

INT. THEATRE - STAGE/IN-HOUSE

Haley and Jesse, in costume, embrace. Haley wears a flowy, all-white dress with a white flower tucked in her hair, and Jesse wears a baggy zip-up hoodie, baggy t-shirt and ripped jeans, his hair messy and unkempt.

In a moment of passion, they kiss.

ALICE (AS CATHY) (O.S.)
Connor? Connor! Where are you?

Jesse (as Connor) pulls away and helps her up.

JESSE (AS CONNOR)
You need to go.

Jesse has immersed himself in the moment of the scene, whereas Haley seems unfocused. A glimmer of fear sits in her eyes as her tone sounds flatter than usual, her body far more tense than it should be in this moment.

HALEY (AS RACHEL)
Okay. When will I see you next?

JESSE (AS CONNOR)
Tomorrow.

Jesse (as Connor) takes her hands.

HALEY (AS RACHEL)
Okay.

JESSE (AS CONNOR)
Goodnight Rachel.

HALEY (AS RACHEL)
Tomorrow.

JESSE (AS CONNOR)
Tomorrow.

The lights fade out, except for the pool of majestic lighting that surrounds Rachel as she watches Connor leave.

Blackout.

A SMALL GROUP OF PATRONS attending the dress rehearsal politely clap. Patrick stares up at the stage, frustrated and unimpressed. The house lights come up.

PATRICK
Back in 10 for Act 2!

INT. THEATRE - STAGE/BACKSTAGE

Jesse and Haley make their way backstage. Once they reach the wings, Haley stops him.

HALEY

Jesse?

JESSE

Yeah?

HALEY

Can you stay tonight?

JESSE

I was gonna go over my script.

HALEY

You could do that at my place.

JESSE

I was actually hoping to stay in tonight. Sorry.

HALEY

Okay. Nerd.

Haley smirks as Jesse gives her a small forced smile.

JESSE

Sorry, I gotta change.

He squeezes her upper arm then heads off.

INT. THEATRE - STAGE/IN HOUSE

Soft music plays as the cast takes their bows, the small audience half-heartedly clapping.

Jesse and Haley come out from the wings and grab each other's hands. Haley looks at him, holding on much tighter than she usually would. As they bow, the cheering becomes slightly quieter.

INT. THEATRE - IN HOUSE

Now out of costume, the cast focuses on Patrick as he gives notes.

PATRICK

Okay guys, a few things.

Patrick glares at Haley.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Haley. *Focus*.

He flips his notes around and shows them to her. "FOCUS!!" has been written in bold and circled multiple times.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Focus! You and Jesse carry this show, and if one of you doesn't carry your weight, the *whole show* goes down with you. Do you understand that?

HALEY

Yes, I-I understand.

PATRICK

Well based on your performance today, it doesn't seem like you do.

HALEY

I'm sorry. It won't happen again.

PATRICK

Good.

He lets out a huge frustrated sigh then looks back at his notepad.

While he moves on to his other notes, Haley stares forward as her eyes begin to glaze over.

PATRICK (V.O.)

Alice, when you call Connor for dinner in the final scene, do it in the same tone as in the other scenes. It'll hit us harder when...

The sounds around her quickly fade away...

INT. ARCADE - MAIN AREA - DUSK

Haley walks back into the still empty arcade. Ethan sits behind the prize counter.

ETHAN

Hey, Haley. Are you--?

HALEY

It's Monday.

Ethan raises an eyebrow.

HALEY (CONT'D)

We don't have shows on Mondays.

She shakes her head, laughing slightly. Ethan laughs too.

ETHAN

Smooth move, Ex-Lax.

HALEY

I haven't heard that one in ages.

ETHAN

90's kid "4 lyfe", yo.

HALEY

Specifically with a number "4" and "lyfe" with a "Y".

Ethan grins as she leans on the counter.

HALEY (CONT'D)

Mind if I hang out here for a bit?

ETHAN

Not at all. I get off in an hour if you wanted to go do something fun. We could make some Creepy Crawlers, bake something in my Easy Bake Oven. Get baked.

Haley suddenly becomes uncomfortable.

HALEY

Oh, uhh...yeah, I'd love to hang, but maybe without the getting baked part.

ETHAN

Oh, sorry, I should have asked if you smoke.

(MORE)

ETHAN (CONT'D)
I just kind of assumed you did
since you're an actor. My bad.

HALEY
No, I-I do--but uhm...I'm just kind
of taking a break right now.

ETHAN
Ah, I gotcha. It's necessary
sometimes.

HALEY
Yeah.

She looks down in thought.

HALEY (CONT'D)
Hey, uhm, how did you know how to
calm me down earlier?

ETHAN
It worked?

Haley nods.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
I'm glad.

Ethan pauses.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
My brother used to get panic
attacks.

HALEY
Used to? He doesn't anymore?

ETHAN
No.

HALEY
That's good. How did he get better?

ETHAN
He didn't.

Haley looks at Ethan, confused. They look at her and it
clicks. Ethan then starts to dig at their arm through their
shirt.

HALEY
Oh. I'm so sorry.

ETHAN
What can ya do.

HALEY
Can I ask what happened...?

Haley looks down at Ethan's digging, then looks back up at them.

ETHAN
Car accident.

