

*INSTINCTS*

by Erin Pollack

05/06/2020

*Inspired by true events.*

**CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)**

PASTOR - (late 50s) Pastor of Fredericksburg Catholic Church.

LIZA - (21/44) Mysteriously murders her roommate.

ANA/OLDER ANA - (21/44) Believes drugs drove Liza to murder.

BRITTANY - (21) Chooses religion about her friend.

TRUTH - (21/44) Lesbian, psychology major, believes everything is driven by science.

PROFESSOR DOULGAS - (mid 40s) Truth's psychology professor.

BRITTANY'S MOM

AUTOMATED MESSAGE

RECEPTIONIST

NEWS REPORTER #1

SHERIFF

NEWS REPORTER #2

CLAIRE'S FATHER - (mid 40s) Father of Claire, the girl Liza murdered.

COP #1

COP #2

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1

WILLIAM - (early 60s) Liza's head lawyer.

BAILIFF

JUDGE GOLDSTEIN - (early 40s) Judge at Liza's preliminary hearing.

CHRIS - (mid 40s) District Attorney of Fredericksburg, Texas.

LIZA'S MOM - (late 60s)

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #2

RUE - (mid 30s) Truth's girlfriend.

JUDITH - (mid 70s) Inmate in prison, Liza's mother figure. She has early onset Alzheimer's.

VICK - (early 30s) Inmate in prison with Liza. She's tough, but has a kind heart.

JORDAN - (late 40s) Ana's husband.

## **SUGGESTED CASTING**

ANA/OLDER ANA

LIZA

BRITTANY/VICK

TRUTH

BRITTANY'S MOM/NEWS REPORTER #1/AUTOMATED MESSAGE

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS/ LIZA'S MOM/ JUDITH

RECEPTIONIST/NEWS REPORTER #2/JUDGE GOLDSTEIN/RUE

PASTOR/WILLIAM/JORDAN

COP #1/CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1/BAILIFF, SHERIFF

COP #2/CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #2/CLAIRE'S FATHER/CHRIS

## **PLACE & TIME**

Small, rural town called Fredericksburg, Texas. Population is a little over 11,000. Small, hot, and dangerous energy. Religion is heavily emphasized. 2016.

## **PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE**

/ equals an overlap in dialogue.

Act Two takes place 23 years after Act One.

The cast must not include any cis-men.

Suggested casting is merely suggested, however the ensemble may be no more than 12 performers.

Catholicism is not meant to be mocked or criticized by this play, the intention is to reveal the commitment to organized religion.

We know what goes in prison, but what comes out of it? This story explores the equal humanity shared between the incarcerated world and the "real world".

*"Can you remember something horrible you did to a friend, family member, or even stranger five years ago? What about ten years ago? Fifteen, even? It was so long ago you would probably agree that you've grown from that moment, that you're a different person now. I mean, it was so long ago, don't you think? Incarcerated people don't get the opportunity to feel like a different person. Incarcerated inmates are told they are that person until their time is up. Imagine not being able to let go of that horrible thing for twenty years. That horrible incident, accident, mistake, whatever it was, sucking humanity out of you like a tick. That one incident defining who you are for a quarter of your life time. Is there anything really that bad? There are people in those prisons who need to be helped, not punished. People who want to change, people who didn't mean to do what they did, who are forced to sacrifice their life for a fucked up ideology of justice? I would never ask for that kind of justice."*

-Ana, Act Two

act one  
scene one

*A dark stage.*

ALL

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

*Lights up on churchgoers, all dressed in warm and formal clothing. Their heads are still bowed in prayer with their eyes closed. OLDER ANA enters downstage left to a small loveseat. She speaks to the audience like they're her psychologist.*

OLDER ANA

Hi, I'm sorry I'm late.

I'm okay.. I mean, I'm starting to feel bad again. As if bad ever left. Hm. I saw on a TV show and, that someone asked, have you ever had something happen that changed you in your soul? I know that sounds cheesy, but truly something that shifted your soul's purpose, intention, and made you feel like a completely different person. That's how I feel. How I've felt, for, shoot, twenty three years now.

*In the church..*

PASTOR

Thank you all for joining us on this beautiful, bountiful Sunday morning. I feel Jesus's love in all of you, and with Him, we find our sanctuary.

ALL

Amen.

PASTOR

I would like to begin this service with two very different quotes.. Beginning with Ephesians 4:31-32.

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. During this time of year, the holidays, different kinds of celebrations, we begin to question who is worthy of our generosity. Why question, when we could just give?

ALL (*improvised*)

Mmm, mhmmm, Amen. Yes.

PASTOR

Why must we remind ourselves of old, frail hostility in order to filter through our love? The love that He, the Lord blessed us with upon our birth? Why must we deny the Lord, love to His children, as well as our family?

ALL

Amen.

*In therapy..*

OLDER ANA

Time is supposed to heal everything but it can't when I'm stuck in that day.. That event. My kids are starting to notice how different I am. They always ask me if I want ice cream after dinner, I hide my tears from them and say no, but then they ask for ice cream and I let them sit with me, hold me. It's sad I'm so fucked up my children have to hold me for comfort. My husband, he just, fucking drowns me out. He wants nothing to do with it. He doesn't know why I'm not over it. Next week she's released, and I don't know if I'm ready to confront the reality again. Her brother called me yesterday, and he told me that.. their mom died. So she now has no one to pick her up from prison. No one to help her back into the real world. Her brother said he's not talking to her still, so it feels like my responsibility to fix this.

PASTOR

The closing verse I would like to conclude our morning with comes from Matthew 6:14-15.

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

I hold these two verses together because.. well.

*Pause. The churchgoers laugh.*

PASTOR

What I want to emphasize this season is coming together. Whether we love through Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, we must uphold our Lord's expectations to love without resentment. To forgive those whose sins have impacted our beings, our energies, in ways we can't completely comprehend or explain. What's most important this season is repent our sins through forgiveness, kindness, and love. And He, the Lord, will show us the guiding light towards our ultimate destiny and warmth. He will love us in times where we don't always feel loved.

OLDER ANA

I've spent twenty three years running circles in my head as to how this happened, what happened, and why such evil in the world exists. You ever wonder that? Why evil exists. People say everything happens for a reason, but that's fucking bullshit.

*At the church..*

PASTOR

Thank you all for coming this morning, and I hope we've set you on a path to a bountiful day, bountiful week, and blessed holiday. Before we leave, I just want to welcome home our children of the church, Liza and Brittany. They have returned home from their educational studies to celebrate our community's love and warmth this holiday. Be sure to share gratitude with them, or hug them on the way out. Girls, would you please join me up here for a moment.

*LIZA and BRITTANY join PASTOR at his podium.*

PASTOR

Hail Mary..

LIZA / BRITTANY

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

*PASTOR makes the holy trinity on BRITTANY.*

LIZA / BRITTANY

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

BRITTANY

Thank you, Father. Bless you.

*BRITTANY bows her head and returns to her seat.*

OLDER ANA

There's no reason why children are shot to death in school shootings.

LIZA

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit

of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death,  
Amen.

OLDER ANA

There's no reason why natural disasters kill thousands of people.

LIZA

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit  
of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death,  
Amen.

OLDER ANA

There's no reason why such hate exists in the world where someone would wish another dead. I mean.  
That's not what I meant to say.

*PASTOR marks the holy trinity on LIZA.*

LIZA

Thank you, Father, Bless you.

*LIZA bows her head and returns to her seat.*

OLDER ANA

I just, I just, I know she never wished for this to happen, but how else could she have done that? Do we  
bury things so deep in our mind that when we lose control that box opens up and we follow it? Do we  
have deep desires we bury with shame like sand?

ALL

In the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

PASTOR

Thank you, and God Bless you.

*Lights fade on the church.*

OLDER ANA

I think I want to increase the dosage of my medicine, just in case.  
I don't know how I'll react when I see Liza.

*Lights fade on OLDER ANA.*

**scene two**

*Lights up in ANA's basement. The couch is stained and the air smells like must and weed. TRUTH and BRITTANY play Mario Kart while ANA and LIZA roll a blunt. They're all drinking Heineken bottles with A\$AP Rocky playing off of a small bluetooth speaker.*

LIZA

You wanna share why you didn't join the service tonight? Hm?

ANA

I told my parents..

*Pause. ANA chuckles.*

ANA

I told my parents I started my period and my cramps are, like, really really bad.

LIZA

Are you actually on your period?

ANA

Nope, I had it last week.

*LIZA laughs.*

LIZA *(jokingly)*

You're going to hell! Skipping out on church service.

ANA *(sarcastically)*

The guilt is consuming me, it really is.

LIZA

I know it must be so hard being such a sinner.

ANA

I can't help it, it's in my instincts, I'm a natural-born sinner.

LIZA

Hail Mary..

*ANA laughs and shoves her shoulder*

ANA

Shut up, I never wanna hear that shit again! And stop making me laugh, I'm gonna fuck up the blunt.



LIZA

I'm proud of you for trying.

ANA

Sorry I'm not an olympic gold medalist.

*LIZA eyeballs ANA as she struggles to roll it.*

LIZA

Baby, baby, baby, give it here please.

*ANA gives her an annoyed look.*

LIZA

I know you can do it, I'm just getting the itches waiting for you to finish.

*BRITTANY shrieks at the TV.*

BRITTANY

Oh my god, / oh my god,  
oh my god.

TRUTH

Chill, chill, / hold up,  
I got this..

BRITTANY

AAAH  
I'm so close!! /  
FUCK fuck fuck

TRUTH

COME ON BABY, / COME ON BABY

BRITTANY

OOOOHHHHH!!  
GOD damn it.

*BRITTANY throws her remote on the ground.*

ANA

Yo, Brittany / do you want to buy me a new one?

TRUTH

/ Yeaahhhh!!!

BRITTANY

Hm.

ANA

Then stop throwing it around like that. And be quiet or else you'll wake up my parents.

BRITTANY

Truth fucking beat me again! There's no point in playing against you.

TRUTH

Oh come on,

It's about the fun of the sport!

BRITTANY

Bull. Shit.

*BRITTANY finishes the rest of her beer.*

LIZA

Jeezz, Brit, chill.

BRITTANY

I'm / tight.

LIZA

Yeah, yeah, we get it but chill out.

I'm rolling this blunt right now, so

Everything is gonna be fine.

TRUTH

Exactly, Brit!

*Pause.*

BRITTANY

One more game.

TRUTH

You sure!? Don't want you to have a heart attack.

BRITTANY

We're doing Rainbow Road.

TRUTH

Phew, yes, ma'am.

*They put the game back on TV.*

LIZA

God, I can't tell if Brittany is starting to become the mean one. I never thought someone could beat Truth in that category.

ANA

Nah, Truth has way more attitude.

LIZA

Not these days.

*Pause.*

ANA

I don't think so.

LIZA

Mhmm.

*Pause.*

LIZA

Is there some.. tension?

ANA

What, no? I like her.

LIZA

Hm.

ANA

Okay, well, it's just. I don't know. She's really lazy, she's still here.

LIZA

She's still in community college, Ana. It's not fair to judge her because she's not at a university.

ANA

You're right, but it's not just that.

LIZA

Well, what is it then?

ANA

She just. I don't know. Seems weak, I guess. Like she could snap.

LIZA

She's our friend. Pull the bug out of your ass.

TRUTH *(still playing the game)*

Is that a spliff?

LIZA

No way, go back to high school.

TRUTH

Oh my god, I was just wondering!

LIZA

I'm just fucking with you!

*LIZA looks to ANA who is staring off into space.*

LIZA

What's wrong?

ANA

Nothing. Just.

LIZA

Ana, are you fucking high?

ANA

No, no, it's not that.

I'm out of it.

LIZA

Why are you out of it?

ANA

Not cuz of coke. I just got the usual shit going on at home.

LIZA

Well, good.

*ANA shoots her a look.*

LIZA

Not that. I mean. That shit will fuck up your brain, like long term. You're too smart to be a junkie.

ANA

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know. Thanks.

BRITTANY

Fuck! That turn is so fucking hard!

TRUTH

Slow down, Brittany!

