?

KEVIN

If that's what you really want.

HANNAH

You promise?

KEVIN

I promise.

HANNAH

Okay, then, I'll go see him. But he's not hooking me up to any machines. Deal?

*Hannah puts her hand out to shake,
Kevin recoils in disgust.*

KEVIN

I'm not touching that.

HANNAH
It's not contagious.

KEVIN
How do you know?

HANNAH
Nevermind.

Hannah goes back to her cooking.

KEVIN
You trust me?

HANNAH
No, of course not. But we have a deal, right?

KEVIN
We have a deal.

Lights.

SCENE 9

A dumbshow in the style of the previous, but more subdued. Soothing dentist-office music plays.

Kevin willingly enters the office and takes the chair like any old patient, as Hannah snaps on her latex gloves and sets up her tools.

Hannah presents Kevin with an ENORMOUS NEEDLE. Kevin doesn't flinch. She injects Kevin in the back of his mouth. He kicks a few times in protest, then relaxes again.

Hannah produces a frighteningly large plier-like TOOTH EXTRACTING DEVICE. She places a lip-retractor into Kevin's mouth to hold it open wide. He grins with his lips pulled back.

Hannah reaches into Kevin's mouth and grabs hold of a tooth. RIPPING NOISES emerge from his mouth as Hannah gets a hold of the tooth and PULLS!

BLOOD spurts out of Kevin's mouth like a fountain.

Kevin's SCREAMS echo through the theatre.

SCENE 10

The clinic. Hannah and Henry clean up after Kevin's visit.

Hannah is still wearing her latex gloves, hiding the rash.

HENRY

What happened?

HANNAH

(shrugs)

He bleeds a lot.

HENRY

And screams.

HANNAH

I had to pull two teeth. You know what that's like.

HENRY

But you gave him something...

HANNAH

I don't think he was in that much pain. He was trying to release his negative energy, balance his chi or some shit.

HENRY

Probably wanted to be sure that you knew it hurt so that you'd prescribe him something really strong.

HANNAH

I offered him vicodin, but he wouldn't let me prescribe him anything, really.

HENRY

That's some turnaround.

HANNAH

I know.

HENRY

I bet it felt good, though. For you?

HANNAH

Better than I expected.

Yeah. HENRY

They look at the room full of blood.

I feel good now. HANNAH

Just gotta clean up the mess. HENRY

Hannah begins to take off her gloves.

I would leave those on. HENRY

I can't. HANNAH

Hannah takes off her gloves, revealing the rash that has developed to twice the intensity of before.

Fuck, Hannah. That shit is back? HENRY

It just started. Do we have any of the nitrex gloves left? HANNAH

No. I...I threw them away. HENRY

What? Why? HANNAH

Because they were yours. HENRY

Yeah, so they were mine to throw away. HANNAH

I just did it last week. They were old. And I...I thought you were cured of that. HENRY

It just stopped for a while. HANNAH

Go wash them or something, at least. Put some cream on them. HENRY

HANNAH

I did, and it just - (*she looks at her hands*) It's not that big a deal.

HENRY

I think I've got some cortisone at home I can bring you.

HANNAH

I'm not going to use someone else's prescription for-

HENRY

It's yours.

HANNAH

Oh.

HENRY

From, from... the last time you had this problem. With latex -

HANNAH

I remember.

HENRY

Okay.

HANNAH

You kept it?

HENRY

I didn't know...

HANNAH

It's probably expired.

HENRY

Yeah.

Hannah studies her hands.

HANNAH

He wants me to go to his doctor with him.

HENRY

For this?

HANNAH

He treats allergies, too. That's what my mom started going to him for in the first place. Before any of the...that part seemed to work.

HENRY

You think it'll work on you if you don't believe in it?

HANNAH

No, but - Kevin promised me. If I do this for him he promised he'd leave.

HENRY

There's only one way you're ever really going to get rid of Kevin. Sell that house.

HANNAH

I can't sell my mother's house!

HENRY

Why not? I sold my parents' place. Helped them get their condo in Florida.

