



**Sample Pages from
Chemo Girl and Other Plays**

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CHEMO GIRL AND OTHER PLAYS

Red Rover
Waiting Room
The Other Room
Chemo Girl

BY
Christian Kiley



Chemo Girl and Other Plays

Red Rover

Waiting Room

The Other Room

Chemo Girl

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Chemo Girl and Other Plays

Chemo Girl and Other Plays can be performed as a full night of theatre, or as individual plays for performance or competition, or as a combination of more than one play. Please play each moment with full life and gusto. This is truly the best way to honor those who exhibit, and have exhibited, so much courage and heart in their battles against cancer.

The plays can be performed with simple blocks, chairs, or stools that can be reconfigured for each play (a hospital room for **Red Rover**, a waiting room for **Waiting Room**, the living room of a home in **The Other Room**, and the altered video game reality of **Chemo Girl**). Please feel free to be imaginative and/or use very little in the way of literal set pieces. This can also be the case with costumes, where suggestions made with a single signature costume piece for each character may be a very efficient way to visually convey the character and help the audience get a visual sense of who's who.

Red Rover (1M, 3W, 12E, doubling possible).....5

A young girl is pulled out of her history class to go to the hospital where she discovers she has cancer. She befriends Lucy (who is chemotherapy personified) and she and Lucy prepare to take on cancer.

Waiting Room (4M, 7W, 1E, doubling possible with parents)..... 21

A group of teenagers who all have various types of cancer are waiting to be called into the doctor's office to receive updates on their progress. At first everyone wants to be by themselves, to stay in their personal bubbles. But as they discover their similarities and appreciate each other for their quirky eccentricities, a bond is created. Their common desire to find out who the mysterious Mr. Fitzpatrick is, after he is called time and time again to go into the office with no response, allows them to express their own feelings about their illnesses.

The Other Room (4M, 3W)..... 39

Dad is recovering from cancer and heavy chemotherapy treatments in the other room. It has become a dark corner of the house, especially for Mary, who rarely goes in there. Tommy goes in to watch Cubs games and wonders how the team's over a century-long World Series drought is helping his Dad. Mom is trying to hold the family together, but it is not an easy challenge for a family dealing with cancer in The Other Room.

Chemo Girl (3W, 13E, doubling possible, ensemble expandable to 26 or more) 53

Camille is given a video game system from her Mom as a form of recovery therapy for cancer. She prefers reading books and finds that video game worlds lack realism and believes they will not help with her fight against cancer. However, Camille is pulled into the video game world that mirrors her fight with cancer. She meets the Gamemaster and takes on the screen name Chemo Girl. Through the levels of this video game Camille discovers many things and must confront a recurring nightmare.

Special Thanks

The playwright would like to thank Bill and Ellen Kiley for their proofreading and editing assistance. Also, special thanks to Bradley Hayward, Rebecca Eckhoff, and Misha Tutt for their advice and support throughout the writing and development process.

Chemo Girl was produced by the Etiwanda High School (Etiwanda, CA) Theatre Arts Department and premiered on December 15, 2012 at the Rancho Cucamonga High School One-Act Festival where it was awarded First Place. The director of *Chemo Girl*, Jasmine Hamming was awarded a scholarship to California Youth In Theatre Day in Sacramento for her skillful direction. Amanda Lucido was awarded Best Actress for her portrayal of Chemo Girl. Madeline Barayang was awarded Outstanding Performer for her portrayal of Mom and Jack McDonald was awarded Outstanding Performer for his portrayal of Lagger/Ensemble. The playwright would like to thank the director, cast, and crew for their dedication, creativity, and heart in producing *Chemo Girl*.

Girl (Chemo Girl)	Amanda Lucido	Director	Jasmine Hamming
Mom	Madeline Barayang	Crew Manager/	
Gamemaster	Dustin Darr	Light Design	Kristiana Perez
Witch	Lauren Dumapias	Costume Design.....	Lizbet Limon
Ensemble.....	Jack McDonald	Sound Design.....	Victoria Andriessen
Ensemble.....	Candice Ervin	Sound Operator	Zipporah Anderson
Ensemble.....	Jordan Ferman		
Ensemble.....	Zoi Gray		
Ensemble.....	Kaycee James		
Ensemble.....	Amber Knudson		
Ensemble.....	Kevin McCondie		
Ensemble.....	Morgan McInnis		
Ensemble.....	Denia Moore		
Ensemble.....	Andrew Nguyen		
Ensemble.....	Adrien Ochoa		
Ensemble.....	Tyler Reinhold		
Ensemble.....	Tommy Russell		
Ensemble.....	Daryl Santos		
Ensemble.....	Arnulfo Sifuentes		
Ensemble.....	Ashley Supall		
Ensemble.....	Sarrah Twineham		
Ensemble.....	Allante Walker		
Ensemble.....	Brad West		
Ensemble.....	Faith Williams		

Red Rover

1M, 3W, 12E*, doubling possible

HOLLY, A girl who recently discovered she has cancer

LUCY, Her friend, Chemotherapy

The Side Effects

NAUSEA*

VOMITING*

FATIGUE*

FEVER*

SWEATS*

CHILLS*

HAIR LOSS*

The Visitors

DOCTOR*

MOM

DAD

CAL*

PAL*

SAL*

SOCIAL WORKER*

* Gender-Neutral Roles

This play is dedicated to Kelly, Anita, Jaime, and all of the nurses and doctors who create a chain of strength in the fight against cancer.

Scene I

In the darkness the ensemble is speaking in unison. "Red Rover, Red Rover send Holly right over." This can be repeated a number of times until the lights come up. HOLLY stands on stage in a simple hospital robe. LUCY is similarly dressed and stands next to her.

HOLLY: When are you getting out?

LUCY: Out? Never.

HOLLY: You will be, what do they call it? Released, discharged...

LUCY: You make it sound like we're criminals.

HOLLY: But we can't just walk out into the daylight.

LUCY: The sun? No. They don't like that.

HOLLY: My doctor told me to rest.

LUCY: It's a full-time job, resting.

HOLLY: I like the pudding.

LUCY: They had a pudding shortage a few weeks ago. It was a big deal.
Some of the patients were hoarding pudding cups and eating them
in the bathroom at 3 a.m.

HOLLY: That's some good pudding.

LUCY: It tastes better in here.

HOLLY: Really?

LUCY: In here you appreciate pudding cups. There are no ice cream
sundaes in oncology.

HOLLY: Guess not. But I can bring you one. When I get out.

LUCY: It would melt.

HOLLY: I think there is a place near here. I heard the nurses talking
about it. One of those places where they sing "Happy Birthday"
like it is the end of the world and they have to get the entire
song out quickly before the world pops open like one of those
cheap party favors. And then they bring you this obnoxious pile
of ice cream and toppings that you need a shovel to eat and it's
on fire with birthday candles. And your world is on fire. (*Singing
the annoying restaurant version of "Happy Birthday."*) Happy, happy
Birthday. We want you to be Happy. Happy, happy, happy...happy,
happy day. (*Building in fervency as she repeats it until she finally
breaks down*) Happy, happy, happy, happy, happy!

LUCY: You, okay?

HOLLY: Yeah. Just tired.

LUCY: Rest.

HOLLY: I have my first treatment today.

LUCY: You'll meet them.

HOLLY: Who?

LUCY: Your side effects.

HOLLY: Oh.

LUCY: They're tough but they remind you that you're alive.

HOLLY: I'm scared.

LUCY: I'm nauseous, I am alive. I'm fatigued, I am alive. I'm tingling, I am alive. I just threw-up, I am alive.

HOLLY: Does that help?

LUCY: Talking to them? Yes.

HOLLY: Can I talk to it?

LUCY: The disease? Oh, heck yes. Sometimes I yell expletives at it. They asked me to cut it out. Not good for patient morale. But it proves you're alive.

HOLLY: That's good. (*HOLLY just says or sings the word "happy" in the "Happy Birthday" restaurant song.*) Happy, happy, happy...

Blackout.

Scene 2

In the darkness LUCY positions herself behind HOLLY and places her body around HOLLY. LUCY's arms are placed over HOLLY's arms to suggest the infusion of the chemotherapy drugs. When the lights come up, HOLLY is looking straight out.

LUCY: How does it feel?

HOLLY: Okay, I guess.

LUCY: Imagine little soldiers marching to destroy an invading army, or a league of superheroes going to fight a gang of villains, or little versions of you-

HOLLY: Throwing chairs through hospital windows.

LUCY: That's the spirit. But don't really do that now.

HOLLY: Wow, I was that convincing. I don't normally talk like that.

LUCY: That might be the chemotherapy talking.

HOLLY: It can do that?

LUCY: Yes, I can.

HOLLY: Strong stuff.

LUCY: I have to be. To take down something like this.

HOLLY: Thank you.

LUCY: Don't thank me yet. We have a long way to go. Get some rest. You'll need it.

Blackout.

Scene 3

HOLLY stands center stage. LUCY is back in her original position. Standing around HOLLY are THE SIDE EFFECTS (except HAIR LOSS). They are spread around the stage like unwanted house guests that have made themselves a little too much at home.

HOLLY: That wasn't too bad.

LUCY: Wait. They're here already.

HOLLY: Side effects. Reminding me I'm alive.

LUCY: Just keep saying that.

HOLLY: I will.

NAUSEA moves close to HOLLY.

NAUSEA: How are you feeling, Holly?

HOLLY: A little queasy.

NAUSEA: Sea sick?

HOLLY: Yes.

LUCY: Say it! Thank them.