Slow and steady wins the race, baby.

*TRUTH sticks her tongue out with her fingers on either side of her mouth.*

BRITTANY

Ew! We get it.

TRUTH

Just saying, honey.

It goes both ways.

ANA

Oh, real hot, Truth.

TRUTH

Shut up, Boomer.

ANA

OH my..

Whatever.

LIZA

Ana, you gotta relax. Nothing good ever happens to people who are fucking / pressed all of the time.

ANA  
I know Liza, thanks.

*Pause.*

ANA  
Sorry.  
I don't like being a bitch.

LIZA  
You're not a bitch.

*LIZA dries the blunt with her lighter.*

LIZA  
Now smoke this blunt with me.

*LIZA stands up and unplugs the TV.*

BRITTANY  
Liza, / what the fuck!?

TRUTH  
YOOOO!!!

LIZA  
Get your asses outside and smoke this blunt.

TRUTH  
Ugh, I love you.

LIZA  
I love smoking my ladies up.

BRITTANY  
I could use some weed, I think.  
I feel.. tense.

TRUTH  
*(sarcastically)*  
No, really?

*LIZA and TRUTH laugh. ANA puts on her jacket.*

BRITTANY

Shut up!

*Pause.*

BRITTANY

Guys, it's sooo cold out.

*Pause.*

LIZA

And?

BRITTANY

I don't think I can do it.

ANA

Take something from my closet, Brittany.

You can grab that blue Nike sweatshirt from the top shelf in my closet.

BRITTANY

Thank you, but I just don't feel like smoking tonight.

Liza.

LIZA

Whatever, alright. Pussy.

BRITTANY

UGH! You don't let up.

LIZA

It's my last night home, I wanted to smoke with you!

BRITTANY

OKAY! Fine, put the guilting away I will come.

*BRITTANY exits to grab a sweatshirt.*

ANA

Do you have to go tomorrow?

LIZA

Absolutely, Claire is taking me to some bar that her, like, uncle owns or something with free booze. I

mean, free fucking liquor on New Year's Eve!? I invited you guys.

BRITTANY

Claire is your roommate, right?

LIZA

Yes, and she's the best. She keeps me sane at school. You guys should come visit so you can meet her!  
She's really sweet.

ANA

I think I can live without visiting your college again.

LIZA

Ugh, fine.

It's really not that bad / though.

ANA

It's that bad.

TRUTH

Yeah, girl, it's just too sketch.

Don't commit too much of yourself to those people, ya know?

LIZA

I know guys you tell me all of the time,  
but they're actually really good people.

ANA

If you trust them, I mean, fine.

TRUTH

If you're happy.

LIZA

I am, thank you.

*BRITTANY enters wearing a tight blue Nike sweatshirt.*

BRITTANY

Bitch, it's SMALL!

ANA

It is on me too, it's because the inside is so warm.



BRITTANY

I guess, but I'm not that amazed by it.

LIZA

Blah, blah, blah. Let's go.

*They put on their shoes by the basement door.*

ANA

I'm gonna miss this, guys.  
It's hard being without you.

LIZA

I know, ugh. Maybe we can meet at someone's school in February?  
After everyone is settled?

TRUTH

I love that idea.  
Get me out of community college.

LIZA

Hey, stop that.

TRUTH

Okay, but I hate being HERE.

ANA

Valentine's Day, let's all come to my school and like, get a cheap Airbnb nearby.

TRUTH

Hell, yes!

BRITTANY

Yes!!

LIZA

Deal.

*LIZA kisses ANA on the cheek.*

LIZA

Here's to the last blunt of winter break, between all four of us at least.

*LIZA holds up the blunt and exits out the basement door. The three girls follow. Lights fade.*

**scene three**

*A lecture hall. PROFESSOR DOUGLAS gives a lecture to a sluggish classroom.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Child abuse. Rape. Sexual assault. Brutal physical attack. Being in a war and witnessing violence, bloodshed, and death from close quarters. Near death experiences. These are extremely traumatic events, and some victims / hold the scars for life. Physical and emotional.

*TRUTH enters.*

TRUTH

Sorry, I'm late, sorry.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Glad you could join us today, Truth.

Can you summarize what I just said to the class?

*TRUTH takes a seat, a little out of breath.*

TRUTH

Uhh..

No. I wasn't in the room when you were talking.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Oh, yes, because you were / late.

TRUTH

Late, yeah, I know.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Oh, so you can't repeat what I already said but you can read my mind?

TRUTH

Yes, because I'm always late, I'm sorry!

*The class looks at TRUTH. She opens her notebook and puts the hood on her sweatshirt up.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Anyways, as I was saying. Trauma. The physical scars heal, but some emotional scars can nearly stop the lives of these people dead in their tracks. Age, gender, that doesn't matter. Whomever is the victim of

trauma, they are afraid to get close to people or form new relationships. Change terrifies them, and they remain, in some cases, forever hesitant to express their needs or desire to meet their goals and potential. It causes damage on the psyche, and changes how someone may view themselves. And it may not be always apparent, but post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, pulls the life force out of its victims. There is no use telling them to “get over” it because PTSD fundamentally changes the brain’s structure and alters its functionalities. Most people with PTSD don’t realize they have it, because the stigma remains it’s only veterans who are diagnosed with this. Which is not the case at all, in fact, some may have PTSD and go their entire lives without being diagnosed, simply because they don’t know their way of thinking is not normal.

Now, open your textbooks to page 41 and please answer one through thirteen.

*The classroom focuses on their textbooks, meanwhile.. Lights up on BRITTANY, as she’s walking home from class. Her phone rings, she looks at who’s calling.*

BRITTANY

Jesus, fuck-

*(answering in a sweet voice)*

Hello?

BRITTANY’S MOM *(v/o)*

Hi sweetie..

How are you?

BRITTANY

Fine.

BRITTANY’S MOM *(v/o)*

Great.

*An awkward pause. BRITTANY makes an annoyed face.*

BRITTANY’S MOM *(v/o)*

Have you heard any/thing  
about your friend?

BRITTANY

*(quickly to answer)*

Nope, no, I haven’t.

Stop asking.

BRITTANY’S MOM *(v/o)*

Oh.

Alright. Huh.

BRITTANY

What?

BRITTANY'S MOM (v/o)

Nothing.

BRITTANY

No, say it, Mom. I want to hear / what you have to say that you brush off every time we've spoken on the phone since January.

BRITTANY'S MOM (v/o)

Nothing, sweetie. I was just thinking about the..  
circumstances.

*Pause. PROFESSOR DOUGLAS writes homework on the board in her classroom.*

BRITTANY'S MOM (v/o)

I should go.

BRITTANY

Yeah.

BRITTANY'S MOM (v/o)

I'm sorry, sweetie.

BRITTANY

Thanks. Me too.

Love you.

*BRITTANY hangs up the phone and continues walking. Lights dim on BRITTANY.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Okay, everyone, homework is on the board.

Don't forget there's a chapter quiz next class.

*Students pack up and exit. TRUTH stays behind in her seat as everyone else leaves.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Can I help you with something, Truth?

TRUTH

You don't have to talk to me like that, you know.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Well,

I think your classmates think I just give you good grades.

TRUTH

That's cute.

*Pause.*

TRUTH

I'm not stupid, you know.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

I know.

TRUTH

Well, I mean, I'm book smart and street smart too. / Even though I'm not treated like it half of the time.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

I never / questioned that.

TRUTH

I know you probably think otherwise, but I'm not. I work almost forty hours a week now, and I pay for college myself. and my shitty phone, and my car insurance. Just because I'm not economically leveled out with the rest of the class, doesn't mean I'm not smart.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

To tell you the truth, Truth, /

TRUTH

Ha, funny. /

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

I just think you're late too often. I never thought you weren't smart.

TRUTH

Then why do you talk to me like that?

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Because I have high standards for my students. I care about my job. I want you to grow.

*Lights up on OLDER ANA, entering her therapist's office. She's quiet, she takes off her coat, looking at her feet the whole time. She kicks her shoes off and sits on a loveseat with her feet propped off. She faces the audience and shrugs. She speaks to the audience like they're her psychologist.*

TRUTH

We never stop growing, no matter how old we are.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Technically our brains / stop growing at 25.

OLDER ANA

Hi.

*OLDER ANA twiddles with her thumbs and doesn't talk, looking around the room.*

TRUTH

Yeah, but, like, but do we really?

I mean, circumstances that can.. change you, no matter what that change is, causes you to grow differently. we don't reach a baseline of who we are, ever, / so why do we-

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

You don't need to prove to me you're not stupid, I know you're smart.

*Pause.*

TRUTH

Whatever.

I thought your lecture today was interesting.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Thanks? Are my lectures usually not interesting?

TRUTH

I mean.. you know.

Today hit home.

*Pause.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Have you heard from your friend?

TRUTH

No. I can write to her now though. I just.. haven't.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Why's that?

TRUTH

Because.. /

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Trick question.

Never explain yourself to anyone.

TRUTH

I know, you tell me all of the time

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Because I want you to break this habit, Truth. It's not healthy to make an excuse to not conform to someone else's reality. Just keep to your own.

TRUTH

Yeah.

I know.

Ugh.

OLDER ANA

Talking today is hard.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Are you feeling conflicted about writing her a letter?

*TRUTH nods.*

OLDER ANA

It's scary to think how much a person can change by the emotional and mental damage done to them. I wonder if I'm still talking to my friend, sometimes. I wonder if her brain is literally so completely different, if, if, if you were to compare MRI scans of her brain now and MRI scans from before, it would just be completely.. one would look like a butterfly and the other would probably just look like a potato.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Is something stopping you?

*Pause.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

You don't owe me an explanation, but if there's a puzzle trying to piece itself together in your head, you

can tell me about it so I can help you.

If you want it.

And speaking as someone with two Master's degrees. I...

Definitely recommend it.

TRUTH

Ha, thanks.

yeah.

I dunno.

I guess I just-

If I write a letter, I'm accepting the situation,

and I haven't fully accepted it yet.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

It's not about accepting it, Truth. It happened and you can't change it.

you..

you accept something when you're given a choice, control.

you don't have a choice. You have to have already accepted it, even if you don't think so.

you haven't processed the magnitude its echoed into your body.

OLDER ANA

How can something that we don't even see, but we feel, that ripples into our lives so painfully..

Are grief and death synonymous? Could they be the same thing? I mean, if you think about it, my best friend who is in prison feels dead to me because sometimes I don't know the girl I'm talking to. I've ignored her calls for months now, and I don't know why. I mean some days my heart literally aches with pain.. But I wasn't stabbed in the chest, nothing is pressing down on my chest making it hard to breath sometimes, but it still feels like cement is tightening around my upper body, and sometimes I feel like I have three brain cells left. I don't want to move at all..

TRUTH

Yeah.

You're right.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

I'm not right. There's no option here. Sometimes it helps to look at things scientifically,

The fact of the matter, ya know? Take off your emotional lens.

*Pause. PROFESSOR DOUGLAS packs up items on her desk into her work bag.*

TRUTH

God you're fucking smart.



PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Thanks. I gotta get home before my husband starves.

*Pause.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

We're strong. We fight more battles than we can count, because we've been through so many we forgot to count.

*Pause.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Bye Truth. Text me if you need anything.

TRUTH

Thanks, Professor.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Don't call me that.

*She walks towards the door with her packed bag.*

TRUTH

Cora?

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Yes?

TRUTH

Scientifically.. Psychologically,

How..

How do I know if I'm gay?

*Pause.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Well, I think you would know by now.

TRUTH

What if I thought I was bi, and now I think I'm just.. gay?

*A long pause.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

You keep it to yourself until you move out of the fucking state.

*Pause.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Didn't you grow up Catholic?

*Pause.*

TRUTH

Yeah.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Family Catholic?

TRUTH

Yeah.

*Pause.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

*(whispering)*

You have every right to be yourself. But you know how it is.. Around here. Keep your head low. No secret partners or affairs, no nothing.

TRUTH

Okay.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

No science to it.

TRUTH

Okay.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

And watch some porn to take the edge off. That's an easier sin to forgive.

