

Intimate Objects

By

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A Mixed-Media Play on Being Human in the Digital Age

Dedicated to The University of Michigan's New England  
Literature Program

## PROLOGUE

*Lights very dim, a slight blue barely illuminating the stage. The proscenium arch is designed like the screen border of a laptop, a silver aluminum with a web-camera built into the top center. On the stage is an electrical forest--white boxes, rectangular prisms, and cylinders all of many different sizes are organized in a way that appears to make them features in the woods of Maine: boulders, trees, and stumps. But they are far from organic, simply white figures, wires running down some of them like ivy. They exist close to each other but have room to be seen. These figures only dominate stage-right and stage-left. Center-stage is a clear path to upstage-center where there is a projection screen that dominates the audience's view. There is a loud chime that causes a reverberating hum and the screen is lit with a bright, piercing light. All of the white figures begin to glow. An image appears on the screen. "Show now loading," the screen states above a blue bar growing in size. As the blue bar grows, the figures onstage become blue little by little. Once the bar has reached its full size, all of the figures are entirely lit. But they quickly go back to dim white, an advertisement on the screen dominating the attention of the audience. The images and videos on the screen show happy moments between people, important moments--weddings, birthdays, births--or even just simple moments of smiling beauty. A bold, yet soothing voice speaks over the images and the calming music that is played in tandem.*

### VOICE 1

Aren't there moments you wish to never forget, but seem to always slip your mind? Why is it that the good always seems to go while the bad forces its way into staying? Don't you have times in life that you know are too important to go unrecorded, but a simple camera can't do the moment justice, can't put you there in that bliss again? Well get ready, because in October of 2020, this is all about to change.

*An image of glasses appears on the screen. We bring to you the InstaGlimpse Glasses. Put them on and record your moments exactly how you see them--peripherals and all. And then, place them back on in years down the road, and you can relive your happiest moments.*

*The images and clips of happy times begin to play again.*

It's just like going back in time--seeing the past exactly as you saw it before. And, with practically infinite storage capacity, you can record every moment, because we all know some of the best moments simply sneak up on you when you least expect it. And, don't worry about recording the bad in life--editing has never been easier than on the InstaGlimpse Glasses. Just plug them into your computer and you can delete and Photoshop.

*The glasses appear once more.*

It's time we take back our lives, one memory after the other. It's all just a glimpse away.

*The screen goes dark, and, then, one of the tall, white rectangular prisms is lit with another advertisement. There is upbeat music and images of a new website called "MyLife." The image on the prism is the log-in page. VOICE 2, more youthful and bold begins to speak.*

VOICE 2

Have pages like Facebook, Google Plus, Everybodycom, CyberGetYours, and WebWorldNow become too bland? Aren't you tired of the same old web? Well, in 2022, My Life is about to hit your technology.

*The screen shows a site similar to Facebook, but different in coloring and format. Clips show pictures of people around the world, all beautiful on a computer screen. We are navigated through the site.*

With MyLife, the creation of your life is put at your fingertips. You can add friends from all over the world, but even better, you can create your own friends, and with the website's advanced technology, these new and exciting friends will take on cyber lives of their own. Pick their appearance from our infinite catalog of models; then, pick their school, lifestyle, interests, location, and more. Then we do the work of making them REAL. You won't want to miss one status, one update. You'll have people who send nothing but the best messages and have nothing but the most engaging conversations tailored to your desires. And don't only create your friends, but yourself. MyLife offers the best editing techniques of any social media site and allows you to be the person who you always dreamed of. Stop trying to find yourself, and create yourself. Create your life...with MyLife.

*The prism fades out and now several of the white figures have advertisements projected on them--images matching the content of the ads. They*

*begin to play advertisements that slightly overlap but keep clarity. One is for web-sex, one is for online buying, one is for a music site, and one is for ancestry searching.*

VOICE 3

(Feminine and seductive.)

Sex has never been more real than with Instasex. Find the perfect matches for you online. Only the most beautiful singles wait behind your screen, the best matches at your keyboard and even your phone. With Instasex's breakthrough in web intimacy, we can calculate how to satisfy every one of your desires by pairing you with--

VOICE 4

(Excited and happy. With salsa music.)

BuyAllNow is just what everyone needs to live the perfect life. Create a profile, and the site's top-notch program will be able to find merchandise that will fit perfectly in your fantasy world at whatever price you desire. They'll get everything: your style, your budget, your dreams--

VOICE 5

(Youthful and masculine. With pop music.)

Never stop the music, never stop the music. The beat goes on with BeatsEverLasting. Download our app, and you will never need to search or buy music again. We got the best music coming at you twenny-four-seven--no ads, no nothing. With this, you are plugged in and stay plugged, never missin' a moment of your favorite genre, artist, or song. You don't even have to push play and--

VOICE 6

(The voice of an older woman. Sad, acoustic music.)

In a world that is rapidly moving forward, it is easy for family to get separated. Easy to lose your roots while in the fast jumble of today. Well, Rootslocator.com holds all of the answers you need to reconnect with your past--find who you are and understand your family tree, from the roots to its leaves. You are just a click away from--

*The two previous ads are reentered and replayed. Enter pictures of computers, phones, TV's, satellites, weapons, and appliances onto some figures. The voices and music begin to be played on fast-forward, and the images on the figures and screen are reduced to micro-glimpses. Words are scrambled, voices high pitched, and the loading*

*hum is played once more. Everything speeds so quickly that it sounds like a burning tension from something big is produced. The figures without advertisements glow red.*

LOUD VOICE

(Very robotic at first but becomes human.)

Warning, overheated. Warning, overheated. WARNING OVERHEATED! Stop, cool down. Turn off. Stop. Stop. Please, take a break! This is over heating! We're burning up!

*An alarm sounds, and smoke fills the stage. The red figures flash on and off. Robot voices whisper unclear words, as if they are exchanging secrets in the midst of this turmoil.*

LOUD VOICE

Warning! Warning! PLEASE SLOW DOWN!!! We are going to ex-ex-ex-ex-ex-ex-explode!

