



#1 NEW YORK TIMES  
BESTSELLER

THIRTEEN REASONS

WHY

A NOVEL BY

JAY ASHER

STAGEPLAY

# THIRTEEN REASONS WHY

(a stage play)  
based on the novel *Thirteen Reason Why*  
by Jay Asher

*Thirteen Reasons Why* was originally performed at the Antioch Community High School Theatre in Antioch, IL on November 12, 2009. It was directed by Wanda Teddy; sets by Tom Deichsel; lighting by Michael Walsh; the production stage manager was Amanda Dahlem. The book was adapted by Wanda Teddy, Dree Nagel, Kate Dornbusch, Latavia Collins, and Pamela Stelmaseck. For this edition, further (minor) adapting was done by Jay Asher.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE REGARDING THE PLAY

A few years ago, I was asked to speak at a literature festival several states away. 500 students were to be bussed in and given free copies of *Thirteen Reasons Why*. Shortly before my visit, one member of the faculty decided she didn't approve of my book. By the time I arrived, the students were no longer being bussed in and the books were not being given out. I spoke to a near-empty auditorium.

For some reason, that faculty member still attended my presentation. After hearing my speech, where I shared several letters written by my teen readers: "*It just makes me want to be wonderful to everyone . . .*" "*. . . it makes me feel so much better knowing that someone understands.*" "*The truth is that this book saved my life . . .*". The faculty member came up to me afterward. Her impulsive response to the subject matter kept her from appreciating how teens were reading the book. And the book was written specifically for teens.

That same day, I received an e-mail from a high school in Illinois asking if they could adapt *Thirteen Reasons Why* into a play for their fall theater production. (What a roller-coaster day!) They felt the story of Hannah and Clay was important enough to share it with their community. They wanted to raise awareness of issues that are hard to discuss. They also wanted to put on an amazing play!

How could I say no to that?

Their production will forever remain one of the highlights of my life. Several parents in the audience approached me after the lights came up, tears in their eyes, thanking me for trusting their teens with my story. (If those teens responded to my story with that much passion, how could I not trust them?) The students and faculty who brought my characters to the stage have earned my complete respect. In fact, they amaze me. To all of them, I offer a sincere . . .

Thank you.

JAY ASHER



# CAST LIST

## HANNAH

CLAY

MOM

JUSTIN

TONY

ALEX

JESSICA

JIMMY

MR. PORTER

WALLY

BRYCE

BARISTA

TYLER

COURTNEY

MARCUS

## JENNY

CHEERLEADER 1

CHEERLEADER 2

CHEERLEADER 3

MRS. BENSON

MRS. BRADLEY

ZACH

POET LADY 1

POET LADY 2

POET LADY 3

POET LADY 4

RYAN

STUDENT 1

STUDENT 2

STUDENTS

(to fill classroom seats and party scene)

### NOTES ON DIALOGUE/ACTION:

When Hannah speaks into her voice recorder (to audience), everyone other than Clay should freeze. Those moments are about Clay listening to Hannah's recorded words. When Hannah resumes re-enacting a scene with other characters, everyone unfreezes. When Clay speaks to the audience, everyone including Hannah should freeze. Those are Clay's thoughts.

### NOTE ON STAGING:

All sets should be visible at all times. While narrating, Hannah and Clay will move between sets.

# SCENE 1 (Cassette 1: Side A)

(HANNAH sits on her bed upstage, stage right, holding a voice recorder. CLAY enters garage carrying a shoebox. He opens it, puts cassette tape in player, then sits at workbench.)

HANNAH

Hello, boys and girls. Hannah Baker here. Live and in stereo.

CLAY

I don't believe it.

HANNAH

I hope you're ready, because I'm about to tell you the story of my life. More specifically, why my life ended.

CLAY

Hannah Baker killed herself.

HANNAH

If you're listening to these tapes, you're one of the reasons why.

CLAY

What? No!

HANNAH

Fear not, if you received this lovely little box, your name will pop up . . . I promise. / Now, why would a dead girl lie? / Hey, that sounds like a joke. Why would a dead girl lie? Answer: Because she can't stand up.

CLAY

Is this some kind of twisted suicide note?

HANNAH

Oh well. I thought it was funny. / The rules are pretty simple.

(MOM enters from offstage.)

MOM

(clears throat)

What's that you're playing?

CLAY

Mom!

(hits pause)

It's nothing. A school project.

MOM

Can I listen?

CLAY

It's not mine. I'm helping a friend. It's for history. It's boring.

MOM

Well, that's nice of you. I'll leave you in peace.

(MOM exits and CLAY hits play.)



**HANNAH**

There are only two. Rule number one: You listen. Number two: You pass it on. Hopefully, neither one will be easy for you. / When you're done listening to all thirteen sides—because there are thirteen sides to every story—rewind the tapes, put them back in the box, and pass them on to whoever follows your little tale. / In case you're tempted to break the rules, understand that I did make a copy of these tapes. Those copies will be released in a very public manner if this package doesn't make it through all of you. / This was not a spur-of-the-moment decision. / Do not take me for granted . . . again.

**CLAY**

No. There's no way she could think that. / I hardly knew Hannah Baker. I mean, I wanted to. I wanted to know her more than I had the chance. And not once did I take her for granted. Not once. / This has to be a mistake. / Or a terrible joke.

(checks box)

Tomorrow at school, someone will laugh when they see me, or look away. And then I'll know.

**HANNAH**

I almost forgot. If you're on my list, you should've received a map.

**CLAY**

(panic)

I'm on the list.

(grabs his backpack, pulls out map, reads:)

"Save this; you'll need it." / These are the same Chamber of Commerce maps we used in elementary school to learn about north, south, east, and west. / I meant to show it around school to see if anyone else got one in their lockers and knew what it meant. But I'd forgotten all about it. / Till now.

**HANNAH**

Throughout the tapes, I'll be mentioning several spots around our beloved city for you to visit. I can't force you to go there, but if you'd like a little more insight, just head for the stars on the map. Or, if you'd like, just throw the maps away and I'll never know. / Ready, Mr. Foley?

**CLAY**

Justin Foley. A senior. He was Hannah's first kiss. / But why do I know that?

(Scene change: the park with the rocket slide. Change is made while HANNAH narrates.

JUSTIN stands near slide.)

**HANNAH**

(going up slide)

Justin, honey, you were my very first kiss. My very first hand to hold. But you were nothing more than an average guy, and I don't say that to be mean. There was just something about you that made me need to be your girlfriend. / I went back as far as you to find an introduction to my story. And this really is where it begins.

**CLAY**

Where am I on this list, Hannah?

**HANNAH**

When you reach the end of these tapes, Justin, I hope you'll understand your role in all of this. Because it may seem like a small role now, but it matters. In the end, everything matters. / I know you didn't mean to let me down. In fact, most of you listening probably had no idea what you were doing—what you were truly doing.

**CLAY**

What was I doing, Hannah? Because I honestly have no idea.

HANNAH

(to audience)

Our first red star on the map can be found at C-4. Take your finger over to C and drop it down to 4. We only lived in that house a short while, the summer before my freshman year, but it's where we lived when we first came to town. / And it's where I first saw Justin. My neighbor, Kat, had a crush on him, but she was moving away.

CLAY

Why am I listening to this? I mean, why put myself through this?

(emotional)

Because it's Hannah's voice. A voice I thought I'd never hear again.

HANNAH

(to audience)

Kat moved before the start of school, and I fell in love with the boy she left behind. And it wasn't long before that boy started showing an interest in me. / When I asked my mom how to get a boy's attention, she said, "Play hard to get." So that's what I did. And sure enough, it worked. / It seemed like weeks went by before you finally asked for my number. / Yes, boys at my old school had asked for my number. But here, at my new school, you were the first. / No. That's not true. But you were the first to actually get my number. / It's not that I didn't want to give it out before. I was just cautious. New town. New school. And this time, I was going to be in control of how people saw me. After all, how often do we get a second chance?

CLAY

The stories must be bad. Really bad. / Why would people want to pass forward a bunch of tapes blaming them in a suicide? They wouldn't. But Hannah wants us to hear what she has to say. And we'll do what she says, passing the tapes on, if only to keep them away from people not on the list. / "The list." It sounds like a secret club. And for some reason, I'm in it.

HANNAH

By the time I got home, you'd already called. Twice. / You lied and told my mom we had math class together. / I grabbed the slip of paper with your number from my mom's hand and ran upstairs. When you answered the phone, I said, "Justin? It's Hannah. My mom said you called with a math problem. So, Justin, what's the problem?" / And you didn't miss a beat.

JUSTIN

Train A is leaving your house at 3:45 pm. Train B is leaving my house ten minutes later.

HANNAH

Pick me, Mr. Foley. Pick me. I know the answer.

JUSTIN

Yes, Miss Baker?

HANNAH

The two trains meet at Eisenhower Park at the bottom of the rocket slide.

CLAY

What did Hannah see in him? For an average-looking guy, so many girls are into Justin. / Maybe they find him intriguing. He's always looking out windows, contemplating something.

JUSTIN

So, when do the trains meet?

HANNAH

Fifteen minutes.

JUSTIN

Fifteen minutes seems awfully slow for two trains going full speed.

CLAY

Whoa. Slow down, Hannah.

HANNAH

(to audience)

I know what you're all thinking. Hannah Baker is a slut.

(angry)

Wrong. Hannah Baker is not, and never was, a slut. Which begs the question, "What have you heard?" / I simply wanted a kiss. I was a freshman girl who had never been kissed. Never. But I liked a boy, he liked me, and I was going to kiss him. That's the story—the whole story—right there.

CLAY

What was the other story? Because I did hear something.

HANNAH

The few nights leading up to our meeting in the park, I'd had the same dream. In that dream, my first kiss took place at the rocket slide. And now, Justin, I would finally be meeting you. At that park. At the bottom of that slide. / I told you to meet me there in fifteen minutes. Of course, I only said that to make sure I got there before you. By the time you got there, I wanted to be inside that rocket slide, just like in my dreams.

JUSTIN

(from ground)

Hannah!

HANNAH

Be right down.

JUSTIN

Stop. I'll climb up.

HANNAH

No! Let me take the slide.

JUSTIN

I'll catch you.

HANNAH

(to audience)

He said it just like in my dreams. / All my friends back home had had their first kisses in middle school. Mine was waiting for me at the bottom of a slide. All I had to do was push off. / And I did.

(slides into a kiss with JUSTIN—an innocent, closed-lip kiss; to audience)

And that's it. / Wait. Stop. Don't rewind. There's no need to go back because you didn't miss a thing. Let me repeat myself. That . . . is . . . all . . . that . . . happened. / Why, did you hear something else?

CLAY

Yes, I did. We all did.

HANNAH

Well, what did you hear? Because I've heard so many stories that I don't know which one is the most popular. But I do know which is the least popular. The truth.

(JUSTIN and friends move to CSTG and form circle as HANNAH walks by.)

CLAY

I can still see Justin huddled among his friends at school. I remember Hannah walking by, and the whole group stopped talking. They averted their eyes. And when she passed, they started laughing. / But why do I remember this? / Because I wanted to talk to Hannah so many times, but I was too shy. Too afraid. Watching Justin and his friends that day, I got the sense that there was more to her than I knew.



**HANNAH**

So thank you, Justin. My very first kiss was wonderful. You were wonderful. / But then you started bragging. / And eventually, as they always will, the rumors reached me. And everyone knows you can't disprove a rumor. / I know what you're all thinking. A kiss? A rumor based on a kiss made you do this to yourself? / No. A rumor based on a kiss ruined a memory that I hoped would be special. A rumor based on a kiss started a reputation that other people believed in and reacted to. And sometimes, a rumor based on a kiss has a snowball effect. / A rumor, based on a kiss, is just the beginning. / Turn the tape over for more.

(to JUSTIN, who stays frozen)

And Justin, honey, stick around. You're not going to believe where your name pops up next.

**CLAY**

(looks at map)

C-4. I know where that is. But first, I'll go to Tony's. / Tony never upgraded his car stereo, so it still plays tapes. He says that way he's in control of the music if he gives someone a ride. / But most important of all, he owns an old Walkman that plays tapes.

(lifts several tapes out of shoebox)

I'll take a few tapes with me and listen to them as I walk through Hannah's old neighborhood. / Or maybe I'll take the tapes somewhere else. Somewhere private. Because I can't listen here.

(calls)

Mom! I'm heading to a friend's house. For his project. I'll call you later.

(Scene ends with dimmed lights to blackout.)

## SCENE 2 (Cassette 1: Side B/1)

(Stage left, lights up on TONY fixing an engine in what could be his garage or driveway. The Walkman is in a pile behind him. CLAY crosses from stage right and TONY doesn't see him.)

**CLAY**

Did it break down, or is this just for fun?

**TONY**

(glances over his shoulder)

Are you kidding? It's always fun.

(resumes fixing engine)

Though it could be more interesting if I could get this thing to run right. / So what's going on, Clay?

**CLAY**

(to audience)

What's going on? Oh, well, since you asked, I got a bunch of tapes in the mail today from a girl who killed herself. Apparently, I had something to do with it. I'm not sure what that is, so I was wondering if I could borrow your Walkman to find out?

(to TONY)

Not much. / I needed to get out of the house. My mom was getting on my nerves.

**TONY**

Tell me about it. My dad's been nagging me about my homework.

(CLAY sneaks Walkman into his pocket)

But I need to get this fixed first.

(faces CLAY)

So, Clay, what'd you come out here for?

CLAY

(to audience)

What if he's on the tapes? What if he's already listened to them and knows exactly what's going on in my head? Or worse, what if he hasn't received them yet?

(to TONY)

I was just walking by. Thought I'd say hi.

TONY

I'm heading over to Rosie's in a minute to see what's up. Can I give you a lift?

CLAY

Thanks, but I'm only walking a few blocks.

TONY

Where you off to?

CLAY

(to audience)

God, I am freaking out.

(to TONY)

Nowhere.

(Blackout.)

## SCENE 3 (Cassette 1: Side B/2)

(Lights up on CLAY, with headphones on sitting midstage as he flips the tape to side B.  
HANNAH on her bed with recorder.)

CLAY

(to himself)

Sorry, Tony. Just too messed up to go into.

(clicks play)

HANNAH

Welcome back. And thanks for hanging out for part two. / If you're listening to this, one of two things has just happened. A: You're Justin, and after hearing your little tale you want to hear who's next. Or B: You're someone else and you're waiting to see if it's you. / Well . . . Alex Standall, it's your turn.

(Spotlight on ALEX in classroom set upstage.)

CLAY

(wipes forehead)

It's not me.

HANNAH

I'm sure you have no idea why you're on here, Alex. You probably think you did a good thing, right?

CLAY

The list.

HANNAH

You voted me Best Ass in the Freshman Class. How could anyone be angry at that? / If you think I'm being silly—if you think I'm some stupid little girl who gets her panties in a bunch over the tiniest things—listen. And you kind of have to, don't you? Because I can name a whole list of people who would care very much if that second set of tapes got out. So let's begin, shall we?

(ALEX, HANNAH, STUDENTS, and MR. PORTER move to classroom where a movie plays.  
Everyone is frozen as HANNAH begins.)

**HANNAH**

I remember sitting in second period the morning the list came out, picking at an old piece of tape stuck on my desk to keep from falling asleep.

(turns to class and scene unfreezes; STUDENTS whisper to each other; a sheet of paper is passed from student to student; to audience)

Eventually, it made its way to the desk behind me.

**JIMMY**

(leans forward over desk to check out HANNAH)

You bet it is.

**HANNAH**

(turns around)

You bet what is?

(JIMMY glances at paper and smiles.)

**CLAY**

When I first saw that list in history class, there were a few names I didn't recognize. But Hannah, I knew her name. And I laughed when I saw it. She was building quite a reputation in a short amount of time. / Only now do I realize that her reputation started in Justin Foley's imagination.

(CLAY moves close to JUSTIN, still frozen near slide.)

**HANNAH**

(tilts head to read paper, whispers)

Freshman Class: Who's Hot/Who's Not.

(to audience)

I had to find my name. I didn't care why I was on the list. At the time, I don't think I even cared which side of the list I was on. There's just something about having everyone agree on something—something about you—that opens a cage of butterflies in your stomach.

(scene unfreezes)

Where is my name?

(MR. PORTER grabs the note. HANNAH looks at JESSICA on other side of the room.

JESSICA is clearly angry, tapping her pencil on the desk.)

**JESSICA**

Seriously?

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Right next to my name, but in the other column, was Jessica Davis' name. / Truth is, Jessica is so much prettier than I am. She would beat me in every category.

**CLAY**

I disagree, Hannah.

**HANNAH**

Everyone knows Worst Ass in the Freshman Class was a lie. But I'm sure no one cared why Jessica ended up on that side of your list, Alex. / Well, no one except you . . . and me . . . and Jessica makes three. / Maybe some people think you were right in choosing me over Jessica, but I think the deciding factor . . . was revenge. / But this tape is not about your motivation, Alex. Though that is coming up. This tape is about how people change when they see your name on a stupid list.

(opens a piece of paper)

I just looked over every name—every story—that completes these tapes. And guess what. Every single event



documented here may never have happened had you, Alex, not written my name on that list. It's that simple. / You needed a name to put down opposite Jessica's. And since everyone at school already had a perverted image of me after Justin's little number, I was the perfect choice, wasn't I?

(looking at JUSTIN)

And the snowball keeps a-rolling. Thanks, Justin.

**CLAY**

Alex's list was a joke. A bad one, true. But he had no idea it would affect her like this. This isn't fair. / And what about me? What did I do? How will Hannah say that I scarred her? Because I have no idea. Some of them, at least two of them, already know why I'm on here. Do they see me differently now? / No. They can't. Because my name does not belong with theirs. I should not be on this list. I'm sure of it. / I did nothing wrong!