HOLLY: Thank them?

LUCY: Thank the side effects for reminding you that you are alive.

HOLLY: My stomach is whirling like possessed tea cups!

LUCY: Thank them for allowing your disease to be discovered.

NAUSEA: Back and forth, round and round, round and round, and round.

HOLLY: Thank you, Nausea, for reminding me that I am alive.

NAUSEA: My pleasure. Here's another wave for you.

HOLLY: Oh, wow! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

VOMITING moves toward HOLLY.

VOMITING: Are you ready for this?

HOLLY runs off stage and throws up. In between heaves she calls out “thank you.” VOMITING is conducting on stage like HOLLY’s heaves are a symphony orchestra.

VOMITING: And one and two and (*HOLLY heaves*)...

HOLLY: Thank you.

VOMITING: And one and two and (*HOLLY heaves*)...

LUCY: Hang in there, Holly!

HOLLY reenters and shakes VOMITING’s hand. VOMITING wipes it off.

VOMITING: Sorry, you were just...throwing up...germs.

FATIGUE moves toward HOLLY and puts a tender arm around her.

HOLLY: I’m so tired.

FATIGUE: Yes you are.

HOLLY: I just want to rest.

FATIGUE: You look so tired kid, you should rest.

HOLLY: Yes, thank you.

LUCY: Say thank you but fight! Like lion-hungry thank you.

FATIGUE: Feel your muscles deflating, feel your energy depleting.

LUCY: Holly, keep saying thank you. Keep fighting.

HOLLY: (*tiring*) Thank you, thank you, thank...

FEVER moves closer to HOLLY.

HOLLY: Is it getting warm?

FEVER: Yes, yes it is.

HOLLY: Hot, very, very hot.

SWEATS and CHILLS move closer to HOLLY.

SWEATS: A little perspiration.

CHILLS: Shiver, shiver, shiver.

SWEATS: Sweat, sweat, sweat.

CHILLS: Shiver.

SWEATS: Sweat.

CHILLS: Shiver.

SWEATS: Sweat.

SWEATS and CHILLS: Shiver, sweat, shiver, sweat, shiver...

HOLLY: Thank you so much.

HAIR LOSS enters frolicking and tossing tufts of hair in the air.

HAIR LOSS: Follicles flying in the air.

HOLLY: Don't you come later?

LUCY: No more expensive hair products!

HOLLY: Thank you!

HAIR LOSS: My pleasure.

LUCY: These are your friends! And they are reminders. You think medicine has beaten this? No. Medicine has not beaten it. It has created another monster to fight it. These two Godzillas fight in this grotesque and primitive combat, while the city beneath them is destroyed; they claw, scratch, and beat each other. And you just hope that there are enough survivors when it is over to rebuild the city, to rebuild yourself.

The SIDE EFFECTS exit as the DOCTOR enters.

DOCTOR: Hello, Holly.

HOLLY: Hello, Doctor.

DOCTOR: How are you feeling?

HOLLY: The side effects are tough.

LUCY: They're kicking her butt.

DOCTOR: Well, we can give you something for that.

HOLLY: When will I be able to go home?

DOCTOR: We have to see how your body reacts to treatment. Do you have any questions about your treatment?

HOLLY: My imagination seems to be creating someone. Her name is Lucy.

DOCTOR: You've made a friend? Another patient?

HOLLY: I don't think so.

DOCTOR: One of the nurses then?

HOLLY: They're nice, but she's not a nurse.

DOCTOR: Well, who is it then?

HOLLY: Her name is Lucy and she talks to me.

DOCTOR: Do you talk to her?

HOLLY: I'm not a wacko but yes, I do talk to her.

DOCTOR: Holly, you are under a lot of strain and the chemotherapy does things to your body, and can affect things like your sense of smell, your vision, a lot of things.

HOLLY: Can it conjure up an imaginary friend?

DOCTOR: I've not heard of that one yet. But if it helps you, makes you feel better, and more comfortable, then that's great. (beat) Hello Lucy, I'm Doctor Harper.

HOLLY: I don't think she talks to anyone but me.

DOCTOR: Well, let us know if you or Lucy need anything.

DOCTOR exits. HOLLY calls after DOCTOR.

HOLLY: Lucy would like some ice cream. Even a simple bowl of plain vanilla ice cream will do!

LUCY: That's nice, but I don't need ice cream. I wouldn't know what to do with it.

HOLLY: That can't be. Everyone loves ice cream. If you don't, you are one of those people who foregoes the pleasures of the world.

LUCY: My purpose is to help you, to be your Godzilla in this fight. There is no ice cream for Godzilla.

HOLLY: I want ice cream.

LUCY: If you're lucky, you can have a pudding cup. Probably vanilla. I heard even prisoners get chocolate sometimes.

HOLLY: We're not prisoners.

LUCY: We're not?

HOLLY: I could take a chair or something and throw it through that window (*referring to an imaginary downstage window*).

LUCY: Well, aren't you just the little troublemaker.

HOLLY: Not really. I don't get in trouble.

LUCY: They say that chemotherapy can change your personality.

HOLLY: Really?

LUCY: That's what they say.

HOLLY: Who?

LUCY: The experts. So you might be throwing chairs through all kinds of windows soon enough. Maybe it will become a new trend, movie stars and athletes throwing chairs through windows and being banned from furniture stores, all thanks to you.

HOLLY: We are going to recover and get out of here and do normal things again. Learn to drive, go to the prom, eat ice cream that is not in a vacuum sealed prepackaged cup, date a little, hang out with friends, use strange acronyms and coded phrases in text messages.

LUCY: That's a lot to look forward to.

HOLLY: Pretty superficial I guess.

LUCY: If it helps you get better then use it.

HOLLY's MOM and DAD enter.

MOM: How are you feeling today, Holly dear?

DAD: Hey, kid.

HOLLY: The side effects are a little rough.

MOM: Did you tell your doctor? Because they have medicines for that.

DAD: They have medicines for everything.

MOM: I brought you a cactus. It doesn't need much of anything to survive.

MOM awkwardly sets down the cactus.

LUCY: Ouch. What a depressing gift.

HOLLY: Thanks.

MOM: Because they are resilient. They survive. Cacti, cactuses, cactus...

DAD: I had a cactus as a kid that is still there in the front yard. Darn thing will outlive us all.

MOM: What did the doctor say?

HOLLY: They want to see how I respond to treatment.

HAIR LOSS enters sprinkling more hair.

HAIR LOSS: Sprinkling hair, sprinkling hair everywhere.

HOLLY: It's too soon!

HAIR LOSS: I am a side effect, I don't follow the rules! Sprinkle, sprinkle, sprinkle.

MOM touches HOLLY's hair.

MOM: Your father brought you something to help with your hair, you know, in case your hair...

DAD: I brought you something.

DAD hands HOLLY a Cubs baseball cap.

MOM: The Cubs. They haven't won a World Series since...

HOLLY and DAD: 1908.

HOLLY: Cursed lovable losers, like me.

DAD: Well, that wasn't...

HOLLY: I love it, Dad. Maybe the Cubs will win it all this year.

MOM: It's just a hat to cover your head.

HOLLY: Yes! I know. I'm losing my hair! I get sick to my stomach. My mouth tastes like metal, I sweat profusely, then I get the chills, I have to be careful not to cut myself, or get a cold, or bump into anything, or breathe in the wrong direction, or exert myself too much. My pee looks like watered-down fruit punch and the only thing I have to look forward to is a vanilla pudding cup and they may be out of those because people are hoarding them and eating them on the toilet at 3 a.m.

MOM: Do you really have to talk like that?

LUCY: Yes! And it was wonderful.

HOLLY: Not really. Sorry, Mom.

LUCY: Press the call button and get the nurse! Two pudding cups and we will eat them with plastic knives because that is how we do it, here, on the edge!

HOLLY presses the call button.

VOICE: (*offstage*) May I help you?

HOLLY: Two pudding cups and two plastic knives. Please.

LUCY: No please! And make it snappy.

HOLLY and LUCY: I can't eat my pudding at room temperature.

MOM: Holly, you need to get control of yourself.

DAD: Control.

HOLLY: Control? I got a call slip in the middle of History class. In the middle of a lecture on The Cold War. Mr. Bronson was talking about the emergency drills where the kids would hide under their desks in case an atomic bomb hit the school. Don't you see how utterly ridiculous the whole thing is? Hiding under desks from an atomic bomb!

MOM: I don't see what that has to do with...

DAD: With...

HOLLY: When I should have been in P.E. I was being diagnosed as stage three. I didn't even know what that meant before I got here. And here we are, hiding under desks.

MOM: This is not The Cold War!

DAD: The Cold War is over.

HOLLY: Not for me.

LUCY: You tell 'em sister.

MOM: We'll be back later.

HOLLY: Could you bring me some ice cream?

LUCY: There. Ask and ye shall receive!

HOLLY: Just have them dump the candy store on it. Just make a mess out of it. A big, sloppy mess of a sundae in a bucket that I have to eat with a shovel.

MOM: I will check with the doctor and see if this is allowed.

DAD: Better check first.

HOLLY: Just sneak it in! It'll be fun. The only danger is the melting. They won't throw you in dairy jail with Bessie the Cow as your cellmate.

MOM and DAD start to exit.

MOM: Try to get some rest. We'll see you later.

DAD: See you later, kid.

HOLLY: *(calling after them)* It's just a little ice cream.

HOLLY sings "Happy, happy, happy" as the lights fade to black.

Scene 4

In the darkness LUCY is whispering "Red Rover, Red Rover send Holly right over" until the lights come up and the dialogue starts.