*Everything off. Silence and darkness. Relief.*

ACT 1Scene One

*Lights back on. Same dim lighting. Landon sits behind a rectangular prism turned long-ways. On the prism is projected the image of a desk. Landon looks sickly--pale with dark circles under his eyes. There is the ring of a phone, but it stops when Landon begins to type feverishly on his computer. A picture of a smiling, gorgeous redhead appears on one of the white figures onstage. She is Shelly Singame, a Californian jetsetter. On another figure, text appears with the heading of MyLife at the top of the figure. The conversation that will follow appears on this figure as instant messaging on Facebook would appear. Shelly's voice is heard in tandem with the text. Landon speaks with what he writes, but his spoken words are flat, emotionless. Stage left, Rose sits behind a figure, and, stage right, Rylie sits behind a figure. Both on laptops in the darkness.*

SHELLY'S VOICE

You would not believe how beautiful this city is.

*Images of Paris appear on the white figures. Shelly in Paris. Shelly at the Eiffel Tower. Shelly at the Arche de Triumph. Shelly with a modelesque man. Shelly shopping, holding a sparkling dress to her body. Etc.*

LANDON

Yeah, I'm looking at the pictures. It's something.

SHELLY'S VOICE

Really, Landon. I wish you could come visit me. God, I wish our paths would just cross sometime.

LANDON

But you're always so up in the air. Jetsetter.

SHELLY'S VOICE

Well, I'll keep taking pictures for you. And, oh, the food! I'm heading to Italy next month, and I'm so scared of the pounds I am bound to gain!

LANDON

You'll be fine. Like you need to worry about pounds.

*Another picture of a girl appears on a figure. This girl appears to have great spunk--eyeliner thick and dyed black hair. Bright-red lipstick and*

(CONTINUED)

*a dress with cuts running down her entire front. She is Tonya, a semi-celebrity in the rock world. She begins a web conversation with Landon, their conversation appearing on another figure. Her voice is booming with a New York accent. A video of her rocking out onstage appears on a figure.*

TONYA'S VOICE

Holy-fuck, I just had the most amazing sex!

LANDON

(To Tonya.)

Good to know.

SHELLY'S VOICE

You're so sweet, Landon. One of my best friends, really. Too bad you're gay.

LANDON

(To Shelly.)

Yep, the ladies sure are missing out. Haha.

TONYA'S VOICE

Really! His dick was so big! I mean, like I'm walking funny!

LANDON

(To Tonya.)

That's going to complicate your gig tonight. If you can't walk, how will you jump around screaming?

SHELLY'S VOICE

And then I'll be off to London. You know, I have a friend who is going to get me into the Royal Palace.

TONYA'S VOICE

Please, I'm a tough bitch. A semi could blow through me, and I'd still do my shit onstage.

LANDON

(To Tonya.)

Haha.

(To Shelly.)

Are you going to meet the queen? Haha.

SHELLY'S VOICE

I'm more concerned about meeting a prince.

TONYA'S VOICE

And fuck, he knew how to throw me around. I was like a rag doll. Raggedy-fucking-Ann, man. Boom, boom, bang bang. You know, like cha-ching. That shit was hot!

(CONTINUED)

*A message appears on one figure.*

VOICE 1

Your friend Chris Wood has been successfully created.  
His life will be available in one day!

*Shelly and Tonya's voices overlap.*

SHELLY'S VOICE

Too bad Prince William is taken.

TONYA'S VOICE

And he had the best drugs a gal could ask for. I was seeing stars and shit. When I was cuming for like the hundredth time, I thought I saw this big ass star turning into a spaceship and it started flying at me. And then it abducted me in this big fuckin' gold light. And I was screamin' 'cuz I was bein' abducted. And I was screamin' 'cuz I was cumin' like a hydrant, and, then, I was just in this blinding light.

*One figure burns a bright white.*

LANDON

(To Shelly.)

Shit, Tonya had an out-of-body, out-of-this-world orgasm last night. Exclamation mark. She's telling me all about it.

SHELLY'S VOICE

I don't need to hear about it. She has no class. You know how I feel about her--

*Landon puts on the glasses sitting on his "desk." They are the same glasses from the advertisement shown in scene one. An image appears on the screen. "Nick Calling," it reads. Landon accepts the call. Nick appears on the screen in a blue bedroom, his name on the wall behind him in block letters. He is laying in bed, smiling at Landon. Landon's voice is not bland while he talks to Nick, but filled with life.*

LANDON

Hey, babe.

NICK

Hey, I was thinking about you a lot today.

TONYA'S VOICE

And, then, for a second I thought he was an alien so I got a little freaked out, 'cuz I didn't want no critter popping outta my belly nine months from now, uh-uh!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



TONYA'S VOICE (cont'd)

Actually, gestation for an alien baby could be totally different, couldn't it? Like, it could incubate for a day and become the size of an elephant.

SHELLY'S VOICE

She needs to grow up, she can't be doing this punk-rock crap forever. It's not even in vogue anymore. It's fucking 2025.

LANDON

(To Nick.)

Really?

NICK

Yeah. I was at the furniture store with my mom and I was looking at all of the little couches and chairs and... I was thinking about what we would get if we were moving in together. You know, if we weren't four hours apart.

LANDON

(To Nick.)

Well, we'd have to have two separate living rooms. One for my modern furniture--

NICK

And one for my comfy stuff. I know...

*He laughs. Nick and Landon stare at each other.*

TONYA'S VOICE

You there?! I was just gettin' to the best part, but I'm not wasting the story on nothin'.

SHELLY'S VOICE

Look at the pictures of the clothes I bought.

*One figure becomes a sideshow of expensive-looking clothing. Two more pictures show up. An older woman named Nina. More conversation.*

NINA'S VOICE

Hey, kiddo.

NICK

Oh, crap, I have a pizza in the oven. I have to go get it out. Be right back. Love you--

LANDON

I--

(CONTINUED)

*All the figures go dark, Landon immediately jerking of the glasses as the screen goes blank. He sits very still for a good ten seconds, staring at his computer. He then begins to move his hands upon his desk, feeling for his charger. He then looks under his desk, crawling around it. He looks at its surface, then under it again, repeating this three times. He then stands in his place fidgeting.*

LANDON

Shit, my charger. Where's my charger? Where the fuck is my charger? Where? Where? God, WHERE IS IT?!!!  
Uuuuuhhhhh...shit, shit, shit. I didn't get to say I love you. Tonya, Tonya needed to tell me her story. WHERE is it?!! Where is my charger?! His dick was like an alien! How? How?! I don't know. Where the hell...FUCK!