**HANNAH**

This tape isn't about why you did what you did, Alex. It's about the repercussions of what you did. More specifically, the repercussions to me.

(Blackout)

## SCENE 4 (Cassette 1: Side B/3)

(HANNAH moves to the Blue Spot Liquor set. While CLAY walks around, HANNAH talks.)

**HANNAH**

The day your list came out wasn't too traumatic. I knew it was a joke, and whoever had a copy, they knew it was a joke, too. / But what happens when someone says you have the best ass in the freshman class? Let me tell you, Alex, because you'll never know. It gives people—some people—the go-ahead to treat you like you're nothing but that specific body part. / Need an example? Fine. B-3 on your maps. Blue Spot Liquor.

**CLAY**

It's nearby.

**HANNAH**

I used to walk there anytime I had a sweet tooth. Which means, yes, I went there every day.

**CLAY**

Blue Spot has always looked grimy from the sidewalk, so I've never actually gone inside.

(Lights up on Blue Spot. HANNAH has her backpack open on the counter.)

**HANNAH**

If I wanted to, I could tell you the name of the person who walked in while I searched my backpack for money. I do remember. But as far as your story goes, Alex, his action—his horrible, disgusting action—was just an aftereffect of yours. / Plus, he's got a whole tape all to himself.

**CLAY**

What happened in the store because of Alex's list? / No. I don't want to know. And I don't want to see Alex. Not tomorrow. Not the day after that. Or Justin or Jimmy. God, who else is involved in this?

(BRYCE enters.)

**BRYCE**

Hey, Wally! / Oh, Hannah, hey. I didn't see you there.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Did I mention I was standing at the counter, visible to anyone the moment they opened the door?

(HANNAH smiles at BRYCE and gives money to WALLY. Register rings up sale.)

**BRYCE**

Hey Wally, guess what?  
(smacks her butt)

**BRYCE**

Best Ass in the Freshman Class, Wally. Standing right here in your store!

**CLAY**

There's more than a few guys I can picture doing that. The sarcasm. The arrogance.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Did it hurt? No. But that doesn't matter because the question is, did he have the right to do it? And the answer, I hope, is obvious.

(HANNAH knocks BRYCE'S hand away. WALLY makes a clicking sound with his tongue in disgust. HANNAH swings her backpack onto her back.)

**HANNAH**

(to Bryce)

Excuse me.

(HANNAH avoids eye contact and moves around BRYCE.)

**BRYCE**

(grabs HANNAH'S wrist and whispers)

Hannah.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

When I looked into his eyes, the joking game was gone.

(HANNAH yanks arm away from BRYCE'S tight grip.)

**CLAY**

I know who Hannah's talking about now. I've seen his wrist-grabbing stunt before. It always makes me want to grab him by the shirt and push him until he lets the girl go. / But instead, every time, I pretend not to notice. / What could I do, anyway?

**BRYCE**

I'm only playing, Hannah.

(hand on HANNAH'S shoulder)

Just relax.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Okay, let's dissect what just happened. / First his words—then his actions. Statement number one:

**BRYCE**

I'm only playing, Hannah.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Translation: Your ass is my play-toy. You might think you have final say over what happens to your ass, but you don't. At least, not as long as

(air quotes)

"I'm only playing." / Statement number two:

**BRYCE**

Just relax.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Translation: Come on, Hannah, all I did was touch you with no indication that you wanted me to touch you. If it'll make you feel better, go ahead, you can touch me wherever you'd like. / Now let's talk about his actions, shall we? / Action number one: Smacking my ass. / Interpretation: Let me back up and say that this guy had never touched my ass before, so why now? My pants weren't anything special. They weren't overly tight. Sure, they were slung a little low and he probably got a hip shot, but he didn't grab my hips. He grabbed my ass.

**CLAY**

I'm starting to understand. I'm starting to see what Hannah means. And that opens up a black hole in the pit of my stomach.

**HANNAH**

Alex, am I saying your list gave him permission to grab my ass? No. I'm saying it gave him an excuse. And an excuse was all this guy needed. / Action number two: He grabbed my wrist then put his hand on my shoulder. / You know, I'm not even going to interpret this. I'm just going to tell you why it pissed me off. I've had my butt grabbed before—no big deal—but this time it was grabbed because someone else wrote my name on a list. And when this guy saw me upset, did he apologize? No. Instead, he got aggressive. Then, in the most condescending way, he told me to relax. Then he put his hand on my shoulder, as if by touching me he'd somehow comfort me. / Here's a tip. If you touch a girl, even as a joke, and she pushes you off, leave . . . her . . . alone. Don't touch her. Anywhere! Just stop. / There are some sick and twisted people out there, Alex—and maybe I'm one of them—but the point is, when you hold people up to ridicule, you have to take responsibility when other people act on it.

**CLAY**

All because of a list.

**HANNAH**

Actually, that's not right. You held Jessica up for ridicule. And that's where our snowball picks up speed. / Jessica, my dear . . . you're next.

## SCENE 5 (Cassette 2: Side A)

(Lights up on CLAY as he switches tapes.)

**HANNAH**

(crosses stage left to Monet set)

I wasn't completely alone, the beginning of my freshman year. Two other freshmen, both featured here on Hannah's Greatest Hits, were also new to the area. Alex Standall and Jessica Davis. And while we never became close friends, we did rely on each other those first few weeks of school. / So where did we go? E-7 on your map. Monet's Garden Café & Coffeehouse.

(Lights up on Monet's set stage left. JESSICA and ALEX are sitting at two close set tables.)

**HANNAH**

(sits at JESSICA's table; to audience)

I honestly don't remember much of what we said that afternoon. When I close my eyes, everything happens in a kind of montage. Laughing. Trying hard not to spill our drinks. Waving our hands while we talk.



JESSICA

(leans toward HANNAH; whispers)

I think that guy's checking you out.

HANNAH

He's checking you out.

JESSICA

(to ALEX)

Excuse me, but which one of us are you checking out?

CLAY

And a few months later, after the Justin Foley rumors begin, Alex writes a list. Who's hot. Who's not. But there, at Monet's, no one knew where that meeting would lead. / I want to push Stop on the Walkman and rewind into the past and warn them. Or prevent them from even meeting. / But I can't. You can't rewrite the past.

HANNAH

(to audience)

Alex blushed. And when he opened his mouth to deny it, Jessica cut him off.

JESSICA

Don't lie. Which one of us were you checking out?

ALEX

Uh . . .

JESSICA

(leans onto ALEX'S table)

Look, we saw you watching us. We're both new to this town and we'd like to know who you were staring at. It's important.

ALEX

I just . . . I heard . . . it's just, I'm new here, too.

JESSICA/HANNAH

(together)

Oh.

HANNAH

(to audience)

Poor Alex just wanted to be a part of our conversation. So we let him. / That afternoon at Monet's was a relief for all three of us. How many nights had I fallen asleep terrified, thinking of that first day of school? Too many. And after Monet's? None. Now, I was excited. / And just so you know, I never thought of Jessica or Alex as friends. But those first few weeks, until we each peeled away, Monet's Garden was our safe haven. / I'm not sure who started it, but whoever had the most exhausting day would lay a hand in the center of the table and say:

ALEX

(puts a hand in the center of the table)

Olly-olly-oxen-free.

(HANNAH and JESSICA put their hands in.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

The other two would lay their hands on top and lean in. Then we'd listen, sipping drinks with our free

hands. / Monet's truly filled whatever void needed filling at the time. For all of us. / But don't worry . . . it didn't last.

CLAY

Why?

HANNAH

(to audience)

The first to drop out was Alex.

(ALEX leaves the set)

Then Jessica stopped going.

(JESSICA leaves the set)

And though I went to Monet's a few more times hoping one of them might wander in, eventually, I stopped going, too. / Until . . .

CLAY

What happened, Hannah?

HANNAH

(to audience)

At school one day, Jessica walked up to me in the halls. "We need to talk," she said. She didn't say where or why, but I knew she meant Monet's . . . and I thought I knew why.

(JESSICA enters and sits at table. HANNAH puts a hand in the center.)

JESSICA

(slaps a paper on the table)

Who's hot? Who's not?

CLAY

When I read that list, I passed it down the aisle without a thought.

HANNAH

(to JESSICA)

Who cares? It doesn't mean anything.

JESSICA

Hannah, I don't care that he picked you over me.

CLAY

And now? How do I see it now? / I should've grabbed every copy I could find and thrown them all away.

HANNAH

(to JESSICA)

He did not choose me over you, Jessica. He chose me to get back at you and you know that. He knew my name would hurt you more than anyone else's.

JESSICA

(eyes closed)

Hannah.

(whispers)

Hannah, I know the rumors.

HANNAH

You can't know rumors.

(to audience)

Maybe I was being a little naive, but I had hoped—silly me—that there would be no more rumors when

my family moved here. That I had left the rumors and gossip behind me . . . for good.

(to JESSICA)

You can hear rumors, but you can't know them.

**JESSICA**

Hannah.

**HANNAH**

Yes, I know the rumors. And I swear, I haven't seen Alex one time outside of school. You have to believe me.

(to audience)

Why should she believe me? Why would anyone not believe a rumor that fits so nicely with an old rumor?  
/ Huh, Justin? Why?

**CLAY**

Jessica could have heard so many rumors about Alex and Hannah. But none of them were true.

**HANNAH**

For Jessica, it was easier to think of me as Bad Hannah than as the Hannah she got to know at Monet's. It was easier to accept. Easier to understand. / For her, the rumors needed to be true.

**CLAY**

I remember a bunch of guys joking with Alex about Hannah in the locker room. / When they cleared out, only Alex and I remained. A tiny wrench of jealousy twisted up my insides, but I couldn't bring myself to ask if what they had said was true. Because if it was, I didn't want to hear it. / Tightening his shoelaces, and without looking at me, Alex denied it all.

**JESSICA**

I don't believe you.

**HANNAH**

Fine. Fine, Jessica. Thank you for helping me the first few weeks of school. It meant a lot. And I'm sorry Alex screwed that up with this stupid little list of his. / I know all about your relationship with him. On that first day here, he had been checking one of us out. And it wasn't me. But if it helps you get over it, I accept any blame you want to put on me for the two of you breaking up. But...it . . . is . . . not . . . true!

(to audience)

But all Jessica heard was me accepting blame.

(JESSICA stands and slaps HANNAH, then exits.)

**HANNAH**

So tell me, Jessica, what did you mean to do? Punch me, or scratch me? Because it felt like a little bit of both. Like you couldn't really decide. / That tiny scar you've all seen above my eyebrow, that's the shape of Jessica's fingernail . . . which I plucked out myself.

**CLAY**

I noticed that scar a few weeks ago. At the party. A tiny flaw on a pretty face. And I told her how cute it was. / Minutes later, she started freaking out.

**HANNAH**

I see that scar every morning when I get ready for school. "Good morning, Hannah," it says. And every night when I get ready for bed. "Sleep tight." / But it's more than just a scratch. It's a punch in the stomach and a slap in the face. It's a knife in my back because a friend would rather believe some made-up rumor than what they knew to be true. / Jessica, my dear, I'd really love to know if you dragged yourself to my funeral. And if you did, did you notice your scar? / And what about you—the rest of you—did you notice the scars you left behind? / No. Probably not.



CLAY

That wasn't possible.

HANNAH

Because most of them can't be seen with the naked eye.

CLAY

Because there was no funeral, Hannah.

(Blackout.)

## SCENE 6 (Cassette 2: Side B/1)

(Hannah crosses stage right to platform below bedroom. Lights up on Monet's set stage left. CLAY is there, buying coffee from a BARISTA. He has the headphones around his neck.)

CLAY

I figure if I drink enough Hairy Chest Blend coffee, which sounds highly caffeinated, maybe I can stay up late to finish the tapes. / But should I? In one night? Or should I find my story, listen to it, then just enough of the next tape to see who I'm supposed to pass them off to?

BARISTA

What're you listening to?

CLAY

Just some tapes.

BARISTA

Cassette tapes? Interesting. Anyone I've heard of?

(CLAY shakes his head, dropping sugar cubes into his coffee.)

BARISTA

We went to school together, two years ago. You're Clay, right?

(they shake hands)

We had one class together, but we didn't talk much.

CLAY

You look familiar.

BARISTA

You wouldn't recognize me. I've changed a lot since high school. Thank God.

CLAY

Which class did we have?

BARISTA

Wood Shop. The only thing I got out of that class were splinters. Oh, and I made a piano bench. Do you remember what you made?

CLAY

A spice rack.

BARISTA

Well, maybe I'll see you around, when there's more time to talk.

(BARISTA walks behind the bar.)

CLAY

(puts on headphones and flips the tape)

Why isn't she talking?

(fiddles with the Walkman)

Why—?

HANNAH

(whispers, to audience)

Shh! . . . / Sometimes there's no one around to tell you to be quiet. Sometimes you need to be quiet when you're all alone. / Like me, right now. / Shh! / For example, you'd better be quiet—extremely quiet—if you're going to be a Peeping Tom. Because what if they heard? What if she . . . what if I . . . found out? / Guess what, Tyler Down? I found out.

(CLAY sits at table, leans back, and closes his eyes.)

HANNAH

I feel sorry for you, Tyler. Everyone else on these tapes, so far, must feel a little relieved. They came off as liars or jerks or insecure people lashing out at others. But your story, Tyler . . . it's kind of creepy. / And I feel a little creepy telling it, too. I'm trying to understand the excitement of staring through someone's bedroom window. Watching someone who doesn't know they're being watched. Trying to catch her in the act of— / What were you trying to catch me in the act of, Tyler? And were you disappointed? Or pleasantly surprised? / Okay, a show of hands, please. Who knows where I'm standing right now?

CLAY

Where are you, Hannah?

HANNAH

If you said, "Outside Tyler's window," you're right. And that's A-4 on your maps. / There's a meeting of the yearbook staff tonight. So I know Tyler won't be home until after it gets all nice and dark. Which, as an amateur Peeping Tom, I appreciate very much. / So thank you, Tyler. Thanks for making this so easy. / Let's take a peek inside before you get home, shall we?

(looks in window)

You've got quite a collection of camera equipment here, Tyler. A lens for every occasion. I know, I know. You're the student-life photographer for the yearbook. But is that the way you use this stuff? Candid shots of the student body? / Ah, yes. Candid shots of the student body. / I took the initiative to look up "candid" in the dictionary. Here's the definition, memorized for your pleasure: Relating to photography of subjects acting naturally or spontaneously without being posed. / So tell me, Tyler, those nights you stood outside my window, was I spontaneous enough for you? Did you catch me in all my natural, un-posed— / Wait. Did you hear that?

(sound of a car under her voice: tires rolling on pavement, then engine idles)

It's you, Tyler. And yes, this is exciting. I can definitely see the thrill.

(engine stops)

Okay, listeners, ready?

(car door slams; keys jangle; door opens)

CLAY

It must have been terrifying for him to hear this. And it must be hell knowing he's not the only one.

HANNAH

As we wait, I'm going to go back and tell everyone how this all began. And if I'm wrong with the timeline, Tyler, find the other people on these tapes and let them know you started peeping long before I caught you. / You'll do that, right? All of you? You'll fill in the gaps? Because every story I'm telling leaves so many unanswered questions.

CLAY

I would've answered any questions, Hannah. But you never asked.

## SCENE 7 (Cassette 2: Side B/2)

(Lights up on HANNAH'S room. HANNAH stands by bedroom door/edge of room. TYLER waits in the bushes outside.)

**HANNAH**

How long were you stalking me, Tyler? How did you know my parents were out of town that week? / In previous stories, I told you all that the rumors you've all heard about me weren't true. And they're not. But I never claimed to be a Goody Two-Shoes. I did go out when my parents weren't home, but only because I could stay out as long as I wanted. / As you know, Tyler, on the night this all began, the boy I went out with walked me all the way to my front door. He stood there while I pulled out my keys to unlock the door . . . then he left. / Were you hoping I'd invite the guy in? Or would that have made you jealous? / Either way, after I went inside—alone!—the moment I stepped into my room . . .

(HANNAH walks to bed. TYLER unfreezes and clicks the camera at the window; the sound is audible)

**HANNAH**

Outside. That sounded like a camera. / No, I'm only freaking myself out.

(sits on bed; another click)

Maybe it was the bed creaking. That's it.

(gets under the covers; another click; to audience)

Truth is, I didn't know what to hope for. My parents weren't home. I was alone. I figured ignoring him was my best option. I was too afraid of what might happen if he saw me reaching for the phone. / Stupid? Yes. But did it make sense? Yes . . . at the time.

**CLAY**

You should've called the cops, Hannah. It might have stopped this snowball from picking up speed. The one you've been talking about. / The one that ran over all of us.

**HANNAH**

Had I snuck under the blinds and looked up to see your face, Tyler, I would've run outside and embarrassed the hell out of you. / In fact, that brings up the most interesting part of—

(Blackout on bedroom.)

**CLAY**

Of what?

(Lights up on bedroom. HANNAH and TYLER have switched places.)

**HANNAH**

Wait! Here you come.

Okay, you're turning on the lights and . . . you shut the door. You're . . . you're sitting on the bed. You're yanking off your shoes and . . . now your socks.

**CLAY**

(groans)

It's your room, Tyler, you can do what you want, but don't embarrass yourself anymore.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Maybe I should tap on the window. Maybe I should give him the same paranoia he gave me. / Revenge might be fun. Revenge, in a twisted way, might give me some sense of satisfaction. But we need to move on.



## SCENE 8 (Cassette 2: Side B/3)

(Lights up on classroom set upstage. COURTNEY and STUDENTS are frozen.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

At school that next day, I told a girl who sat in front of me what happened. This girl's known for being a good listener, and sympathetic, and I wanted someone to validate my fears. / Well, she was definitely not the girl for that job. This girl's got a twisted side that very few know about.

COURTNEY

A Peeping Tom? You mean, a real one?

HANNAH

I think so.