LUCY: Red Rover, Red Rover, send Holly right over.

HOLLY: I loved that game as a kid.

LUCY: As a kid? It's the game you're playing now.

HOLLY: Red Rover. Really?

LUCY: Of course it is. Our team: the side effects, your support network, me.

HOLLY: You're on my team?

LUCY: Of course. We are the bond that will not be broken until the game is complete.

HOLLY: Oh.

LUCY: We are connected there through your IV, through your veins, and arteries.

HOLLY: We are?

LUCY: We are.

HOLLY: Really?

LUCY: In time, you'll come to embrace the idea.

Three of HOLLY's friends, CAL, PAL, and SAL enter.

CAL: How's it going Holly?

PAL: You look pale.

SAL: Everyone says "hi."

CAL: Is the food any good?

PAL: You've lost weight.

SAL: Mal says "hi."

CAL: Have you had a lot of visitors?

PAL: You seem depressed.

SAL: That one guy in Calculus says "hi."

CAL: What is the name of the guy in Calculus class?

PAL: You're frowning.

SAL: The lunch ladies say "hi."

CAL: Does it hurt?

PAL: Your face looks like it hurts.

SAL: The crossing guard says “hi.”

LUCY: Does the crosswalk say “hi”?

PAL, SAL, CAL: Holly!

HOLLY: Yes.

CAL: What’s wrong?

HOLLY: Lucy.

CAL: Who’s Lucy?

HOLLY: A friend.

PAL: No one else is here.

SAL: They have you in a private room because you know, you have...

HOLLY: I have what? What do I have? Please tell me what I have in a regular tone of voice like normal people talking to each other in a normal conversation. Not people who bring their child a cactus and talk to her like she’s a stranger. Not people who whisper dangerous words like they are going to blow up in their mouths if they talk too loudly.

SAL: There’s no one else in the room.

HOLLY: What do I have, Sal? Say it, Pal. Go ahead Cal! Tell me what I’ve got. The thing I’ve got inside of me. Say it. Call it by name.

CAL: We better get going.

CAL, PAL, and SAL exit. HOLLY calls after them.

HOLLY: Be sure to take a pudding cup on the way out! You never know when they’ll run out. Maybe that’s the key to the whole thing, the cure for this and everything that hurts us is the pudding cup! Anything that hurts, just rub pudding on it!

SOCIAL WORKER enters with caution.

SOCIAL WORKER: Pudding. Is that the source of your anger?

LUCY: Yes, down with airtight vanilla pudding cups.

HOLLY: Not really.

Waiting Room

4M, 7W, 1E*, doubling possible with parents

CALLER*, Calls patients in for their appointments

FAITH, Very positive and gregarious

FINN, Real name Finland, a sharp cynic

ROHAN, Real name Ronald, but uses this name as his cancer-fighting character

CLOUD, Real name Claudia, struggling with depression

OSWALD, Already knows his diagnosis and options, but comes to the waiting room once a week to be a part of something

Finn's Family

DAD

MOM

SISTER

Rohan's Family

DAD

MOM

SISTER

* Gender-Neutral Role

This play is dedicated to people who wait patiently for appointments, tests, and treatments. May you find peace. You are not alone.

The waiting room is comprised of a large number of chairs, too many for the people sitting in the waiting room. The formation can be a "U" or any formation that allows the audience full frontal access to the action. CLOUD, FINN, ROHAN, FAITH, and OSWALD are seated in the waiting room. Each has tried to create a space bubble for themselves except for FAITH, who has planted herself in a seat right next to FINN. CALLER enters with great efficiency, holding a single sheet of paper.

CALLER: Donald Fitzpatrick?

CALLER glances around the room.

CALLER: Donald Fitzpatrick?

FAITH: There was a man, who to me, could have very easily been cast, if life were a movie, as Donald Fitzpatrick. He exited with some urgency. My guess is he had to go to the bathroom. Badly. He

was doing the race-walking thing where it looks like the walker is going to take a doodee in his pants.

CALLER: Donald Fitzpatrick?

FAITH: He'll be back, or at least a man who could play him in *The Donald Fitzpatrick Story*.

CALLER scans the room without really looking at anyone. Exits.

FAITH: (*talking to FINN or anyone who will listen*) He'll be back. Of course he'll be back.

FINN: Can you stop?

FAITH: Stop? You want me to stop being concerned about other people.

FINN: Yes.

FAITH: It's who I am.

FINN: Well, try to be less of who you are right now.

FAITH: That would be a lie.

FINN: That guy who walked out, Fitz-whatever, he could be sprawled out on the bathroom floor gasping for air or even dead already.

FAITH gets up and frantically moves around.

FAITH: Mr. Fitzpatrick! Mr. Fitzpatrick! Help! Someone check all the restrooms on this floor. Help!

ROHAN gets up abruptly and covers FAITH's mouth.

ROHAN: Will you stop that?

FAITH is still trying to scream.

ROHAN: Stop it...stop...it. Calm down and I will let go.

FAITH slowly calms down.

ROHAN: Ready? I'm going to let go now.

FAITH is still breathing heavily. ROHAN lets go.

FAITH: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

ROHAN: He's gone.

FAITH: That was the name of my Freshman English teacher. He used to reenact scenes from *Romeo and Juliet* with his hands. He even put makeup on his left hand for Juliet.

FINN: Sounds like a freak.

FAITH: He was the best.

ROHAN: That wasn't him. Same name, different guy.

FAITH: You don't know that. You don't.

FAITH moves away from FINN and sits alone.

FINN: Nice job psycho.

ROHAN: You wanted her to keep screaming? Is that what you wanted?

FINN: Let me see, we have the lifecycle of the Luna Moth on loop on the television and magazines from the Clinton administration. Yes, I will take the frantic search for Mr. Fitzpatrick.

ROHAN: That's twisted.

FINN: Oh, please. You were ready to choke her out.

ROHAN: What I exhibited there is called restraint.

FINN: Maybe you can be a mall security officer one day and tase teenagers for sneaking gummy bears into a sparsely attended matinee.

ROHAN: I brought silence back to the waiting room. Be grateful.

ROHAN sits down as far away from FINN as he can and picks up a magazine.

ROHAN: This magazine says that due to his success in the Civil War, Ulysses S. Grant may run for president. Well, that's news to me.

CALLER enters holding a single sheet of paper.

CALLER: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

CALLER scans the room without really looking at anyone.

CALLER: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

FAITH stands and releases an exhalation with sound but no words come out.

CALLER: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

CALLER exits.

FINN: I picture that Fitzpatrick guy standing in front of a vending machine, completely constipated in thought. He knows he should get the healthy trail mix, but those pink-sprinkled puffballs of sweet artificial bliss are calling out to him. Those are the hardest decisions in life. They seem so insignificant but they're huge.

CLOUD: *(the words come out despite her reluctance to speak)* I would get the snack cakes.

FINN: Me too.

FAITH: Trail mix. Complex carbohydrates and protein.

ROHAN: Vending machines are part of the reason our civilization has declined.

FINN: You want to hunt for snack cakes in the wild?

ROHAN: Something like that. Yes. Not snack cakes though.

CALLER enters with a single sheet of paper.

CALLER: Claudia Freeman?

CLOUD stands up.

CALLER: Claudia—

CLOUD: Cloud. Yes.

CALLER: Claudia Freeman?

CLOUD: Yes. I renamed myself. But yes, I am Claudia Freeman.

CALLER exits with CLOUD following.

ROHAN: Good luck.

FINN: It's not the lottery.

ROHAN: I just meant...

FINN: Nice job, Mr. Smooth.

ROHAN: My name is Rohan.

FINN: Rohan, Protector of Ignorance. What a piece of work. Do you work at Medieval Times? I thought I recognized you. You're the Chartreuse Knight!

FAITH: Leave him alone.

FINN: Oh, you liked being restrained by Rohan, King of Middle Earth.

FAITH: Nobody wants to be here. Can we at least make it pleasant?

FINN: Pleasant. I don't know what you're waiting for, but there is no singing telegram coming through that door for me. This is a dungeon. You like that Rohan? I used one of your Ren Faire words.

FAITH: Do we have to suffer while we wait?

FINN: Would you rather hire a clown and have ice cream cake?

ROHAN: Yes, as long as the clown can juggle sharp objects and the ice cream cake has mint chocolate chip ice cream.

FINN's DAD, MOM, and SISTER enter.

DAD: How is my little Princess?

FINN: Take it easy, Dad.

DAD: We brought you those pink snack cakes you like so much.

SISTER: May I have one?

MOM: No, they're for your sister.

SISTER: But it's a two-pack and there are two of us.

MOM: But your sister is sick.

SISTER: So if I get really sick, I can eat nothing but junk food.

MOM: Yes.

SISTER closes her eyes and concentrates intensely.

SISTER: Dearest God, please give me a serious illness that will allow me to eat nothing but junk food, but not so serious that I can't play dolls or dance.

MOM: Please stop it. God doesn't like you clogging up the prayer lines with your junk food requests.

FINN: Mom, you can let her have them both.

SISTER: See, the sick one says it, so it is.

DAD: No. Your sister will keep her snack cakes. She can save them for later.

MOM: Any news?

FINN: Yes, they told me I was cured and that I should stay here and heal the other sick people.

DAD: That's our cynical girl.

FINN: Yes it is.

MOM: We would sit with you here all day, but we know you want to face this alone. So as horrible as it is, we will sit in the hospital cafeteria and risk contracting food poisoning simply from looking at and smelling the food, so that you can be alone.