TRUTH

Thanks.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Anytime. Bye, Truth.

*Lights fade in the classroom.*

OLDER ANA

And then I look up what psychosis is, and signs that it could be happening, or is about to happen, I'm always so fearful of snapping, now. I put so much stress on myself trying to relax, isn't that.. I just feel like it.. This is the kind of thing that truly changes someone in their soul. You can change the body, you can change the mind, you can change hair, clothes, you put on makeup and change all of these little things.. but to literally have to acknowledge your soul like that, it goes deep. We don't think about our souls, they just exist and we live in them, but to be awakened and put in front of yourself like that.. it causes just as much damage to my brain.

*Lights fade on OLDER ANA.*

AUTOMATED MESSAGE (v/o)

9-1-1, what's your emergency?

...

9-1-1, what's your emergency?

...

9-1-1, what's your emergency?

...

9-1-1, what's your emergency?

*The stage fades to black. The stage is black for at least a minute, falling into silence.*

#### **scene four**

*Lights up. BRITTANY walks with her phone to her ear.*

BRITTANY

Mom, I don't think-

BRITTANY'S MOM

Brittany, I just got off the phone with Grammy and she says you need to go to the counseling / center at your school right now.

BRITTANY

Mom / I'm not gonna-

BRITTANY'S MOM

Right now, Brittany! Or I'll call them myself!

BRITTANY

OKAY, fine!

*BRITTANY hangs up her phone and walks offstage. Lights up on PROFESSOR DOUGLAS's class  
TRUTH sits in her seat with her head down, not taking any notes.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

The most significant neurological impact of trauma is seen in the hippocampus, now write that down. PTSD patients show a considerable reduction in the volume of the hippocampus. This region of the brain is responsible for memory functions. It helps an individual to record new memories and retrieve them later in response to specific and relevant environmental stimuli.

*BRITTANY enters a counseling services lobby.*

BRITTANY

Hi,

Um,

Can I make an appointment for today?

RECEPTIONIST

Is it an emergency?

BRITTANY

Um..

*Awkward pause. She nods.*

RECEPTIONIST

Come with me.

*The receptionist takes BRITTANY into another room. She holds a clipboard.*

RECEPTIONIST

Here, have a cookie. There's juice boxes in that mini fridge.

BRITTANY

Thanks.

RECEPTIONIST

Are you feeling suicidal?

BRITTANY

No.

RECEPTIONIST

Have you been sexually assaulted?

BRITTANY

No.

RECEPTIONIST

Was someone you know sexually assaulted?

BRITTANY

No.

RECEPTIONIST

Do you feel like harming yourself?

BRITTANY

No.

RECEPTIONIST

Do you feel like harming somebody else?

BRITTANY

No.

RECEPTIONIST

Are you having a panic attack?

BRITTANY

Um, no.

RECEPTIONIST

Is someone you know planning on hurting somebody else?

BRITTANY

No.

RECEPTIONIST

Did you recently go through a break-up?

BRITTANY

No.

RECEPTIONIST

Are you having thoughts of suicide?

BRITTANY  
You said that already.

RECEPTIONIST  
I like to be thorough.  
What's going on?

BRITTANY  
Um..

*BRITTANY gestures to the clipboard. She hands it to her. She writes something down and hands it back to her. The RECEPTIONIST reads it and makes an appalled face and leaves the room quickly.*

BRITTANY  
Yeah, there it is.

*In the classroom..*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS  
The hippocampus also helps us distinguish between past and present memories. PTSD patients with reduced hippocampal volume lose the ability to discriminate between past and present experiences or correctly interpret environmental contexts. The particular neural mechanisms involved trigger extreme stress responses when confronted with environmental situations that only remotely resemble something from their traumatic past. For example, this is why a sexual assault victim may be terrified of parking lots because she was once raped in a similar place. Or a war veteran cannot watch violent movies because they remind them of his trench days; their hippocampus cannot minimize the interference of past memories.

*Pause. PROFESSOR DOUGLAS notices TRUTH's gloominess.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS  
I'll have your essays graded by next class. Great work today, guys. Let's end class early.

*The class packs up. TRUTH sits still in her seat. BRITTANY waits in the room silently. The RECEPTIONIST pokes their head into the room gently and delicately, as if scared to set off a bomb.*

RECEPTIONIST  
Hi.. Brittany.. Catherine is ready to see you, if you're ready. Whenever, you're ready.

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS  
Truth?

*TRUTH stands up.*

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS

Truth.

*PROFESSOR DOUGLAS approaches TRUTH. TRUTH begins to sob and falls into PROFESSOR DOUGLAS's arms.*

BRITTANY

You don't have to look at me like you're scared of me. I'm just as scared as you are.

**scene five**

*Projection of news reports overlapping projections of LIZA walking into a mugshot. She is hysterically sobbing, she sucks her lips in, a camera flashes and the image rewinds. There is blood on her face and white shirt.*

NEWS REPORTER #1 (v/o)

On January 7, 2016 at 4:45AM Fredericksburg Police Department was dispatched to the 1200 block of Hickman Street in reference to a 911 call. Upon arrival officers located a deceased female with multiple stab wounds, identified as Claire Martin. After an investigation, officers have made an arrest in this incident. 21-year-old Liza Brown has been charged with violating Texas code 19.02, murder in the second degree. /

...

Murder in the second degree.

Murder in the second degree.

Murder in the second degree.

SHERIFF (v/o)

I can tell you, there were a lot of stab /wounds.

We have notified next of kin and can release the name of the victim. / The victim is Claire Martin, a fellow student at the university.

NEWS REPORTER #2 (v/o)

The coroner has confirmed that Claire Martin suffered more than forty to fifty stab wounds, and according to a search warrant when officers arrived there was a butcher knife / sticking out of the victim's mouth.

NEWS REPORTER #1 (v/o)

Search warrants reveal more gruesome details in the Fredericksburg murder that happened this week, the murder weapon was retrieved from the victim, Claire Martin, search warrants states the butcher knife was sticking out of her mouth. /

SHERIFF (v/o)

When we got to the door she opened it, put her hands behind her back, and uttered the words "Arrest me, I killed her." / According to the lease the two were roommates.

NEWS REPORTER #2 (v/o)

There will be a public memorial service to anyone who would like to attend at the Fredericksburg community center. /

NEWS REPORTER #1 (v/o)

A public memorial service will be held tomorrow evening at six in the Fredericksburg community center for those who would like to honor Claire's life.

SHERIFF (v/o)

Nobody was expecting something like this. And a motive is completely unclear, but it is under investigation. Thank you for your time.

*A gentle spotlight on ANA on her knees. Two unforeseen figures are running around the stage.*

AUTOMATED MESSAGE (v/o)

9-1-1 what's your emergency?

LIZA

*(screaming)*

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

*Silence. ANA still kneels in prayer. Spotlight on BRITTANY, who sits downstage on her knees praying. Spotlight on TRUTH, who sits downstage on her knees, eyes wide open unable to pray. Lights out.*

ANA & BRITTANY

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

*Lights fade on ANA & BRITTANY. TRUTH sits on her knees, speechless. She stands up and exits the spotlight. Blackout.*

**scene six**



*One by one, candles are lit by university students, all wearing winter clothes.*

PASTOR

Thank you everyone for coming. Thank you so much. Thank you to Claire's friends who have shared memories of her this evening. Thank you. Now, Claire's father would like to share a few words.

*Some people cry. A photo of CLAIRE hung on an easel. Silence. CLAIRE's FATHER, also wearing winter clothes, stands next to the photo.*

CLAIRE'S FATHER

Thank you all for coming, this evening. Thank you for your strength, thank you for sharing your spirits through song.. I never thought.. I never thought these are words I would be saying at my daughter's memorial service.. I've never thought about those words. But.. no energy can be created nor destroyed. Nothing is wrong if it comes from love. These are our family's highest beliefs. Claire is not to be remembered by her death, but how she lived and her future ambitions and dreams that will not die with her. This is the energy she leaves behind. We believe in the Butterfly Effect, and we believe that's what is happening here. There is no rhyme or reason as to how this tragedy occurred, but something small happened in a different state which echoed its way into our own lives. In many different ways, scientific and not. We are not to forget to take care of others, ourselves, and hold our loved ones close every single day. To never hold someone you love again is a tragedy, and it almost feels shameful to be so dependent on those moments to heal, but that's life. And in life with love, grow, shape, change, and forgive. We will move forward, even with a forever void in our family, we will continue to grow, love, and forgive. Thank you.

PASTOR

Thank you, Mr. Martin. Such beautiful and kind words. Claire's memory, energy, and life will never be forgotten and it remains with us everyday. We would like to invite all of you to bow our heads for a moment of silence to pray for Claire and her family and friends. Mr. and Mrs. Martin also wish to pray for Liza and her family, as they said, nothing can be wrong if it comes from love.

*The university students hold out their candles. A minute of silence.*

PASTOR

Hail Mary..

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.  
Amen.

LIZA (o/s)

*(screaming)*

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

*The students get into a formation and begin to march together through the audience, candles still lit.*

**scene seven**

*Lights up on ANA as she sleeps in her bed. Two cops are seen walking a woman in handcuffs (LIZA) through the stage, clothes covered in blood, with a bag on her head.*

LIZA

*(quickly speaking, stuttering)*

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

*LIZA starts to shake and tremble and scream. COP #1 stops and shakes her.*

COP #1

SHUT THE FUCK UP. /

COP #2

Jeez, what did this bitch take!?

*COP #1 and COP #2 struggle to walk with LIZA as she starts having body spasms. She shoves her head around. ANA tosses and turns in her sleep. A gavel strikes twice and ANA sits up in bed, breathing heavily. ANA watches the nightmare in front of her.*

COP #1

Doesn't matter what she took, keep her calm and still, before she stabs us to death too.

ANA

She wouldn't, she didn't / mean to.

COP #2

Is she having a seizure?

COP #1

No, she's just off her shit.

LIZA

ANA!!

ANA. /

Ana, help me please.

ANA

Liza, oh my god.

LIZA

Ana, I'm so sorry,

I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry.

I'm so, so, sorry.

It was an accident, Ana!

*COP #1 hits her with a baton, LIZA falls. She starts laughing uncontrollably.*

COP #2

What / the hell!?

ANA

*(through tears)*

No, no! What the fuck..

LIZA

Just dance, Ana, everything will be okay if you just dance. I love my Jesus. Don't tell anyone but I've done cocaine with the devil. He likes me, we're friends. But, I. I..

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, / pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

Amen.

COP #1

Get her out of here, she needs to go to a hospital, now.

COP #2

But Chris said-

COP #1

Fuck Chris, this girl's in dark and she's gonna kill us.

*LIZA is escorted offstage with aggression. ANA screams into her pillow. Lights fade.*

**scene eight**

*BRITTANY sits in a pew at church. She stares forward at the audience. A minute of silence. PASTOR enters.*

PASTOR  
Brittany?

*Pause.*

BRITTANY  
Hi, Father.

PASTOR  
What are you doing here? Shouldn't you be at college?

*Pause.*

BRITTANY  
*(voice cracking)*  
I really needed to come home.

PASTOR  
Oh, sweetheart.

*PASTOR sits next to BRITTANY.*

PASTOR  
I can't imagine how painful this is for you.

*Pause.*

BRITTANY  
Yeah.  
Did you know Liza was chanting Hail Mary all night?  
Her parents told me.

PASTOR  
Wow.

BRITTANY  
I used to feel so safe when I prayed..  
Now I feel like.. I'm asking to be haunted.

PASTOR

I understand.

I'm so sorry your emotions are so mixed up.

BRITTANY

I'm scared.

PASTOR

Of?

BRITTANY

Of religion. Since her parents told me.

This church used to always feel like home.. Now..

It feels like hell.

PASTOR

I'm sorry you feel that way.

BRITTANY

Yeah.

PASTOR

May I ask then, why are you here right now?

*Pause.*

BRITTANY

Just my instincts, I guess.

PASTOR

Your instincts are searching for home.

*Pause.*

BRITTANY

I'm not even sure what's good in that anymore. Home.