COURTNEY

I always wondered what that'd be like. Having a Peeping Tom is kind of . . . I don't know . . . sexy.

CLAY

Definitely twisted. But who is she? / And why do I care?

COURTNEY

Do you think he'll come back?

HANNAH

What if he does?

COURTNEY

Then you'll have to tell me all about it.

(COURTNEY turns away from HANNAH.)

HANNAH

(taps COURTNEY on the shoulder until she turns)

How would you like to come over and catch a Peeping Tom? Two girls. Irresistible, right? You can tell your parents we're doing a school project.

(Blackout. HANNAH and COURTNEY move to bedroom.)

CLAY

God, does everyone use that excuse? You'd think parents would've caught on by now.

## SCENE 8 (Cassette 2: Side B/4)

(Lights up on HANNAH'S bedroom. HANNAH sits with COURTNEY on the bed. TYLER is outside.)

HANNAH

(to COURTNEY)

And that's when I heard the first . . .

(Sound of camera click.)

**COURTNEY**

(whispers)

Pretend you didn't hear. Just play along.

(obviously acting)

Oh my god! You let him touch you where?

(Click.)

You know what I could use? A nice, deep, back massage.

**HANNAH**

(whispers)

You're evil.

(Click.)

**COURTNEY**

(whispers)

You know what it means if he stops taking pictures, right?

**HANNAH**

(whispers)

No.

**COURTNEY**

(whispers)

It means he's doing something else.

(Click.)

(disappointed)

Oh well.

**HANNAH**

(whispers)

We should call the cops.

**COURTNEY**

(whispers)

No way. I'm not leaving until I find out if I know him. What if he goes to our school?

**HANNAH**

(whispers)

What if he does?

**COURTNEY**

(whispers)

When I say "three", charge the window.

(stops whispering)

It's time for some body lotion.

(Click.)

**HANNAH**

(forceful)

Look in my top dresser drawer.

**CLAY**

(shifts uncomfortably)

I can't stop listening.

**COURTNEY**

(opens drawer and feigns shock)

I didn't know you were into this! We should use it . . . together.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

There was nothing in my drawer worthy of a reaction like that. There was nothing in my whole room worthy of that.

(to COURTNEY)

Um, okay.

**COURTNEY**

How many of these do you have? You are definitely a naughty girl.

(Click. Click.)

**HANNAH**

Why don't you count them?

**COURTNEY**

Let's see, now. Here's one . . . and two . . . THREE!

(HANNAH runs to the window and pulls up the blinds. TYLER runs off stage right.)

**CLAY**

Tyler, I'm sorry, but you brought this on yourself.

**HANNAH**

(toward stage right where TYLER exited)

So who were you? I saw your height and your hair, but I couldn't see your face clearly enough. / Still, you gave yourself up, Tyler. The next day at school I asked so many people the exact same question, Where were you last night? Tyler, you had the most defensive—and interesting—response of all.

**TYLER**

(from offstage)

What, me? Nowhere.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

And for some reason, telling me you were nowhere made your eyes twitch and your forehead break into a sweat.

**CLAY**

You are such an idiot, Tyler.

**HANNAH**

Hey, at least you're original. And at least you stopped coming around my house. But your presence, Tyler, that never left. / Why didn't you leave me alone? My house. My bedroom. They were supposed to be safe for me. Safe from everything outside. But you were the one who took that away. / Well . . . not all of it.

(voice trembles)

But you took away what was left. / So who was this mystery girl featured in your story, Tyler? / Should I tell? / That depends. What did she ever do to me? / For the answer . . . insert tape three.

(Blackout.)



# SCENE 9 (Cassette 3: Side A/1)

(Lights up on CLAY sitting at Monet's. HANNAH is in her bedroom with recorder.)

CLAY

I'm ready for it to be me, Hannah. I'm ready to get this over with.

(CLAY switches tapes.)

HANNAH

Courtney Crimsen. What a pretty name. And yes, a very pretty girl, as well. / You're sweet to everyone you meet in the halls. You're sweet to everyone as they walk with you to your car after school. / You . . . are . . . just . . . so . . . sweet. Right? / Wrong.

CLAY

What are you doing, Hannah?

(CLAY goes to refill coffee.)

HANNAH

Yes, my dear listeners, Courtney is nice to whomever she comes in contact with or whomever she's talking to. And yet, ask yourselves—is it all a show? / I think it is. Now let me tell you why. / First off, to everyone listening, I doubt Tyler will let you see the pictures he took of me giving Courtney a backrub.

CLAY

(nearly spills his coffee)

Courtney's the one from Hannah's room?

HANNAH

If you have seen those pictures, lucky you. I'm sure they're very sexy. But as you now know, they're also very posed. / Posed. What an interesting word to sum up Courtney's tale. Because when you're posed, you know someone's watching. / Yes, Courtney, you put on your very best smile. You let your sweetest personality shine. / I don't think you do this intentionally, Courtney. And that's why I put you on these tapes. To let you know that what you do affects others. More specifically, it affected me.

CLAY

Courtney does come off as genuinely sweet. Hearing her story here, on these tapes, must have killed her. / "Killed her." A phrase I will now drop from my vocabulary.

HANNAH

Courtney Crimsen. The name sounds almost too perfect. And as I said, you look too perfect, too. The only thing left . . . is to be perfect.

(Coffee in hand, CLAY goes back to his table.)

HANNAH

So that's where I give you credit. You could have taken the bitch route and still had all the friends and boyfriends you could handle. But instead you took the sweet route, so everyone would like you and not a soul would hate you. / Let me be very clear. I do not hate you, Courtney. In fact, I don't even dislike you. But for a time, I thought you and I were becoming friends.

CLAY

I don't remember that. I don't think I ever saw them hanging out.

HANNAH

It turns out you were just grooming me to be another tally mark under People Who Think Courtney Crimson Is a Really Neat Girl. And once you did it to me, and I realized it, I watched you do it to others. / Here, Courtney, is your contribution to the anthology of my life.

# SCENE 10 (Cassette 3: Side A/2)

(Lights up on classroom. COURTNEY is talking to other STUDENTS until HANNAH taps her on the shoulder.)

**COURTNEY**

Hey! So weird last night, right?

**HANNAH**

I know.

**COURTNEY**

I mean, what the hell?

**HANNAH**

Seriously.

**COURTNEY**

Too funny!

(Both laugh until MR. PORTER walks in. COURTNEY faces front. Spotlight on Monet's.)

**CLAY**

(looks at the map)

Part of me feels strange about keeping such a close track of Hannah's story. Like I'm obsessed. Too obsessed.

(HANNAH walks just outside classroom set with her backpack.)

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

It wasn't until I stepped into the hall on my way to second period that I thought, Wait a sec. She didn't say good-bye. She just walked out of class without so much as a glance in my direction.

**CLAY**

I'm just doing what she asked. That's not obsession. It's respect. I'm living out her last request.

**HANNAH**

Did you say good-bye on any other day, Courtney? No, not often. But this time it felt intentional. I guess I thought that after what we'd experienced less than twenty-four hours before, we would now be more than just casual acquaintances.

**CLAY**

A-4. A red star on Tyler's house.

**HANNAH**

But that, evidently, is what we'd become once again. / Until the night of the party. / Until the night she needed me again. / Let me tell you, dear listeners, there is a much bigger, more important party later in the tapes.

**CLAY**

Is that it? Is that where I come in?

**HANNAH**

But this is the party that brings Courtney into the mix. / I was at school.

COURTNEY

Hannah, wait up. How are you?

HANNAH

Fine. How are you?

(to audience)

But truthfully, I didn't care. Every time our eyes caught each other in a crowded hall and I watched her gaze jump to someone else, I lost a little more respect for her. And sometimes I wondered how many other people in that one hallway felt the same.

COURTNEY

Did you hear about the party tonight?

HANNAH

I have, but I don't feel like going and wandering around looking for someone to talk to.

COURTNEY

We should go together.

HANNAH

(to audience)

She tilted her head to the side and flashed her smile.

(COURTNEY tilts her head and smiles.)

And—though I'm probably imagining this—I think I even saw her bat her eyes.

(COURTNEY bats her eyes.)

CLAY

Yeah, that's Courtney. No one can resist her, and she flirts with everyone.

HANNAH

(to COURTNEY)

Why? Why should we go to a party together?

(to audience)

That obviously took her by surprise. I mean, Courtney is who she is and everyone wants to go to a party with her. Everyone! Boys. Girls. It doesn't matter. That's the kind of admiration people have for her.

CLAY

Have? Or had? Because I have a feeling that's about to change.

HANNAH

Most of them, unfortunately, don't realize how carefully she plans her image.

COURTNEY

Why should we go to a party together? Hannah, so we can hang out!

HANNAH

Why do you want to hang out after ignoring me for so long?

COURTNEY

I haven't been ignoring you. You must have misread things. It'll be a great chance to get to know each other better.

HANNAH

(to audience)

Although I was still suspicious. She is who she is and everyone wants to go to a party with her.

COURTNEY

Great! Can you drive?



**HANNAH**

(obviously a little hurt)

Sure, Courtney. What time?

**COURTNEY**

I'll give you the time and address and everything.

(opens notebook, writes on it, and rips out paper for HANNAH)

This is going to be great!

(Blackout on classroom.)

## SCENE 11 (Cassette 3: Side A/1)

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Here's my theory as to why you wanted to go to a party with me, Courtney: You knew I was pissed at being ignored by you. At the very least, you knew I was hurt. And that was not good for your flawless reputation. That had to be fixed. / D-4 on your map, everybody. Courtney's house. / When I pulled up to the curb, your front door flew open. Out you came, bounding off the porch and down the walkway.

(Lights up on party house set. COURTNEY and HANNAH arrive at the party. JESSICA, ALEX, JUSTIN, BRYCE and other STUDENTS are mingling.)

**CLAY**

Why do I feel so compelled to follow her map? I don't need to. I'm listening to the tapes, every single one, front and back, and that should be enough. / But it's not. / I'm not following the map because she wants me to. I'm following it because I need to understand. Whatever it takes, I need to truly understand what happened to her.

**COURTNEY**

(to HANNAH)

Thanks for the lift.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

The lift? / I wanted to be wrong about Courtney. I did. But at that moment, I knew how the party would play out. But how it ended? Well, that was a surprise. That . . . was weird.

(Two football player STUDENTS collect money at the door to the party. HANNAH reaches into her pocket.)

**STUDENT 1**

Two bucks a cup. / Oh. Hey, Courtney. Here you go.

(STUDENT 1 hands COURTNEY a red plastic cup.)

**CLAY**

Two bucks? That's it? They must charge girls differently.

**STUDENT 1**

(hands HANNAH a cup and smiles)

My replacement is coming soon. We should hang out.

**COURTNEY**

(grabs HANNAH by the arm)

Don't. Trust me.

HANNAH

Why?

(COURTNEY looks into the party and doesn't respond.)

CLAY

I don't remember any stories of Courtney and any football players. Basketball players, yes. Many of them. But football? None.

COURTNEY

We should split up.

HANNAH

(under her breath)

Gee, that sure didn't take long.

COURTNEY

There are a few people I need to see, and we can meet up later.

HANNAH

Yeah, there are some people I need to meet up with, too.

COURTNEY

Don't leave without me. You're my ride, remember?

(Blackout.)

## SCENE 12 (Cassette 3: Side A/4)

(Lights up on bench outside Monet's. CLAY is looking at map. SKYE approaches from behind him. Evening is setting in.)

SKYE

Planning a trip?

(CLAY looks over his shoulder at SKYE.)

CLAY

(to audience)

Skye Miller. My eighth grade crush. She's always been pretty, but she acts like the thought's never crossed her mind. Especially the past couple of years.

(to SKYE)

Hey, Skye.

(SKYE smirks in response.)

CLAY

(to audience)

Now, she hardly ever talks to anyone. Why? What happened between eighth grade and now? No one knows. One day, at least it seemed that fast, she just stopped wanting to be a part of anything.

(looks at her)

I could invite her to sit and talk. To be more exact, I could try to talk with her. An almost guaranteed one-way conversation.

SKYE

(turns to leave)

See you tomorrow.

CLAY

(to audience)

And that's it. The conversation's over. Longer than usual, actually. Part of me, I admit, is relieved.

(to SKYE as she walks away)

See you later.

(picks up backpack and map and begins to walk)

How will I know which one is Tyler's house? This is the block, I know that, and it's this side of the block, but Hannah gave no address and it's getting dark.

(with a chuckle)

Maybe I'll get lucky. Maybe there will be a sign posted in his yard. 'Peeping Tom - Come Inside'.

(CLAY looks at house and stops smiling. A bedroom light is on. A spiderweb of duct tape holds the fractured window together.)

CLAY

There's duct tape holding the window together. / Was it a rock? Did someone throw a rock at his window? / Was it someone who knew? Someone from the list? / As I get closer I can almost picture her, Hannah, standing beside his window whispering into a recorder. Words too soft for me to hear at this distance. But in the end, the words reach me.

(MARCUS approaches from behind.)

MARCUS

You want to throw something?

(CLAY turns, prepared to fight.)

MARCUS

Hold it! It's me.

CLAY

(rests hands on knees, relieved)

What are you doing here?

MARCUS

(holds out fist-sized rock)

Take it.

CLAY

Why?

MARCUS

(points at Walkman)

You'll feel better, Clay. Honest.

CLAY

Let me guess, Marcus. You're on the tapes.

(nods to window)

Did you do that?

MARCUS

(pushes rock into CLAY's hand)

You'd be the first to say no, Clay.

CLAY

(to audience)

My heart starts racing. Not from Marcus standing here, or Tyler standing somewhere inside, or the heavy rock in my hand, but from what he just told me.



**MARCUS**

You're the third person to come out here. Plus me. / That's my house down there. With the light on. I've been watching Tyler's house to see who comes around.

**CLAY**

(to audience)

I can't imagine what Tyler told his parents. Did he plead with them not to replace the window because more might be coming? And what did they say? Did they ask how he knew? Did they ask why?

**MARCUS**

The first was Alex. We were hanging out at my house when, out of nowhere, he wanted me to point out Tyler's house. I didn't know why, it's not like they were friends, but he really wanted to know.

**CLAY**

So, what, you just gave him a rock to throw at his window?

**MARCUS**

No. It was his idea. I didn't even know the tapes existed yet.

**CLAY**

(to audience)

Why did Marcus choose this heavy rock for me?

(feeling weight of the rock)

He's heard the rest of the tapes, but he obviously wants me to be the one to finish off the window. Why? / I should make him tell me which window is his. I should tell Marcus this rock is going through one of his house's windows, and he might as well tell me which one is his so I don't scare the hell out of his little sister.

(to MARCUS)

You're a dick, Marcus.

**MARCUS**

What?

**CLAY**

You're on the tapes, too. Right?

**MARCUS**

So are you, Clay.

**CLAY**

What makes us so different from him?

**MARCUS**

He's a Peeping Tom. He's a freak. He looked in Hannah's window, so why not break his?

**CLAY**

And you? What did you do?

**MARCUS**

(stares off, then blinks)

Nothing. It's ridiculous. I don't belong on those tapes. Hannah just wanted an excuse to kill herself.

**CLAY**

(drops rock with anger)

Get the hell away from me.

**MARCUS**

It's my street, Clay.

(CLAY stalks away, putting headphones back on his head.)

**HANNAH**

Was I disappointed when you ditched me, Courtney? / Not much. It's hard to be disappointed when what you expected turns out to be true. But did I feel used? Absolutely. / And yet the whole time Courtney was using me, she probably thought she was polishing up her image in my eyes. Can you say . . . backfire?

**CLAY**

(opens map while walking)

The exact locations of the red stars are hard to see if I don't stop walking, if I don't stand still beneath a streetlamp. But I can't stop moving, trying to walk off the encounter with Marcus. Not even for a moment.

(Lights up on party house.)

**HANNAH**

Did anyone at that party actually believe she brought me there as a friend? Or did they simply think I was her latest charity case? / I guess I'll never know. But I needed to leave. / When I approached the gate, the same gate where I entered the party, guess who was standing there all by himself. / Tyler Down . . . fully equipped with his camera. / When he saw me, the look on his face was priceless. And pitiful.

(TYLER crosses arm in front of camera as if hiding it.)

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Was he trying to shield the camera from my view? Why would he do that? Everyone knows he's on the yearbook staff. / But I asked anyway.

(to TYLER)

What's that for?

**TYLER**

What? Oh . . . this? Um . . . yearbook.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

From behind me, someone called my name. I'm not going to tell you who, because it doesn't matter. Once again, what was about to be said was just an aftereffect of someone else's actions.

**STUDENT 2**

(male walks into scene)

Courtney said I should talk to you.

**CLAY**

After this, your reputation as a sweet girl is ruined, Courtney.

**STUDENT 2**

She says you're fun to hang out with.

**HANNAH**

Fun . . . how?

(STUDENT 2 shrugs.)

**HANNAH**

How?

**STUDENT 2**

She said you've got a few surprises buried in your dresser.

CLAY

She made that up! Courtney completely made that up.

(TYLER starts walking away.)

HANNAH

(fighting back tears)

Did she say what was in there?

(STUDENT 2 smiles.)

HANNAH

Do you believe everything people say about me?

STUDENT 2

Calm down. It doesn't matter.

HANNAH

Yes! It does matter.

(walks after TYLER and grabs his arm)

You want a picture? Follow me.

TYLER

(nervous)

You want a picture by the keg? They'll never print it. You know, underage drinking?

HANNAH

(to audience)

Right. Why would they want a yearbook that showed actual student life?

(to TYLER)

Not that. I want you to take a picture of me. Me and Courtney.

(off TYLER's look)

Are you all right?

TYLER

Yeah, no, sure, fine.

(COURTNEY is in the middle of filling her cup.)

COURTNEY

(to HANNAH)

Are you having fun?

HANNAH

Someone wants to take your picture.