*All of the pictures appear on the figures once more. Nick is on the screen.*

ALL VOICES OF CYBER FRIENDS

Hello? Hello? Hello? Hello?

LANDON

I'm coming. I just hafta find my charger. I'm coming, I'm coming.

*The hello's continue.*

Dammit! I'm coming. DAMMIT! WHERE IS IT! HELP ME!  
SOMEBODY HELP ME!

NICK

*(Never-ending and over the hello's.)*

I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you...

LANDON

Don't go. I just need my charger. I just need some power.

*The figures without pictures begin to flash red.*

DIGITAL VOICE

Dead battery. Dead battery. Dead battery. Dead battery...

*The voices continue, getting louder and louder. Landon screams.*

(CONTINUED)

LANDON

FUUUUUUUUUUUUCK!

*Landon collapses on the floor. Dim blue lighting. All of the voices and sounds blend into a gentle phone ring. Lydia enters, not acknowledging the phone ring. She looks at Landon, broken on the ground.*

LYDIA

Landon, what's wrong?

LANDON

(Numb.)

I can't find my charger.

*Long beat.*

(Still numb.)

Mom, I can't find my charger.

LYDIA

(Nervously.)

I...I put it away...

*Landon stares at her in disbelief.*

LANDON

You what?

LYDIA

I...I just--when you were asleep, and I came in to check on you. You've been online way too much. On that one site. On the InstaGlimpses...you need a break. It's been months since you left this house.

*Landon looks at her with completely blank eyes.*

LANDON

I need the power back. I can't, I can't see.

*He balls up on the floor.*

LYDIA

You've gone blind?

LANDON

No...I can see you, and this room, but I...I can't see...

*Lydia crouches next to him, rubbing his back.*

(CONTINUED)

LYDIA

Sweetie. You need a break. You need help. I love you.

*The ringing of the phone grows louder.*

LANDON

(Still numb.)

Mom, I can't stop the ringing.

LYDIA

Landon, sweetie, you're sick.

LANDON

It won't stop.

*The phone rings very loud.*

LYDIA

There is no ringing, honey.

*A picture of Shelly flashes on a figure.*

SHELLY'S VOICE

LANDON!

LYDIA

It's all in your head. Landon...I've made some arrangements--

LANDON

(Breaking his numbness.)

WHY WON'T IT STOP! Please, please just get away from me. I can't stand your touch. PLEASE?

*Lydia jerks up, on the verge of tears. She rushes away, looking back at Landon before exiting.*

Where did everyone go? Why am I so alone?

*Light focus on Rylie, who sits behind a figure of his own as he stares at a laptop. An image emerges on the screen. It is of a woman's torso, her head is not in the picture that her webcam is capturing.*

RYLIE

I want to see what's under your clothes.

*The woman begins to unbutton her blouse, but stops.*

What's wrong?

*The woman begins to button her shirt once more.*

No, go back. Go BACK! GO THE FUCK BACK!

(CONTINUED)

*The woman flips him off and disconnects their chat. A new image appears on the screen. It reads "Herbert Dawnings calling."*

Shit...uh...

*Rylie stares at the computer, not sure if he should answer. The ringing ends. Rylie is slightly relieved, but the ringing resumes in no time. Rylie answers. The image of a short, chubby, balding man with glasses and a red face appears on the screen.*

Hi, Boss.

BOSS

RYLIE! Where the fuck were you today?

RYLIE

I...oh, did...we had that meeting didn't we? Boss, I cannot tell you how sorry I am. I totally spaced out. I've been sick--

BOSS

Over the past month? This month you've missed three meetings! ONE, TWO, THREE! What the hell do you have? Chronic Dumbass Syndrome? It's a little too early for dementia to be making you forget about your CAREER!

RYLIE

It's just this...this cold I can't wear off. Makes be drowsy all the time. Out of it.

*The image of the woman's torso appears on all of the figures. This time, she unbuttons her blouse more, but just as she is about to fully remove it, the image repeats itself. Rylie is lost in this image, looking around the stage.*

BOSS

Excuses, excuses. Well, you know what? Excuses are like assholes! Everyone's got one. Hey, I could say I'm a dick 'cause my uncles used to tie me down and stick dirty socks in my mouth when they watched me. Could ramble on about the psychological damage of being a young boy in a house full of baboon like males. But guess what? I do not do that. I just say I'm a dick. No excuses. I'm a motherfucking dick, and the whole world can suck it if they don't like it. So, don't you tell me you were absent because you're sick. Just say it. You were absent because you are a dumbass.

*Rylie does not respond. He is distracted.*

Rylie? RYLIE? Are you listening to me?

(CONTINUED)

RYLIE

Yes, sir, it's just this sickness.

BOSS

MOTHER-OF-GOD EXCUSES, Rylie! Look, I'm letting you get away with this one, but not easy. The ad agency has a project for you.

RYLIE

(With a smile and enthusiasm.)

We always have projects in Creative, sir. I'll be glad to take it.

BOSS

You're going to the woods.

RYLIE

What?

BOSS

You're going to the god-damn filthy, filled-with-faeries-and-quirrels-fucking, dear-shit-stuck-on-your-shoes woods. All these hippies are propagating this faggotty philosophy on why we need to get back to nature, and why we can't let technology take over our lives. And, you know what? The tech companies are beginning to fear the bullshit is cutting into their profits! Well, we are going to launch a beautiful ad campaign against those tree-hugging, haven't-showered-for-weeks, Gandalf-bearded dishrags. And, since you weren't AT THE MEETING today, you were volunteered to be the research man. You're going to a tech rehab facility in the woods.

RYLIE

I'm what?

BOSS

It's for whacked out people who spend their days glued to a computer chatting it up with cyber friends or jerking off to naked ladies. These hippies out in fucking Maine have a camp for them. To heal them. Get them away from the real world. Well, you're going to infiltrate. You're going to see how these people think and use it against them. Kay?

RYLIE

Sir, I--

BOSS

Good bye. Busy day. Got a mistress to bang.

*Beat.*

(MORE)

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BOSS (cont'd)

Oh, and, by the way, we made a back story for you in the meeting. It was real fun, actually. We all got a real kick. So...we made you an online sex addict. It was a joke, you know. We were all like, oh, so that's why he's missing work! He's too busy lookin' at boobies.