FINN: I know it's weird, but thanks Mom.

DAD: Alright sweetie, just follow the stench of burnt rump roast if you need us.

MOM and DAD start to exit. SISTER lingers behind.

SISTER: Dear God, if my sister were to give me her pink snack cakes right now, could you heal her on the spot? Please.

FINN starts to hand them to SISTER.

DAD: Those are your sister's cakes. Now move it out.

SISTER follows MOM and DAD as they exit.

ROHAN: That's our cynical girl.

FINN: Can it, Sir Freak-a-Lot.

FAITH: That was very sweet. Your family loves you.

ROHAN: And they even obey simple commands.

FINN: I want to be alone when I find out.

FAITH: Really?

FINN: Yes. Do you ever get the strong sense that...I don't know, it's stupid.

FAITH: Nothing you feel is stupid.

ROHAN: Sometimes I feel stupid. It's like my brain is a bowling ball.

FINN: Nice introspection there Prince of Oblivion.

FAITH: What do you feel?

FINN: I just have moments where I have seen this play out before, the diagnosis, everything.

ROHAN: Wow. I wish I had that.

FAITH: Those might just be your fears. You have choices and opportunities in life.

FINN: Why are we here then, watching the mating patterns of Luna Moths, and waiting?

ROHAN: If I could have a giant eye, like a Cyclops eye, but connected to my hand, and this giant eye could see things, the future. That would be so great.

FAITH: (to FINN) What's your name?

FINN: Finland. But I go by Finn.

FAITH: I'm Faith.

ROHAN: And I am-

FINN: Rohan, King of Mothland.

ROHAN: You don't have to mock me. My real name is Ronald.

FINN: Like the burger clown?

ROHAN: Ron isn't much better. When I was diagnosed I asked my parents if I could change my name to one more suitable for battle. They said no. But I'm going by Rohan anyway.

FAITH: That takes guts.

ROHAN: Rohan will put up a better fight than Ron. Ron gets his butt kicked by the sniffles.

CALLER enters.

CALLER: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

CALLER scans the room without really looking at anyone.

CALLER: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

CALLER continues to vaguely scan the room.

CALLER: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

CALLER exits.

FAITH: She's persistent, you have to give her that.

CLOUD enters as if she has been thrown violently out of the unseen office. She stops and tries to collect herself. She is beginning to breakdown.

FAITH: (to CLOUD) You okay?

FINN: Of course she's not okay. (Beat. To CLOUD.) Want a sprinkly-pink snack cake? I can't give you both but you can have one.

FAITH: Oh, that's much better. Snack cakes will save the day.

CLOUD: What do you do? When the clock starts counting backwards?

ROHAN: Smash it.

CLOUD: It still counts backwards.

FAITH: You unlearn how to tell time.

CLOUD: The ticking. It's like the clock is in my head.

FINN: Snack cakes! We feast on snack cakes. Rohan, use your dagger to release the snack cakes from their plastic prison.

ROHAN: I'm afraid I left it at home.

FINN: Then we do it like cave people did when they ate artificial snack cakes and use our hands.

FAITH: Okay, I'm in.

FINN takes CLOUD by the hand and the foursome sits together.

FINN: Half a cake each.

FINN starts to divide the snack cakes.

FAITH: (*referring to OSWALD*) What about that guy?

FINN: He hasn't made his presence felt and that really messes with the math.

ROHAN: Yeah, forty-percent each is a mess.

FINN: What's that guy's deal anyway? (*louder*) Too good for our catty and juvenile conversation? Is that it?

FAITH: Just leave him alone. We don't know his story.

FINN: You must've been great on the playground. Peacemakers make me sick.

FAITH: Why?

FINN: Peace is a lie. I had a civil war going on in my body and the way they wanted to settle it was to bring in a foreign army. Chemotherapy. And when that didn't work another army. Radiation. There are no fronts, or color-coded maps, or good-guy-bad-guy uniforms, or foxholes to hide in, or white flags.

FAITH: Maybe if you changed your attitude. Did you ever think of that?

FINN: Like you? Not everyone can be a solar-powered optimist like you!

FAITH: I'm faking it! I'm faking it. Okay?

CLOUD suddenly stands up on one of the chairs.

CLOUD: Six months. That's how long they told me I have to live. Not even enough time to be the only bald girl at Spring Formal. But I will prove them wrong. I will be the only bald girl in attendance at the Spring Formal.

OSWALD stands up on one of the chairs.

OSWALD: My countdown has already hit zero and I'm still here. Once a week I come here, to the Oncology Waiting Room, to remind myself that time is precious and it's mine. I will live (*looking at CLOUD*) and not be preoccupied with my countdown.

ROHAN stands up on one of the chairs.

ROHAN: As silly as it is, I changed my name to fight this disease. And it's working. I will slay my dragons and monsters.

FAITH stands up on one of the chairs.

FAITH: I pretend I am happy and sometimes I believe it. More often than not I believe that I am a happy, well-adjusted girl. I will be who I am, even if that means I am not always a happy well-adjusted girl.

FINN stands up on one of the chairs.

FINN: I like to start fights. But this is the biggest fight of all. I asked for a brawl and I got one. I got the biggest, ugliest opponent of them all. I'm ready. Are you? I will use all my strength to fight you.

CALLER enters.

CALLER: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

CALLER scans the room without really looking at anyone.

CALLER: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

CALLER continues to vaguely scan the room.

CALLER: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

CALLER exits. The others get down from the chairs.

FINN: She didn't tell us to get off the chairs.

FAITH: Maybe this is commonplace?

CLOUD: I doubt it.

ROHAN: Yeah, nothing common about us.

OSWALD: So how are we going to break up the snack cakes?

FINN: So you're in? This stuff will kill you.

OSWALD: I'll take my chances.

FINN breaks up the cakes into four pieces and gives them to everyone else, leaving her with none.

FAITH: Oh, please. Don't be a snack cake martyr.

FINN: Afraid of the competition?

FAITH breaks her portion in half.

FAITH: Here.

FINN: Thanks.

ROHAN's DAD enters, MOM and SISTER follow close behind. MOM is texting on her phone and SISTER is wearing headphones. There is a general reluctance to be here from ROHAN's family.

DAD: Ronald.

ROHAN: Dad, Father, Man Who Participated In My Creation.

DAD: Cut the wise cracks, Ronald.

ROHAN: My name is Rohan.

DAD: I will not call you that. And we don't have a lot of time.

ROHAN: I think they have a twenty-minute-or-it's-free policy.

MOM: What's he rambling about now?

DAD: Another snide comment, that's all.

MOM: We don't have long Harry.

ROHAN: Maybe those things on the side of your head, what do you call them, diamond earring holders? Maybe they can also be used to amplify sound.

DAD: Don't you talk to your mother that way.

ROHAN: She's your girlfriend, not my mother.

DAD: We are married.

ROHAN: If an unconvincing Elvis impersonator marries you it doesn't count.

MOM: Harry, I'm going to wait in the car. I don't want to be late.

MOM exits quickly.

SISTER: They threw all your weapons and armor and sorcery books away.

DAD: Be quiet, Katherine.

ROHAN: Did you throw my things away?

DAD: You are behaving like a lunatic!

ROHAN: That was my stuff.

DAD: That I paid for. We are sensible people, we have health care. We don't need swords, spell books, and armor.

ROHAN: It makes me feel better.

DAD: What's in your hand?

SISTER: A pink-sprinkly snack cake. Busted! Dad, Ronald is eating junk food.

ROHAN: Yes! A snack cake.

DAD: Now you put that down, Ronald.

ROHAN: I am Rohan, Consumer of the Snack Cakes!

DAD: I do not have time for this nonsense.

ROHAN: I am going to eat this pink-sprinkly snack cake.

DAD: Put that disgusting artificial unfood down.

ROHAN: I am the Consumer of the Snack Cakes!

ROHAN steps onto a chair.

DAD: You immature child. I will not watch you do this.

ROHAN: Will you watch me go through chemotherapy, with the chemicals dripping into my veins? Actually watch me, not text, or play games, or listen to music. Just silently watch the chemicals enter my body.

DAD: This is ridiculous. Goodbye, Ronald.

SISTER: *(to Rohan)* Loser.

DAD exits, followed by SISTER.

ROHAN: I'm eating this cake and...you can't stop me.

ROHAN collapses in his chair, defeated.

FINN: I'm sorry, Rohan.

FAITH: At least your parents showed up.

ROHAN: I would rather they stayed away. You can completely tell they don't want to be here. It's just a token gesture, so they can tell the people they're trying to impress in between martinis that their son has the disease of the month, and they can raise their glasses to me and say some regurgitated greeting card phrase, and move on with their lives.

CALLER enters.

CALLER: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

CALLER scans the room without really looking at anyone.

FINN: (to CALLER) Hey, are you going to keep doing that?

CALLER: Mr. Fitzpatrick?

FINN: He's not here. He left.

FAITH: That's true, he did leave.

CALLER continues to vaguely scan the room.

FINN: What's that piece of paper you are holding?

FINN moves quickly toward CALLER.

FINN: I want to see that paper. I bet it tells us about this Fitzpatrick-guy's condition.

FAITH: I don't think that's our business. Not one bit.

CALLER: (ignoring them) Mr. Fitzpatrick?

FINN blocks the door.

FINN: Give me Fitzpatrick's paper.

CALLER tries to get around FINN.

FINN: Can I get a little help here?

ROHAN and CLOUD cross over to help FINN.

FAITH: This is not a good idea. It's none of our business.