(grabs COURTNEY's arm and drags her to TYLER)

Put your cup down or the yearbook won't be able to use it.

COURTNEY

I . . . I don't want to.

HANNAH

Why not, Courtney? Why did you invite me here? Please don't tell me I was just a chauffeur. I mean, I thought we were becoming friends.

COURTNEY

We are friends.

HANNAH

Then put down your drink. It's time for a picture.

(TYLER aims and focuses the camera. COURTNEY lowers her drink and HANNAH puts her arm around COURTNEY's waist.)

HANNAH

If you ever want to borrow anything from my dresser, Courtney, all you need to do is ask.

TYLER

Ready?

HANNAH

(leans forward like a funny joke has been told until camera clicks)

I'm leaving. This party sucks.

COURTNEY

Please stay. Hannah, please. How will I get home if you leave?

HANNAH

Find another ride.

(to audience)

Part of me wanted to cry for being so right about her invitation. Instead, on the long walk back to my car, I started laughing. And I shouted into the trees, "What is going on?" / On the drive home, I took the longest possible route home.

CLAY

I have a feeling I'll be doing the same.

HANNAH

I explored alleys and hidden roads I never knew existed. I discovered neighborhoods entirely new to me. And finally . . . I discovered I was sick of this town and everything in it.

(Lights fade on party set to blackout.)

CLAY

I'm starting to get there too, Hannah.

## SCENE 13 (Cassette 3: Side B/1)

HANNAH

(to audience)

How many of you remember the Oh My Dollar Valentines?

CLAY

How many of us would rather forget?

HANNAH

Those were fun, weren't they? You fill out a survey, a computer analyzes your answers, then it cross-references with the other surveys. For just a buck, you get the name and number of your one true soul mate. For five bucks, you get your top five. And hey! All proceeds go to a good cause.

CLAY/HANNAH

(together)

Cheer camp.

HANNAH

(to audience)

Each morning over the loudspeaker came the cheery announcements:



**CHEERLEADER 1**

Don't forget! There're only four more days to turn in your surveys! Only four more lonely days until your true love is revealed!

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

And every morning, a new peppy cheerleader continued the countdown.

**JENNY**

Only three more days!

**CHEERLEADER 2**

Only two more days!

**CHEERLEADER 3**

Just one more day!

**JENNY & CHEERLEADERS**

(together)

Today's the day!

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Then the whole squad of cheerleaders sang.

**JENNY & CHEERLEADERS**

Oh my dollar, oh my dollar, oh my dol-lar Valentine!

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

The Valentine survey was a two-parter. First, you described yourself. Hair color. Eye color. Height. Body type. Favorite type of music and movie. Then you put a check beside your top three things to do on weekends. Which is funny, because whoever designed this list forgot to mention drinking and sex—which would've been the most accurate response for most of our student body. / In all, there were about twenty questions. And I know, based on who appeared on my list, that not everyone answered honestly. / For part two of the survey, it was your turn to describe what you were looking for in a soul mate. As I filled mine out, I found myself describing a certain someone at our school.

**CLAY**

I should've answered my survey seriously.

**HANNAH**

You'd think that if my answers all described one person, that person would've at least appeared in my top five. But that person must have been immune to the cheerleaders and their cheers because he didn't end up on my list anywhere. / And no, I'm not telling you his name . . . yet.

**CLAY**

For fun, I filled mine out as Holden Caulfield from *The Catcher in the Rye*. / Holden. What a horrible first date that depressed loser would make.

**HANNAH**

The moment the surveys were distributed, I bubbled in my answers. After class, I walked straight to the student body office.

(Lights up on table with a heart-covered box and a computer on it. HANNAH approaches the box and puts her folded survey in. MRS.BENSON stands near the table, monitoring the box.)

**MRS. BENSON**

Hannah Baker? I didn't know you and Courtney Crimsen were friends.

(off HANNAH's blank stare)

At least, that's what I figured. That's what it looked like. I mean, you are friends, aren't you?

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

My first thought was of Tyler standing outside my window . . . and I was furious! Was he actually showing off those Peeping Tom photos? To Mrs. Benson?

**MRS. BENSON**

I delivered some checks to the yearbook room this morning and saw some sample photos for the yearbook. One was of you and Courtney.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

You guessed it. The one from the party, with my arm around her waist, looking like I was having the time of my life.

(to MRS. BENSON)

No, we're just acquaintances.

**MRS. BENSON**

Well, it's a really fun picture. The wonderful thing about a yearbook photo is that everyone shares the moment with you . . . forever.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Before, I probably would have agreed. But not with that photo. Anyone looking at that photo would definitely not be sharing our moment. They could not come close to imagining my thoughts in that picture. Or Courtney's. Or Tyler's. / Everything about it was false. / Right then, in that office, with the realization that no one knew the truth about my life, my thoughts about the world were shaken. / You have so little control over anything. And at some point, the struggle becomes too much—too tiring—and you consider letting go.

(runs fingers along the shoebox lid, lost in thought)

But now? The survey. Was this just another chance to get jerked around? Was this survey, for the guys who found my name on their list, going to be the excuse they needed to ask me out? / And would they be extra excited about doing that because of the rumors they'd heard? / I realized I could either lift off the top and take out my survey, or . . . I could wait and see.

**CLAY**

If I had been smart, if I had been honest with my survey, I would have described Hannah. And maybe we would have talked. Seriously talked. / But I didn't do that. I wasn't thinking that way.

**HANNAH**

Very little, I told myself, could go wrong. The survey was a joke. No one's going to use it. Calm down, Hannah. You are not setting yourself up. / But if I was right—if I called it correctly—if I willingly gave someone an excuse to test those rumors about me . . . well . . . I don't know. Maybe I'd shrug it off. Maybe I'd get pissed. / Or maybe I would let go and give up. / This time, for the first time, I saw the possibilities in giving up. I even found hope in it.

(lights down on table as HANNAH comes to front of stage)

In the end, I walked out of that office with my survey still in the box, unsure of what I was. An optimist? A pessimist? / Neither. A fool.

(Lights up on table. Now, JENNY is manning it. HANNAH walks to table.)

HANNAH

(to JENNY)

Hi, I'm—

JENNY

Thanks for supporting the cheerleaders, Hannah. / That sounded dumb, right? But I'm supposed to say it to everyone.

CLAY

It was probably the same cheerleader who gave me my survey results.

JENNY

(types at the computer)

How many names do you want? One, or five?

HANNAH

(hands over money)

Five, please.

(Sound of a printer.)

JENNY

You know, they put the printer on your side so we can't peek at your names. So people won't feel embarrassed by who they get.

HANNAH

(takes list from printer)

That's a good idea.

JENNY

So . . . who'd you get?

CLAY

Definitely the cheerleader who helped me.

JENNY

I'm just joking.

CLAY

No she wasn't.

(HANNAH hands over her list.)

JENNY

Not bad. Ooh, I like this one.

HANNAH

It's not a bad list. But not wonderful, either.

JENNY

(shrugs)

It's a shrugger, I guess. But you want to know a secret? It's not the most scientific of surveys.

HANNAH

Two of these guys fit me pretty well.

JENNY

Yeah, they do.

HANNAH

And this one—I can't believe I got him. Pretty cool.

JENNY

(serious)

No. Trust me . . . no.

HANNAH

But he's cute.

JENNY

On the outside.

HANNAH

(to audience)

I didn't push the subject, but I should have. And in a couple more tapes you'll know why. / Which reminds me, I haven't told you who our main man on this tape is. Fortunately, this is the perfect time to introduce him because that's exactly when he showed up.

(MARCUS comes on stage dialing a cell phone. Sound of cell phone ringing.)

HANNAH

(to JENNY)

Yours?

(JENNY shakes her head.)

HANNAH

(takes her phone out of her backpack)

Hello?

MARCUS

(on phone, but watching HANNAH)

Hannah Baker. Good to see you.

HANNAH

Who is this?

MARCUS

Guess how I got your number?

HANNAH

I hate guessing games.

MARCUS

I paid for it.

HANNAH

You paid for my phone number?

(JENNY puts one hand over her mouth, excited, and points at the printout.  
HANNAH shrugs. JENNY points out names and HANNAH shakes her head.)

MARCUS

It looks like you made my list, but I didn't make yours.

CLAY

Actually, you did make her list. A different list. One I'm sure you don't like being on.

HANNAH

Oh? And where on your list did my name pop up?



**MARCUS**

Guess. / Just kidding! Ready for this? You're my number one, Hannah.

(HANNAH holds up one finger to JENNY.)

**JENNY**

(jumps up and down, clapping)

This is so cool!

**MARCUS**

So what are you doing for Valentine's Day?

**HANNAH**

Depends. Who are you?

(MARCUS enters the scene, waving.)

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Marcus Cooley.

**CLAY**

I should've hit him with the rock when I had the chance.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Marcus, as you know, is one of the biggest goof-offs at school. Not a slacker goof-off, but a good goof-off. He's actually funny. So naturally, I didn't take his words at face value.

(to MARCUS)

You're lying. I am not on your list.

**MARCUS**

(shows his list)

What—you don't think I'm ever serious?

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Still, I thought he must've been kidding about getting together for Valentine's Day. So I thought I'd make him squirm a bit.

(to MARCUS)

Fine. When?

**JENNY**

(covers face)

So . . . cool!

**MARCUS**

Oh . . . um . . . Okay . . . well . . . How about Rosie's? You know, for ice cream.

**CLAY**

E-5. I saw that star on the map.

**HANNAH**

(sarcastic, to MARCUS)

Ice cream?

(to audience)

I didn't mean it to come out that way. An ice cream date just sounded so . . . cute. So I agreed to meet him there after school.

(MARCUS exits.)

JENNY

You have absolutely got to let me brag about this.

HANNAH

Okay, but not until tomorrow—just in case.

## SCENE 14 (Cassette 3: Side B/2)

(HANNAH just outside Rosie's—a modified Monet's; CLAY midstage.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

Did I tell the cheerleader about what happened at Rosie's? No. Instead, I avoided her for as long as I could. / And you're about to find out why. / Of course, I couldn't avoid her forever. Which is why, in a little while, she'll make another appearance on these tapes . . . but with a name.

CLAY

With every side of every tape, an old memory gets turned upside down. A reputation twists into someone I don't recognize.

HANNAH

(moves into Rosie's)

If you want the full Hannah experience, go to Rosie's for yourself. E-5 on your map. / To me, Rosie's had an aura about it. A mystery. In the stories I heard, it seemed like things were always happening there. Fights. Makeout sessions. And it seemed that Rosie always turned a blind eye as cones were being filled and burgers were being flipped. So I wanted to go, but I was not about to go alone and look like a dork. / Marcus Cooley gave me the excuse I needed. And it just so happened that I was free. / Free, but not stupid. / I was a little wary of Marcus. Not of him so much as the people he hung out with.

CLAY

People like Alex Standall.

HANNAH

After peeling away from our olly-olly-oxen-free group at Monet's, Alex started hanging out with Marcus. And after the little stunt Alex pulled with the "Who's Hot / Who's Not" list, I didn't trust him. / So why would I trust someone he hangs out with?

CLAY

You shouldn't.

HANNAH

Why? Because that's exactly what I wanted for me. I wanted people to trust me, despite anything they'd heard. And more than that, I wanted them to know me. I wanted them to get past the rumors. And if I wanted people to treat me that way, then I had to do the same for them, right? / So, I walked into Rosie's and sat at the counter. And when you go there, if you go there, don't order right away. / Just sit and wait. And wait a little more.

(A cell phone rings. Lights up on CLAY midstage. He walks downstage, answers his phone.)

MOM

(concerned)

Honey? Is everything all right? / It's getting late.

CLAY

I forgot to call. I'm sorry.

**MOM**

Do you want me to pick you up?

**CLAY**

Mom? Can you do me a favor? / I left some tapes on the workbench.

**MOM**

For your project?

**CLAY**

(presses hand to forehead)

It's okay. Never mind. I'll get them.

**MOM**

I can bring them to you. Just tell me where you are.

**CLAY**

(looks around, then starts walking)

I'm at Rosie's.

**MOM**

The diner? Are you getting work done there?

**CLAY**

When are you going to leave?

**MOM**

As soon as I get the tapes.

**CLAY**

(walks faster)

Great. I'll see you soon.

(Blackout.)

## SCENE 15 (Cassette 3: Side B/3)

(Lights up on Rosie's. HANNAH sits at the counter with an empty shake glass.)

**HANNAH**

Listen to the conversations around you. Are people wondering why you're sitting there alone? Now glance over your shoulder. Did a conversation stop? Did their eyes turn away? / Be honest. You've never gone there by yourself, have you?

**CLAY**

I haven't.

**HANNAH**

It's a totally different experience. But if you do go, and you don't order anything, everyone's going to think the same thing about you that they thought about me. That you're waiting for someone. / When fifteen minutes are up, you have my permission to order a shake. Because fifteen minutes is ten minutes longer than it should take even the slowest person to walk there from school. / Somebody . . . isn't coming.

**CLAY**

You're an ass, Marcus. You stood her up when you never even had to ask her out to begin with.

**HANNAH**

Calm down, Hannah. That's what I kept telling myself. You're not setting yourself up for a fall. / But isn't that how I convinced myself not to pull my survey out of the box? / Those were the thoughts running through my head after waiting thirty minutes for Marcus to show up. Which probably didn't put me in a good frame of mind for when he finally did show up.

**CLAY**

If Marcus didn't stand her up, then what?

(MARCUS enters Rosie's, out of breath, and sits next to HANNAH.)

**MARCUS**

I'm sorry. I kind of thought maybe we were joking about the date. But then I thought more about it, and figured I'd better come anyway . . . just in case.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

And that's why he's on this tape. Just in case. Just in case I, Hannah Baker—Miss Reputation—was waiting for him. / And sadly, I was. / See, when Marcus came into Rosie's, he wasn't alone. No, Marcus came into Rosie's with a plan.

**MARCUS**

(nods toward booth)

Why don't we sit over there, where it's more comfortable?

(HANNAH and MARCUS move to a booth, with HANNAH between him and a wall. They talk quietly and then laugh out loud. He puts his hand on her thigh, she can't remove it. They struggle a little, then she slaps him.)

## SCENE 16 (Cassette 4: Side A/1)

(Lights up on CLAY sitting at Rosie's counter.)

**CLAY**

Fifteen minutes. That's how long Hannah said to wait. Fifteen minutes and then I should order.

(MOM enters, sits beside CLAY, and sets down shoebox of tapes.)

**MOM**

Did you order yet?

**CLAY**

Are you staying?

**MOM**

Where's your friend? Weren't you working with someone?

**CLAY**

(hedges)

He had to, you know, he's in the bathroom.

**MOM**

(looks over CLAY's shoulder, unsure)

Oh.

(pause)

Clay?



CLAY

Yes?

MOM

Don't be out long.

CLAY

It might be a while. It's a school project.

MOM

(touches CLAY's head, then down to the back of his neck)

Be careful.

(Exit MOM. CLAY watches her go, then takes a tape out of the box, puts it in the Walkman and pushes play. Lights fade on Rosie's. Spotlight on HANNAH in classroom.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

Everyone's favorite class . . . okay, everyone's favorite required class . . . is Peer Communications. It's kind of the nonelective elective. Everyone would take it even if it wasn't required because it's such an easy A. There's very little homework, and don't forget the bonus points for class participation. I mean, they encourage you to yell out in class. What's not to like? / After feeling more and more like an outcast, Peer Communications was my safe haven at school. Whenever I walked into that room, I felt like throwing open my arms and shouting, "Olly-olly-oxen-free!"

## SCENE 17 (Cassette 4: Side A/2)

(Lights up on classroom set. STUDENTS mime a class discussion. HANNAH is among them.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

For one period each day, you were not allowed to touch me or snicker behind my back no matter what the latest rumor.

MRS. BRADLEY

(to STUDENTS)

Rule number one, day number one. If anyone snickers at what anyone else says, they owe me a Snickers bar. And if it's an extremely rude snicker, you owe me a King Size.

HANNAH

(to audience)

And everyone paid up without argument. That's the kind of respect people had for Mrs. Bradley. / Each day, we had a brief reading assignment full of statistics and real-world examples. Then, we discussed. Bullies. Drugs. Self-image. Relationships. Everything was fair game. I loved it. / But something happened in that class, didn't it? Otherwise, why would you be listening to me talk about it? / But it wasn't really the class itself that played a part. Even if I never took Peer Communications, the outcome may very well have been the same. / Or not. / I guess that's the point of it all. No one knows for certain how much impact they have on the lives of other people.

(walks to bookrack)

At the back of Mrs. Bradley's room stood a wire bookrack, but this rack never held any books. Instead, at the beginning of the year, each student received a paper lunch bag to decorate. Then we opened our bags and hung them on the rack with a couple of pieces of tape.

**MRS. BRADLEY**

I know people have a difficult time saying nice things to each other, so I devised a way for you to anonymously say what you feel, by dropping notes into each other's bags. / If you can, tell them to their face. But if you can't, drop them a note and they'll feel it just the same.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

As far as I know, no one ever left a mean or sarcastic note in anyone's bag. / So, Zach Dempsey, what's your excuse?

(Lights up on Rosie's set. TONY walks up behind CLAY.)

## SCENE 18 (Cassette 4: Side A/3)

(TONY presses stop on the Walkman. Lights out on classroom.)

**CLAY**

What? What happened?

**TONY**

Is this my Walkman?

**CLAY**

(nervous)

Tony, hey. / It is. It was on the floor. I saw it when I was over. I think I asked if I could borrow it.

**TONY**

I'm sorry, Clay. I'm sure you asked and I just forgot. Just return it when you're done.

**CLAY**

Thanks.

**TONY**

No need to rush.

(TONY sits at a table away from CLAY. Lights out at Rosie's. Lights up on classroom.)