HANNAH

They're still alive. They wanted you to.

HENRY

So?

HANNAH

If I didn't have that house, where would I stay when I come back here?

HENRY

You could stay with me.

HANNAH

I already told Emily she can stay at my place anyway, it's too late.

HENRY

You and Emily. Always up to some little scheme.

HANNAH

What do you mean by that?

HENRY

I mean that you and I don't get to be "friends" when that girl is single. I need to find some new guy to introduce her to.

HANNAH

Henry!

HENRY

Or better yet, I could ask her out myself.

HANNAH

You're not going to do that!

HENRY

Did I detect a note of jealousy? You won't even know what's going on with us, you're going to be so far away.

HANNAH

Cut it out, Henry.

HENRY

It's just nice to see that I can still get a reaction from you.

HANNAH

Of course you can. But I don't...I don't want to get rid of the house. I love that house, but it's -

HENRY

Is it about me?

HANNAH

What do you mean?

HENRY

You leaving. Because if it were about me, you wouldn't have to go to these lengths. You could just go out on your own. I wouldn't be...well, I'd be hurt, but. It would be better than...

HANNAH

I know, Henry.

HENRY

It would be better than losing you completely.

HANNAH

You're not losing me.

HENRY

I've already lost you.

HANNAH

Why are you being like this?

HENRY

What?

HANNAH

Passive-aggressive.

HENRY

You're the one who's being passive! I don't think you're coming back here, and I think you need to accept that. You really want to change things, you have to make bold choices. Sell your house, sever ties. This halfway shit is such bullshit. It's a cop-out, stringing yourself along!

HANNAH

I think you're telling me what you want.

HENRY

What?

HANNAH

You want to make a clean break? Why haven't you hired my replacement yet.

HENRY

I'm not ready.

HANNAH

I know.

HENRY

It's different. I'm not the one saying he wants to move halfway across the world. I'm here. I don't want to move on.

HANNAH

And neither do I, really. I'm coming back, Henry. How many times to I have to tell you I'm coming back.

HENRY

I guess I don't know what it means when you say that.

Lights.

SCENE 11

Hannah's living room.

Kevin sits at the coffee table, noodling with his instruments. He's given up on the woodwinds for now, and pulled out a children's glockenspiel, on which he taps out a tune. His face is a little black and blue from the earlier treatment.

Emily enters with scrapbooks.

KEVIN

Oh. Hi.

EMILY

How are you doing?

Kevin dabs his mouth with a tissue. It comes out bloody.

KEVIN

My mouth has turned into a menstruating vagina.

EMILY

Okay.

KEVIN

We're not supposed to talk.

EMILY

What do you mean?

KEVIN

I'm not -

EMILY

Because of the bleeding? That's okay. I won't bother you.

KEVIN

Okay.

Kevin tries to shut up, but it's clearly painful to him. Emily notices.

EMILY

Didn't Hannah give you something for the pain?

KEVIN

Belladonna didn't work. I should try ruta graveolus, or arnica. But I didn't bring my kit with me.

EMILY

I meant some real stuff.

KEVIN

I'm a drug addict, Emily.

EMILY

But it isn't abuse if you do it now. This is what those drugs are for.

KEVIN

Sucks that I abused them, then.

EMILY

Wow. You're really serious about this.

KEVIN

I'm clean almost 700 days. It's serious stuff.

Kevin tries to leave.

EMILY

Don drank too much. That was one of the things...

KEVIN

He's an alcoholic?

EMILY

He was never diagnosed or anything.

KEVIN

It doesn't work like that.

EMILY

I know, I just.

KEVIN

That makes sense, though. He was always a big drinker in high school. Him and those guys. Robbie and Justin. Always getting drunk and smashing things up.

EMILY

I guess it seemed tame at the time.

KEVIN

They were such assholes, ugh. I hated them!

Emily unpacks some more.

EMILY

Hannah quit drinking too, you know.

KEVIN

Is that why she started going to church?

EMILY

She quit after what happened with Don.

KEVIN

What...happened with Don?