OSWALD: Come on!

OSWALD moves over to help out as well. CALLER moves into the waiting room, trying to escape but the others surround her and FINN grabs the paper. CALLER exits quickly, now unimpeded by the others.

FAITH: You should give that back.

FINN is reading to herself.

FINN: It says that the results of Mr. Fitzpatrick's last CT scan are negative!

CLOUD: Mr. Fitzpatrick is in remission!

ROHAN: Mr. Fitzpatrick kicked cancer's butt!

Everyone celebrates, including FAITH, who is celebrating despite herself.

OSWALD: This is what I've been coming here for, waiting for, every single day!

FAITH: My English teacher or someone with the same name is in remission!

They continue to pump their fists, dance, high five, jump around, and celebrate. This release has caused some real emotion to surface for everyone.

FAITH: That's right, cancer. Mr. Fitzpatrick kicked your butt. How does that feel, cancer? You like that? You want some more of that, cancer? I'll let you catch your breath. But you're just going to lose it again. Mr. Fitzpatrick kicked your butt.

FINN: I wonder what he'll do when he finds out?

CLOUD: Hug someone, that's for sure.

ROHAN: Hug himself.

OSWALD: Run through the sprinklers at two a.m. in his underwear.

ROHAN: I haven't done that for a while.

FINN: Who are you kidding, Rohan? That's how you bathe.

FAITH: I bet he will learn Italian. "Grande notizia, Signore Fitzpatrick."

CLOUD: Or skydive.

OSWALD: What would you really do if you received the news that Mr. Fitzpatrick received today? That you were in remission, that you were free.

CLOUD: Impossible.

OSWALD: What if it wasn't impossible?

CLOUD: I just never thought about it. Things have been so bleak for so long.

ROHAN: Well, I know what I would do. Move out. Just pack a backpack and some supplies and start walking. Canada, Mexico, Pacific, Atlantic, wouldn't matter. And I would befriend some stray dog and we would travel from place to place, take on odd jobs. And we would sleep in a haystack in a barn, or in the crook of an old tree, or under a small town shop awning. People would give us things: leftover stew or a hunk of pie, a scarf, or some advice about traveling in "this part of the country." Just walk right out of my adolescence and into adulthood. No more pimples, or trying to fit in, or parental expectations, or cancer. Especially no more cancer.

FINN: What? No fire-breathing dragons?

ROHAN: Why don't you tell us? It'll feel good.

FINN: I would throw a block party with fireworks and music blaring and shut down the street for the entire night. We would have multi-layered Jello that looks like a sunset, and barbecues with smoke filling the air, mixing with the smells of the fireworks. There would be people from the past there, friends, enemies, teachers, cousins, even those that aren't alive anymore. And we would all dance like in the movies where everyone magically knows the choreography, and everyone is graceful, and happy. And no one is sick, and everyone gets along, and there is this healthy and vibrant feeling and it is like a fuel. And that fuel gives everyone the power to have long, long, wonderful lives.

FAITH: That was beautiful.

FINN: Shut up. Do you really think so?

FAITH: Of course. I would want to get everyone that is an important part of my life and give them a big hug. All of them at once, an enormous group hug.

FINN: It has to be real. That's not what you would really do if you found out you were free of this monster.

FAITH: I think I would kiss a boy.

FINN: Any boy?

FAITH: Marshall Simpson.

FINN: Marshall Simpson. Is he cute?

FAITH: Gorgeous.

FINN: That's it? Kiss Marshall Simpson.

FAITH: Clearly you haven't seen Marshall Simpson.

OSWALD: What about you Cloud?

CLOUD: Skydive with a parachute.

OSWALD: Come on.

CLOUD: I would love to feel my own head of hair on the way down, whipping around, out of control, and the wind-created style it would be in when I landed. I guess it's a teenage-girl thing. I just want to be a normal girl who obsesses about hair, and friends, and fads, and who likes me and who doesn't.

CLOUD starts to exit.

FINN: Wait.

CLOUD: I have to go. Tell my parents, my family.

FINN: Stay with us.

CLOUD: I can't. I have to face the reality of this.

FINN: I don't want you to go.

CLOUD: It's more gravity than choice.

FINN: I always hated gravity.

ROHAN: Can we meet here? Once a week, all of us.

FINN: Like group therapy.

ROHAN: Or like friends. Friends battling a common enemy.

The Other Room

4M, 3W

DAD, In the other room, is seen on stage in three flashbacks

TOMMY, Watches Cubs games with his dad

MARY, Avoids the entire ordeal by going to her best friend's house

MOM, Trying to keep the house in order

ROB, Tommy's friend

BOB, Tommy's friend

JEN, Mary's best friend

This play is dedicated to my friend David Vedder.

When the lights come up the stage is empty. We hear a voice from offstage. The voice is normal, kind, even familiar.

VOICE: Tommy. Tommy, could you come here? Tommy.

TOMMY enters from the audience, he hurries in and puts down his backpack.

TOMMY: I'm coming, Dad.

TOMMY exits and MARY enters. She keeps her backpack on and stands center stage. MOM enters.

MOM: Hey, sweetie. Take off your backpack and stay awhile.

MARY: Can I go over to Jen's?

MOM: Again? You've been over there practically every day.

MARY: Chemistry has been tough for me. Jen has an A in Chemistry.

MOM: But you stay there for dinner and don't come home until we are all asleep. We miss you. Hey, tell me the truth, is Jen's mom a better cook than I am?

MARY: Mom, I am a high school girl. I am supposed to be moody, fickle, and mysterious. It's part of the job description.

MOM: Alright. Go in and say hi to your dad before you go.

MARY: That room.

MOM: What about it?

MARY: You know.

MOM: What? Go ahead and say it Mary.

MARY: Mom, please don't take it so personally.

MOM: It is your Father and he is very sick; and let me get this straight, you want me to not take it so personally?

MARY: And you wonder why I don't want to be here.

MOM: There are times in our lives when it is not about where we want to go and what we want to do. It is about what we have to do.

MARY: But I'm not an adult.

MOM: Yes, but you are part of this family.

MARY: I'll be back before dinner. Okay?

MOM: Tomorrow Jen comes over here. You guys can alternate days.

MARY exits.

MOM: I was a teenager once. Why does it seem so far away?

TOMMY enters.

TOMMY: Hey, Mom.

MOM: Tommy, what's been going on with Mary?

TOMMY: A prolonged and agonizing condition. I believe it's known as puberty. It might be permanent.

MOM: How are you?

TOMMY: Mom, you know me. No worries.

MOM: Yeah, that's what worries me.

TOMMY: You're a mom. You have to worry.

MOM: Actually, I enjoy worrying so much. I'm not sure I could live without it.

DAD: (*offstage*) Tommy, the game is starting.

TOMMY: Coming, Dad.

MOM: No sneaking in the contraband snacks today, Tommy. You're not helping him.

TOMMY: In Psychology class we learned that a favorite food or snack can create endorphins, and those puppies can make a person feel more positive and help promote healing.

MOM: There are pills for that.

TOMMY: There are studies, Mom. And I know where you hide the French truffles by the way.

MOM: That is a break-glass-in-case-of-emergency thing.

TOMMY: I almost forgot, Rob and Bob are coming over to study for History.

MOM: Can we call one Robert? The rhyming names are just too weird.

TOMMY: It kind of makes me feel like a superhero with two sidekicks.

ROB: (*offstage*) Tommy!

ROB and BOB enter. They are dressed eerily similar.

BOB: Are you ready to play some Halo and eat a family-sized bag of Spicy Cheetos?

ROB: Each!

MOM: (*trying not to laugh*) Hello, Rob...Bob.

ROB and BOB: Hello, Mrs. H.

MOM: You are here to study, right? Not poison your body and mind.

TOMMY: Oh, no. I told my dad I would watch the Cubs game with him.

ROB: Spoiler alert. They're going to lose.

TOMMY: Guys, we are going to have to watch at least some of the game with my dad.

BOB: That room.

TOMMY: What about it?

BOB: It's just...

ROB: That's okay, we'll watch a few innings.

BOB: I always feel sad when I leave that room.

TOMMY: Well suck it up. I live here and you don't see me jumping off the roof of the gym.

ROB: Do you think that would work with a bed sheet as a parachute?

BOB: Yeah, and we could post it on the internet and become superstars.

TOMMY: No, it would not work. Plus the urine from your sheets would impede flight.

BOB: Are you saying I pee my bed?

TOMMY: Yes, that's exactly what I'm saying.

BOB: That was one time and I was wearing an adult diaper as an experiment to see how much liquid it could hold.

ROB: What class was that for?

BOB: A little class I like to call life. Life knowledge. What, everything has to be for a grade? What are you going to do when you get in the real world?

TOMMY: Pee in a toilet, not a diaper.

BOB: Don't knock it 'til you've peed in it.

MOM: Okay, mom in the room.

TOMMY: You know how this goes Mom, press the emergency eject button.

MOM: I think that means leave. Got it.

MOM exits.

ROB: She's pretty cool, Tommy.

BOB: And pretty. Does she have a date for Homecoming?

TOMMY: Yeah, my dad you idiot.

ROB: Take it easy, Tommy.

BOB: Plus, isn't your dad, you know...

TOMMY: What? My dad is what?

BOB: He's sick right? I mean he's really sick.

TOMMY: Maybe you guys should go.

ROB: Don't take everything so personally, Tommy.

TOMMY: Not everything. Just this. I'll walk you guys out.

BOB: We need help to study for the History test.

ROB: When you add up both of our grades, they don't equal your one grade.