**HANNAH**

Don't worry, Zach. You never left anything mean in my bag. I know that. But what you did do, was worse. / But first, let's go back . . . to Rosie's.

## SCENE 19 (Cassette 4: Side A/4)

(Lights up on Rosie's. CLAY is still at the counter, watching, though not actually part of the scene. HANNAH is in the booth she was in with Marcus. ZACH approaches from a nearby booth where JUSTIN, BRYCE, and COURTNEY sit. ZACH sits beside HANNAH. She pretends to ignore him.)

**ZACH**

(clears throat)

You okay?

(HANNAH stares at the glass.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

I pretended not to notice him. Not because I had anything against him, but because my heart and my trust were in the process of collapsing.

ZACH

I'm sorry. For whatever happened just now with Marcus.

(ZACH gets no response from HANNAH. He picks up bill from table, studies it, leaves some money, then returns to his friends.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

At that table, the worst thoughts in the world first came into my head. It's there that I first started to consider . . . to consider . . . a word that I still cannot say. / I know you tried coming to my rescue, Zach. But we all know that's not why you're on this tape. So I've got one question before we continue. When you try rescuing someone and discover they can't be reached, why would you ever throw that back in their face?

CLAY

How many secrets can there be at one school?

HANNAH

You probably got sick to your stomach when you heard what I did, Zach. But the more time that went by, the better you felt. No one knew. No one would ever find out.

CLAY

But now we will.

(Blackout.)

## SCENE 20 (Cassette 4: Side A/5)

(Lights up on classroom set with STUDENTS and HANNAH.)

HANNAH

Before I left Rosie's, I listened in on you and your friends, Zach. They were teasing you for not getting that date you assured them was in the bag. And you took the teasing. / But you must have a slow boil, getting more and more angry. And you chose to get back at me in the most childish of ways. / You stole my paper bag notes of encouragement.

CLAY

How pathetic.

HANNAH

So what tipped me off? Everyone else was getting notes. Everyone! And for the most insignificant of things. And there were people in that class I considered friends who would have put something in my bag after I chopped off most of my hair. / Come to think of it, I cut my hair the very day Marcus Cooley and I met at Rosie's. / Wow! That's weird. All those warning signs they tell us to watch out for, they're true. I needed a change, just like they said, so I changed my appearance. The only thing I still had control over.

(walks to the bookrack and checks her bag)

The next day, when I found my bag empty, I knew something was up. The first few months of class I received maybe four or five notes a week. But suddenly, after the telltale haircut . . . nothing. / I waited a week. / Then two weeks. / Then three weeks. / Nothing. / It was time to find out what was going on. So I wrote myself a note. "Hannah. Like the new haircut. Sorry I didn't tell you sooner." / Then I casually



ran my hand around the inside of my bag, pretending to check for notes, but I actually left that note for myself. / And the next day? Nothing in my bag. The note was gone. / Maybe it didn't seem like a big deal to you, Zach. But I needed any hope those notes might have offered. / And you? You took that hope away. You decided I didn't deserve to have it.

**CLAY**

The longer I listen to these tapes, the more I feel I know her. Not the Hannah from the past few years, but the one from the past few months. That's the Hannah I'm beginning to understand. / Hannah at the end. / But the people who passed Hannah in the halls, or sat beside her in class, what could they have done? / Maybe then, like now, it was already too late. / This isn't fair. If Zach had any idea what Hannah was going through, I'm sure he wouldn't have stolen her notes.

(STUDENTS gather around bookrack, checking their bags. HANNAH stands near the door with another STUDENT.)

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

The day my self-written note went missing, I stood outside the classroom door and started talking to someone I'd never spoken with before. I looked over her shoulder every few seconds, watching the other students check their bags for notes. / That sure looked like a lot of fun, Zach. / And that's when I caught you. A light touch to the lip of my bag and you peeked into my bag, not yours. / The next day, I reattached my paper bag to the rack with the tiniest sliver of tape. Inside, I placed a little note folded in half.

**CLAY**

The perfect setup.

(ZACH checks HANNAH's bag. It falls and he takes a note that falls on the floor while HANNAH watches. He exits and stops just before leaving the set, reads the note, then turns back to HANNAH.)

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

In that moment, I was scared. Would he confront me and tell me he was sorry? Yell at me? / The answer? None of the above.

(ZACH leaves classroom set but stays onstage.)

**HANNAH**

(to direction Zach left)

I wasn't worth an explanation—not even a reaction. Not in your eyes, Zach.

(to audience)

For the rest of you listening, the note was addressed to Zach by name. Maybe he sees it now as a prologue to these tapes. Because in there, I admitted that I was at a point in my life where I could have used any encouragement anyone might have left me. / I couldn't take it anymore. You see, Zach's not the only one with a slow boil.

(to ZACH, shouts)

Why?

(ZACH pushes note into his pocket.)

**HANNAH**

Why, Zach?

**CLAY**

I heard about that. Hannah flipping out for no apparent reason, embarrassing herself in front of so many people. / But they were wrong. There was a reason.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

So now, let's get personal. In the spirit of opening up—of full disclosure—let me offer you this: My parents



love me. I know they do. But things have not been easy recently. Not for about a year. / There was suddenly a lot for them to think about. A lot of pressure to make ends meet. / When I cut my hair, my mom didn't even notice. / And as far as I knew—thank you, Zach—no one at school noticed, either.

CLAY

I noticed.

HANNAH

In class, Mrs. Bradley also had a paper bag. She wanted us to recommend topics for future discussions. / So I did just that. I wrote a note to Mrs. Bradley that read: "Suicide. It's something I've been thinking about. Not too seriously, but I have been thinking about it." / Why was I writing this note? It was a lie. I hadn't been thinking about it. Not really. Not in detail. The thought would come into my head and I'd push it away. / But I pushed it away a lot. / I was sure more people than just me had thought about it, right? So why not discuss it as a group? / Or deep down, maybe there was more. Maybe I wanted someone to figure out who wrote the note and secretly come to my rescue. / Maybe. I don't know. But I was careful never to give myself away.

CLAY

The haircut. Averting your eyes in the halls. You were careful, but still, there were signs. Little signs. But they were there. / And then, just like that, you snapped back. / A few days before she took the pills, Hannah was herself again. She said hello to everyone in the halls. She looked us in the eyes. It seemed so drastic because it had been months since she had acted like that. Like the real Hannah. / It seemed so drastic, because it was.

HANNAH

So what did I want from the class? Mainly, I wanted to hear what everyone had to say. Their thoughts. Their feelings. / And boy, did they tell me.

(STUDENTS come into class and begin discussion. All sound slightly annoyed.)

JUSTIN

It's going to be hard to help without knowing why the person wants to kill himself.

COURTNEY

If they're lonely, we could invite them to sit with us at lunch.

ALEX

If it's grades, we can tutor them.

JESSICA

If it's their home life, maybe we can . . . I don't know . . . get them counseling or something?

JENNY

It's like whoever wrote this note just wants attention. If they were serious, they would have told us who they were.

CLAY

God. There was no way for Hannah to open up in that class.

HANNAH

Were they just being nosy, or did they really think that knowing specifics was the best way to help? A little of both, maybe. / And truthfully, I don't know what they could have said to sway me either way. Because maybe I was being selfish. Maybe I was just looking for attention. Maybe I just wanted to hear people discuss me and my problems. / Or maybe I wanted someone to point a finger at me and say:

STUDENTS

(turn and point at HANNAH)

Hannah. Are you thinking about killing yourself? Please don't do that, Hannah. Please?

HANNAH

(to audience)

But deep down, the truth was that the only person saying that was me. Deep down, those were my words. / At the end of class, Mrs. Bradley passed out a flyer called The Warning Signs of a Suicidal Individual. Guess what was right up there in the top five? / "A sudden change in appearance."

(touches her short hair)

Huh. Who knew I was so predictable?

(Blackout.)

[NOTE: This play is much more powerful if done as one act so the tension doesn't let up, as it never lets up for Clay during his continuous listening. It also allows the audience to interpret Hannah's story on their own without hearing the judgement of others while munching on brownies during intermission. If your performance needs an intermission, this would be the best time to take one. The following would then be Act II.]

## SCENE 20 (Cassette 4: Side B)

HANNAH

(to audience)

Sometimes we have thoughts that even we don't understand. Thoughts that aren't even true—that aren't really how we feel—but they're running through our heads anyway because they're interesting to think about. / If you could hear other people's thoughts, you'd overhear things that are true as well as things that are completely random.

CLAY

(looks at TONY)

I have no idea what Tony's thinking. And he has no idea about me. He has no idea that the voice in my head, the voice coming through his Walkman, belongs to Hannah Baker.

HANNAH

That's what I love about poetry. The more abstract the better. / They're like puzzles. It's up to the reader to decipher the code, or the words, based on everything they know about life and emotions. / And honestly, there is no better way to explore your emotions than with poetry.

CLAY

Or audiotapes.

HANNAH

The next time you write a poem, decipher it as if you'd just found it printed in a textbook and knew absolutely nothing about its author. The results can be amazing . . . and scary. But it's always cheaper than a therapist. / I did that for a while. Poetry, not a therapist.

CLAY

Maybe a therapist would have helped, Hannah.

HANNAH

(flips through a spiral notebook)

I bought a spiral notebook to keep all of my poems in one place. / My first few attempts were a bit sad. Not much depth or subtlety. Pretty straightforward. But still, some came out fairly well. At least, I think they did.

(TONY exits the Rosie's set.)

CLAY

(sees TONY leave)

Why didn't he stop to say good-bye?

HANNAH

To me, I suppose, these tapes are a form of poetic therapy. / As I tell you these stories, I'm discovering certain things. Things about myself, yes, but also about you. All of you. And the closer we get to the end, the more connections I'm discovering. / Maybe you've even discovered some connections that I haven't. Maybe you're one step ahead of the poet.

CLAY

No, Hannah. I'm barely keeping up.

HANNAH

And when I say my final words . . . well, the last words on these tapes . . . it's going to be one tight, well-connected, emotional ball of words. / In other words, a poem.

CLAY

(looking outside)

Tony's sitting outside.

HANNAH

Looking back, I stopped writing in my notebook when I stopped wanting to know myself anymore. / If you hear a song that makes you cry and you don't want to cry anymore, you don't listen to that song anymore. / But you can't get away from yourself. You can't decide to turn off the noise in your head.

CLAY

Is he waiting out there? Why?

HANNAH

But I loved poetry. I missed it. And one day, after several weeks, I decided to go back to it. I decided to use poetry to make myself happy. Bright and happy sunshiny poems. / D-7 on your map. The community room at the public library. / They taught a free course called Poetry: To Love Life. They promised to teach not only how to love poetry, but through poetry, how to better love ourselves. / Sign me up!

CLAY

It's too dark to go there now.

(Lights up on library set. POET LADIES and STUDENTS are sitting in a circle. RYAN is among them.  
HANNAH walks in.)

POET LADY 1

This poem is about death and the evilness of men.

POET LADY 2

This is about the destruction of the greenish, bluish orb with wisps of white.

CLAY

What?

POET LADY 2

Earth.

HANNAH

(to audience)

Seriously, that's how she described it.

CLAY

Another reason I hate poetry. Who says "orb" instead of "ball" or "sphere?"

**POET LADY 3**

Earth is a knocked-up gaseous alien needing an abortion.

**POET LADY 4**

Expose yourself. Let us see your deepest and your darkest.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

So many times I wanted to raise my hand and say, "Um, so, when do we get to the happy stuff? The stuff about loving life? That's what the flyer said. That's why I'm here." / In the end, I only made it through a few of those poetry groups. But something did come of it. Something good? / Hmm . . . I wonder. / See, someone else was in that group. Another high schooler with a perspective adored by the older poets. Who was it? The editor of our school's very own Lost-N-Found Gazette.

**CLAY**

Ryan Shaver.

**HANNAH**

So here you go, Ryan Shaver. The truth shall set you free.

(POETRY LADIES and other STUDENTS exit.)

**CLAY**

The motto of the Lost-N-Found.

**HANNAH**

You've known this for a while, Ryan. I'm sure of it. At the first mention of poetry, you knew this one was about you. Though I'm sure you must have thought, This can't be why I'm on the tapes. It wasn't a big deal.

**CLAY**

The poem from school. God, it was hers.

**HANNAH**

Remember, this is one tight, well-connected, emotional ball I'm constructing here. / Would you like to hear the last poem I wrote before quitting poetry for good? / No? / Fine. But you've already read it. It's very popular at our school.

**CLAY**

The poem. We discussed it in English. We read it aloud many times. / And Hannah was there for it all.

**HANNAH**

Some of you may recall it now. Not word for word, but you know what I'm talking about. / The Lost-N-Found Gazette, Ryan's semiannual collection of items found lying around campus. / Like a love letter tossed under a desk, never discovered by its intended love. If Ryan found it, he'd scratch out the giveaway names and scan it for use in an upcoming gazette. / Photographs that fell out of binders . . . he scanned them, too. / History notes covered in doodles; scanned. / Some people may wonder how Ryan found so many interesting items to scan. Did he really find them at all? Or did he steal them? I asked him that very question after one of our poetry meetings.

**RYAN**

I swear, everything I print is found purely by chance.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

But guess what? My poem? He stole it. / Each week, after our poetry group, Ryan and I would sit at the library and talk. That first week, we simply laughed about the poems the other people had written and read. We laughed about how depressing they all were.



**RYAN**

Wasn't this supposed to make us happy?

**HANNAH**

Apparently, you signed up for the same reason as me.

**RYAN**

Okay. I have an idea. Let's read our own poems to each other. But only happy poems.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

And, as poets never do, we explained ourselves. Line for line. / The third week, we took the biggest chance of all and handed each other our entire notebooks of poetry. / Wow! That took a lot of courage. / His poems were amazing. Much deeper than any of mine. / His stuff sounded like real poetry. Professional poetry. / Of course, I had no idea what his poems meant. Not exactly. But I felt the emotions precisely. And I felt almost ashamed at what he must have been thinking as he went through my notebook. Because reading through his, I realized I should have taken the time to choose better words. More emotional words. / But one of my poems grabbed him. And he wanted to know more about it . . . like when I wrote it. / But I didn't tell him. / I wrote it the same day a group of students got angry that someone had the nerve to ask for help regarding suicide. And whoever wrote that note didn't sign her name.

**CLAY**

It was anonymous. Just like the poem that appeared in the Lost-N-Found.

**HANNAH**

So Ryan wanted to know why I wrote the poem. / With that one, I told him, the poem had to speak for itself. But I was interested in knowing what he thought it meant.

**RYAN**

On the surface, the poem is about acceptance—acceptance from your mother. But more than that, you want her approval. And you want certain people—in this case a boy—to stop overlooking you.

**CLAY**

A boy?

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

I asked if he thought it meant anything deeper. / And part of me was joking. I thought he'd figured out my poem exactly.

**RYAN**

The poem isn't about your mom. Or a boy. It's about you. You're writing a letter to yourself . . . hidden in a poem.

**HANNAH**

(flinches defensively)

You're wrong.

(to audience)

But he was right. And I felt scared, and sad, by my own words.

**RYAN**

You wrote this poem because you're afraid of dealing with yourself. You're using your mom as an excuse, accusing her of not appreciating or accepting you, when you should have been saying those words into a mirror.

HANNAH

And the boy? What does he represent?

CLAY

(gently touches the headphones on his ears)

It's me. Oh God. It's me. I know that now.

RYAN

No boy is overlooking you more than you're overlooking yourself. At least, that's what I think it means. And that's why I asked about the poem. I feel it goes deeper than I can figure out.

HANNAH

(to audience)

Well, Ryan, you were right. It went much, much deeper than that. And if you knew that—if that's what you thought—then why did you steal my notebook? Why did you print my poem, the poem that you yourself called "scary" in the Lost-N-Found? Why did you let other people read it?

CLAY

And dissect it. And make fun of it.

HANNAH

It was never a lost poem, Ryan. And you never found it, so it did not belong in your collection. / But in your collection is exactly where other people found it. That's where teachers stumbled across it right before their lectures on poetry. That's where classrooms full of students cut up my poem, searching for its meaning.

CLAY

In our class, no one got it right. Not even close. But at the time, we all thought we did. Even Mr. Porter.

HANNAH

Do you know what Mr. Porter said before handing out my poem?

(Spotlight on MR. PORTER in classroom.)

MR. PORTER

Reading a poem by an unknown member of our school is the same as reading a classic poem by a dead poet.

HANNAH

(to audience)

That's right—a dead poet.

MR. PORTER

Because we can't ask either one about its true meaning.

(Light fades out on classroom.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

Then Mr. Porter waited, hoping someone would fess up to writing it. But that, as you know, never happened. / So now you know. And for those of you who need a refresher, here it is. "Soul Alone" by Hannah.

I meet your eyes  
you don't even see me  
You hardly respond  
when I whisper  
hello

Could be my soul mate  
two kindred spirits  
Maybe we're not  
I guess we'll never  
know

My own mother  
you carried me in you  
Now you see nothing  
but what I wear  
People ask you  
how I am doing  
You smile and nod  
don't let it end  
there

Put me  
underneath God's sky and  
know me  
don't just see me with your eyes  
Take away  
this mask of flesh and bone and  
see me  
for my soul  
alone

And now you know why. / So, did your teachers dissect me properly? Were they right? Did you have any clue at all it was me? / Yes, some of you did. Ryan must have told someone—proud that his collection had made it into the curriculum. But when people confronted me, I refused to confirm or deny it. Which pissed some of them off. / Some even wrote parodies of my poem, reading them to me in the hopes of getting under my skin.

**CLAY**

I saw that. I watched two girls in Mr. Porter's class recite a version before the bell rang.

**HANNAH**

It was all so stupid and childish . . . and cruel.

**CLAY**

They were relentless, bringing new poems every day for an entire week. Hannah did her best to ignore them, pretending to read while waiting for Mr. Porter to arrive. For the start of class to come to her rescue.