*Boss laughs. Rylie is silent.*

Well, have fun, Rylie. But don't go fucking a tree-hugger--unshaved armpits on a girl is nay-sty!

*Boss disconnects. Rylie is lost in shock and wonders about the figures. The woman undressing is still displayed, the clip of her undressing repeating. It speeds up.*

RYLIE

Take it off! TAKE IT OFF! SHOW ME WHAT'S UNDER--

*He is interrupted by a quick flash of light and the short glimpse of an entirely naked female body--no head in the frame. Light focus on Rose, downstage right. Now, on the figures is countless crap--all types of crap. All objects that money can buy--clothes, tables, dishwashers. The pictures of these things flash quickly upon the figures, soon to be replaced with more crap. On the screen is a beautiful dining room. Rose's outfit is rather ridiculous. She has on a silk red dress and sparkling high heels. On her wrists are a total of ten bracelets, and she has at least one ring on each finger. A tiara sits on her head. Around her neck is only a stethoscope. Her hair, nails, and make-up border between well-done and over-done.*

ROSE

My newest room. Created on BuyAllNow. Isn't it beautiful? Oh, look at the the dark, oak table from Russia. Look at the carvings at it's feet--horse hooves. They look so real. Like I could sit on it, and it could gallop me off into the sunset. It's antique. Belonged to the royal family before they were all murdered by angry communists. Won't it look so good with that gold framed mirror from Italy? Italy was the original maker of the mirror, you know. So nothing less than an Italian mirror, nothing less. And the chandelier designed by Claude Rémairé. It will sparkle above guests' heads like golden fireflies as we chat over dinner served on porcelain plates. Our conversations will be centered around my magnificent collections, of course the painting in this room will

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ROSE (cont'd)

be a piece of great interest. Yes, I will tell them, it's by Jean Lunaé. He's on the up and coming. Oh, the things in this room, the things!

VOICE 4

Now that your room is completed, all you have to do is buy!

ROSE

Oh, I was just about to do that, Bethany.

*Rose walks to her computer on a figure. She sits down at it.*

*(Fragile, truthfully.)*

I think this room will make me feel safe. The light, light purple paint reminds me of my childhood bedroom. My father reading me to bed, his voice carrying me off into distant lands where I could be a princess surrounded by a mote, a prince, a court. I believed that all existed... Hah, children are stupid creatures. But this exists, this room will soon exist!

*Rose's phone, sitting next to her computer, begins to ring. She answers it while she fiddles with the stethoscope around her neck.*

ROSE

Hello, honey.

DR.'S VOICE

I don't think you should call me that anymore, Rose.

ROSE

Oh, don't be silly. Just because we are separated does not mean I can't be sweet.

DR.'S VOICE

Rose--

ROSE

I was just in the process of redoing our dining room. You must come and see it when I'm done!

DR.'S VOICE

You redid your dining room two months ago.

ROSE

I grew tired of it, sweetheart. The red trim was too vulgar.

(CONTINUED)



DR.'S VOICE

Rose, you have to stop.

ROSE

(Charmingly.)

I will not stop calling you endearing names! No, no, no!

DR.'S VOICE

No, Rose. You have to stop buying things. I've--I've cut you off.

ROSE

You what?

DR.'S VOICE

I'm canceling the cards, the accounts--everything. I don't have the money.

ROSE

What are you talking about? You're a cardiologist. You're set for life. Why else would you spend years of heck in med school, if you weren't going to be well-off? Med school in the Caribbean I may add, which put me through years of lonesomeness. All I had was my Pinterest account to keep me company and help me plan a wedding. No, no, you aren't cutting me off. That's silly. That's just silly, sweetie. You owe me.

DR.'S VOICE

There's no money.

ROSE

It's another woman. You've found her, haven't you? I knew it would come. And now you have a new girl to spend on. Lovely, just lovely.

DR.'S VOICE

No! There's no money! I'm going to have to claim bankruptcy, and you are too!

ROSE

You can't make these decision without me. I am an integral part of the planning in this relationship!

DR.'S VOICE

You aren't fit to make decisions. Your house is filled with crap from floor to ceiling, and you never come out of it!

ROSE

Our house, our house, remember. And...the house is askew because I am in between redesigning. It is a messy process.

(CONTINUED)

DR.'S VOICE

You never redesign. You buy, and then you just pile the stuff--

ROSE

I AM TRYING TO FIND PERFECTION! You would understand if you were a woman or a homosexual. But you are not.

*Long silence.*

DR.'S VOICE

I miss you.

*Long silence. Rose walks to one of the figures, feeling it.*

I'm sorry, but this has to end. It's all gone, Rose. There's no more.

*DR. hangs up.*

ROSE

Sweetheart? Honey! Hello???

*Rose looks down at herself. She can see her body and this makes her distraught. She collapses inward, breathing heavily. She embraces the figure and rubs it. Upon the figure is an intricate rug. See the Persian rug? I think it tells a story. It tells the story of a queen who was kicked out of her own home and had to ride off to the forest to live in a cottage with a distant relative. An evil woman had taken her place and wanted her destroyed. So, the queen had to hide amongst the trees.*

*Nick is back on the screen. A clip of him wording, "I love you," repeats itself. Landon stares at it, his hand over his mouth. Stage left, the image of the woman undressing flashes on the figures, Rylie in the middle of the figures, like they are imprisoning him, or like he is lost within them. The flashes of merchandise continue on the figures stage right.*

*She had to leave behind all of her belongings, she only had three bags to ride off into the night with. Quickly, quickly into the night to save herself. Riding away in secrecy into the purple haze of dusk that radiated on the sky. But her tears left a trail for the evil woman to follow, the queen could not escape the evil woman. So, one night, the evil woman's guard arrived, having followed this trail of tears. He was dressed in all black.*

*The Man in Black flashes upon the screen, replacing Nick for a short moment.*

(CONTINUED)

And he severed the queen at her waist, flooding the entire landscape in her blood. And, he threw the pieces of her in a shimmering lake where, at least, he knew she would be happy, because she always loved the water. She could not escape the evil woman, but at least she tried.