TOMMY: I will email you my study sheet. Just drill that over and over.

ROB: Look, I'm sorry that we were...

BOB: I was pretty insensitive.

TOMMY: And pretty. What are you doing for Homecoming?

TOMMY, BOB, and ROB try to laugh it off.

TOMMY: I'm just moody. We good?

BOB: Most abso-def-certainly.

TOMMY: What was that?

ROB: I'm coming up with the new hip word. Yeah, we're good.

TOMMY, BOB, and ROB exchange forgiveness gestures. Handshakes and half-hugs, etc. They exit. DAD enters. TOMMY reenters.

DAD: Want to play catch?

TOMMY: Of course. I want to try out my new glove.

DAD and TOMMY mime tossing the ball back and forth during the following conversation.

DAD: There was a little heat on that one.

TOMMY: I can bring it from time to time.

DAD: Remember when I had to lob it to you underhand?

TOMMY: And I would close my eyes.

DAD: And somehow it would end up in your glove.

TOMMY: You would say...

TOMMY and DAD: Now, you trust me? Right, Tommy?

TOMMY: Yes, of course I do.

DAD: When do you think the Cubs will win a World Series?

TOMMY: You don't want me to answer that.

DAD: Why? You think I can't deal with the truth?

TOMMY: I'm afraid I can't.

DAD: There is an entire generation of fans that never saw the Cubs win a Championship.

TOMMY: Yeah.

DAD: But there is something neat about that.

TOMMY: You think so?

DAD: Loyalty. Complete loyalty. You don't give up on your team just because they haven't won for over a hundred years.

TOMMY: So I should keep wearing my hat?

DAD: Absolutely.

DAD throws the ball over TOMMY's head and TOMMY has to retrieve it. When he does, DAD exits.

TOMMY: Dad, I was thinking we could go to Wrigley Field and...Dad?

MARY and JEN enter.

JEN: I am so sorry, Mary. My mom is so wrapped up in organizing that bake sale at school that you would think she was a muffin pan giving birth to a litter of chocolate chip muffin-children.

MARY: It's okay. Things get pretty weird over here too.

JEN: We have been friends a long time and I have never been to your house. I like it.

MARY: Let me show you my room.

TOMMY: Hey, Mary.

MARY: Tell Mom that we're going up to my room and that Jen is staying for dinner.

TOMMY: Okay.

JEN: I'm Jen by the way.

TOMMY: Yeah, I've seen you at school.

JEN: You go to RHS?

TOMMY: Yeah, I'm practically invisible.

MARY: He's a freshman.

JEN: You're cute. You should sit with us at lunch sometime.

MARY: No and no. Not cute and never sitting with us ever during any meal ever.

JEN: Mary, you love your brother.

MARY: I want to be clear about the separation of friends and family. You may acknowledge each other, nod, even a small wave, perhaps some single syllable greetings: "Hi, hey, Tom, Jen."

JEN: Well, that's efficient.

TOMMY: Save the syllables. It could be a new movement.

JEN and TOMMY laugh a little despite trying to follow MARY's edict.

MARY: *(as if physically separating them)* Alright break it up, break it up. We're going upstairs.

MARY starts to lead the way and then comes back to get JEN when she lingers.

JEN: Nice to meet you, Tom.

TOMMY: Yes, good to see you too Jen.

MARY starts to lead JEN offstage, clearly miffed.

JEN: What? We followed the rules and everything. Not a multiple syllable word exchanged.

MARY: You are breaking the rules of nature. He is a freshman and my brother.

MARY and JEN exit. TOMMY stands stunned. MOM enters.

MOM: I heard the fanfare, Mary must be home.

TOMMY: Yes, with her friend Jen.

MOM: Something must've happened.

TOMMY: Something about muffin babies for a bake sale. But Jen's staying for dinner and they are upstairs fake-studying. Can I eat dinner with Dad in his room?

MOM: Nice. You're going to leave me with the best-friend twins.

TOMMY: Quality bonding time. I have to watch the Cubs fall deeper into the cellar.

MOM: Alright, we'll bring dinner to the two of you. But only because you are Cubs loyalists.

TOMMY: Thanks, Mom.

TOMMY exits. MOM starts to exit but DAD enters. She feels his presence and stops.

DAD: Care to dance? But I will warn you, I am entirely unskilled.

MOM: *(turning around)* There's no music playing.

DAD: You ever see an old couple dancing, too old or too in love to realize that there is no music playing?

MOM: Are we going to get there one day?

DAD: That's a little presumptuous. We just met.

DAD and MOM start to dance.

DAD: I hope you have good insurance. I have bruised and battered my share of toes in my day.

MOM: I am unscathed.

DAD: Maybe because you're leading.

MOM: Sorry.

DAD: No I like it. Close your eyes.

MOM: Okay.

MOM closes her eyes.

DAD: Where do you want to be?

MOM: Right here.

DAD: Anywhere in the entire world, the entire universe?

MOM: Right here is where I want to be.

DAD steps away from MOM and exits. MOM continues dancing. MARY and JEN enter. They watch MOM dance alone for a moment.

MARY: Mom.

MOM is still caught up in the moment with her eyes closed, perhaps even humming.

JEN: It's sweet.

MARY: Crazy is what it is. Mom. Mom!

MOM: (*opening her eyes*) Sorry, sorry. Just daydreaming.

MARY: Mom, this is Jen.

JEN: Hi, Mrs. H.

MOM: Sorry, Jen. You must think I'm nuts.

JEN: No, I actually put on full ballets in my room. Very therapeutic.

MARY: Remember separation of friends and family.

JEN: Yes, I am sad that I broke the rule. (*breaking out of the one syllable routine*) How do you want me to say Mary with one syllable?

MOM: Am I missing something?

JEN: Rules of engagement for friends in socializing with family.

MOM: Don't make eye contact with me or you might...

MOM and JEN: Turn to stone.

MOM and JEN try not to laugh but do so nonetheless.

MARY: What is up with you people?

MOM: Yeah, that's a tough one.

MARY: Jen is going to stay for dinner. Okay?

MOM: Yes, it will be just the girls. Tommy is watching the Cubs game with your dad.

MARY: It's an addiction.

JEN: I love the Cubs. The more they lose, the more I love them. Kind of a dysfunctional relationship.

MOM: Maybe you two could go in and watch with the boys?

MARY: Mom.

JEN: Great idea!

MOM: I told your brother not to bring snacks in there, which means there are plenty of ooey-gooey things to eat.

MOM exits into the kitchen.

JEN: Nice!

MARY: That room.

JEN: What's wrong, Mary?

MARY: I don't really want to get into it.

JEN: You want to see your dad, right?

MARY: There is something about that room.

JEN: Sorry.

MARY: I just don't like to go in there. And I know that makes me sound like a terrible person. Like I'm afraid it's catching. Or that there is a horrible monster in there that will get out if I open the door too long, that it will get me, get us all. I just...

JEN and MARY: Don't want to see him like this.

MARY: Yes.

JEN: My dad had it. And no one would say it, like acknowledging it would make it real, would make it stay. My dad had cancer. And he fought. A long and valiant fight. And I would put on a happy face and read to him. The newspaper, sports magazines, my Biology book, anything I could get my hands on. And the Cubs and their quest to break the over-century-long curse became something

to believe in and cheer for. If the Cubs could do it, end the curse, the century-long drought, then anything was possible, even overcoming something that seemed incurable.

MARY: I am so sorry, Jen.

JEN: Me too. We're friends for many reasons. Some of which we don't know yet.

MARY: Yeah.

MOM reenters holding a mixing bowl and spoon, excited to be one of the girls.

MOM: I'm going to go make the gooiest Macaroni and Cheese and then after dinner we will make a giant chocolate cake for no reason in particular and we will stick our faces in the bowl and lick it clean. Okay, maybe just eat some of the batter with spoons.

MARY: Nice recovery, Mom.

MOM: Thanks. I'm old but not beyond repair.

MARY: We're going to watch the game. Hey, why don't we just all eat with Dad tonight?

JEN: Absolutely. You need comfort food to watch the Cubs.

MARY: For sure.

MOM exits back into the kitchen.

MARY: Go on ahead, Jen. *(she indicates with a gesture)* First door on the right. I'll be in soon. I just need a minute.

JEN: Don't worry. I won't sit too close to Tommy.

MARY: Hey, you're a big girl.

MARY looks out and considers what has taken place. DAD enters.

DAD: Mary, have you ever played "See It, Believe It"?

MARY: That's a made-up game.

DAD: No. It's been around a long time.

MARY: Well, how do you play it?

DAD: Well, I cover your eyes.

Chemo Girl

3W, 13 E*, doubling possible, ensemble expandable to 26 or more

GIRL, Camille. She is battling cancer.

Screen name: Chemo Girl

MOM, Has come back to give her daughter the power to fight

GAMEMASTER*, Is in charge of Save the Planet (the video game world)

WITCH, Guards the forbidden forest of living trees

LAGGER*, Flies behind the flyers and helps GIRL

ENSEMBLE I-II*, Portrays various roles in the play: PARTS OF THE STORM 1, TREES, MINES, STATUES, PATIENTS, FLYERS, PARTS OF THE STORM 2.

* Gender-Neutral Roles

This play is dedicated to Amanda Hayward in admiration for her strength and courage.

GIRL stands alone center stage. She looks straight out, holding her breath. After a few seconds, GIRL exhales.