**HANNAH**

This doesn't seem like a big deal, does it? / No, maybe not to you. But school hadn't been a safe haven of mine for a long time. And after your photo escapades, Tyler, my home was no longer secure. / Now, suddenly, even my own thoughts were being offered up for ridicule.

(CLAY changes the tape, then starts to exit Rosie's.)

**CLAY**

Once, when those girls were teasing her, Hannah looked up. Her eyes caught mine for just a moment. A flash. But she knew I saw her. And even though no one else saw it, I turned away. / She was on her own.

# SCENE 21 (Cassette 5: Side A/1)

(Outside Rosie's. TONY is sitting on a curb as CLAY comes out.)

TONY  
Clay!

(CLAY walks over.)

TONY  
Sit down, Clay.

CLAY  
Is everything all right?

(TONY nods. CLAY sits.)

CLAY  
What's going on?

TONY  
You're the ninth person I've had to follow, Clay.

CLAY  
What? What are you talking about?

TONY  
The second set of tapes. Hannah wasn't bluffing. I've got them.

CLAY  
(covers face with his hands)  
Oh God.

TONY  
It's okay. / What were you listening to in there? Which tape?  
(pause)  
It's okay, Clay. Honest. Which tape?

CLAY  
Ryan's. The poem.

(TONY leans back and closes his eyes.)

CLAY  
What?

TONY  
Can we sit while you listen to the next tape?

CLAY  
Why'd she give them to you?

TONY  
I'll tell you if you'll just listen to the next tape right now.

CLAY  
Why?

TONY  
Clay, I'm not joking. Listen to the tape.



CLAY

Then answer my question.

TONY

Because it's about you, Clay.

(looks at Clay)

The next tape is about you.

(Pause, then CLAY pounds the curb with his fist. TONY puts a hand on CLAY's shoulder.)

TONY

Listen to it. And don't leave this spot.

(With a heavy sigh, CLAY pushes play. Lights up on HANNAH on her bed, speaking into the recorder.)

HANNAH

Romeo, oh Romeo. Wherefore art thou, Romeo?

CLAY

My story. My tape. This is how it begins.

HANNAH

Good question, Juliet. And I wish I knew the answer.

TONY

Clay, it's okay!

HANNAH

To be totally honest, there was never a point where I said to myself, Clay Jensen . . . he's the one. / I'm not even sure how much of the real Clay Jensen I got to know over the years. Most of what I knew was second-hand information. And that's why I wanted to know him better. Because everything I heard—and I mean everything!—was good. / It was one of those things where, once I noticed it, I couldn't stop noticing it.

CLAY

Hannah, let's get on with it. Please.

HANNAH

Overhearing gossip about Clay became a distraction. And like I said, I didn't know him very well, but my ears perked up whenever I heard his name. I guess I wanted to hear something—anything—juicy. Not because I wanted to spread gossip. I just couldn't believe someone could be that good. / If he actually was that good . . . wonderful. Great! But it became a personal game of mine. How long could I go on hearing nothing but good things about Clay Jensen? / Normally, when a person has a stellar image, another person's waiting in the wings to tear him apart. They're waiting for that one fatal flaw to expose itself. / But not with Clay.

(CLAY looks at TONY. TONY has a slight smirk.)

HANNAH

I hope this tape doesn't make you run out and dig for that deep, dark, and dirty secret of his . . . which I'm sure is there. At least one or two of them, right?

CLAY

I've got a few.

HANNAH

But wait, isn't that what you're doing, Hannah? You're setting him up as Mr. Perfect only to tear him down. You, Hannah Baker, were the one waiting in the wings. Waiting for a flaw. And you found it. And now you can't wait to tell everyone what it is and ruin his image. / To which I say . . . no.

(CLAY gives a deep sigh of relief.)

HANNAH

And I hope you're not disappointed. I hope you aren't just listening—salivating—for gossip. I hope these tapes mean more to you than that. / Clay, honey, your name does not belong on this list.

(CLAY runs his fingers through his hair.)

HANNAH

You don't belong in the same way as the others. It's like that song: One of these things is not like the others. One of these things just doesn't belong. / And that's you, Clay. But you need to be here if I'm going to tell my story. To tell it more completely.

CLAY

(presses Pause, to TONY)

Why do I have to hear this? Why didn't she just skip me if I don't belong? / I would've been happier never hearing this.

TONY

No. It would drive you crazy not knowing what happened to her. / Besides, I think she wanted you to know.

CLAY

But why?

(Blackout.)

## SCENE 22 (Cassette 5: Side A/2)

(TONY frozen; out of spotlight.)

HANNAH

(to audience, set back behind Clay)

Yes, there are some major gaps in my story. Some parts I just couldn't figure out how to tell. Or couldn't bring myself to say out loud. Events I haven't come to grips with . . . that I'll never come to grips with. / But does that diminish any of your stories? Are your stories any less meaningful because I'm not telling you everything?

(Spotlight on CLAY, downstage.)

CLAY

No.

HANNAH

When you mess with one part of a person's life, you're messing with their entire life. Unfortunately, you can't be that precise and selective. / Everything . . . affects everything. / The next few stories are centered around one night.

CLAY

The party.

HANNAH

They're centered around our night, Clay. And you know what I mean by our night because, through all the years we've spent going to the same school, there's only one night when we connected. / When we really connected. / That night drags many of you into the story as well . . . one of you for the second time.

CLAY

I hated that night.

HANNAH

Hopefully, no one will hear these tapes except for those of you on this list, leaving any changes they bring to your lives completely up to you. / Of course, if the tapes do get out, you'll have to deal with consequences completely out of your control. So I sincerely hope you're passing them on.

CLAY

(looks at frozen TONY; to audience)

Would Tony really give the tapes to someone not on the list? Could he? / Who?

HANNAH

For some of you, those consequences may be minimal. Maybe shame. Or embarrassment. But for others, it's hard to say. A lost job? Jail time? / Let's keep this between us, shall we? / So Clay, I wasn't even supposed to be at that party. My grades were slipping pretty fast. My parents asked for progress reports every week. And when none of them came back with improvements, I was grounded. / But during one of my Clay Jensen gossip moments, I found out that you were going to be at the party. / What? Clay Jensen at a party? Unheard of.

CLAY

I study on the weekends. In most of my classes, we're tested every Monday. It's not my fault.

HANNAH

No one could figure out why they never saw you at parties. Of course, they had all sorts of theories. But guess what? That's right. None of them were bad.

CLAY

Give me a break.

HANNAH

For those of you who don't know which party I'm talking about, there's a red star on your map. A big, fat, red star completely filled in. C-6. Five-twelve Cottonwood. / Aaaah . . . so now you know. But you'll have to wait until your name pops up to hear what I'm going to tell. To hear how much I tell. / That night, I decided that walking to the party would be nice. Relaxing. We had a lot of rain that week, and I remember the clouds were still hanging low and thick. The air was warm for that time of night, too. My absolute favorite type of weather. / Pure magic. / It felt like life held so many possibilities. And for the first time in a long time, I felt hope.

CLAY

So did I. I forced myself out of the house and to that party. I was ready for something new to happen. Something exciting.

HANNAH

Hope? Well, I guess I misread things a bit.

CLAY

And now? Knowing what happened between Hannah and me, would I still have gone?

HANNAH

It was simply the calm before the storm.

CLAY

Yes. Even if the outcome stayed the same.

(Blackout.)

## SCENE 23 (Cassette 5: Side A/3)

HANNAH

The party was well underway by the time I got there. The music was loud and no one was dancing. It could've been any party . . . except for one thing. / Clay Jensen.

(Lights up on party set. HANNAH walks into the scene. All the STUDENTS are frozen, including CLAY)

HANNAH

I'm sure you heard a lot of sarcastic remarks about your showing up when you first arrived, but by the time I got there, to everyone else you were just a part of the party. But unlike everyone else, you were the whole reason I came. / With everything going on in my life—going on in my head—I wanted to talk with you. Really talk. Just once. A chance we never seemed to get at school. A chance to ask, Who are you?

CLAY

(to audience)

We didn't get that chance because I was afraid. Afraid I had no chance with her. / That's what I thought. And I was fine with that. Because what if I got to know her and she turned out to be just like they said? What if she wasn't the person I hoped she was? / That, more than anything, would have hurt the most.

(CLAY walks up behind her and taps her on the shoulder.)

CLAY

Hannah . . . hey.

(HANNAH turns.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

I couldn't believe it. Out of the blue, there he was.

CLAY

(to HANNAH)

I don't know why, but I think we need to talk.

HANNAH

(smiles)

Okay.

(CLAY and HANNAH sit on one end of a couch. JESSICA and JUSTIN are making out on the other end.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

We sat down and started talking. Just . . . like . . . that. / Everything I could have hoped for was happening.

(begins walking downstage while talking; from here on, CLAY will look at her back while speaking; when he speaks, HANNAH freezes)

The questions were personal, as if catching up for the time we let pass. Yet the questions never felt intrusive. And they weren't intrusive. Because I wanted you to know me.

CLAY

(to HANNAH)

It was wonderful. I couldn't believe you and I were finally talking. Really talking. And I did not want it to stop. / I loved talking with you, Hannah.



**HANNAH**

(to audience)

It seemed like you could know me. Like you could understand anything I told you. And the more we spoke, I knew why. The same things excited us. The same things concerned us.

**CLAY**

(to HANNAH)

You could have told me anything, Hannah. That night, nothing was off limits. I would've stayed till you opened up and let everything out, but you didn't.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

I wanted to tell you everything. And that hurt because some things were too scary. Some things even I didn't understand. How could I tell someone—someone I was really talking to for the first time—everything I was thinking? / I couldn't. It was too soon.

**CLAY**

(to HANNAH)

But it wasn't.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Or maybe it was too late.

**CLAY**

(to HANNAH)

But you're telling me now. Why did you wait till now?

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

You kept saying that you knew things would flow easily between us.

**CLAY**

(to HANNAH)

I felt that way for a long time. I knew we'd get along.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

You knew that we would connect. But how? You never explained that. How could you know? Because I knew what people said about me. I heard all the rumors and lies that will always be a part of me.

**CLAY**

(to HANNAH)

I knew they weren't true, Hannah. I mean, I hoped they weren't true. But I was too afraid to find out.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

I was breaking. If only I'd talked to you sooner. We could have been . . . we could've . . . I don't know. But things had gone too far by then. My mind was set. Not on ending my life. On never being close to anyone. I'd graduate, then I'd leave.

(CLAY begins to walk toward HANNAH. He'll stop right beside her, facing her.)

**HANNAH**

But then, I went to a party. I went to a party to meet you. / Why did I do that? To make myself suffer?

CLAY

(to HANNAH)

I was there for you. We were talking. You could have said anything. I would have listened to absolutely anything.

(Unfreeze whole scene. JESSICA and JUSTIN become obnoxious in their making out. CLAY and HANNAH circulate around the party, laughing and trying to talk. They end up near the empty bedroom.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

How many times had I let myself connect with someone only to have it thrown back in my face? / Everything seemed good, but I knew it had the potential to be awful. Much, much more painful than the others.

CLAY

(to audience)

There was no way that was going to happen.

HANNAH

(to audience)

So there he was, letting me connect with him. And when I couldn't do that anymore, when I pulled the conversation to lighter topics, he made me laugh. He was exactly what I needed.

(HANNAH leans in and kisses CLAY with a lingering kiss.)

CLAY

What was that for?

HANNAH

You're such an idiot.

(They kiss again and move to sit on the bed.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

Some of you may be wondering, How come we never heard about this? We always found out who Hannah was making out with. / Wrong. You only thought you found out. Haven't you been listening? Because I can count on one hand—yes, one hand—how many people I've made out with. / What's that? You don't believe me? Guess what . . . I don't care. The last time I cared what anyone thought about me was that night. And that was the last night. / Now get comfortable, because I'm about to tell you what happened in that room between Clay and me. Are you ready? / We kissed. / That's it. / We kissed.

CLAY

(to audience)

That's when I whispered to her that I was so sorry. Because inside, I felt so happy and sad at the same time. Sad that it took me so long to get there. But happy that we got there together.

HANNAH

(to audience)

The kisses felt like first kisses. Kisses that said I could start over if I wanted to. With him. / But start over from what? / And that's when I thought of Justin. My real first kiss. I remembered the anticipation leading up to it. I remembered his lips pressed against mine. / And then I remembered how he ruined it.

(to CLAY, pushing him away)

Stop.

(to audience)

I shut my eyes so tight it was painful. Trying to push away all that I was seeing in my head. And what I saw was everyone on this list . . . and more. Everyone who caused me to be so intrigued by Clay's reputation. / Clay's reputation was deserved. But mine . . . mine was not. And there I was, with him. Adding to my reputation.

CLAY

(to HANNAH)

But Hannah, I—

HANNAH

(to CLAY)

Just go.

CLAY

Hannah—

HANNAH

Please.

(CLAY slowly leaves the bed and returns to the party. HANNAH slides down to the floor, holding her knees and crying.)

HANNAH

(to where CLAY)

That, Clay, is where your story ends.

(Spotlight on CLAY.)

CLAY

But it shouldn't have. I was there for you, Hannah. You could have reached out but you didn't. You chose this. You had a choice and you pushed me away. I would have helped you. I wanted to help you.

HANNAH

He left the room and we never spoke again.

CLAY

Your mind was set. No matter what you say, it was set.

HANNAH

That night, when I got home, I tore a page from my notebook and wrote down one name after another. The names in my head when I stopped kissing you. Three dozen, at least. / And then . . . I made the connections. I circled your name first, Justin. And I drew a line from you to Alex. I circled Alex and drew a line to Jessica, bypassing names that didn't connect—incidents all by themselves. / My anger and frustration with all of you turned to tears and then back to anger and hate every time I found a new connection. / And then I reached Clay, the reason I went to the party. I circled his name and drew a line . . . back. Back to a previous name.

CLAY

It was Justin.

HANNAH

In fact, Clay, soon after you left and shut the door . . . that person reopened it. / But that person's already received the tapes. So Clay, just skip him when you pass them on. In a roundabout way, he caused a new name to be added to this list. And that's who should receive the tapes from you.

(pause)

And yes, Clay—I'm sorry, too.

(Blackout.)

## SCENE 24 (Cassette 5: Side B/1)

(Lights up on Rosie's stoop, with CLAY and TONY.)

CLAY

(to TONY)

I didn't know what to make of that night. Everything that happened. I'd liked her for so long from far away, but I never had a chance to tell her. And by the end of that night, it seemed like I knew her even less than before. But now I know. I know where her mind was that night. Now I know what she was going through.

TONY

Clay, I need to know that you're going to be all right.

CLAY

(whispers)

No one blames me.

TONY

No one.

CLAY

What about you?

TONY

No, I don't blame you.

CLAY

But why you? Why did she give you the other set of tapes?

TONY

Let's walk to the party house. I'll tell you there.

(Blackout.)

## SCENE 25 (Cassette 5: Side B/2)

(Lights up on party bedroom. HANNAH is still hiding on one side of the bed.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

Soon after Clay left, the couple from the couch walked into the bedroom. Actually, stumbled into the bedroom is more accurate.

(JUSTIN and JESSICA stumble into the room. JUSTIN guides JESSICA to the bed; she is obviously drunk. When she nearly falls off the bed, he steadies her, chuckling a little.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

I thought he would tuck her in and shut the door behind him as he left. And that would be the perfect time for my getaway. End of story.

CLAY

Hannah wasn't my first kiss, but the first kiss that mattered. And after talking with her for so long that night, I assumed it was just the beginning of our story.



**HANNAH**

But that's not the end of the story. Because that wouldn't make for a very interesting tape, now would it? And by now, I'm sure you knew it wasn't the end.

(JUSTIN starts kissing JESSICA, who halfheartedly joins in.)

**JUSTIN**

Are you still awake?

**JESSICA**

Hmmmm . . .

**JUSTIN**

Do you want me to take you to the bathroom? Are you gonna puke?

**JESSICA**

Uhhhhhh . . .

**JUSTIN**

(gets up and tucks her in)

Okay. I'll check on you in a bit.

(JESSICA is unresponsive. JUSTIN leaves, pulling the door shut behind him.)

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Sorry, but you're going to have to wait for a name on this one. Before I say his name out loud, this guy needs to stew a bit. / Go on, deny I was ever in that room. Deny that I know what you did. Or not what you did, but what you didn't do. What you allowed to happen.

**CLAY**

God. What else could've gone wrong that night?

**HANNAH**

I know she wasn't your girlfriend, that you hardly ever talked to her and barely even knew her, but is that your best excuse for what happened next? Or is that your only excuse? / Either way, there is no excuse.

(Scene unfreezes. HANNAH stands, stumbling toward the door. Outside the room, BRYCE walks up to JUSTIN. HANNAH stops as the doorknob rattles. BRYCE grabs for the door, but JUSTIN stops him from going in.)

**JUSTIN**

No. Let her rest.

**BRYCE**

Aw, come on, man.

(BRYCE tries for the door again, but JUSTIN stops him.)

**JUSTIN**

Trust me, she won't move. She'll just lay there.

**BRYCE**

I'm working the night shift. I have to leave in a few minutes, but that's all I need. Just relax and step aside.

(BRYCE opens the door. HANNAH drops to the floor and crawls to a closet to conceal herself as BRYCE enters the room. He stands over JESSICA on the bed, then climbs in.)

**CLAY**

"Just relax." Those words, he's said it before. It's what he always says to the people he's taking advantage of. Girlfriends. Guys. Whoever. / It's Bryce. It has to be. Bryce Walker was in that room.

HANNAH

(to audience, touching scar)

I could have stopped it. If I could have talked. If I could have thought about anything. / But I didn't. And it doesn't matter what my excuse was. That my mind was in a meltdown is no excuse. I could have stopped it—end of story. But to stop it, I felt like I'd have to stop the entire world from spinning. Like things had been out of control for so long that whatever I did hardly mattered anymore. / I wanted the world to stop . . . to end.