*Light change to Landon. Lydia enters carefully, wanting to speak to him. Landon only looks at the screen with his hand over his mouth. Lydia stares at him, then places on her InstaGlimpse glasses. A video appears on two of the white figures. It is of Landon and Nick at the beach. It's a beautiful afternoon--sky incredibly blue, sunshine illuminating the sparkling sand by the ocean. The sound of the water is soothing. Nick and Landon look suspicious.*

LYDIA'S VOICE

What are you two doing?

LONDON

(Laughing.)

Nothing...

LYDIA'S VOICE

Really?

LONDON

(Giving a sneaking smile to his  
boyfriend.)

Is it ready?

NICK

Yep.

*The two reveal a neckless of sea shells.*

LONDON

We made it just for you.

LYDIA

Oh, it's beautiful!

*Landon moves toward the camera shooting the video. His smiling face dominates the image.*

LONDON

Let's put it on, birthday lady! And, I wrote you a short story!

*Nick begins to sing happy birthday. Landon chimes in. Lydia, smiling behind her glasses, begins to*

(CONTINUED)

mouth the tune as well, tears running down her cheeks. She begins to break down but quickly removes the glasses. The image is cut from the figures. She mutters, "dammit," while she straitens herself up. She stares at Landon once more, then looks at her glasses. Exits. Rose falls to her knees. She listens to her heart with the stethoscope to calm herself. The loading chime is heard once more, its hum becoming louder and louder until it is unbearably loud and the lighting on the stage, screen, and figures becomes an extreme, bright white. All of the characters place their hands over their ears and close their eyes. They open their mouths as if they are about to scream. Everything off. Relief.

ACT 2Scene One

*Lights dim. Regina walks onstage and onto the deck that is now upstage center under the screen. She is a small, middle-aged woman with fiery red hair and a tight face. She has an overbearing yet caring presence, indicating that she is the boss but possibly a friend. She stands erect, ready. Landon and Rose sit on figures turned sideways and dressed up as cots. There is a third and middle one of these cots that is vacant. Headlamps lit on their heads. Rose is dressed in extremely extravagant hiking gear--she looks like a Bivouac princess with her silver stethoscope around her neck. She is surrounded by heaps of suit cases, a bright pink duffel bag clutched to her body. She fidgets, uneasy. Landon sits in thought, his hands twitching like they are typing on a computer. As Regina speaks the following, images of nature appear on the screen incrementally and by the end of her statement, the stage is lit with pictures of vegetation and a green glow.*

REGINA

Welcome to Camp Wolando, Green Reintroduction. I am Regina, program director. You are all here today because you have become addicted to isolation that feels like solidarity, distraction that feels like importance, and fallacies that feel like realities. Many of you have had a Facebook for as long as you can remember and a laptop since elementary school. Now, children get cell phones in kindergarten and are completely plugged in by the age of ten. You are here because you need to be insulated by the organic--by rock, tree, and dirt--to regain the control and perspective of yourself and your world. Here we believe the solution lies in stepping away from technology to find your own answers, find yourself. Obviously, we removed you from what you cannot live without. Now it is time for you to find what your life really is while it is stripped to its core.

*Pause.*

Now, to move on to practicalities. Contraband: computers of any kind--phones, iPods, any type of music playing devices, Web or InstaGlimpses...etcetera. It can all be found in your handbooks. It goes without saying that you may not leave the borders of this camp.

*Pause.*

We have given you journals. We do so because many of you have lost sense of writing by hand, writing

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

REGINA (cont'd)

directly, organically. By middle school, students take notes on laptops and do every assignment by this medium as well. It is time we go back. Thoughts do not go onto a digital document but onto paper to show us the electrical storm of your mind. This is the key for you to find yourself. Journals will be turned into us regularly to assess your progress.

*Pause. As she says the following paragraph, the images of white bracelets appear on figures above Landon and Rose. The bracelet above Rose has her name and a "T" on it, the bracelet above Landon has an his name an an "L" on it. They both wear their bracelets on their wrists.*

On your wrists, we have placed durable bracelets. Below your name, you are to write the first letter of what keeps you ill. When you need to be reminded of why you are here look down at your bracelet, and see what is chaining you. You may remove it when you feel you are finally free.

*Pause.*

Remember, you came to the woods to live deliberately. Live this opportunity to its fullest. Look at yourselves and what you have become.

*Lights dim to very dark. Regina exits. The loading hum is heard, and the figures begin to light an eerie dark blue. The loading hum trails on... Landon grabs the journal at his feet, beginning to write.*

LANDON

This is withdrawal. Laying in bed, turning in bed--frantically, pathetically. You are in a sleeping bag, feeling cocooned, no, caged. You are trapped in this synthetic sac shielding you from the cold of night, from the eyes of the chipmunk who you think must eat human flesh. Sweating, chest compressing, head aching, heart palpitation, you realize that there is no escape from this forest. No drive home, no calling a friend, no logging on to see pictures of places you've never been. You are trapped. Here. There is nowhere but here.

*Landon lets out a gasp, collapsing in on himself. He clenches his chest. Shelly's picture appears on a figure. The picture is of her next to the Royal Guards of Buckingham Palace.*

(CONTINUED)

SHELLY'S VOICE

Landon...

LANDON

Shelly?

*He removes himself from his bed. He searches around him, finding Shelly.*

Shelly.

SHELLY'S VOICE

(Laughing.)

How are you doing out here in the stone-age?

LANDON

Don't ask...I'm surrounded by all of these...people. I forgot what that was like--they're just too much. All three dimensional and smelly. I mean, look at my cabin-mate.

*Landon looks at Rose who sits at her cot, clutching her duffel bag and rocking back and forth.*

People are strange.

*He looks at the vacant cot center stage.*

I'm scared to know what the other cabin mate will be like.

SHELLY'S VOICE

Strangers are strange Landon. These lunatics are strange. That's what you have us friends for...you know you're safe with us.

LANDON

(More to self.)

There was never anyone easier to talk to than you guys.

SHELLY'S VOICE

That's right. And we miss you. You need to get out of here and reunite with us.

LANDON

I...I can't. I need to--

SHELLY'S VOICE

What? You need to leave me? Is that it? I have been there for you through thick and thin. I helped you through the hardest moment of your life. I...LANDON!

*Her voice becomes robotic.*

If you go too long without logging on, your account will be deactivated.

(CONTINUED)

*Her voice changes back to normal.*  
Think of all you are losing! Think of me. I need you.  
Do you want to be alone in this world?