GIRL: It's harder than it looks, holding your breath. It's a lot easier when you're under water. Mostly because you have to hold your breath under water. There is no choice. I think that's when we human beings do our best. When we are forced to do something and there is a time limit or a deadline. This is why a lot of people suddenly lose the ability to cope when they graduate from high school or college. They need the deadlines. They thrive on the urgency, the countdown. The increased importance of what they're doing. "This has to be done right now." I often have these dreams where I need to defuse a bomb that is deep, deep under water. I hold my breath and go, I'm assuming, hundreds of feet under the water, and I only have one chance to do it. And I get down there past the sea life, tiger sharks, sea turtles, schools of brightly-colored fish, and into the fields of casually swaying seaweed, like groupies at a concert during a slow song, just softly swaying, swaying, swaying back and forth. And then at the sand-carpeted bottom of the sea floor under a heavy rock, is a package. And when I open the package, it has a huge digital readout on it and there are always eight seconds left on it. And there are wires pouring out everywhere, rainbow-colored wires, and I don't have scissors or a knife or any tool to cut the right wire, even if I knew what the right wire was, which I never do, so I start to chew on

the red wire and right when I am about to cut through it with my incisors...I wake up.

GIRL holds her breath again. MOM enters with a wrapped item, the one described in GIRL's dream.

MOM: Camille, I got you something.

GIRL exhales quickly.

GIRL: Is it an attack bunny?

MOM: No.

GIRL: Is it a spider-monkey magician?

MOM: No.

GIRL: Is it a cure for—

MOM: (*preventing her from saying the word*) Open it!

GIRL rips off the wrapping paper revealing a video game system.

MOM: You don't need a remote control or anything. It reads and interprets your body movement or something crazy like that.

GIRL: This is a lot different than playing tic-tac-toe on stone tablets like you did as a kid.

MOM: Very funny.

GIRL: Lookie there, I had a sense of humor for a moment.

MOM: You may never hear me say this again. I want you to play this video game!

GIRL: Really, because I prefer reading books about my condition and wallowing in self-pity like an emotional pig. Thanks, Mom.

MOM hugs GIRL and exits.

GIRL: It's a nice thought. But video games, a fake world. How is that going to help me solve my problems here?

*GAMEMASTER enters standing upstage of GIRL.
GAMEMASTER can be dressed like a game show host.*

GAMEMASTER: Are you ready to play?

GIRL: I haven't even set up the game system yet.

GAMEMASTER: You live in the future. No installation necessary.

GIRL: I am not really into video games. My mom is just trying to distract me from my disease.

GAMEMASTER: That sounds very serious, little lady. But do you know what else is very serious?

GIRL: Splitting an atom.

GAMEMASTER: True. But what is really, really, very serious is *Save the Planet*.

GIRL: Sounds serious. I'm not the girl for the job.

GAMEMASTER: You're the only person here.

GIRL: My skills are weak. I'm sure someone else can make a better attempt at saving the earth.

GAMEMASTER: Please select a screen name.

GIRL: Well, my name is Camille.

GAMEMASTER: Please select a screen name.

GIRL: My name is Camille!

GAMEMASTER: Screen names should wield a certain amount of power.

GIRL: Camille is raw power.

GAMEMASTER: It sounds like a type of tea or a place where old people play shuffleboard.

GIRL: It is a bad, bad, kick-butt name.

GAMEMASTER: Please select a screen name.

GIRL: Angry Girl.

GAMEMASTER: Name already used. Please select a screen name.

GIRL: Shrieking Battle Babe 21.

GAMEMASTER: Tacky. Please select a screen name.

GIRL: Number One Gangsta.

GAMEMASTER: Trying desperately to be tough. Please select a screen name.

GIRL: Chemo Girl! Okay. Chemo Girl. That's who I am. A girl who is going through chemotherapy. (*waiting for a response from GAMEMASTER*) Yes! That's what I thought.

GAMEMASTER: Greetings, Chemo Girl. Prepare for hair, makeup, and wardrobe sequence.

The ensemble enters dressed in all black. They are going to give GIRL a complete and total makeover to prepare for the game. This can include alterations to GIRL's hairstyle and attire. If GIRL is wearing a hat, it can be removed. Music can play during this sequence as underscoring as the GAMEMASTER explains the game.

GAMEMASTER: Welcome to *Save the Planet*. In this game you will have to run, fly, and swim, punch, kick, and destroy, in order to protect the earth from the fierce army of invaders. All the movements are intuitive, so just move as you normally would.

GIRL: This is crazy. I don't even like video games.

GAMEMASTER: If by crazy you mean stunningly realistic, yet amazingly fantastic, you're welcome.

GIRL: I'll try it. But I can stop anytime I want, right?

GAMEMASTER: Most people stop to use the bathroom, or eat, or take a quick nap. But soon you will do all your life activities here. You won't need anything else.

GIRL: Yeah, I'm pretty sure I'm not going to pee in a bucket in order to not interrupt my video game playing.

GAMEMASTER: Standby for *Save the Planet*.

The ensemble moves around GIRL in a frantic way, circling her and making storm sounds.

GAMEMASTER: You are in the primordial ooze, you are part of the storm of creation, and unless you help, you will witness the earth's destruction.

GIRL: Did you write that yourself? Tacky.

GAMEMASTER: I thought it captured the moment.

Beat. The ensemble freezes in a variety of physical positions, becoming trees.

GAMEMASTER: Welcome to the Forbidden Forest.

GAMEMASTER exits. WITCH enters.

WITCH: Welcome to the forbidden forest, Chemo Girl!

GIRL: Yes, he said that already. But I'll play along. Why on earth am I here?

WITCH: You'll soon find out. I know your weakness.

GIRL: Sure you do.

WITCH: You are sick. Very sick.

GIRL: So?

WITCH: How can a sick little girl save the world?

GIRL: Apparently you don't know me.

WITCH: Oh, but I do. You can't even save yourself.

GIRL: I'm doing just fine.

WITCH: You have cancer.

GIRL: What did you say to me?

WITCH: I said, you have mustard.

GIRL: No. You said something else. You said it. How could you possibly know that?

WITCH: Beware of the trees, Chemo Girl.

The WITCH exits with a flourish.

GIRL: What a psychotic video game. Cheesy game show host? Are you there?

The trees all take one step closer to GIRL. GIRL notices this change, looking around.

GIRL: Did the trees move?

The trees spring into action, moving like martial arts foliage. GIRL springs into action. Music can play during this sequence as GIRL fights the trees. The fight sequence is clearly stylized with no real contact between the combatants. The dialogue can continue throughout the fight. You may elect to use the fight dialogue selectively or remove it entirely if the fight choreography works better without it. GIRL can also make sounds of exertion throughout.

GIRL: Here you go.

GIRL brings down a tree with a punch.

GIRL: You should branch out.

GIRL takes out two trees at the same time, one with the right hand, one with the left.

GIRL: It's hard for me to root for you.

GIRL kicks another tree.

GIRL: Time to leave this forest.

GIRL knocks one tree into another, who falls into a third.

GIRL: Okay, enough with the tree puns.

GIRL continues to fight, knocking out trees with skill and ease.

GIRL: Here you go. Boom, crack, smack. I'm making sound effects. Really? You like that? That was a rhetorical question. Well, here's some more. Hiya! Supa! What is supa? Lemonade! I must be thirsty. Crushed ice. Crush you. Pew, pew, pew! I think that was supposed to be the sound of a laser gun. I'll have to work on that.

All the trees are defeated and on the ground.

GIRL: Witch? Game show host? Mr. Game show host?

MOM: (offstage) Camille?

GIRL: Mom!

The ensemble stays in their positions on the ground. They have become verbal land mines that when triggered say phrases that are intended to unnerve and rattle GIRL. GIRL crosses to one of the downstage MINES. The MINES rise when they speak their lines and face the audience.

MINE #1: Needles that poke.

GIRL turns and another MINE triggers.

MINE #2: Colored liquids in IV bags.

GIRL moves abruptly, triggering another MINE.

MINE #3: Nausea and vomiting.

GIRL tries to run, triggering another MINE.

MINE #4: Fever, hot, hot, fever.

GIRL stays still but now the MINES are triggering themselves.

MINE #5: Chills, icy cold, icy, chills.

MINE #6: Sores. But it's dangerous if you bleed.

MINE #7: Low platelets, stay away from sharp things.

MINE #8: Sick, sick, sick.

MINE #9: Low white blood cells.

MINE #10: Thoughts of mortality.

MINE #11: Your life, hanging by a thread.

All the MINES repeat their lines as they close in on GIRL. They get very, very close.

MOM: (offstage) Fight, Camille. Fight.

GIRL makes a sound from deep within her and pushes her arms out. All of the MINES fall backwards and freeze like STATUES in a museum. GIRL is out of breath, trying to recover when MOM enters and hides behind one of the STATUES.

MOM: Camille.

GIRL: Mom?

GIRL moves in the direction of MOM's voice. MOM moves behind another STATUE.

MOM: Find the water.

GIRL: Where are you, Mom?

GIRL continues to search for MOM. MOM moves behind another statue.

MOM: Find the water and finish your dream.

GIRL: Mom, what are you talking about?

MOM: Finish your dream, Chemo Girl.

GIRL sees where MOM is hiding and runs for her but some of the STATUES come to life and block her.

MOM: *(while exiting)* Save the planet, Chemo Girl! You can save the planet.

GIRL: *(to the STATUE)* Get out of my way. I beat up a forest of ninja trees, defeated a field of disparaging land mines, so I don't think a stubborn statue is much of a challenge.

During this sequence, the STATUES can deliver their lines toward the audience.

STATUE #1: I am your postal worker.