My home was just torn from below my feet.

*Pause.*

PASTOR

You know, Liza may have done a horrible and mysterious thing. God forgives all of his children. We are told to choose love. I think Liza needs some love right now, regardless of the circumstances.

*BRITTANY starts to cry. She falls into his shoulder.*

BRITTANY

I'm scared, I'm scared to give it to her.

I'm scared.

*Lights fade.*

**scene nine**

*Lights up on TRUTH, sitting at her dining room table. A bong sits next to her with a pile of crumpled up paper on the floor. She stares blankly at the paper in front of her and the bong. She takes a hit of the bong and coughs a few times. She opens her phone and puts on calming music. She picks up the pen.*

TRUTH

Hi..

How are things?

No, nope that's fucked up.

Hey.. I miss you.

Is it like Orange is the New Black in there?

God, what the fuck are you saying Truth.

Hi love,

I hope you can find forgiveness..

Absolutely not.

*TRUTH crushes the paper and tosses it in the pile. She hits her bong twice. She sips on her coffee. She breathes. She picks up the pen again.*

TRUTH

"Liza,

I love you, I miss you.

I think about you all of the time.

I hope you can find some compassion and forgiveness for yourself."

Oh, yeah, yeah, that's good. That's fucking good.

*TRUTH hits the bong again and coughs.*

TRUTH

*(writing)*

"I want you to know that not all things happen for a reason, I want you to know that that's all bullshit.

There is no reason why some evil in this world exists, and I hope you don't spend time wondering what the reason was for your accident. Because there is none. I still love you, and I always keep you in my thoughts, every day."

*TRUTH hits the bong, again.*

TRUTH

Oh my god, weed and coffee really does it for me.

*TRUTH exhales smoke and coughs.*

TRUTH

“Your dad sent me your mailing address, we didn’t speak long, I text him sometimes and tell him I’m thinking of you guys. I don’t want to send your address to anyone without your permission, and your parents, of course. I love you, I don’t know how the phone calls work there, but I’m writing my phone number in case you can call me.”

*ANA bursts in her door. TRUTH jumps.*

TRUTH

What / the fuck, Ana you scared the shit out of me.

ANA

Liza’s preliminary hearing was scheduled.

TRUTH

What??

ANA

They cancelled her arraignment because she got a lawyer.

Her parents just told me about it. /

Her hearing is next, next week.

*TRUTH picks up her phone and looks at it.*

TRUTH

Oh shit, they called me twice.

*ANA grabs the bong and takes a hit.*

TRUTH

I mean, nice to see you too.

ANA

*(holding smoke in)*

Sorry, I was kind of freaking out.

*ANA exhales and coughs.*

ANA

You know I never mind coming home to visit, but is everything okay?

TRUTH

Yeah, yeah, it's all good, it's just..

*Pause.*

TRUTH

My psychology professor was in a car accident. She, she died.

ANA

Oh no, Truth, I'm so sorry.

TRUTH

Thanks, that's why I texted you so weirdly, sorry about that.

ANA

I would say it kind of scared me, but the worst thing has already happened to us.

TRUTH

Haha, yeah. I'm okay.

ANA

It's okay to not be okay too, you know.

TRUTH

Yeah, right.

*They both chuckle.*

ANA

I love you.

TRUTH

I love you too.

*TRUTH sighs.*

TRUTH

Anyways, um..

To be honest I don't,

I don't know what preliminary hearing, what that means.

ANA



It means she doesn't get bond and she won't make a plea, yet.

TRUTH

Oh.

ANA

What?

TRUTH

Nothing.

*Pause.*

ANA

What are you doing, anyways?

TRUTH

Nothing.

*ANA grabs the paper. TRUTH sighs.*

TRUTH

Shit.

*A long pause.*

ANA

*(choked up)*

You have her address?

TRUTH

Yeah.

ANA

And, you didn't think to, you know,

Tell me? /

Somewhere in your fucked up mind, you  
were gonna keep this to yourself?

TRUTH

I just got it today..

I didn't- I didn't even know if I wanted to write to her.

*Pause.*

ANA

I could smash your bong right now, but I really need that thing.

*ANA takes another hit. She exhales and coughs. She paces. ANA throws a water bottle across the room. A long pause.*

ANA

*(choked up)*

You have,  
no idea how I'm feeling.

TRUTH

I do, actually.

You are not as alone as you feel,  
and you certainly know that not everything is about you.

ANA

Yeah.

*Pause.*

ANA

I'm sorry.

TRUTH

Stop being such a bitch.

ANA

I'm trying.

*Pause.*

ANA

In that letter..

You called it an accident..

*Pause.*

TRUTH

I've been reading about..

*Pause.*

ANA  
What?

TRUTH  
Psychosis.

ANA  
Yeah. And?  
What's that?

TRUTH  
Psychosis is like, when your brain snaps.  
You hallucinate and you blackout and nothing around you is real, but it feels.. Really fucking real. Like,  
you can't even tell, apparently.  
Google it.

*Pause.*

TRUTH  
It makes sense.

ANA  
What does?

TRUTH  
That's what happened to Liza.

*Pause.*

ANA  
You think Liza did bad acid?

TRUTH  
No.  
I think she had a psychotic break.

*Pause. Lights up on a jail cell, where a woman lays in a jail uniform, her back to the audience.*

ANA  
What.. how did that..  
We had just seen her like, a week before. She was.. She was fine.

TRUTH

It's not something that shows signs or like, symptoms. There's / so many reasons and circumstances..

ANA

Our friend isn't psycho, she can't be. No, why would she be? Maybe she just did something really bad.. and was.. / she was feeling..

TRUTH

Religious psychosis is one of the most common types of psychosis episodes.

And..

A lot of people who were raised in strict Catholic families..

A lot of people who have these come from Catholic backgrounds.

Or, like, strict religious backgrounds, at least.

*Pause.*

TRUTH

She was screaming her Hail Marys all night, Ana.

She was scared of something.

*ANA puts her hand on her mouth, trying not to cry. CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1 enters the jail cell.*

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1

Brown,

time to take your medicine.

...

Brown!

*Lights fade on the jail cell.*

ANA

But that's..

That's where we come from.

We were raised in that.. in that church..

Nothing is wrong with us. / We love..

TRUTH

It's not just religion, Ana.

*A long pause.*

ANA

Does that..  
Does all of that..  
make it an accident?

*Pause.*

TRUTH  
I can't tell you how to feel, but that's what I think.

*Pause.*

ANA  
Did we miss something?

TRUTH  
No.

ANA  
I love our roots.

TRUTH  
They're just roots. That's why they're under the soil.  
We know what they are. It's personal to us.  
We love what grounds us, we hate what breaks us.

ANA  
Yeah.

*Pause.*

TRUTH  
You can write to her, if you want.  
I'm sure she would love that.

ANA  
I could try.

TRUTH  
Nothing is wrong if it comes from your heart.  
That's what Claire's father said at the memorial service.

ANA

Kind of morbid, huh?

TRUTH

No, ugh, God. It's just he lost his daughter and even he is spreading that message.  
We're doing the right thing.

ANA

Yeah.

My heart feels perpetually broken.  
And I'm.. I'm so angry.

TRUTH

Me too.

Think about writing her.

ANA

I don't..

I don't know.

That poor girl..

TRUTH

Liza?

ANA

No, Claire.

Two years ago when they met, do you think Claire knew she was meeting the girl who was gonna end her life?

TRUTH

What kind of a fucking question is that?

Of course she didn't.

ANA

Has, like, her whole life been living up to that one moment where..

Like..

I think it was drugs. She probably.. I don't know. She just didn't mean to.

No matter what it really was.

TRUTH

Yeah.

And we know that.

We don't need confirmation.

ANA

Yeah  
I don't know.

TRUTH  
What?

ANA  
I don't know about writing to her.  
I don't know about anything.

*A long pause. A knock on the door. TRUTH looks at ANA, a little confused. TRUTH reluctantly stands and cracks the door open.*

TRUTH  
Oh, hi!

*TRUTH opens the door. BRITTANY enters.*

BRITTANY  
Hi.

*ANA hugs her. BRITTANY keeps her arms at her side.*

ANA  
Oh my god, hi.  
It feels like forever.

TRUTH  
It's so nice to see you.

*BRITTANY remains still, not hugging ANA back. ANA steps back.*

TRUTH  
Thank you for coming home, it means a lot.

BRITTANY  
I was already planning on it.

*Pause.*

ANA  
What's wrong?

*A long pause.*

ANA  
Brittany.

BRITTANY  
I can't do this, guys.

TRUTH  
What?

BRITTANY  
Pretend like Claire's murder isn't a big deal.

*Pause.*

ANA  
Well, of course it's a big deal.

TRUTH  
We're not trying to diminish her / death.

BRITTANY  
But you are. By supporting Liza.

*Pause.*

TRUTH  
Brittany.  
You haven't even asked us how we're feeling.

*Pause.*

BRITTANY  
How are you feeling? /

TRUTH  
Terrible. Confused. Hurt.

ANA  
We're grieving.

BRITTANY



But are you grieving for Claire or for Liza?

*Pause.*

ANA

How do you expect us to answer that?

We're grieving for both. Two girls lost their lives that day.

BRITTANY

But only one of them is dead.

*A long pause.*

TRUTH

I'm standing by Liza. Whether you like it or not, Brittany. Our friend is going through the worst time in her entire life. She just accidentally / killed her friend.

BRITTANY

Accidentally?

TRUTH

Yes, Brittany. Accidentally.

I said it. It was an accident.

It was a fucking accident, it was a fucking accident.

It was an accident, it was an accident! She lost her fucking mind and didn't even know what was really in front of her. Liza has never been a violent person in her entire life and she loved Claire. I know she killed her. I know she ended her life and did a horrible thing and it was gruesome and violent and horrible, but she didn't fucking mean to. Imagine being in her position / right now where she can't even remember what happened.

BRITTANY

I wouldn't be in her position because I would never stab my friend to death. /

TRUTH

Get out!

*TRUTH opens the door.*

TRUTH

Get out of my house, get out of my sight.

*Pause. BRITTANY stares at ANA.*

BRITTANY

Ana.

*Pause.*

ANA

I hope you're at her preliminary hearing next week. Regardless of what you.. how you feel.

*BRITTANY walks towards the door. Before she exits, she turns around.*

BRITTANY

If you support sinners you are sinning yourself.

ANA

Alright, thanks.

*BRITTANY exits. TRUTH cries. ANA holds TRUTH.*

ANA

I know. It's okay.

We're okay.

I love you. We're in this together.

*TRUTH nods.*

TRUTH

We're in this together.

*ANA exits.*

#### **scene ten**

*ANA walks home. She's outside. The wind blows and birds chirp. She stands for a moment in the bliss of nature.*

ANA

*(to herself)*

I miss you.

*Her phone rings. She looks at it. She debates answering it, then she holds the phone to her ear.*

ANA

Hello?

AUTOMATED MESSAGE (v/o)

Hello, this is a prepaid call from..

LIZA (v/o)  
Liza Brown.

AUTOMATED MESSAGE (v/o)  
/ Inmate at the Fredericksburg Regional Jail. To accept this call press zero, to refuse this call hang up or press one to prevent calls from this facility press nine.

ANA  
Holy Fuck.  
Hold on.  
Oh God, I don't know what to do.  
Shit. Um..

AUTOMATED MESSAGE (v/o)  
To accept his call press zero, to refuse..

*ANA pushes zero on her phone.*

AUTOMATED MESSAGE (v/o)  
Thank you.

*Static echoes the stage as ANA grips the phone to her ear in complete shock. The static stops.*

ANA  
Hello?

LIZA (v/o)  
Hello?

ANA  
Oh my / God, Liza.

LIZA (v/o)  
Hi baby.

ANA  
Oh my God, / I miss you so much. How..  
How did this..  
How do you have my number?

LIZA (v/o)

*(through tears)*

I miss you..

I'm so sorry, Ana..

My parents gave you.. I mean, gave me your number. /

I'm sorry, I hope..

ANA

Oh, Liza..

LIZA (v/o)

I'm sorry, I hope.. I hope this is okay..