*A picture of Tonya appears on another figure.*

TONYA'S VOICE  
Landon!

SHELLY'S VOICE  
Get out of here, I am having a conversation.

TONYA'S VOICE  
Go get lost up your own snatch, bitch. Landon, we have serious shit to talk about. I mean, buddy, I have done some crazy crap in the past few days, and I got no one to tell it to! Dude, you are missing out. God, the adventures! You know that guy, that alien boy, well, he took me--

*Her voice becomes robotic.*  
He took me to meet Bono. And guess what--

SHELLY'S VOICE  
Oh, God, not another sexcapade. Landon doesn't want to hear about your vagina; he's gay. Landon, you need to listen to me--

*Landon*  
Guys, just--

*Nick appears on the screen.*

NICK  
You didn't say I love you!

LANDON  
Nick, I couldn't!

NICK  
Say it!

LANDON  
I can't!

*Nina appears.*

NINA'S VOICE  
Landon, you left granny hanging. Shame on you.

*Everyone begins to call Landon's name.*



LANDON

Stop! Stop the talking. Stop, stop, stop, stop, stop!

*It all stops. Images disappear. Everything off. The figures light an eerie green once more. On the deck upstage is a young man dressed in all white, even a white sheet covering his head. He lays in fetal position on his side. He is crying like a baby. Landon runs up to him.*

Are you okay? Who are, who are you?

*Shelly reappears.*

SHELLY'S VOICE

It's Chris Wood. He was supposed to be your friend.

*Landon drops to his knees, touching the man. The baby cries continue.*

Remember, you made him. He was yours, and, then, you just left him, starved him, didn't even give him a chance in the world.

*The cries die out. Shelly's voice becomes robotic.*  
If you do not finish activating your created friend, he will be deleted from the MyLife database.

*Her voice returns to normal.*

He's dead, Landon. You killed him.

*A blood spot becomes visible on The Man in White's shirt at his gut. The blood spot spreads as Landon watches in shock. From behind The Man in White, a smart phone floats in midair. We hear a high pitched voice coming from the phone say, "touch me." Landon shutters, and Shelly chuckles.*

SHELLY'S VOICE

You killed him, Landon.

HIGH PITCHED VOICE

Touch me.

LANDON

Shut up!

HIGH PITCHED VOICE

Touch me.

LANDON

Shut up!

(CONTINUED)

HIGH PITCHED VOICE  
Touch me.

*Landon stares at the phone. He begins to talk to it.*

LANDON  
You never understood my needs. You didn't understand I needed to be wanted. That I needed to feel like I was integral to your life. You treated me like all that mattered was how I felt about you, not how you felt about me.

HIGH PITCHED VOICE  
Touch me.

LANDON  
Oh, don't pull that crap. So, you're saying that it's my fault you are the way you are? That I make it all about me.

HIGH PITCHED VOICE  
Touch me.

LANDON  
No, I understand you; you just don't understand me. You don't understand what it's like to have to bitch your boyfriend out in order for him to come and visit you once a month.

HIGH PITCHED VOICE  
Touch me.

LANDON  
I definitely have to bitch you out. If I didn't say anything, I'd see you once a year.

HIGH PITCHED VOICE  
Touch me.

LANDON  
Fine, I'll be less harsh. I just really don't appreciate that you make everything about me. Can't you just try to understand me more? Please do it, for me.

*The phone glows red.*

HIGH PITCHED VOICE  
(Very angry.)  
TOUCH ME!

(CONTINUED)

LANDON

Oh, so now you're getting harsh with me. You know what?  
Goodnight. I love you.

*Silence.*

Hello?

*More silence.*

Oh, you're not going to reply? Do you even love me? No messages, no calls in an hour. Does anyone even love me?

*There is a long silence. Landon looks at the man dressed in white dead on the dock. The sound of Shelly chuckling. The phone begins to ring, getting louder and louder.*

LANDON

Make it stop, Shelly!

SHELLY'S VOICE

*(Teasing.)*

Say you're sorry.

LANDON

I'm sorry.

*Shelly laughs. The phone dies.*

SHELLY'S VOICE

Don't worry. We'll always be here. You'll always be innocent as long as you have us. We'll wipe the blood right off of your hands. We love you.

*Shelly disappears. Lights fade out. Spotlight on Rose. She is rummaging through her things in her duffel bag, running her hands through them with moans of relief. She has made her cot into a fancy bed--laying multiple silk sheets and pillows upon it and turning her gold sleeping bag into a blanket. A small figure acts as her bedside table with lit candles upon it.*

ROSE

No silk curtains that catch the sunlight beautifully; no tea pots from England; no rugs of alpaca hair; no antique tables; no antique chairs; no instagram; no Pinterest; no...no nothing...

*She steadies herself, putting the stethoscope in her ears and listening to her heart. It relaxes her. The peppy voice (Voice Four) of the online buying advertisement is heard.*

(CONTINUED)

VOICE 4

Rose! There is so much waiting for you at BuyAllNow!  
You should see how your profile has evolved!

ROSE

Bethany? Could that be you? Oh, have you come to save  
me from this wretched place?

*The figures and screen light up with images of  
countless merchandise on them: Purses, couches,  
fountains with little naked angels pissing into a  
pool, etc...*

VOICE 4

Yes, Rose. And, I must say you have not been a very  
good customer! Our top designers and stylists knew you  
by name! You were one of our best buyers! But, now look  
at you. Your phone is so outdated. I mean, that's only  
15G. Slower than molasses.

ROSE

Oh, no...

VOICE 4

Your boots are so last season!

ROSE

Already?

VOICE 4

And, Rose, we really need to talk about your outfit.

ROSE

Bethany, I neeeeed you!

VOICE 4

You need to buy.

*Rose is looking around at all the objects on the  
figures, running between them, stroking them.*

ROSE

Yes...yes, that is true.

(Exasperated and laughing.)

You see, I have no money! That's why I came here. No  
money, cards all maxed out, debt a doctor can't pay  
away! Bankruptcy baby! I...I decided I needed help.

VOICE 4

ROSE! DON'T BE RIDICULOUS! There is always money for a  
lady! You just need to  
buy-buy-buy-buy-buy-buy-buy-buy---

(CONTINUED)

*The buy's continue...*

ROSE

Yes, you are right. Buy and the money will come!