HALEY
I'm so sorry.

ETHAN
What can ya do.

HALEY
I could...give you a hug?

ETHAN
Awkward over-the-counter hug? My favorite.

Ethan titters as Haley leans in for the hug. Ethan slowly and gently wraps their arms around her. Haley closes her eyes, surrendering into them, whereas they become even more anxious.

It's then that the door opens and a group of ROWDY TEENAGERS come in. Slightly startled, the two of them let go of each other, letting out a breathy, awkward chuckle.

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE ARCADE - NIGHT

Ethan and Haley walk out of the arcade, the lights inside now turned off. It's a quiet night, save for a few cars that pass by them every so often.

Ethan locks up the arcade then puts the keys back in their pocket as they starts walking. Haley follows.

The two of them both look down at the ground intensely, Ethan keeping as far away from the road as they can. Haley and Ethan then start speaking at the same time:

ETHAN
So what is your--

HALEY
I'm not okay.

ETHAN
What?

HALEY

I--have this--I have this
(motions to her head)
thing, where, out of the blue, I'll
start to feel outside of myself,
which terrifies the shit out of me
and then I get panicky and then I
get panic attacks. And-and it makes
you feel numb, emotionally, all the
time, or panicky, and-and you feel
totally crazy, like-like you're
losing your mind. And you become
ultra aware of existence and life
itself because you're detached from
reality which then makes you freak
out even more. And it's...and it--
and it's always there but if it
does stop--if it does go away for a
bit, you're so done--so exhausted,
that you don't have the energy to
feel panicky or terrified anymore.
You're just this soulless vessel
floating numbly through life in
this constant state of what feels
like death. And you don't even know
who you are anymore and you just
feel...dead. You feel dead.

ETHAN

Shit, Haley. That sounds
horrible...

HALEY

It is. And I wanted you to know.
Because...because I'm not
this...cool chick that's doing a
show at the Walterdayle. I'm this
crazy chick who's...crazy.

This punches Ethan right in the gut.

ETHAN

Haley, you are *not* crazy.

HALEY

You don't know that.

ETHAN

Going through shit does not make
you crazy. If that were the case,
then I'd be crazy as fuck.

Haley looks at Ethan.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

But I'm not. I'm just human. A human that experienced a traumatic event that fucked them up.

They start picking at their arm through their shirt.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

And it's not like I asked for it-- it's not like I walked into the Mental Illness Depot and said, "Hi, can I have one order of PTSD, please? Heavy on the T."

Haley takes notice of the aggressive digging.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Like. Nobody asks to feel these things. Nobody *asks* for this shit. But humans, we're fragile as fuck. One word, one action, one event can break us, and we're left to pick up the pieces. So we harden. But that protection is only so strong, you know?

Ethan looks into Haley's eyes.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

So don't ever call yourself crazy for being human. Don't ever call yourself crazy for feeling. Better yet, own it. Because without fragility, there's no vulnerability, and without vulnerability there is no art, no soul, no life.

On impulse, Haley grabs the back of Ethan's head and brings their lips to hers.

After a passionate kiss, their lips part. Coming down from the rush, Ethan tenses, whereas Haley stays in the tender moment.

INT. PORT HOPE HOSPITAL - ARTHUR'S ROOM - DAY

Haley pokes her head into the room and lightly knocks on the doorframe. Arthur lies in a bed half-heartedly playing Speed Racer on a well-loved Nintendo DS. He looks as though the life has been taken right out of him, but as soon as he sees Haley, he brightens up and flips the console shut.

ARTHUR

How did you know I was here?

She slowly walks in as he puts the DS down beside him.

HALEY

I didn't.

Arthur looks at her, confused.

HALEY (CONT'D)

I guessed.

HALEY (CONT'D)

Barb called. She's worried sick.

ARTHUR

I know...

HALEY

So, were you *going* to try? Or did you?

Arthur avoids eye contact.

HALEY (CONT'D)

(gently, but desperate)

Why?

Arthur remains silent.

HALEY (CONT'D)

Why, dad?

Arthur stares.

HALEY (CONT'D)

Is it me? Is it--?

ARTHUR

No! God no! If anything, you keep me around longer.

Haley scoffs.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Haley...

HALEY
Don't.

ARTHUR
I mean it.

HALEY
Do you?

ARTHUR
Yes.

HALEY
What about Barb?

ARTHUR
What about Barb?

HALEY
You've spent the last 10 years with her, so shouldn't she be the one who keeps you around longer?

ARTHUR
You both do. Michael and Richard too.

HALEY
Mom, on the other hand--

ARTHUR
I loved her.

HALEY
But you didn't love me enough to stick around.

ARTHUR
It wasn't like that.

HALEY
No? Then what was it like?

Arthur pauses.

ARTHUR
I came back.

HALEY
Yeah, after she was already gone!

ARTHUR
I didn't want you to be alone.

HALEY
I was 15. I would have been fine!

ARTHUR
I didn't want to lose you too...

HALEY
Well, you did. But you have a new family now, so...

Haley gets up.

ARTHUR
Wait, please. Please.

Haley stops. She turns around.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
I love you.

Haley stares at her father.

HALEY
I love you too.

She leaves.

Arthur lays there, still. He looks down, expressionless.