ANA

Of course, / Liza, of course.

I miss you. We're gonna bring you home.

LIZA (v/o)

*(so hysterical it's almost inaudible)*

Ana, I'm so sorry /

I didn't mean to.. I didn't.. I.. I didn't mean to..

ANA

Liza, it's okay, it's okay. I can't understand you, will you say that again?

LIZA (v/o)

I'm scared. /

ANA

What, babe? I'm sorry I can barely understand you-

LIZA (v/o)

I'm so scared.

I'm so fucking scared.

ANA

Me too, Liza, me too. It's okay.

Liza, look..

There's no reason why this crazy, fucked up accident happened to you, okay? None. Whatsoever.

*We hear LIZA weep over the phone.*

LIZA (V/O)

Ana. You know me, you know I would, I would never.. /

ANA

Of course I know that Liza, of course.

LIZA (V/O)

My preliminary hearing is next week..

It would mean a lot if you could come, my parents can send you more information.

*Pause.*

ANA

I know, I know.

*Pause.*

ANA

Of course I'll be there.

LIZA (v/o)

Really?

ANA

Of course. / You're the best.

You're my best friend.

LIZA (v/o)

I actually have to go, we aren't supposed to use the phones this late.

ANA

What was that?

LIZA (v/o)

I have to go.

ANA

No, Liza, wait-

LIZA (v/o)

Really, I'll get in trouble.

ANA

I love you so much, Liza. We'll get through this, we're gonna get you out of this, we're gonna get you home. We're gonna get you home.

LIZA (v/o)

I love you so much. I'm so sorry, I love you, I have to go.

*The phone clicks off.*

AUTOMATED MESSAGE (v/o)

Thank you for using GTL.

*ANA rests her phone face down on the ground and cries. Lights dim. Blackout.*

**scene eleven**

*Lights up in a courtroom. WILLIAM sits at the defense table. CHRIS, organizes files on the prosecution's table. TRUTH and ANA sit on the defense side.*

ANA

I'm so fucking nervous I could vomit.

TRUTH

Nothing to get upset over, it's just the preliminary hearing.

She's not even gonna set a plea, Ana, it'll be fine.

ANA

Stop telling me to calm down.

TRUTH

Nobody said calm down?

*Awkward pause.*

ANA

Sorry.

*Pause.*

ANA

Where's Brittany?

*Pause.*

ANA

Truth?

TRUTH

She's not coming.

ANA

WHAT!?

*The courtroom looks at her.*

ANA

Sorry.

TRUTH

Brittany said..

Her prayers are enough.

ANA

Huh!?

TRUTH

Brittany said / that her prayers are enough.

ANA

I know what she said,

I just don't understand.

I guess I shouldn't be surprised after her religious meltdown / last week.

TRUTH

She's just uncomfortable, it's fine.

WILLIAM

Pardon me?

*Pause.*

TRUTH

Hi.

ANA

Hi.

WILLIAM

I understand that you are Liza's friends, correct?

ANA

Yeah.

WILLIAM

I just wanted to express my sincere sorrow, I can't imagine the pain and confusion you're going through. If you'd like to give me some character testimonials, I'll have my paralegal schedule an appointment, here's our card.

ANA

Yes, yes, yes / thank you.

TRUTH

Absolutely, thank you.

WILLIAM

I think you could really help her case moving forward.

TRUTH

That's great, yeah.

ANA

Thank you.

WILLIAM

Now excuse me, I have to set up. What are your names?

ANA

I'm Ana.

TRUTH

I'm Truth.

WILLIAM

Ana, Truth, it's been a pleasure. Now, excuse me, I have to prepare.

*WILLIAM sits back down at the table.*

TRUTH

He's nice.



ANA

Yeah. He said moving forward, so that's good.

TRUTH

He's old, though.

ANA

Eh.

*ANA looks around.*

ANA

Where are her parents?

TRUTH

They're downstairs. They don't want to be seen on camera. /  
Well, I don't even know if her dad is here.

ANA

Why?

TRUTH

Her dad almost lost his job already, of course he's not gonna be seen on camera.

ANA

That's fucked up.

That they're not up here.

TRUTH

You don't know, you don't have a big job.  
And you don't have to pay for lawyers to represent a murder case,  
so.

ANA

If I did I'd still support my fucking / daughter.

BAILIFF

All rise.

*The courtroom stands. The media in the back makes quiet motions of excitement. They start their cameras.*

BAILIFF

The honorable Judge Goldstein residing.

*JUDGE GOLDSTEIN enters the room.*

JUDGE GOLDSTEIN

Please be seated.

*The room sits.*

JUDGE GOLDSTEIN

What do we have first?

CHRIS

We will begin with the Liza Brown case, your honor.

*Pause.*

CHRIS

You know what I'm talking about, right?

*CHRIS chuckles.*

ANA

Ew, what's funny?

TRUTH

Shush.

JUDGE GOLDSTEIN

Yes, sir. Will you bring the defendant in please?

*A door in the back opens. LIZA enters, escorted by COP #1 and COP #2. She is in shackles and a grey and black striped jail uniform. She is pale, her hair is frizzy, and her face holds a deep frown. She looks almost like she's in a trance.*

ANA

Oh my God.

*WILLIAM whispers to LIZA. She nods.*

JUDGE GOLDSTEIN

Miss. Brown, you are facing a felony offense for the slaying and killing of Claire Nicole Martin, do you

understand the charges as they are presented against you?

LIZA

Yes ma'am.

WILLIAM

Judge, upon reviewing the prosecution's evidence we believe that there is enough evidence to move this case forward, and our client would like to waive her right to this preliminary hearing.

ANA

What? What does that mean?

TRUTH

Ana, shut up!

ANA

Is he.. He's selling her ass out!?

TRUTH

Shut the fuck up Ana before you get her in more trouble.

ANA

Not possible.

JUDGE GOLDSTEIN

It's her right, she just needs to sign this off.

*JUDGE GOLDSTEIN outstretches her arm with a sheet of paper. WILLIAM takes the paper and hands it to LIZA, who struggles to sign it in shackles as she uncontrollably shakes.*

LIZA

Sorry.

*LIZA hands the paper back to her attorney. WILLIAM crosses to CHRIS. He signs it.*

JUDGE GOLDSTEIN

Okay, this concludes the hearing. Next.

*JUDGE GOLDSTEIN hits her gavel. LIZA stands and looks to her friends before she exits.*

TRUTH

That's seriously it?

ANA

Talk about justice.

TRUTH

It's not Liza's justice, anyways. It never was.

ANA

Well, can we,  
can we see her?  
She's still here right?

*TRUTH looks around.*

TRUTH

Let's go.

*They exit the courtroom. Lights fade.*

#### scene eleven

*Lights dim. Lights fade in on LIZA who sits in shackles in a holding cell on one side of the table. Her leg shakes. Her body shakes. A SHERIFF opens the door. LIZA'S MOM walks in behind him. LIZA and her mother stand stunned.*

SHERIFF

You have fifteen minutes.

LIZA

/ Mommy.

LIZA'S MOM

Oh, my baby.

*LIZA stands and waddles over, her shackles shaking. She cries. LIZA falls into her mother's arms. They hold each other for the first time in forever. The hug exists for at least four minutes in silence. Outside of the room, SHERIFF sits in a chair. TRUTH and ANA slowly enter.*

SHERIFF

May I help you?

ANA

Hi. We'd really like to see our friend.. Liza.

SHERIFF

Sorry, can't have too many people in there at once.

TRUTH

Please. We're her best friends, we haven't seen her in months.

SHERIFF

Sorry, I have to follow the rules.

*ANA starts to cry and beg.*

ANA

Please. You have no idea / what we've been through, we came so far to be here.

TRUTH

Please, you don't understand, please. /

SHERIFF

Okay, okay, one minute.

*PASTOR enters the hall, holding BRITTANY's hand. They don't look at ANA or TRUTH.*

ANA

Father?

TRUTH

Brittany?

*They ignore them.*

SHERIFF

Hello, Father.

PASTOR

Hello, sir.

*SHERIFF lets him through the door.*

PASTOR

Thank you very much.

SHERIFF

Of course, Father.

ANA

What the fuck!?

*PASTOR and BRITTANY enter the holding room. LIZA's MOM and LIZA, are still holding an embrace.*

PASTOR

Hello, Liza.

*LIZA exits their embrace. She sees BRITTANY.*

LIZA

Brittany.

BRITTANY

Hey.

LIZA

Can I hug you, please?

*BRITTANY doesn't respond. PASTOR hugs LIZA. After a moment, He steps out of the hug and stretches his arms out. The three hold hands in a circle, and bow their heads. BRITTANY remains in the corner. She abruptly exits the room during the prayer. She vomits in a nearby trash can. She cries. She looks up at her friends.*

ANA

Brittany,  
what's up?

*Pause.*

BRITTANY

I just met face to face with, with a murderer. /

TRUTH

You're such a coward.

*BRITTANY cries. Suddenly, she gets angry.*

BRITTANY

At least God loves me.

TRUTH

What? /

BRITTANY

Dyke.

*BRITTANY exits. TRUTH is frozen. SHERIFF notices this. He opens the door silently.*

SHERIFF

You have five minutes.

ANA

Thank you so much.

Truth, come on.

*They enter the room. SHERIFF closes the door behind them.*

ANA

Liza, / oh my God, oh my God.

TRUTH

/ Liza.

LIZA

You guys..

*LIZA stands in her shackles and the girls hug her at once.*

ANA

I missed you so much, I love you so much.

TRUTH

We love you, we think about you so much.

LIZA

It means so much of you guys to come, I'm so happy I get to see you and hug you. I love you.

TRUTH

We love you!

TRUTH

You still smell like you.

LIZA

Really?

ANA  
Yeah you do!  
You look beautiful.

LIZA  
*(in a different tone)*  
Really.

TRUTH  
Ana shut up.

ANA  
What, she does! She probably hasn't heard a compliment in ages.

LIZA  
It's been so many months, man.

ANA  
I know, but the world is waiting for your return. We miss you so much.

LIZA  
Nobody is waiting for me.

*A long pause.*

LIZA  
I'm..

*LIZA looks to her mother.*

LIZA's MOM  
It's okay, honey. Tell them.

ANA  
Tell? Tell what? Tell us what?

LIZA  
I'm taking a guilty plea.

*ANA puts her head down.*

LIZA  
I'm gonna take a guilty plea. They.. If we go to.. It just could be so much worse. They..



I can't say much, I just..

ANA

We are waiting for you. We are here for you.

*LIZA cries.*

TRUTH

What happened?

*Pause.*

TRUTH

We're all thinking about it, no?

LIZA's MOM

Ana..

TRUTH

No. With all due respect,

I'm hurting.

My best friend is hurting. We're all hurting.

Liza, please.

ANA

She doesn't want to talk about it, and she probably can't talk about it either.

TRUTH

I can't do this, I-my life can't be a mystery.

LIZA

Truth.

*Pause.*

LIZA

It's a mystery to me too.

*Pause.*

TRUTH

I'm sorry. I didn't.. I'm sorry.

LIZA

It's okay..

I- I, I love you guys so much. I can't thank you enough for coming.

TRUTH

Of course.

We're in this together, okay?

LIZA

Okay.

*Pause.*

ANA

We're in this together.

*SHERIFF enters.*

SHERIFF

Okay guys, I've got a job to do.

*ANA and TRUTH hold LIZA.*

PASTOR

If we could all bow our heads in prayer.

*The girls let go of LIZA. They all bow their heads, except for TRUTH who keeps her eyes wide open.*

PASTOR

Lord, we thank thee for our blessings and our lives. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, amen.

*TRUTH stares at the group. ANA and TRUTH hug LIZA once more, and exit the room. TRUTH runs to the trash can in the hall and vomits. ANA rubs her back and cries.*

ANA

It's okay / Truth. It's okay.

TRUTH

That poor girl..

ANA

But she's still our girl, right? Didn't that still feel like her?

*LIZA, her parents, and the PASTOR are left in the cell by themselves. LIZA's MOM strokes her daughter's hair.*

LIZA

I missed your touch.