CLAY

For Hannah, the world did end. But for Jessica, it didn't. It went on. And then, Hannah hit her with these tapes.

HANNAH

I don't know how many songs went by with me stuck in that closet. / And when footsteps fell within the room—several songs after he entered the room—I pressed my back against the closet wall . . . waiting.

(BRYCE leaves the room slowly, looking around as he goes. With a smile, he passes JUSTIN and exits the stage.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

But his footsteps walked away. It was over. / After all, he couldn't be late for work, could he?

(Scene unfreezes. HANNAH gets out of the closet and exits the room, obviously upset. She stops in front of JUSTIN and they stare painfully.)

HANNAH

(toward frozen JUSTIN)

And that's where I saw you. The person this whole tape revolves around . . . Justin Foley. / We'd come a long way, Justin. From my first kiss at the bottom of the slide. To now. / First, you started a chain of events that ruined my life. Now, you were working on hers. / The color in your face . . . gone. Your expression . . . blank. And your eyes looked so exhausted. / Or was it pain I saw there? / Justin, baby, I'm not blaming you entirely.

(to audience)

We both could have stopped it. And I'm admitting this to you. To all of you. That girl had two chances. And both of us let her down. /

(toward Justin)

So what do you think of him now, Justin? Do you hate him? Your friend that raped her, is he still your friend? / Yes, but why? / It must be denial. He's always been a good friend to you. And the more you hang out with him, the more he seems like the same old guy from before, right? So he couldn't possibly have done anything wrong. Which means that you didn't do anything wrong, either. / That's great news, Justin. Because if he didn't do anything wrong, and you didn't do anything wrong, then I didn't do anything wrong. And you have no idea how much I wish I didn't ruin that girl's life. /

(to audience)

But I did.

(Blackout.)

## SCENE 26 (Cassette 6: Side A)

(TONY and CLAY sit outside the party house.)

CLAY

Full story. What happened?

TONY

She came over to my house. Hannah. And that was my chance.

CLAY

For what?

TONY

Clay, the signs were all there. She came over with her bike. The one she always rode to school.

CLAY

The blue one. And let me guess. You were working on your car.

TONY

Who would've thought, right? But she never came over to my house before, so I was a little surprised. What was weird, though, was why she came over.

CLAY

Why?

TONY

She came over to give me her bike. / She wanted me to have it. She was done with it. It was a sign. And I missed it. / She said I was the only one she could think of who might need it. I drive the oldest car at school and she thought if it ever broke down I might need a backup. / I told her that I couldn't take her bike. Not without giving her something in return.

CLAY

What did you give her?

TONY

I'll never forget this. Her eyes, Clay, they never looked away. She just kept looking, straight into my eyes, and started crying. She just stared at me and tears began streaming down her face.

(wipes tears from his eyes)

I should have done something.

CLAY

What did she ask for?

TONY

She asked me how I made my tapes, the ones I play in my car.

(leans back and takes a deep breath)

So I told her about my dad's old tape recorder. / Then she asked if I had anything to record voices.

CLAY

God.

TONY

Like a handheld recorder or something. Something you didn't have to plug in but could walk around with. And I didn't ask why. I told her to wait right there and I'd get one.

CLAY

And you gave it to her?

TONY

I didn't know what she was going to do with it, Clay.

CLAY

Wait, I'm not accusing you, Tony. But she didn't say anything about why she wanted it?

TONY

If I had asked, do you think she would have told me?

(CLAY shakes his head.)

TONY

A few days later, when I get home from school, there's a package sitting on my porch. I take it up to my room and start listening to the tapes. But it doesn't make any sense.

CLAY

Did she leave you a note or anything?

TONY

Just the tapes. But it didn't make any sense because Hannah and I have third period together and she was at school that day.

CLAY

What?

TONY

So when I got home and started listening to the tapes, I went through them so fast. Fast-forwarding to find out if I was on them. But I wasn't. And that's when I knew that she'd given me the second set of tapes. So I looked her up and called her house, but no one answered. So I called her parents' store. I asked if Hannah was there, and they asked if everything was all right because I'm sure I sounded crazy.

CLAY

What did you say?

TONY

I told them that something was wrong and they needed to find her. But I couldn't make myself tell them why.  
(takes in a jagged breath of air)

And the next day at school, she wasn't there. / I went home early that day, pretending I was sick. And I've got to admit, it took me a few days to pull myself together. But when I returned, Justin Foley looked like hell. Then Alex. And I thought, okay, most of these people deserve it, so I'm going to do what she asked and make sure you all hear what she has to say.

CLAY

But how are you keeping track? How did you know I had the tapes?

TONY

You were easy. You stole my Walkman, Clay! But everyone else, they were a little trickier. I'd run to my car after the last bell and drive as close to the front lawn of the school as possible. When I saw whoever was next, a couple days after I knew the last person had heard the tapes, I'd call out his name and wave him over. Or her. I'd wave her over.

CLAY

And then you'd just ask if they had the tapes?

TONY

No. They would've denied it, right? So I'd hold up a tape when they got close and tell them to get in because I had a song I wanted them to hear. Every time, based on their reaction, I knew.

CLAY

And then you'd play one of her tapes?

TONY

No. If they didn't run away, I'd have to do something, so I'd play them a song. Any song. They would sit there, wondering why in the hell I was playing them this song. But if I was right, their eyes would glaze over, like they were a million miles away.

CLAY

So why you? Why'd she give the tapes to you?



TONY

I don't know. The only thing I can think of is because I gave her the recorder. She thought I had a stake in it and would play along.

CLAY

You're not on them, but you're still a part.

TONY

(grips the curb)

I've got to go.

CLAY

I didn't mean anything by that. Honest.

TONY

I know. But it's late.

(TONY walks away from the scene. CLAY presses play on the Walkman.)

HANNAH

If time was a string connecting all of your stories, that party would be the point where everything knots up, And that knot keeps growing and growing, getting more and more tangled, dragging the rest of your stories into it. / I wandered back into the party. Staggered in, really. But not from alcohol. From everything else. / Then a hand touched my shoulder. A gentle squeeze. / It was Jenny Kurtz.

CLAY

The cheerleader from the Oh My Dollar Valentines.

(Lights up on car set. JENNY is frozen in the scene when HANNAH approaches.)

HANNAH

Jenny, this one's for you.

JENNY

Hannah? Do you need a ride home?

HANNAH

(to audience)

I almost laughed. Was it so obvious? Did I look that terrible?

(JENNY and HANNAH get in the car. Sound of car starting.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

We got in the car and Jenny didn't say a thing. She didn't ask me any questions. And I was so grateful. Jenny, maybe you've had things happen, or seen things happen at parties that you just couldn't discuss. Not right away, at least. Which is sort of fitting, because I haven't discussed any of this until now. / Well . . . no . . . I tried. I tried once, but he didn't want to hear it.

CLAY

Is that the twelfth story? The thirteenth? Is it one of the names written on her paper that she won't tell us about?

HANNAH

What happened next, I'm not entirely sure. / The rain wasn't heavy, but it blurred the windshield just enough to keep everything dreamlike. And I needed that. It kept my world from becoming too real, too fast. / And then . . . it hit. There's nothing like an accident to bring the world crashing back.

CLAY

An accident?

HANNAH

The front wheel on my side slammed into and jumped the curb. A wooden post smacked into your front bumper and snapped back like a toothpick.

CLAY

God. No.

HANNAH

A Stop sign fell backward in front of your headlights. It caught under your car and you screamed and slammed on the brakes.

(JENNY screams.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

In the side mirror, I watched sparks fly onto the road as we slid to a stop. / Okay, now I'm awake. / We sat for a moment, staring through the windshield. The wipers smeared the rain from side to side. And my hands stayed gripped to my seatbelt, thankful we only hit a sign.

CLAY

The accident with an old man. And a guy from school. Did Hannah know? Did she know Jenny caused it?

(JENNY gets out of the car and walks around checking for damage. She puts her head down, obviously upset.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

The dent wasn't bad. I mean, it wasn't good, but you had to feel some relief. It could have been worse. It could have been much, much worse. For example . . . you could have hit something else.

CLAY

She knows.

HANNAH

And what were the first words you said when you got back in the car?

JENNY

Well, that sucks.

(gets in car and is about to start it when HANNAH tries to stop her)

Hannah, I'm not drunk. It's raining.

HANNAH

Barely. Park the car.

JENNY

Be reasonable.

(laughs)

Nobody obeys stop signs anyway. They just roll on through. So now, because there isn't one there, it's legal. See? People will thank me.

HANNAH

Park the car.

JENNY

Hannah, listen.

HANNAH

Park it. Please.

JENNY

Get out.

**HANNAH**

You were lucky it was only a sign.

**JENNY**

Hannah! Get . . . out!

**HANNAH**

(to audience, getting out of car)

So finally, I did. I opened the car door and stepped out. But I didn't shut it.

(to JENNY, who's staring through the windshield, hands gripping the wheel)

Can I use your phone?

**JENNY**

Why?

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

I should have lied.

(to JENNY)

We need to at least tell someone about the sign.

**JENNY**

They'll trace it. They can trace phone calls, Hannah.

(starts the car)

Shut the door.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

I didn't.

(toward frozen JENNY)

You revved the engine and I took the hint, stepping back onto the curb. Then you peeled away, causing the door to slam shut, picking up speed the further you got . . . and you got away. / In fact, you got away with much more than knocking down a sign, Jenny. / And once again, I could have stopped it . . . somehow.

**CLAY**

We all could have stopped something. The rumors. The rape. / You.

**HANNAH**

At the very least, I could have taken your keys. Or at the very, very least, I could have reached in and stolen your phone to call the police. / But you found your way home in one piece, Jenny. But that wasn't the problem. The sign was knocked down, and that was the problem. / B-6 on your map. Two blocks from the party there's a stop sign. But on that night, for part of the night, there wasn't. And it was raining. And someone was trying to deliver his pizzas on time. And someone else, heading in the opposite direction, was turning.

**CLAY**

The old man.

**HANNAH**

There was no Stop sign on that corner. Not on that night. And one of them, one of the drivers, died.

(Lights fade on car set.)

**CLAY**

No one knew who caused it. Not us. Not the police. / But Jenny knew. And Hannah. And maybe Jenny's parents, because someone fixed her bumper real fast.

**HANNAH**

Eventually, I made it to a gas station. C-7 on your map. And I used a payphone to call the police. When someone answered, I sucked in the tears that wet my lips and told them that on the corner of Tanglewood and South-- / But she cut me off. She told me the cops had already been called and were on their way. / I was shocked. I couldn't believe you actually called the police, Jenny. / But I shouldn't have been shocked. Because as it turns out, you didn't call them. / At school the next day, that's when I found out who had called. And it wasn't to report a fallen sign. It was to report an accident. An accident I was never aware of . . . until then. / But that night, after hanging up the phone, I wandered the streets some more. Before I went home, I needed to calm down. If my parents caught me sneaking back in with tears in my eyes, they'd ask way too many questions. Unanswerable questions.

**CLAY**

That's what I'm doing now. Staying away. I wasn't crying the night of the party, but I can barely hold it back now. And I can't go home.

(opens the Walkman and flips the tape over)

I'm almost at the end.

## SCENE 27 (Cassette 6: Side B)

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Just two more to go. Don't give up on me now. / I'm sorry. I guess that's an odd thing to say. Because isn't that what I'm doing? Giving up? / Yes. As a matter of fact, I am. And that, more than anything else, is what all comes down to. Me . . . giving up . . . on me. / No matter what I've said so far, no matter who I've spoken of, it all comes back to—it all ends with—me.

**CLAY**

Her voice sounds calm. Content with what she's saying.

**HANNAH**

Before that party, I'd thought about giving up so many times. I don't know, maybe some people are just preconditioned to think about it more than others. Because every time something bad happened, I thought about it. / It? Okay, I'll say it. I thought about suicide.

**CLAY**

The anger, the blame, it's all gone. Her mind is made up. The word is not a struggle for her anymore.

**HANNAH**

After everything I've talked about on these tapes, everything that occurred, I thought about suicide. Usually, it was just a passing thought. / I wish I would die.

**CLAY**

I've thought those words many times. But it's a hard thing to say out loud. It's even scarier to feel you might mean it.

**HANNAH**

But sometimes I took things further and wondered how I would do it. I would tuck myself into bed and wonder if there was anything in the house I could use. / It became a sick sort of game, imagining ways to kill myself. And there are some pretty weird and creative ways.

**CLAY**

You took pills. That, we all know.



HANNAH

It came down to two lines of thinking. If I wanted people to think it was an accident, I'd drive my car off the road. Someplace where there's no chance of survival. And there are so many places to do that on the outskirts of town. I've probably driven by each of them a dozen times in the past couple weeks. / Then there are these tapes. / Can I trust the twelve of you to keep a secret? To not let my parents find out what really happened? Will you let them believe it was an accident if that's the story going around?

(pause)

I don't know. I'm not sure.

CLAY

She thinks we might tell.

HANNAH

So I've decided on the least painful way possible. / Pills. / But what kind of pills? And how many? I'm not sure. And I don't have much time to figure it out because tomorrow . . . I'm going to do it. / Wow. / I won't be around anymore . . . tomorrow. / Tomorrow I'm getting up, I'm getting dressed, and I'm walking to the post office. There, I'll mail a bunch of tapes to Justin Foley. And after that, there's no turning back. I'll go to school, too late for first period, and we'll have one last day together. The only difference being that I'll know it's the last day. / You won't.

CLAY

Can I remember? Can I see her in the halls on that last day? I want to remember the very last time I saw her.

HANNAH

And you'll treat me how you've always treated me. Do you remember the last thing you said to me?

CLAY

I don't.

HANNAH

The last thing you did to me?

CLAY

I smiled, I'm sure of it. I smiled every time I saw you after that party, but you never looked up.

HANNAH

And what was the last thing I said to you? Because trust me, when I said it, I knew it was the last thing I'd ever say.

CLAY

Nothing. You told me to leave the room and that was it. You found ways to ignore me every time after that.

HANNAH

Which brings us to one of my very last weekends. The weekend following the accident. The weekend of a new party. A party I didn't attend.

CLAY

Even if I thought you might be there, I still would've stayed home. / With the way you ignored me at school, I assumed you would ignore me there, too. And that was a theory too painful to prove.

HANNAH

I've heard people say that after a particularly bad experience with tequila, just the smell of it can make them barf. And while this party didn't make me barf, just being near it—just hearing it—twisted my stomach into knots. / One week was nowhere near enough time to get over that last party.

CLAY

Wait, I remember it now. The last time I saw you.

**HANNAH**

The bass thumping down the block was impossible to shut out. But I tried. I ran through the house, closing curtains and twisting shut every blind I could find.

**CLAY**

I remember the last words we said to each other.

**HANNAH**

Then I hid myself in my bedroom with the TV blasting. / I shut my eyes, tight. I wasn't watching the TV any more. I wasn't in my room anymore. I could only think back to that closet, hiding inside it. And once again, no one was around to hear me cry.

**CLAY**

In Mr. Porter's English class, I noticed your desk was empty. But when the bell rang and I walked into the hall, there you were. / We almost bumped into each other. But your eyes were down so you didn't know it was me. And together, we said it.

**CLAY/HANNAH**

(together; HANNAH because of the near collision, CLAY because of regret)

I'm sorry.

**CLAY**

Then you looked up. You saw me. And there, in your eyes, what was it? Sadness? Pain? You moved around me. I watched you walk down the long stretch of the hallway, with people knocking into me. But I didn't care. / I stood there and watched you disappear. Forever.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

After being shut in for so long, I decided to catch a breath of fresh air. And maybe, in turn, be a hero. / Once again, everybody, D-4. Courtney Crimsen's house. The site of this party. / No, this tape is not about Courtney . . . though she does play a part. But Courtney has no idea what I'm about to say, because she left just as things got going.

**CLAY**

(walks toward park set)

I'm not going to Courtney's. I'm going to the scene of Hannah's first kiss.

**HANNAH**

My plan was to just walk by the place. Maybe I'd find someone struggling to put a key in their car door and I'd give them a ride home. / But the street was empty. Everyone was gone. / Or so it seemed. / And then, someone called my name. / Over the tall wooden fence at the side of Courtney's house, a head poked up. And whose head would that be? Bryce Walker's.

(Lights up on fence set. HANNAH approaches while COURTNEY and BRYCE look at her over the fence.)

**CLAY**

God, no. This can only end one way. If anyone can shovel more shit onto Hannah's life, it's Bryce.

**BRYCE**

(to HANNAH)

Where you going?

**CLAY**

How many times had I seen him, with any of his girlfriends, grabbing their wrists and twisting? Treating them like meat.

**BRYCE**

(louder as HANNAH ignores him)

Come on, join us. We're sobering up.

**CLAY**

That's not why you did it, Hannah. That's not why you joined them. You knew it was the worst choice possible. You knew that.

**HANNAH**

(to audience, softly)

But who am I to hold a grudge?

**CLAY**

That's why you did it. You wanted your world to collapse around you. You wanted everything to get as dark as possible. And Bryce, you knew, could help you do that.

**BRYCE**

We're all just relaxing a bit.

**COURTNEY**

I can give you a ride home when we're done.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Courtney was there, too. And she sounded so genuine, which surprised me. / It even made me feel a little guilty.  
(approaches the fence)

I was willing to forgive you, Courtney. I do forgive you. In fact, I forgive almost all of you. But you still need to hear me out. You still need to know. / I walked across the wet grass and noticed steam rising up from behind the fence. The source of the steam? A redwood hot tub.

**COURTNEY**

We're in our underwear.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Should I? / No . . . but I will.

(HANNAH walks closer to fence.)

**CLAY**

You knew what you were getting into, Hannah.