EMILY

He drove his car through the window of the laundromat. With Ruby in it.

KEVIN

Shit.

EMILY

She was okay. He remembered to strap her in.

KEVIN

Did it make the paper?

EMILY

Yeah. But I didn't save it or anything.

KEVIN

I'm sure you can still find it online.

EMILY

Right.

KEVIN

You didn't think I was serious about the scrapbook.

EMILY

No. I didn't -

KEVIN

I am.

Kevin turns to leave. Emily selects a scrapbook from the pile.

EMILY

This one is Quebec.

Kevin nods, taking the book.

EMILY

Don't read the stuff I wrote around the photos, okay? I made that when I was still a teenager.

KEVIN

Here's Kevin, looking cute...

EMILY

I said don't!

KEVIN

Okay, okay. *(beat)* There's a picture of my dad.

EMILY

What?

Kevin stares at the photo in wonder.

KEVIN

Your pictures are out of order. We took this trip after he left.

EMILY

I'm sorry, I'll fix it.

KEVIN

(beat) "The Great Disappointment" that's what my mother called him.

EMILY

Oh. That's funny. That's what we call-

KEVIN

The time when Jesus didn't come back when your people had predicted? Yeah. My mom was raised an Adventist, too, remember? That was her little joke.

EMILY

Don was my Great Disappointment.

KEVIN

What? Not me?

EMILY

No.

Kevin flips through the pictures.

KEVIN

I practiced every morning, what I was going to say to you. Read up in the guidebook little tidbits that I could use to impress you.

EMILY

That's sweet.

KEVIN

But I could never seem to get your attention.

EMILY

I was only interested in what was happening in the Babysitters' Club.

KEVIN

This is when Hannah and I started hating each other. This trip. This is when it all fell apart.

EMILY

You don't hate each other.

KEVIN

We were both so messed up, with our Dad gone. We really needed someone to be there for us, more than ever. And Hannah got you.

EMILY

We tried to include you.

KEVIN

You did. But it drove her crazy when I talked to you. At one point she "forbade" me from it. She said I wasn't allowed to go anywhere near you, to speak to you, even look at you.

EMILY

But you didn't listen to her.

KEVIN

No. How could I?

EMILY

I was always around.

KEVIN

And, more importantly, you were you.

EMILY

Right, well. You won then, didn't you?

KEVIN

No! What are you talking about? She did.

EMILY

Sure, I mean after you messed everything up.

KEVIN

I didn't! Emily. It wasn't a game. I was in love with you.

EMILY

No.

KEVIN

What, you have a scrapbook that says something different? Let's see it.

EMILY

What?

KEVIN

Tenth grade. Your eleventh.

Kevin looks for the scrapbook in Emily's pile. She goes to stop him but she isn't fast enough.

Kevin flips through the scrapbook.

KEVIN

All these notes I put in your locker.

EMILY

I know.

KEVIN

Wow. You really saved everything. What is this? Clover?

EMILY

You gave it to me.

KEVIN

And you laminated it.

EMILY

It's not - it's just what I do. I had the, paper, plastic stuff.

KEVIN

But this means something, Emily. You kept everything.

EMILY

I might have taken a few things out after you broke up with me.

KEVIN

After you broke up with me, you mean?

EMILY

No. No I don't.

KEVIN

Emily. You were the one who broke up with me.

EMILY

I needed some time to work things out. You were my friend's kid brother, my next door neighbor, there were a lot of things to work out...

KEVIN

Yeah, there was Hannah.

EMILY

But I gave you another shot, you can't have forgotten that.

KEVIN

...no...

EMILY

And then you said you couldn't do it.

KEVIN

Right.

EMILY

Couldn't do it. Wouldn't do it. Whatever, we don't need to talk about this.

KEVIN

No, let's talk about it.

EMILY

You never gave me an explanation.

KEVIN

I guess I was confused, too.

EMILY

But you loved me. You say you loved me. You obsessed over me from the age of twelve. You sent me these letters that...are the most beautiful poetry I've ever read. They're full of passion and feeling and...you did these drawings (*she flips through the book*) of the back of my head, but clearly -

KEVIN

I was afraid of drawing noses.