LIZA's MOM

I missed you. I love you, always.

LIZA

I don't want you to leave, Mommy.

LIZA's MOM

I'm not going anywhere.

*She kisses her daughter's forehead.*

TRUTH

Yeah, it still felt like her. It's still her. I know.. I know she didn't know.

ANA

She didn't know, Truth. She didn't.

TRUTH

*(crying)*

We're in this together?

*Her mother exits the room. PASTOR stands. He makes the Holy Trinity on LIZA and kisses her forehead.*

ANA

We're in this together.

*ANA hugs TRUTH.*

LIZA

Thank you, Father.

*PASTOR exits. LIZA sits in the cell alone.*

**END ACT ONE**

**act two**

**scene one**

*An older woman, LIZA, now 44, sits on a prison bunk writing on a pad of paper. ANA, now 43, shuffles through a box of mail like looking at photo albums. She picks up an envelope, smiles, and reads the paper inside.*

ANA

on trauma

.

Times

where I've

swam in the sea

dancing with a wave

stronger than my

gravity, I've

attempted drowning

sorrows in

bubbles of my air and

sometimes others.

Gently

popping in my face

the whispers of

meaningless anxiety

that swim in

my lungs until

painful chokes and croaks

revive me to remind me

that I'm alive,

almost unfortunately.

In the moments that

I remember her life,

and occasionally mine,

I am reminded

of how

thirty to forty stabs

can end two lives

in the same

four minutes

it took for her

to lose her mind.

Listening

to the bubbles of demons

that were unreal,

but held more power  
than the real,  
and now everything that  
I never dreamed of  
is real.

Suffocated  
by the  
bubbles left  
to pop and disappear,  
as if there was  
nobody to fill them  
at all.

Drowning  
in the remembrance  
of the lives  
that were over  
the night of  
January seventh.  
I miss her life,  
but I miss mine too.

Love, Liza Brown.  
April 24, 2033.

*ANA's phone rings. She answers.*

ANA  
Hello?

*In the prison, CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1 enters LIZA's room.*

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1  
Come on, Brown.  
Visiting hours.

ANA  
Oh, shit.  
I'm so sorry.. I-

*ANA hangs up and slowly exits.*

LIZA  
What day is it?

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1

January 24, 2039.

LIZA

What day of the week?

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1

Tuesday.

LIZA

Oh, wow.

Sorry, Joe.

Thought it was Monday.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1

Great, come on, now.

LIZA

Did your daughter get over her flu?

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1

She's still staying home from school.

But she's been feeling better.

LIZA

Oh gosh,

I hope she feels a hundred percent soon.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1

Thanks, Liza. Let's go.

*They exit. Lights fade.*

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1 (v/o)

Your name, please.

ANA (v/o)

A-ana Steimel.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1 (v/o)

And who are you here to see?

*A soft spotlight on LIZA and CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #2. LIZA raises her arms, standing in a cross. CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #2 begins to pat her down.*

ANA (v/o)  
Liza Brown.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #2 (v/o)  
Inmate number?

*Pause.*

ANA (v/o)  
272417.

*LIZA turns around to be searched.*

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #2 (v/o)  
Follow me.

*A soft spotlight. ANA and CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #2 enter the dim light. ANA extends her arms, mirroring the same pose as LIZA. CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1 gestures LIZA to exit. ANA turns around. They finish the search and CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #2 gestures ANA to exit. A loud buzz. Plain square tables with an uncomfortable desk chair on either side. Inmates in orange jumpsuits enter and all visitors from the opposite chairs rise. LIZA enters and spots ANA. She crosses to her. ANA takes a second to stand after seeing LIZA.*

LIZA  
Ana.

ANA  
Hi.

LIZA  
Can I hug you?

ANA  
Of course.

*They embrace. LIZA cries softly. ANA steps out of the hug first, an awkward moment. LIZA sits down.*

LIZA  
I haven't seen you in..

ANA

A while,  
yeah.  
I'm really sorry.

LIZA

It's okay, it's okay!  
Did you fly out here?

ANA

Yeah, I flew out here yesterday and got a hotel.

LIZA

That's so nice of you, I'm so happy to see you.

ANA

Me too.

*Pause.*

LIZA

How's the big city? Anything like Texas?

ANA

Not at all.  
It's quite freeing.. Being around different kinds of people in a different kind of world.

LIZA

That sounds beautiful.

*Pause.*

LIZA

How are your kids?

ANA

I think Ryan likes a girl that doesn't like him back,  
which is how I've pieced the story together,  
but he hasn't said that,  
and I won't tell him either.

LIZA

That's smart of you.



ANA

He's in fourth grade now.

LIZA

Wow! A big boy.

*Pause.*

LIZA

Have you gotten my letters?

ANA

Yes, I love them.

Have you gotten mine?

LIZA

Yes, I haven't gotten any in.. a little bit.

*Pause.*

ANA

Yeah,

I'm sorry.

LIZA

It's okay! You're married with kids!

You're so busy, it's fine,

it's fine.

ANA

Okay.

Thanks for understanding.

LIZA

Of course.

*Pause.*

LIZA

I don't know if you remember this, but,

I'm released in eight days.

ANA

Yes, I remember.

LIZA

My mom is gonna pick me up,  
move me into a new apartment she set up /  
my brother might even-

ANA

Your mom died last week, Liza.

*Pause.*

LIZA

What?

*Pause.*

ANA

She, she,  
got a blood clot while she was gardening,  
and she fell over,  
when the neighbor saw her-  
well. It was too late.

*Pause.*

LIZA

Oh.

ANA

I'm so sorry, Liza.

LIZA

That's okay,  
I mean,  
it's my brother's fault for not putting  
her in assisted living.  
He has the money, he has the time,  
it's- his fault.

ANA

Yeah.

LIZA

Or, you know, maybe, just maybe if I wasn't in prison.  
Maybe I would have my own job and support her and  
my mother wouldn't have to die in her fucking garden.

*LIZA weeps.*

ANA

I'm so sorry, Liza.  
Would your brother pick you up?

LIZA

No,  
no way,  
He hasn't written to me in years.  
He just cut me off.  
Mom too.  
It's not- It's not..

ANA

I know.

LIZA

Is that why you came, to tell me?

ANA

It's a good excuse to get me out here.

LIZA

Ha.  
That's sweet.

ANA

Liza, I-  
I can pick you up.

LIZA

Really?  
Are you sure?

ANA

Yes.

LIZA

I could just take a bus.

ANA

No, you shouldn't have to.

*Pause.*

LIZA

Thank you so much, Ana.

Thank you.

*ANA takes a deep breath.*

ANA

Liza.

*Pause.*

ANA

I know I've only felt a quarter of the pain  
and grieving you've been feeling for the last twenty-three years.  
And nothing can compare to the hell you've been put through.  
But..

*Pause.*

ANA

It's been twenty-three years of nightmares, avoiding Halloween, not watching scary movies,  
and coming up with ideas to fill in the empty pictures,  
blaming myself for not being there,  
and I know..

*A long pause.*

ANA

I know that I'll never be able to move forward if I don't ask..

*Pause.*

ANA

Liza,  
what happened?

*A long pause.*

LIZA

I have no idea.

ANA

But what does that mean?

LIZA

Ana, I can't.

ANA

Why not?

LIZA

Because.

ANA

Liza, please!

*The room looks to ANA.*

ANA

Sorry.

*ANA looks to LIZA.*

LIZA

Ana, I can't talk about it.

ANA

Why not?

LIZA

Ana. Shit  
is different in prison.

ANA

Yeah, but /

LIZA

There are ears everywhere.

ANA  
Oh.

LIZA  
Please.

*ANA looks away. Disappointed.*

LIZA  
Thank you, for never asking before now. Thank you, and I know how much pain and hurt I've put you through, how much grieving you've done.

ANA  
I know you've had just as much, if not more.

*A long pause.*

LIZA  
Ana.

ANA  
Hm?

ANA  
Listen to me.  
And I..  
That poor girl.. Not a day goes by where I don't think about her. Pray for her..

ANA  
Thank you for telling me.

LIZA  
When I say I don't remember.. I really don't. There's some stuff I do, and some stuff I don't..

ANA  
Okay.

*Pause.*

LIZA  
I can tell you in eight days.

*A long pause.*

ANA  
I'm so sorry.

LIZA  
It's not me you should be sorry for.

*Lights fade.*

**scene two**

*TRUTH, now 43, lays on the couch with her girlfriend, RUE. They cuddle and kiss every now and again. TRUTH's phone rings, she looks at it.*

TRUTH  
What the-

RUE  
Who is it?

TRUTH  
Hold on..

*She answers.*

TRUTH  
Hello?

AUTOMATED VOICE (v/o)  
Hello, this is a prepaid call from..

*Lights fade in on LIZA at a prison phone booth.*

LIZA  
Liza Brown.

AUTOMATED VOICE  
/ inmate at the Dallas City Women's Correctional Facility. To accept this call press zero, to refuse this call simply hang up.

TRUTH  
No fucking / way..

RUE  
What??

TRUTH

How the fuck.. Hold on, I-

AUTOMATED VOICE

To accept this call, press / zero..

*TRUTH pushes a button on her phone.*

AUTOMATED VOICE

Thank you.

*Pause.*

TRUTH

Hello?

LIZA

Hey, T.

*Pause.*

TRUTH

Hi, Liza.

RUE

Who??

*TRUTH waves at RUE quiet.*

TRUTH

How, how are you?

LIZA

I've been great.

...

Um,

Ana gave me your number, I hope that's okay.

TRUTH

Oh, did she now?

LIZA

Yeah. But I'll be brief,



Just wanted to say, that..  
I'm out in a week..

TRUTH  
Yeah, I've been thinking about that.

*Pause.*

TRUTH  
I didn't forget you.

LIZA  
Thanks.

*Pause.*

LIZA  
Um, so,  
My mom died.

TRUTH  
Oh no..  
I'm so, so sorry.

LIZA  
Yeah.  
Thank you, it's okay, kind of.  
Ana offered to pick me up next week.

TRUTH  
*(appalled)*  
Oh, did she now?  
So, you're moving to New York?

LIZA  
No, she's just gonna help set me up down here. I can't leave the state for, uh.

*She sighs.*

LIZA  
For my probation, for ten years.

TRUTH

You can't leave the state for ten years?

RUE

Huh!?

LIZA

No, yeah. I mean yes.

TRUTH

That's fucked up.

LIZA

Yeah, I filled out a form and stuff, to have my probation suspended to New York.

But I didn't realize that was only for like, misdemeanors, and little drug stuff.

Not.. felonies.

TRUTH

Oh.

LIZA

Yeah,

I just wanted to call and tell you,

tell you that,

I love you.

I hope I can see you when I'm out.

TRUTH

Yeah.

Um,

I love you too, Liza.

Sorry, life is just a little complicated lately.

I'll talk to Ana and see what I can do.

LIZA

Yeah, yeah, totally. That's totally okay.

Thank you, Truth.

Also, I wanted to tell you that Brittany wrote to me recently.

TRUTH

What!?

LIZA

Yeah, right?

She said..

I guess it doesn't matter what she said.

TRUTH

You can tell me, Liza.

LIZA

Do you mind if I read it to you?

TRUTH

Not at all, do you have it on you?

LIZA

Yeah, it's kind of hard to interpret, ha. Sometimes I just read it over.

Anyways..

“January 7, 2039. My dearest Liza, today has been twenty-three years since you were arrested. I think about you every day, even if you think I don't. I will always have love and compassion for you in my heart. I know you have the ability to build a bright and beautiful and brand new future for yourself. I hope you've taken time and forgiven yourself. I know as difficult as this is, I've spent a lot of time wondering what I want for my future. It feels like when you're out, I'm out. As harsh as this may seem I must ask that you do not contact me when you are released. I hold no malice or ill feelings towards you, but I have to put myself first and move on. I hope you understand. Sincerely, Brittany.”

*A long pause.*

TRUTH

I'm sorry, Liza.

LIZA

Thank you. It's okay.

It was nice hearing your voice.

TRUTH

You too, Liza.

I'll.. see you soon.