STATUE #2: I am your peewee soccer coach.

STATUE #3: I am the lunch lady.

STATUE #4: I gave you a stuffed toy at the amusement park.

STATUE #5: I was the mall Santa Claus until...

STATUE #6: I am—

GIRL runs and hugs STATUE #6.

GIRL: Uncle Paul.

STATUE #7: I am your second grade teacher.

STATUE #8: I am that kid you always wanted to talk to but never did.

STATUE #9: You used to read books to me at the senior center.

STATUE #10: I starred in that TV show you watched as a kid.

STATUE #11: I was your roommate in the hospital.

STATUE #6: We all had cancer too.

GIRL: Uncle Paul, I love you.

STATUE #6: I love you too, Chemo Girl.

GIRL: Why are you calling me that?

STATUE #6: The water. Go to the water.

GIRL: Mom said that too.

STATUE #6: Finish your dream.

GIRL tries to grab STATUE #6 but he moves away quickly. The STATUES start to exit in all directions.

GIRL: I'm sorry! I am so sorry. I didn't know. I didn't realize what was going on, how it impacted so many people. Stay with me. We can fight this together.

GIRL tries to run and catch the STATUES but she cannot.

GIRL: Go to the water.

GAMEMASTER enters with the video game system that MOM gave GIRL at the start of the play.

GAMEMASTER: How's it going, Chemo Girl? Having a good time?

GIRL: This game is twisted. It's custom-designed for my life.

GAMEMASTER: I told you that we lived in the future. Maybe you would be happier playing with a ball of yarn or a sock puppet.

GIRL: No! I can play just fine.

GAMEMASTER: I am going to up the stakes. This is the key to the game (*referring to the package*). I am going to hide it somewhere on planet earth. Your job, Chemo Girl, is to find it before it destroys the planet.

GIRL: That is totally unreasonable.

GAMEMASTER: The game is called *Save the Planet*. If you wanted to play *Save the Jungle Gym* you should have ordered that.

GIRL: I didn't order this.

GAMEMASTER: Well, it's a little late for that. You have it and that's that.

GIRL: How much time do I have?

GAMEMASTER: No, no, no...the game asks questions that you must answer.

GIRL: Alright. I'm not afraid of you or this game or anything. Not anymore.

GAMEMASTER: Oh, but the monsters from under your bed and inside the dark shadows of your closet are not blue-fluffy-big-eyed dopes, they are crimes, and disasters, and epidemics. I know your diagnosis, Camille.

GIRL: My name is Chemo Girl!

GAMEMASTER: Good luck then, Chemo Girl.

GAMEMASTER exits. There are sounds of moaning and agony offstage. When the ensemble enters, they are all patients who are very sick. GIRL tries to go to each one and help them, but nothing she does or says helps.

PATIENT #1: Help me, I don't feel very well.

GIRL moves to PATIENT #1.

PATIENT #2: Could you help me to my bed?

GIRL moves to PATIENT #2 and starts to help.

PATIENT #3: I need a nurse.

GIRL: Nurse, nurse. Is there a nurse?

PATIENT #4: I can't find my room.

GIRL: What number is it? What floor?

GIRL tries to move to each PATIENT but cannot. She stands flustered and motionless.

PATIENT #5: I need my medicine.

PATIENT #6: Have you seen my teddy bear? He is brown and has one eye.

PATIENT #7: I want to escape. Help me escape.

PATIENT #8: I am burning up, I need ice.

PATIENT #9: I am freezing. Please get me a blanket.

PATIENT #10: Everything tastes like metal.

PATIENT #11: The package is in the water. The cure is in the water.

GIRL crosses quickly to PATIENT #11.

GIRL: What did you say?

PATIENT #11: I didn't say anything.

GIRL: But you did. The cure is in the water? Where? Where in the water? The planet is mostly water and there are big red numbers counting down. We need to find it.

MOM enters and stands in the middle of the PATIENTS.

MOM: Go to the water, Camille.

GIRL moves urgently toward her MOM.

GIRL: Why are you here with these sick people?

MOM: You know why.

GIRL: No. You're fine, you'll be okay.

MOM: You can break the cycle. You can overcome the genetic predisposition.

GIRL: You'll be fine, Mom! You're fine.

The PATIENTS start to exit, repeating their lines as they go.

MOM: I have to go.

MOM starts to exit with the others. GIRL chases after her.

GIRL: You gave me the game so I could save the planet, so that I could save you.

GIRL grabs MOM by the arm, turning her around.

GIRL: Right, Mom? So that I could save you.

MOM: So that you could save yourself.

MOM exits. The ensemble enters, and using their arms as wings, they fly around the stage.

FLYER #1: Blue Jay One, this is Blue Jay Leader. Assume attack formation.

FLYER #2: I read you loud and clear. Assuming attack formation.

The ensemble moves into a flight pattern of four FLYERS in the upstage row, three FLYERS in the row in front of that, two FLYERS in the row in front of that, and FLYER # 1 alone and furthest downstage.

FLYER #2: Target approaching.

FLYER #1: Thank you, Blue Jay One. Standby for full scale attack.

One ensemble member, not included in the formation, lags behind. GIRL talks to LAGGER.

GIRL: What is going on with these strange, militant birds?

LAGGER: Oh, another mission. This time they're going to attack Chemo Girl.

GIRL: What?

LAGGER: They are going to destroy Chemo Girl. (*noticing GIRL is not moving her arms*) You'll need to start flapping your wings if you want to keep flying.

GIRL starts to move her arms like a bird.

GIRL: I'm new at this. First-time flyer, actually.

LAGGER: Not bad, not bad at all.

GIRL: Thanks.

FLYER #2: Prepare for attack!

GIRL: Stop!

FLYER #2: Blue Jay Leader we have a problem.

FLYER #1: Blue Jay One, this had better be good.

FLYER #2: Pardon me, Miss, who are you?

GIRL: I'm Chemo Girl.

FLYER #2: Blue Jay Leader, she says—

FLYER #1: Dispense with the formality, I'm right here.

GIRL: I think you are looking for me.

FLYER #1: Affirmative. We were told you were a ground target.

GIRL: Surprise.

FLYER #1 grabs GIRL's arm and spins her around. GIRL starts to lose control.

FLYER #1: Surprise. Have a safe landing, Princess.

GIRL regains control and curves around so that she is now facing the formation.

GIRL: Nobody, and I mean nobody calls me...

GIRL hits the FLYERS' formation like a bowling ball hitting pins.

GIRL: PRINCESS!

FLYERS scatter in every direction. Cries of "mayday", "I'm going down", and other phrases indicating that the FLYERS will no longer be airborne soon are heard for several seconds. The FLYERS all exit, crash-landing offstage, leaving GIRL and LAGGER alone.

LAGGER: You're good.

GIRL: I'm determined.

LAGGER: We're coming up on the ocean.

GIRL: The ocean?

LAGGER: That's what you're looking for, right? The water.

GIRL: Yes, but just look at it. It's massive.

LAGGER: It's a tough game to win.

GIRL: You said it.

LAGGER: But you've made it this far. I think you can do it.

GAMEMASTER enters, not flapping his arms. He moves next to LAGGER.

GAMEMASTER: (to LAGGER) You talk too much.

LAGGER: Oh.

GAMEMASTER: So you know what happens next?

LAGGER: Please, no.

GAMEMASTER: Loose lips sink ships. What once was a flyer is now a fish.

LAGGER turns into a fish-person and stops moving his arms and begins to veer offstage. GIRL moves to save LAGGER but is held back by GAMEMASTER.

GAMEMASTER: He'll be happier down there. And now the only question left is can you save the planet?

GIRL: But that's not the real question. It never has been.

GAMEMASTER: What is the real question then?

GIRL: Do I have the courage and determination to overcome my disease?

GAMEMASTER: You can't even say it.

GIRL: Cancer, alright. I have to save myself. Not planet earth. This has always been about cancer.

GAMEMASTER: You're so right. But will you find it in time?

GAMEMASTER exits. GIRL moves her arms less and less until she is standing on the ground. MOM enters.

MOM: Go to the water.

GIRL: Mom, you're alive.

MOM: I am a part of this, which is made up of memories and fantasies and your reactions to the treatment.

GIRL: That would explain the flying.

MOM: You can do this. Go to the water.

GIRL: But there is so much of it.

MOM: You know where to go. This is your dream. “Hundreds of feet under the water, down there past the sea life, tiger sharks, sea turtles, schools of brightly-colored fish, and into the fields of casually swaying seaweed, like groupies at a concert during a slow song, just softly swaying, swaying, swaying back and forth. And then at the sand-carpeted bottom of the sea floor under a heavy rock...there it is.”

GIRL: How did you know?

MOM: I love you, Camille.

GIRL: I love you too, Mom. Don't go.

MOM: I have been gone for a long while. This just shows how strong you really are. You brought me here. Thank you, Camille, thank you for letting me help you.

GIRL stands looking at the water.

GIRL: Here it is. The water.

The members of the ensemble enter as a storm. Each actor takes on a different element of the storm. The rain, wind, thunder, lightning, hail, cold, etc. can be repeated by the actors and they can alternate the words with storm sound effects. GIRL and MOM are trapped in the middle of the storm. It continues around them as the dialogue continues.

MOM: Camille, you have to go in now.

GIRL: Come with me. I need you.

MOM: This is not my fight. I had my fight.

GIRL: You can fight again.

MOM: No.

The storm surrounds MOM and takes her offstage. GIRL tries to pull her away from the storm but it is too strong. A member of the storm leaves the video game



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