**HANNAH**

(to audience)

Not once had I given in to the reputation that had been set for me. Not once. Even though sometimes it was hard. Even though, sometimes, I found myself attracted to someone who only wanted to get with me because of what they'd heard. But I always said no to those people. Always! / Until Bryce.

(toward fence)

So congratulations, Bryce. You're the one. I let my reputation catch up with me—I let my reputation become me—with you. How does it feel? / Wait, don't answer that. Let me say this first: I was not attracted to you, Bryce. Ever. In fact, you disgusted me. / I was using you. I needed you, so I could let go of me, completely.

(to audience)

For everyone listening, let me be clear. I did not say no or push his hand away. All I did was turn my head, clench my teeth, and fight back tears. And he saw that. He even told me to "Just relax."

(starts walking away)

When you were done, Bryce, I got out of the hot tub and walked home. The night was over. / I was done.

(Blackout.)

# SCENE 28 (Cassette 7: Side A)

HANNAH

(to audience)

One . . . last . . . try. / I'm giving life one more chance. And this time, I'm getting help. I'm asking for help because I cannot do this alone. I've tried that.

CLAY

You didn't Hannah. I was there for you and you told me to leave.

HANNAH

Of course, if you're listening to this, I failed. Or he failed. And if he fails, the deal is sealed. / Only one person stands between you and this collection of audiotapes: Mr. Porter.

CLAY

No! He cannot know about this. / I see him every day. I do not want him to know about this. Not about me. Not about anyone. To bring an adult into this, someone from school? No.

HANNAH

Mr. Porter, let's see how you do.

(Lights up on classroom set. MR. PORTER is at his desk. HANNAH puts recorder gently into her backpack and walks in.)

MR. PORTER

Hannah. Glad you made it. / Come in. Sit here.

(HANNAH sits.)

HANNAH

Thank you.

MR. PORTER

Are you comfortable? Do you want some water?

HANNAH

I'm fine. Thank you.

MR. PORTER

So, Hannah, how can I help you? What would you like to talk about?

HANNAH

Well, that's . . . I don't know, really. Just everything, I guess.

MR. PORTER

(joking)

That might take a while.

(pause, growing serious)

Hannah, it's okay. I've got as much time as you need. Whenever you're ready.

HANNAH

It's just . . . things. Everything's so hard right now.

(voice shakes)

I don't know where to begin. I mean, I kind of do. But there's so much I don't know how to sum it all up.



MR. PORTER

You don't need to sum it all up. Why don't we begin with how you're feeling today. Right now.

HANNAH

Right now I feel lost, I guess. Sort of empty. I don't care anymore.

MR. PORTER

About?

CLAY

Make her tell you. Keep asking questions, but make her tell you.

HANNAH

About anything. School. Myself. The people in my school.

MR. PORTER

What about your friends?

HANNAH

You're going to have to define "friends" if you want an answer to that question.

MR. PORTER

Don't tell me you don't have friends, Hannah. I see you in the halls.

HANNAH

Seriously, I need a definition. How do you know what a friend is?

MR. PORTER

Someone you can turn to when . . .

HANNAH

Then I don't have any. That's why I'm here, isn't it? I'm turning to you.  
(CLAY climbs into rocket slide.)

HANNAH

You don't know how hard it was to set up this meeting.

MR. PORTER

My schedule's been fairly open this week.

HANNAH

Not hard to schedule. Hard to get myself here.

MR. PORTER

I'm glad that you're here, Hannah. So tell me, when you leave here, how do you want things to be different for you?

HANNAH

You mean how can you help? I guess I . . . I don't know what I'm expecting. / I need it to stop.

MR. PORTER

You need what to stop?

HANNAH

I need everything to stop. People. Life.

MR. PORTER

Hannah, do you know what you just said?

CLAY

She knows what she said, Mr. Porter. She wants you to notice what she said and help her.

MR. PORTER

You said you wanted life to stop. Your life?

(pause)

Is that what you meant to say, Hannah? Those are very serious words, you know.

CLAY

She knows every word that comes out of her mouth, Mr. Porter. She knows they're serious words. Do something!

HANNAH

I know. They are. I'm sorry.

CLAY

Don't apologize. Talk to him!

HANNAH

I don't want my life to end. That's why I'm here.

MR. PORTER

So what happened, Hannah? How did you get to this point? I know you can't sum it all up. It's the snowball effect, am I right?

CLAY

Yes. The snowball effect. That's what she's been calling it.

MR. PORTER

It's one thing on top of another, isn't it?

HANNAH

It's too hard.

MR. PORTER

Life?

(HANNAH starts crying. MR. PORTER pulls out a box of tissues.)

MR. PORTER

Here. Take this. An entire box of tissues just for you. Never been used.

HANNAH

(laughs)

Thank you.

CLAY

He got her to laugh!

MR. PORTER

Let's talk about school, Hannah. So I can get some idea how you got to this point.

HANNAH

Okay.

MR. PORTER

When you think of school, what's the first thing that comes to mind?

HANNAH

Learning, I guess.

MR. PORTER

Well, that's good to hear.

HANNAH

I'm kidding.

(MR. PORTER laughs.)

HANNAH

I do learn here, but that's not what school is for me. It's just a place filled with people that I'm required to be with.

MR. PORTER

And that's hard for you?

HANNAH

At times.

MR. PORTER

With certain people, or people in general?

HANNAH

With certain people. But also . . . everyone. / It's hard because I don't know who's going to . . . you know . . . get me next. Or how.

MR. PORTER

What do you mean, "get" you?

HANNAH

Not like a conspiracy or anything. But it feels like I never know when something's going to pop out of the woodwork.

MR. PORTER

And get you?

HANNAH

I know, it sounds silly. But it's hard to explain unless you've heard some of the rumors about me.

MR. PORTER

I haven't. Teachers tend to get left out of student gossip. / When was the last time a rumor . . . popped up?

HANNAH

Not all of them are rumors.

MR. PORTER

Okay.

HANNAH

No. Listen . . .

CLAY

Please listen.

HANNAH

Years ago I was voted . . . you know, in one of those polls. Well, not really a poll, but someone's stupid idea of a list. A best-of and worst-of thing. And people have been reacting to it ever since.

MR. PORTER

When was the last time?

HANNAH

Recently. At a party. I swear, one of the worst nights of my life.

MR. PORTER

Because of a rumor?

HANNAH

So much more than a rumor. But partly, yes.

MR. PORTER

Can I ask what happened at the party?

HANNAH

It wasn't really during the party. It was after.

MR. PORTER

Okay, Hannah, can we play Twenty Questions?

HANNAH

What?

MR. PORTER

Sometimes it's hard for people to open up, even when everything is confidential.

HANNAH

Okay. Yes.

MR. PORTER

At this party you mentioned, are we talking about a boy?

HANNAH

Yes. But again, it wasn't during the party.

MR PORTER

I understand that, but we need to start somewhere.

HANNAH

Okay.

MR. PORTER

(exhales)

I'm not going to judge you, Hannah, but did anything happen that night that you regret?

HANNAH

Yes.

MR. PORTER

Did anything happen with this boy—and you can be totally honest with me, Hannah—did anything happen that might be considered illegal?

HANNAH

You mean rape? No. I don't think so.

MR. PORTER

Why don't you know?

HANNAH

Because there were circumstances.

MR. PORTER

Alcohol?



HANNAH

Maybe, but not with me.

MR. PORTER

Are you thinking of pressing charges?

HANNAH

No I'm . . . no.

MR. PORTER

Then what are your options?

HANNAH

I don't know.

CLAY

Tell her, Mr. Porter. Tell her what her options are.

MR. PORTER

Something needs to be done, Hannah. Something needs to change for you.

HANNAH

I know, but what are my options? I need you to tell me.

MR. PORTER

Well, if you won't press charges, if you're not sure if you even can press charges, then you have two options.

HANNAH

What? What are they?

CLAY

She sounds hopeful. She's putting too much hope in his answers.

MR. PORTER

One, you can confront him. We can call him in here to discuss what happened at this party. I can call you both out of . . .

HANNAH

You said there were two options.

MR. PORTER

Or two, and I'm not trying to be blunt here, Hannah, but you can move on.

HANNAH

You mean, do nothing?

MR. PORTER

It is an option, and that's all we're talking about. But if you won't press charges and you won't confront him, you need to consider the possibility of moving beyond this.

HANNAH

Move beyond this?

MR. PORTER

Is he in your class, Hannah?

HANNAH

He's a senior.

MR. PORTER

So he'll be gone next year.

HANNAH

You want me to move beyond this.

CLAY

It's not an option because she can't do it. Tell her you're going to help her.

HANNAH

(lifting her backpack)

Thank you, Mr. Porter.

MR. PORTER

Hannah. Wait. You don't need to leave.

CLAY

No!

HANNAH

I think I'm done here.

CLAY

Do not let her leave.

HANNAH

I got what I came for.

MR. PORTER

I think there's more we can talk about, Hannah.

HANNAH

No. I think I've figured it out. I need to move on and get over it.

MR. PORTER

Not get over it, Hannah. But sometimes there's nothing left to do but move on.

CLAY

Do not let her leave that room!

HANNAH

You're right. I know.

MR. PORTER

Hannah, I don't understand why you're in such a hurry to leave.

HANNAH

Because I need to get on with things, Mr. Porter. If nothing's going to change, then I'd better get on with it, right?

MR. PORTER

Hannah, what are you talking about?

HANNAH

I'm talking about my life, Mr. Porter.

MR. PORTER

Hannah, wait.

(Lights out on classroom.)

HANNAH

(to audience)

I'm walking down the hall. / His door is closed behind me. It's staying closed. / He's not coming. / He's letting me go. / I think I've made myself very clear, but no one's stepping forward to stop me.

CLAY

Who else, Hannah? Your parents? Me? You were not very clear with me.

HANNAH

A lot of you cared, just not enough. And that . . . that is what I needed to find out.

CLAY

But I didn't know what you were going through, Hannah.

HANNAH

And I did find out. / And I'm sorry.

CLAY

(crying)

"I'm sorry." The last words I'll ever hear from Hannah. And now, anytime someone says those words, I'm going to think of her. / I would have helped her if she'd only let me. I would have helped her because I want her to be alive.

(walks downstage, looks out over audience heads, eyes searching upward)

I would have helped you! I want you to be alive.

## SCENE 29

(MR. PORTER stands in front of STUDENTS in the classroom.)

MR. PORTER

(holds up a folder)

Before the school day gets too far underway, I need someone to take this to the front office for me.

(STUDENT takes the folder and walks across stage. SKYE crosses stage and bumps into him)

(CLAY enters the stage without the Walkman, wearing a different jacket.)

SKYE

(mumbles)

I'm sorry.

(CLAY looks up, flinching at the words 'I'm sorry.')

STUDENT

(ignores SKYE)

All right, Clay!

(laughs)

Someone's late for class, huh?

CLAY

Talk to me later.

(catches SKYE looking at him before continuing on her way; he jogs after her)

Skye.

(SKYE turns and they begin to talk. Blackout.)

(In individual pools of shadowed light on front of stage.)

JUSTIN

Spreading rumors does affect people. So does believing them.

ALEX

Suicide is the number three cause of death among teens.

**JESSICA**

If a friend is sexually assaulted, listen to them, offer help if you can, and support them.

**TYLER**

Someone else's privacy should never be taken for granted.

**COURTNEY**

Everyone matters.

**MARCUS**

Setting boundaries is important among significant others as well as friends.

**ZACH**

You never know what a positive word can mean to someone.

**RYAN**

People who are physically, sexually, or verbally abused are more likely to attempt suicide.

**BRYCE**

Two-thirds of sexual assaults are committed by someone the victim knows.

**JENNY**

It's important to let your friends help you.

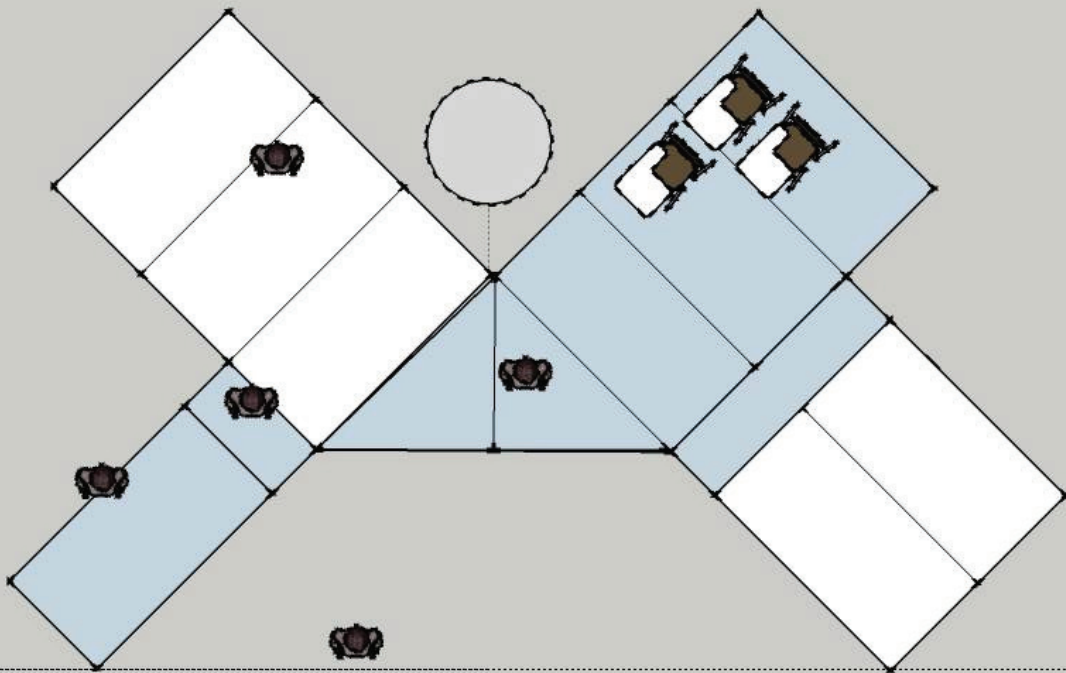
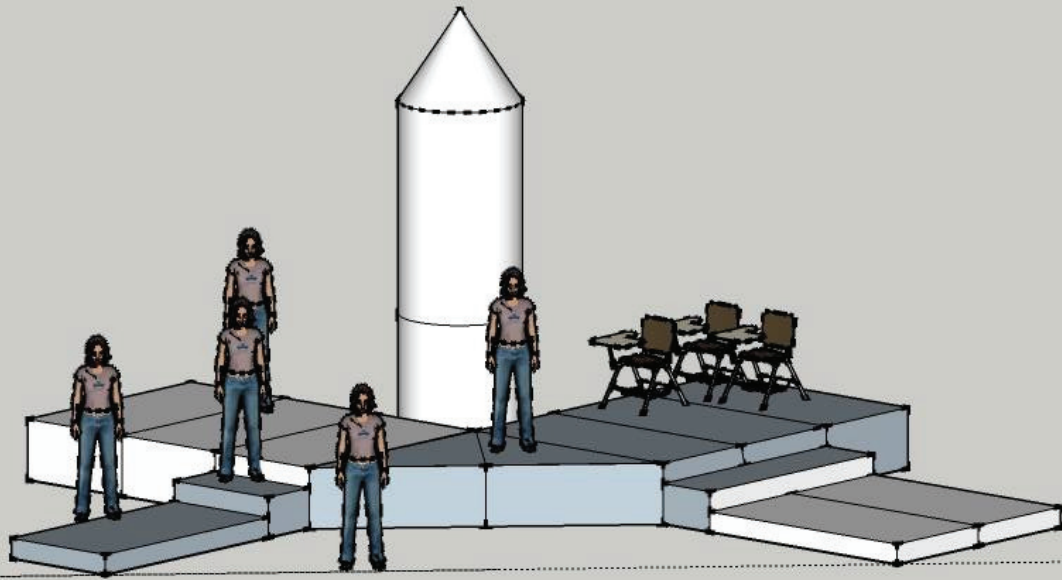
**MR. PORTER**

If you've ever had thoughts like Hannah Baker, do not keep them to yourself. Talk to someone. Get the help you deserve.

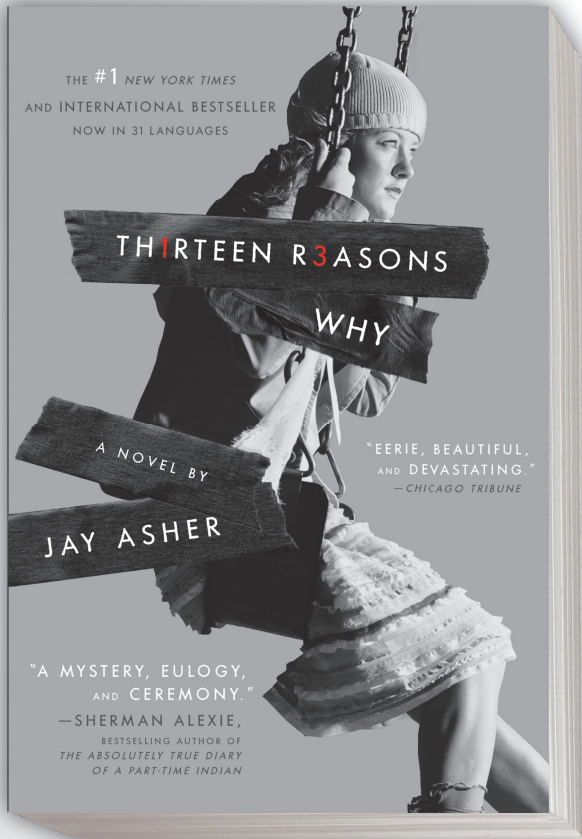
**CLAY**

Suicide should never be an option. Someone is always willing to listen. 1-800-SUICIDE is staffed by people who want you to call them when you need to talk.





You can't stop the future.  
You can't rewind the past.  
The only way to learn the secret  
... is to press play.



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