LIZA

Thanks, Truth. Bye.

TRUTH

Bye.

*TRUTH hangs up the phone.*

TRUTH

That.. That, FUCKING BITCH.

RUE

You wanna explain / to me who that was?

TRUTH

No.

Oh, Brittany, I'm gonna fucking kill her..

Sorry.

*TRUTH dials on her phone.*

RUE

What!?!

TRUTH

One second.

*Pause.*

TRUTH

*(in the phone)*

Look here bitch I know you sent me to voicemail because it didn't ring the entire 30 seconds..

Liza just fucking called me and you have some serious explaining to do, so I hope you stop ignoring us after decades, and we can work out whatever bullshit trauma you want to revisit and reevaluate.

How dare you write Liza a letter, you fucked up twat.

*TRUTH hangs up.*

TRUTH

Shit.

That felt good.

RUE

*(almost scared)*

Baby, that was crazy..

TRUTH

I know, sorry.

I'm not crazy.

*TRUTH's phone rings.*

TRUTH

*(answering)*

Oh, look who it is!

ANA (v/o)

Hi? Everything / okay?

TRUTH

Yeah um. Actually I just got off the phone with..

Did you give Liza my number?

*Pause.*

ANA (v/o)

Her mother just died, have some compassion.

TRUTH

Oh, my God.. Oh, compassion?

Me!?

ANA (v/o)

Believe it or not we're all she has left,

so

step up to the fucking plate and stop being scared of striking out.

TRUTH

Oh yes, because her irresponsibility is suddenly my problem, my mess to clean up.

ANA (v/o)

It feels like just yesterday you were saying psychotic break, psychosis, science, blah blah blah.

TRUTH

Yeah and look where we are now!

ANA (v/o)

So how can you say her uncontrollable mental disorder suddenly equates to irresponsibility?

Hm?

*Pause.*

ANA (v/o)

She's always taken full responsibility for this. She said it in court.

TRUTH

Whatever.

ANA (v/o)

Yeah, that's what I thought. Be there in two minutes.

TRUTH

What?

ANA (v/o)

I'm in Texas visiting Liza.

*ANA hangs up.*

TRUTH

UGH!!

RUE

So, can I have an update now? You wanna tell me who Liza is?

TRUTH

Um, oh, um

I never told you about Liza?

RUE

No, never.

TRUTH

Well, that's a long.. um..

*A knock on their door.*

RUE

What are / you into, Truth?

TRUTH

Hold on, just hold on, one thing at a fucking time.

*TRUTH gets the door. ANA walks in carrying two Starbucks coffees.*

TRUTH

You're pretty fucking bold to come over here, after you gave my number to a murderer / without my consent.

RUE

/ I'm sorry, what?

ANA

Nice to see you, too.

TRUTH

I know, I never left.

RUE

Should I leave?

ANA

I only have two coffees.

TRUTH

I hope they're for me and her.

ANA

I was hoping it would be ours. /

RUE

Is she playing? Are you kidding?

TRUTH

Ana, you didn't even introduce yourself to my girlfriend, Rue.

ANA

Hi Rue,

My name is Ana.

*ANA extends her hand carrying the drink holder in the other.*

RUE

I'm Rue, nice to meet you.

*They shake hands for a moment longer than necessary.*

RUE

How do you know Truth?

ANA

Oh, we went to high school together.

RUE

Oh, cool. That's nice you're / still friends.

ANA

And our best friend stabbed her roommate to death in college and is getting released next week after twenty-three years.

*RUE lets go of ANA's hand.*

RUE

Oh.

*Pause.*

RUE

*(to Truth)*

Is that Liza?

TRUTH

You've gotta be fucking shitting me.

ANA

Do you ever stop swearing?

*TRUTH jumps on top of ANA trying to tackle her. ANA spills the coffee onto RUE, who screeches.*

RUE

OW / what the fuck-

*RUE quickly exits.*

ANA

/ Truth, chill out!

TRUTH

Who / do you think you are coming into my life and making a mess!?



ANA  
You're losing your shit!

*ANA flips TRUTH onto the couch and gets on top of her grabbing her hands. TRUTH is fighting back trying to get free from her grip.*

ANA  
Truth, / you need to relax. Chill out. Chill out. Breathe.

TRUTH  
How could you do this, why would you do this /

ANA  
Breathe, Truth. Calm down. You're okay, you're okay.

*Pause as TRUTH catches her breath.*

ANA  
Calm down. You're okay.

TRUTH  
*(cries)*  
I don't want to deal with it all over again.

ANA  
I know, it's okay.

*TRUTH hugs ANA. They hold a tight embrace.*

ANA  
We're okay.  
We're in this together.

*Lights fade.*

### **scene three**

*A prison play yard. Brick walls read NO EXCESSIVE NOISE. LIZA sits in a corner writing in a journal. Other inmates talk amongst themselves in groups, occasionally looking over to LIZA. A mid 70s disoriented woman, JUDITH, walks by LIZA.*

LIZA  
Hey, Judy.

JUDITH  
What?

LIZA  
I said hi.

JUDITH  
Oh,  
hi.

LIZA  
Wanna sit down with me?

JUDITH  
Okay.

*JUDITH takes a moment to sit down, LIZA extends her arm to help her sit.*

LIZA  
They let you out of the infirmary? How long were you there?

JUDITH  
Yes.  
I was okay.  
I just fell. I was there for a day.

LIZA  
We all fall sometimes.

JUDITH  
You seem,  
happy.

LIZA  
I am.  
I'm getting released soon.

JUDITH  
Really?

LIZA  
Yes,  
five more days.

JUDITH

Where are you going  
to be  
going?

LIZA

My friend is picking me up as of right now.

JUDITH

No Mom or Dad?

LIZA

No.  
Mom died last week.  
Dad's been dead for.. quite some time.

JUDITH

Oh. I'm  
sorry.

LIZA

It's okay.

*Pause.*

LIZA

You've been like a Mom to me here,  
you know that right?

JUDITH

Yes,  
you're my daughter.

LIZA

I know I am.

JUDITH

When you leave,  
will you please,  
um..

*JUDITH closes her eyes to think. She makes a writing motion with her hand.*

LIZA

Write?

JUDITH

Yes! Write me about you, and your life, and other things.

Food.

LIZA

Of course! I'll even call you.

I don't know how I'm gonna take on the world without you.

JUDITH

You can do this.

Food, food,

what are you going to eat when you're out?

LIZA

Ohhh.. mmm..

I want..

A Philly cheese steak with french fries,  
and a large strawberry milkshake.

JUDITH

You want junk?

LIZA

It's not junk! It's comfort food. It's love.

JUDITH

I want a nice, juicy, Ribeye, with a baked potato..

Broccoli..

And..

Did I get the mail today?

LIZA

No, mail is tomorrow.

JUDITH

Oh, yes.

How is your mom?

LIZA

She died.

JUDITH

Oh no, I'm so sorry.

When?

LIZA

Last week.

JUDITH

Oh my,  
that's so sad.

LIZA

Yeah it is.

Wanna know the first meal I'm gonna have when I'm out?

JUDITH

What?

LIZA

A thick, juicy, Ribeye with a baked potato and steamed broccoli.

JUDITH

I think I want a strawberry milkshake.

LIZA

That sounds good.

JUDITH

Yeah.

What sounds good?

LIZA

A strawberry milkshake.

JUDITH

I never liked strawberry, I like chocolate.

LIZA

Chocolate is just as good!

*VICK, approaches JUDITH and LIZA.*

VICK

Afternoon, ladies.

LIZA

Hey, Vick.

VICK

My favorite little inmate family.

Wassup, baby.

Wassup lady.

JUDITH

Hello, I'm Judith.

*JUDITH extends her arm.*

VICK

You watching / out for your mama, homie? She's a little nuts.

LIZA

Yes. She just got out of the infirmary for her hip, be nice.

VICK

Pardon me?

*JUDITH awkwardly brings her arm back in.*

LIZA

Be nice to her, she doesn't know.

VICK

I am nice.

LIZA

I know you are Vick.

*Pause.*

VICK

Heard you're getting out soon.

LIZA

Yeah. Five days.

VICK

I dunno bro, I couldn't do all that shit.

LIZA

What?

VICK

Get back out there, man.

Out there is less safe than this place is, you know?

LIZA

Not really.

I don't have the same experiences you do.

VICK

Real nice of you baby.

I don't need the sympathy,

I need strength, you know?

I appreciate it though.

LIZA

I know, sorry.

VICK

All good.

LIZA

What's your home like?

VICK

Fucked up.

LIZA

Where are you from?

JUDITH

Illinois!

VICK

Inner city Baltimore.

LIZA

What does that mean anyways, inner city?

VICK

You're more privileged than I thought, lady.

JUDITH

When is lunch? I'm hungry.

VICK

You ate.

LIZA (*to JUDITH*)

We already ate.

JUDITH

No, we didn't.

I'm not crazy.

VICK

Yeah, yeah, we know.

Where you from, anyway?

LIZA

Fredericksburg.

Texas.

VICK

No shit.

You from right here!

LIZA

Yep.

VICK

A southern belle.

LIZA

I guess.

VICK

You going back there when you're out?

LIZA

Not by choice.



VICK

You gonna go to church?

LIZA

Absolutely.

*Pause.*

VICK

See their family?

*A long pause.*

LIZA

I can't.

VICK

Why not?

Can't handle it?

LIZA

No.

Court ordered.

VICK

Really?

LIZA

Yeah.

Part of the plea deal.

VICK

You took a plea deal? No shit..

I know for me, it's like..

I wanna see their family every day, ya know. Just say sorry.

*Pause.*

VICK

Wait,

Why do I see you in the meds line every day then?

LIZA  
Because.

*Pause.*

VICK  
Ohhhh,  
one of those situations..  
But, that's what happened?

LIZA  
Yeah.

VICK  
And you took a deal anyways?

LIZA  
They were gonna hit me with second-degree, and  
....  
thirty-two counts of involuntary manslaughter.

VICK  
What the fuck for?

LIZA  
I can't talk about it.

*Pause.*

VICK  
Ohhh,  
for the wounds.  
Say no more. Say no more.

LIZA  
I'm not really supposed to be talking about it, so.  
Yeah.

VICK  
You know they probably wouldn't have actually hit you with those charges,  
that sounds pretty.. Severe. Like, how could they prove that with one incident?

LIZA

Dunno. I didn't want to risk it. Not enough evidence for insanity. Anyways, it doesn't matter now it's already been two decades so, yeah.

VICK

Cool.

I mean, gotcha.

*Pause.*

VICK

You're telling me you've been incarcerated for twenty-three years and you haven't not once talked about this?

LIZA

No. I can't.

VICK

What got you three extra years then?

LIZA

Why should I tell you?

VICK

Because you're about out and it won't matter.

LIZA

It will always matter.

VICK

Glad you know that.

*Pause.*

JUDITH

She was popping pills. That's how she got three extra years.

*Pause. They look at JUDITH.*

VICK

Shit gets painful here.

LIZA

Yeah.

More painful when you fuck up.

VICK

Got that right.

I've got five extra years for a cell phone, man.

I just wanted to call my baby.

LIZA

You got a kid?

VICK

A little boy.

His name is Jay.

LIZA

How old is he?

VICK

He's eight next month.

Every time I call him he asks when I'm coming back from my business trip.

*Pause.*

VICK

He don't know his mama was selling dope to pay for diapers.

Man, I got mixed up in the wrong shit..

His daddy ran off, and

My mom takes care of him, now.

LIZA

You'll always be his mother.

VICK

Yeah, I know.

Until I'm not.

*LIZA looks to JUDITH.*

LIZA

Just like how you'll always be my mom, even when I'm out of here.

*JUDITH gives an awkward and confused smile. A long pause.*

VICK

I'll look after her for you.

I know her head is a little.. fuzzy.

LIZA

It's not your responsibility.

VICK

It is.

Until it's not.

*A long pause. Lights fade.*

**scene four**

*Lights up on a dinner table. ANA and JORDAN sit on either end, awkwardly eating. A long pause.*

ANA

Truth agreed to help with the kids while I'm gone.