*Rose lets out a mad laugh.*  
Oh, the relief!

*She runs about, looking at the merchandise.*  
Oh, look at that toaster! Such a deal! Only twenty dollars. ADD TO CART!

*The sound of a cash register cha-chinging is heard.*  
And, look at those panties! That is true class! ADD TO CART!

*Another cha-ching!*  
And the painting and vase and the hair dryer and the pretzel making kit and the new Kitchen Aid mixer (look at that color) and the espresso machine and the ceiling fan, and the cup with Miss President Hillary Clinton's face upon it, and the gold plated TV, and the gold ring. ADD, ADD, ADD, ADD, ADD, ADD, ADD, ADD!!!

*She lets out a large sigh of relief.*  
And, now it is time to collect my goods!

*She reaches into one of the figures with excitement, pulling out her hand to only find clumps of dirt, twigs, and leaves in it. She reaches in both hands. More dirt, twigs, and leaves. She lets out a scream and begins to dig out the materials incessantly but stops with fear. As she moves one hand out, we see her wrist is grasped by a black glove. She pulls her hand out more and The Man in Black steps out from the figure, grappbing her wrist. They stare at each other. Rose runs away to her cot, clutching her pink duffel bag and listening to her heartbeat with her stethoscope. Lights dim down, images disappear, The Man In Black exits, and lights focus on Rylie, who is wheeling a suitcase behind him to downstage-center with a hiking bag on his back. The screen lights up with Rylie's bracelet on it--his name with an "S" written on the bracelet that he also wears. He walks to his cot (the center most one) and removes his luggage. He wears a tailored suit and tie. He sits down on his cot solemnly. A woman's moan is heard. It's heard again, louder. LOUDER. It is the voice from the online sex ad, Voice 3.*

(CONTINUED)

VOICE 3

Oh, baby...

*Rylie looks from side to side, making sure his roommates are asleep. He walks to the screen.*

RYLIE

I knew you'd find me, Pretty Thang.

*The screen lights up and a red curtain appears on it. The curtain pulls back, and a woman with bleach blond hair, and orange-tan skin appears on the screen, walking closer and closer. Her breasts are enormous, and her waist line is minuscule. She wears a bright-red lace bra and thong. Her whole body is displayed as she saunters toward us on the screen.*

PRETTY THANG

Oh, for sure, baby. For sure.

*She slides her hands down her thong, feeling herself.*

I have so much waiting for you, so much! You just need to cum back!

*Rylie begins to loosen his tie.*

RYLIE

I wish I could, but--

PRETTY THANG

Cum on, look at all I have in store for you...

*The figures display various types of pornographic images of all tastes: gay, straight, curious, S&M, MILF Action, Daddy on Twink, Bears, Interracial, Gangbang, Hatefucking, etc...*

RYLIE

Oh...yeah, you've got so much for me don't you, Pretty Thang...

*Rylie checks his surroundings, making sure his roommates are asleep. His back to the audience and looking at the figures and screen, he begins to masturbate. He lets out stifled moans. He is cut short because all of the figures go back to green. Now, on the screen, Boss has abruptly replaced Pretty Thang; however, he is still wearing her clothes--his pudgy, hairy body protruding from the extremely tight underwear upon him.*

(CONTINUED)

RYLIE

(Buttoning his pants, and readjusting  
his belt quickly.)

Oh, hi, Boss.

BOSS

Jesus Christ, Rylie. What the hell are you doing?

RYLIE

I--

BOSS

I don't wanna hear any of your bullshit!

(Mimicking.)

Oh, I need my porn! Oh, I can't live without the money  
shot!

(Back to normal.)

How the hell was I supposed to know you were so messed  
in the head? When I sent you here as a web sex addict,  
I didn't know you were the real deal! I wouldn't have  
sent you if I knew you could actually need it. Company  
dollars paying for your sick head. Disgusting! Well, I  
don't give a care if you need it. The Desperate  
Housewives and Dirty Nannies can live without you.  
You're here for a reason.

RYLIE

I don't need it...

BOSS

I don't give a fuck!

RYLIE

Yes, sir.

BOSS

Damn right, yes. Now, do your job and keep your dick  
out of it.

RYLIE

You're totally right boss. I've gotta get my head into  
the game. 100 percent. I won't let you down.

BOSS

Oh, Jesus, Rylie. Cut the kiss-ass bullshit and zip  
your fly.

*Rylie quickly does so.*

You're here on a mission: come up with a  
counterargument to the anti-tech movement. Find the  
money-shot, Kid. Don't buy into this garbage. Remember  
the motto at the firm, "Find the Beauty."

(CONTINUED)

*Images of bright advertisements flash upon the figures as Boss speaks. Rylie sits down in his new cot center stage and stares at them, reaching out his hand into the air.*

There are billions of people in this world wandering around like lost little ants, just searching for something beautiful. They want to have beauty, create beauty, be beauty, love beauty. Well, there are trillions of words, ideas, and images that we can manipulate to make them think we got just that beauty. And, if they think we got the beauty, they'll never stop coming back for more. Find. The. Beauty.

*Everything off. A moment. Then a buzz that carries into the next scene.*

### Scene Two

*Landon, Rose, and Rylie sit on figures around Regina. She sits with a pad of paper in her hands, writing. Rose and Rylie are frozen.*

REGINA

Landon, here for social--

LANDON

Social media addiction and a touch of addiction to the lovely InstaGlimpe Glasses. Yes. That's me, the boy who dropped out of college to play on a computer. Owning up to all the bad stuff now, so no awkward questions come later.

REGINA

Interesting tactic...why did you drop out of school, Landon?

LANDON

(With contempt.)

The real world. Freshman year in college is hard.

REGINA

The real world is hard. Did you let it stop you?

*Landon stares off for a beat.*

LANDON

No, distractions stopped me. People as distractions. Always easily distracted. Diagnosed with ADD at age five, Regina. Can I call you that? Or, do I have to call you by some name that clearly establishes the power disparity going on here?

(CONTINUED)



REGINA

Regina is fine.

*Regina turns to Rylie. Landon freezes and Rylie comes to motion.*

RYLIE

Nice to meet you, Regina.

REGINA

Why were you so late to arrive last night, Rylie?

RYLIE

Car problems. We had a horrible trouble. There was an unnoticed anti-freeze leak and it led to a blown gasket. Luckily, I had a friend in the area who could give me assistance.