EMILY

And then you dumped me! Just like that.

KEVIN

I didn't dump you.

EMILY

That's what it felt like.

KEVIN

I'm sorry.

EMILY

So, yeah, I guess it was a disappointment.

KEVIN

I know.

EMILY

And now you're here. You've come back. And you're sitting in front of me, so I can ask.

KEVIN

Go ahead and ask, then, Emily.

EMILY

What happened? What did I do?

KEVIN

You didn't do anything. I was just...it was too much. With our mothers being friends and my dad gone, and Hannah, and I was fucking up in school and everything and...It was a lot of things.

EMILY

Yeah.

KEVIN
I was sixteen years old.

EMILY
Yeah.

KEVIN
I was a kid.

Emily flips through the scrapbook.

KEVIN
I mean look at me then, will you?

She does.

KEVIN
And look at me now.

She does.

EMILY
(a revelation)
You were a kid, weren't you?

KEVIN
We both were.

EMILY
Wow.

KEVIN
That's all there is to it.

EMILY
And all this time I've. *(beat)* But you did love me.

KEVIN
Of course I loved you. Haven't you read these letters?

Emily smiles. Fixes his hair.

EMILY
(laughs)
Yeah.

KEVIN
I'm not confused now, if it means anything.

EMILY
It does.

KEVIN

Could I...? Could I kiss you?

EMILY

(she pulls away) I have a daughter.

KEVIN

So?

EMILY

So I can't go around letting strange men just kiss me.

KEVIN

But I'm not a strange man. I'm a great love from your past who's come back. I'm someone who still knows that you're beautiful and smart and--

EMILY

You could kiss me.

KEVIN

Okay.

He leans in to do so. She stops him.

EMILY

I mean in theory. But your teeth, I mean your mouth. You're bleeding. And Hannah made it sound like...

KEVIN

That's Hannah again. Trying to make you think that I have cooties.

EMILY

But she's been doing a lot of stuff to them. I mean I did see...

KEVIN

It's okay.

EMILY

When your mouth is all fixed, okay?

KEVIN

What?

EMILY

You can kiss me.

KEVIN

Okay, but...then I'll be gone.

Really? EMILY

I promised Hannah. And I'm trying...I'm trying to be... KEVIN

Truthful. EMILY

Yes. KEVIN

I think it's cruel. Of her. EMILY

I know. KEVIN

It's crazy that she would make you go! Especially when she's not going to be here. Especially when I'm the one... EMILY

You should talk to Hannah. KEVIN

I can. I mean if you want me to. EMILY

I know what she'll probably say. I made her this deal...She's not going to want to leave here before I'm gone. KEVIN

What deal? EMILY

(shrugs) She's coming to my doctor with me. KEVIN

Really? Well if she'll do that, anything's possible, right? EMILY

Emily gets up from the couch and returns to the shelf, where she flips through the scrapbook, considering.

Kevin returns to his work, glancing up at her every two seconds.

Lights.

SCENE 12

Dr. Pedersen's clinic. A dumbshow or dance in the style of the dental visits, but with more of a 1970s science fiction feel.

Dr. Pedersen stands in a corner, his back to the audience, fiddling with his MACHINE, which looks like an old chrome stereo, with colorful wires and lights.

Kevin KNOCKS on the door frame. Pedersen looks up.

Kevin pulls Hannah into the room by her arm, and with the momentum of his YANK, lands her in Pedersen's chair.

Kevin RESTRAINS Hannah in the chair as Pedersen foists spherical brass electrodes into her hands. The electrodes are connected by long colorful wires to the machine. Hannah STRUGGLES to break free, but she is trapped. She TREMBLES in reaction to the treatment as machine's needles fluctuate and it emits ominous beeps.

Kevin and Dr. Pedersen nod to each other, satisfied.

Lights. End of Act I.

THIS PLAY IS NOT FINISHED!

**To obtain the full script, please contact me at
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