*Pause.*

JORDAN

When?

ANA

When, what?

JORDAN

When is she coming?

*Pause.*

ANA

Tonight.

*Pause.*

JORDAN

Why?

ANA

Jordan, / please.

JORDAN

How is she getting here?

ANA

I bought her a plane ticket.

JORDAN

And you're not..  
you're telling me now?

ANA

Well I haven't exactly been.. /  
your favorite person in the world.

JORDAN

It just..  
Amazes me.  
How you could / make a decision like that..

ANA

Jordan, I am begging you, not now.

JORDAN

Without talking to me? Without talking to the kids? I mean, really.  
It's just disappointing.

ANA

What's disappointing?

*Pause.*

ANA

You can call CPS if you want, I'd love to hear what they have to say.

JORDAN

There you go, making smart ass comments instead of being reasonable. I can't-

ANA

Jordan. They're asleep. Please keep your voice down.

JORDAN

Oh so you care about them being asleep  
but not being put in danger by your murderous friend?

*A long pause.*

JORDAN

What?

Is it not true?

ANA

Where are your morals?

JORDAN

Oh, please don't bring up the faith / shit again.  
You quit religion so you could stop talking about it

ANA

It's not about faith, and it's not about religion.  
It's about my friend who needs help!

JORDAN

Whatever.

*Pause.*

ANA

What's happening?

JORDAN

Dunno.

ANA

Seriously?

*Pause.*

ANA

Jordan?

JORDAN

What?

ANA

Are you serious?

JORDAN

Yeah.

ANA

Do you really not wanna talk that bad?

JORDAN

Yeah. I'm pissed and the kids are asleep.

ANA

Oh my God..

*A knock on the door.*

ANA

Oh, thank God.

*ANA gets up to open the door.*

ANA

Seriously, snap out of it.

JORDAN

I would be able to if you talked with me about picking up a killer.

ANA

Enough. That's enough, Jordan. She's got nobody. Nobody!

Nowhere to go, no one to help her get started.

She's been in a cement block for twenty-three years,  
wearing the same fucking thing every fucking day.

No voice, no freedom. Shit food. Just waiting for a deadline to get the fuck out of hell.

Her mom just died.

And what happened was twenty-three years ago.

JORDAN

Yeah and Claire would be 43 with a husband and kids.

Probably doing this world more good.

ANA

Can you remember something horrible you did to a friend, family member, or even stranger five years



ago? What about ten years ago? Fifteen, even? It was so long ago you would probably agree that you've grown from that moment, that you're a different person now. I mean, it was so long ago, don't you think? Incarcerated people don't get the opportunity to feel like a different person. Incarcerated inmates are told they are that person until their time is up. Imagine not being able to let go of that horrible thing for twenty years. That horrible incident, accident, mistake, whatever it was, sucking humanity out of you like a tick. That one incident defining who you are for a quarter of your life time. Is there anything really that bad? There are people in those prisons who need to be helped, not punished. People who want to change, people who didn't mean to do what they did, who are forced to sacrifice their life for a fucked up ideology of justice? I would never ask for that kind of justice.

*A louder, more aggressive, knock.*

JORDAN

I think your friend is here.

*Pause.*

ANA

That sucks.

*ANA opens the door. TRUTH enters with a rolling suitcase, carrying a plastic case of store-bought brownies.*

TRUTH

Jeez, yelling already? You forget I was coming?

*JORDAN looks pissed off and ANA is looking at the floor.*

TRUTH (*sarcastically*)

So, how are things?

ANA

Nothing I say matters. Ever

*Pause.*

TRUTH

Jordan, you sure look happy.

JORDAN

Euphoric, Truth. I'm glad you made it here safely.

ANA

Truth. Will you tell the kids? While I'm gone?

TRUTH

Oh.

Oh, / Ana.

ANA

Truth, please. I need your help.

TRUTH

Is that the first thing we're gonna talk about when I walk through the door?

ANA

Truth, please.

TRUTH

Ana, I will make you dinner, I will vacuum your entire apartment, but I can not talk to / your children.

ANA

Please.

You're their Aunt Truth,

Will you please be the cool aunt and talk to them?

TRUTH

No.

ANA

Please?

TRUTH

Not my responsibility, sorry.

*TRUTH looks to JORDAN.*

TRUTH

You wanna say anything?

*Pause. ANA starts to cry.*

ANA

What do I do?

TRUTH

Just.. tell your kids in a way.. they'll understand.  
Don't mention any blood or anything, and they'll be fine.

JORDAN

Of course, just lie.

TRUTH

Look.  
we don't have time for that right now.  
it's here,  
it's in your face,  
so fucking deal with it.

JORDAN

Whatever, Truth. I'm sure you can take much better care of this than I can.

TRUTH

Ugh.  
Anyways.  
I've decided that I'm only going to be here until you leave,  
then I'm getting a hotel.  
I'll stay for a couple more days then I need to go home.  
I only get eight sick days.  
So, yeah.

ANA

That's it?

TRUTH

Yeah. Sorry.

ANA

It's fine, I appreciate your help at all.

*Pause.*

ANA

Can felons use public transit?

TRUTH

They should, why wouldn't they?

ANA

But they don't let them vote.  
Or have, like, anything.

TRUTH

So, are you just gonna have an Uber driver pick her up from the prison?

*A long pause.*

ANA

I didn't even think about that.  
Would your girlfriend let me borrow her car?

TRUTH

Seriously?  
After you spilled coffee on her last week?

ANA

I don't know. I just didn't think that far.

TRUTH

No, you have. You're just not thinking realistically.  
When Liza's out it's not gonna be old Liza Brown again.  
It's gonna be a convicted murderer, our old friend Liza Brown, reentering society.  
After being in a maximum security prison for twenty-three years.

ANA

I guess I'll have to rent a car while I'm there.

JORDAN

Thank you, Truth.

TRUTH

I'm not on your side. Don't thank me for anything.  
And you need to understand that a 44 year old woman's life was put on halt  
and in this world, the only life she knows is that from when she was 21.  
She fucked up. She took responsibility. She took a guilty plea to pay for her sins.  
This is not a serial killer, this is not a witch, this is not a murder hungry person,  
this is a completely stable, schizophrenic woman who has been taking antipsychotics every day for  
23 years.  
This is a woman who has absolutely nothing, a woman who made that choice out of guilt and grief.  
I don't understand how we can sit around and hold judgement towards the action,

when what matters more to me is that a psychosis episode can paralyze you so badly you can stab your friend to death. And not even remember how it happened.  
Nobody took care of her then. Somebody needs to take care of her now.  
It's not stupid, it's courageous.

*Pause.*

JORDAN  
Ana.

ANA  
Yeah?

JORDAN  
I am so sorry.

ANA  
I'm sorry too. Nothing has hit me yet.

JORDAN  
It's okay.  
Can you just please be careful?

ANA  
I will.

JORDAN  
Okay.

*JORDAN hugs ANA.*

ANA  
*(choked up)*  
Jordan.

A friend who I love, a friend who holds a special place in my heart, who has given up probably a third of her life to give justice to something indescribable.

We are not alone.

Our kids are not alone.

She is alone.

Please try. Try to understand. Is it okay if I stay with her for a little while and help her?

JORDAN  
Okay. I'll try.

TRUTH

Good.

*A long pause. ANA looks to TRUTH.*

ANA

Sometimes what's real doesn't feel like enough.

TRUTH

It's always worth something.

*Lights fade.*

**scene five**

*VICK does push-ups in her bunk. LIZA enters.*

LIZA

Hey.

VICK

Oh hey, you.

LIZA

Can I talk to you for a second?

VICK

Sure.

LIZA

I'm leaving today.

VICK

Oh, no shit.

LIZA

Yeah. I wanted to give you something.

*LIZA extends the Holy Bible.*

LIZA

This has been mine since I got here. For twenty-three years, I've flipped these pages and-

VICK

Hold it, are you giving this to me?

LIZA

Yeah.

VICK

We barely know each other, whatchu giving me this for?

LIZA

Well, I just.. I really like your energy. I think you have a kind heart, a big future. Maybe you could read your son Bible quotes, if you're religious or not. It just means a lot to me and I don't have much else other than Cheetos to offer you.

VICK

Why offer me anything?

*Pause.*

LIZA

Did you mean what you said earlier about looking after Judith?

VICK

Oh. You're trying to bribe me.

LIZA

I don't call it bribery, I'm trying to support you.

VICK

How is that supporting me?

LIZA

You think the CO's won't see you nicely taking care of Judith, tell the Warden how good a person you are?

*Pause.*

VICK

I'd rather have the Cheetos than a fucking Bible.

*They both laugh.*

LIZA

Thank you. I have to go say bye to Judith. Can I hug you?

*She nods. LIZA hugs VICK.*

VICK

Good luck out there.

LIZA

Thank you. I'm gonna write to you when I get settled, if that's okay.

VICK

Yeah. Thanks little baby.

*LIZA smiles and crosses to JUDITH's bunk. JUDITH sits in her bunk, organizing papers and letters.  
LIZA enters.*

LIZA

Hey, Judy.

JUDITH

Oh, hi!

I'm Judith.

LIZA

I'm leaving today.

JUDITH

Congratulations!

What's your name?

LIZA

Liza.

Liza Brown.

JUDITH

That's my daughter's name!

LIZA

Yes, it is.

May I hug you?



JUDITH  
Why, yes.

*LIZA holds JUDITH tight.*

LIZA  
I'm really scared, Mom.  
I'm scared to be without you.

JUDITH  
The little birdy leaves the nest when it knows it can fly.

*Pause.*

LIZA  
Yeah.  
I love you so much.

JUDITH  
Wait, are you leaving?

LIZA  
Yes. I'm getting released today.

JUDITH  
But you can't leave.

LIZA  
I have to.  
It's time to fly.  
Or try to.

JUDITH  
But..  
I don't want you to go.

LIZA  
I know, I know..

JUDITH  
Stay a little longer, please!  
Look at my letters.

*JUDITH shuffles through the papers on her bed.*

JUDITH

My cousin wrote these to me,  
These are for me.

*A long pause.*

LIZA

Judith, you wrote these to yourself.

JUDITH

No, it's signed Mark!

LIZA

Mark Twain.  
The author.

*A long pause.*

JUDITH

What's wrong with me?

LIZA

I don't know, Ma.

But..

You cannot be afraid to tell people how you're feeling.  
You have to talk about what feels wrong, and what feels right.

JUDITH

It doesn't feel right for you to leave.

LIZA

I know, I feel the same way.

I love you.

*LIZA hugs JUDITH one more time.*

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1

Hurry up, Brown!

LIZA

*(to Judith)*

Goodbye.

JUDITH

Wait, please.

Don't go.

*LIZA crosses to CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1.*

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1

My daughter is one hundred percent now, like you hoped for. She's over the flu.

Thank you.

LIZA

I'm so glad. You're welcome.

*JUDITH becomes hysterical as CORRECTIONAL OFFICER #1 walks with LIZA. VICK nods to LIZA before she exits.*

JUDITH

Wait!!

I don't know who I am I don't know what I'm doing I don't know where I am I don't know where I am  
who am I who am I who am I

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit  
of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death,  
Amen. /

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit  
of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death,  
Amen.

VICK

Judith, Judith,

they're / going to sedate you if you don't relax.

Relax.

Breathe.

JUDITH

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit  
of thy..

Oh, I don't remember, what's the prayer what is it what's the prayer

Liza told me she did cocaine with the devil, can that be true?

Is there a Jesus?

Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

Amen. Amen.

*JUDITH begins to breath rapidly.*

VICK

Breathe. Come here, lay down.

*VICK sits on the bed, JUDITH lays with her head in VICK's lap.*

VICK

Good. Slow your breathing, slow it down, slow.

Deep breaths. Good.

JUDITH

Hail Mary..

Hail..

Hail Mary..

Hail..

VICK

Hail Mary, full of grace.

VICK & JUDITH

The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

*VICK marks the holy trinity on JUDITH and kisses her forehead as she lays in her lap, looking up at her..  
Lights fade.*

**END OF PLAY**