REGINA

That was convenient.

RYLIE

Yes. Fortune is lovely when it is present.

REGINA

But when it's not...

RYLIE

It's a real kick in the pants.

REGINA

You're here for online-sex addiction?

*Rylie is silent.*  
Is that correct?

*Beat.*  
Rylie?

RYLIE

Yes, I was participating in that practice far too much.

*Beat.*

REGINA

Okay.

*Regina turns to Landon.*  
So, you understand you were online for four months, barely coming out of your room--

(CONTINUED)

LANDON

I don't like to hear it, but that seems to be the case.  
It didn't seem like four months.

REGINA

Dissociation. It happens when you take a break from the  
real world.

LANDON

I was always in the real world--

REGINA

Four months?

LANDON

When are you going to ask me about my feelings?

REGINA

I wasn't planning on doing that.

LANDON

Well, that's what my past therapist always did. She  
asked me about my feelings, all the while staying on  
her WebGlasses so she could check her email, Facebook,  
and feed her Dot-Net-Doggy.

REGINA

Lord, your parents had you seeing an online therapist?

LANDON

I wasn't seeing the therapist for my web addiction. It  
was for depression.

REGINA

What was the cause?

LANDON

It's hard seeing the real world for the first time.

*A faint phone ring is heard. Landon looks around  
to it find its origin. Regina turns to Rose.*

REGINA

Rose, what causes you to have these compulsions you  
speak of?

ROSE

Well, I look down at myself...

*Rose purposely poises her head upward so she  
cannot see her body.*

And I see everything I'm missing.

(CONTINUED)

REGINA

But you have so many things...

ROSE

It's the other things I am missing. The husband, the marriage, the...looks. You know, I used to be a very attractive girl. A real looker. I was a model...and homecoming queen, and...a doctor's wife. But then, I started losing. Losing it all.

REGINA

Did you start losing things because of your addiction?

ROSE

No...

REGINA

When did you start losing?

*Regina moves on to Rylie.*

Rylie, when did you start having sex? Online sex?

RYLIE

Well...My mom, my mom was very religious. Very Catholic. She was raised by her passionate, very passionate, Catholic grandmother. So, she always took the family to church. My dad, he didn't want to go. He'd always fight with my mom, saying, "We're all just rotten animals. Religion's just a cover up. No better than the monkeys in the jungles swinging on a vines and shoving bananas and monkey dicks down their throats." But, my mom always got him to go...like she always had something to hold over his head, something to make him believe that he needed, for whatever reason, to go or make him believe that he could be fixed.

*Beat.*

And...and these nuns at my school gave tutoring. And when I was thirteen, the newest nun began to tutor me. She was this beautiful blond woman with big blue eyes wider than the sky and a tight body with hips that could just barely be made out under the that black habit. She...she tutored me online...and when I would get a math problem right, she would take off a part of her clothes. Slowly and slowly, I saw everything on her, every piece of her fair flesh. Everything but what lied under her headdress. She never took that off. She said God was upstairs, so if he looked down on her, she would still appear dressed from a birds-eye view.

*There is a long pause.*

I don't blame her for what she did. She was beautiful, and they kept her all locked up. She didn't have anyone

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RYLIE (cont'd)

to enjoy her body, to admire it, to see what was under...She just wanted to be seen. Doesn't everyone want that?

*Regina turns to Rose.*

ROSE

Men used to look at me. I would see it. At the grocery store, at the country club, at my husband's professional parties. They'd stare at me even when their wives was present. I'd feel their glares crawling up my skin like spiders, giving me these little vibrations, tingles.

*Beat*

It always felt so important to get those stares. Some validation for a girl who was...was a fat little girl. Piggly wiggly all throughout elementary. Oink, oink. But, apply the fat camp, smear on some make up, dye the hair, throw a dress on her, and that girl will get some LOOKS eight years down the road. Those looks made me feel like I existed. Because the only way to exist is by being the prettiest little thing in the room. I mean, if no one is looking at you, how do you exist?

REGINA

When did you start losing, Rose? When did you start losing your looks?

ROSE

I think I hear the dinner bell ringing.

REGINA

Rose?

ROSE

What is this? Interrogation.

*Regina turns to Landon.*

LANDON

Look, I am going to tell you how I feel, like what happens in normal therapy. I don't like it here. It's late May, but it's also Maine, so the weather is cold and rainy, and there's no heat or electricity in our cabins. I forgot to pack deodorant so my pits will be stinking until the counselors make a town trip in a week. And I am petrified of the gamers going through withdrawal here because they look like zombies, and I heard you keep them in the separate half of the camp because some attempt to bring the violent lives they lived in their video games into real life. I sweat; I

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LANDON (cont'd)

cramp; I get head aches and palpitations, I read statuses in my sleep; and if I lose my headlamp, I will be totally fucked if I need to pee at night. You know, my mom said the grass may be greener on this side--the hippie, no tech side--but guess what? There isn't even grass here. It's orange pine needles on boulders.

REGINA

Are you done? It's time to talk about what you've so blatantly been avoiding.

LANDON

I don't know what you're getting at.

*We hear a phone ringing in the distance once more.  
Landon fidgets.*

REGINA

Why did you drop out of college, Landon? Why did all of this happen? It wasn't just because the real world is hard; I have the truth in your file. I know what happened.

*There is a raging phone ring. Landon cringes and covers his ears. We begin to see a picture of Nick on a figure. Landon stares at it.*

REGINA

Landon?

*He does not reply.*

Landon?!

*Still no reply as the phone rings.  
Answer me!*

*Still no reply.  
Regina turns to Rylie.*

REGINA

When was your first time having real sex?

*Rylie is silent.*

REGINA

When was your first time?

*Rylie remains silent. Regina turns to Rose, who has walked downstage.*

(CONTINUED)

REGINA

When did you start losing?

*Rose closes her eyes and trembles in frustration as the phone rings incredibly loud. She chucks her wig and tiara across the stage. On her head is a tightly pulled bun.*

ROSE

(Screaming over the ringing, with her eyes closed.)

Three years ago! I started losing three years ago by losing my Cervix! To cancer!

*The ringing stops. Rose looks down at herself and immediately loses control, running to her wig and clutching it, apologizing to it.*

And, without my things...without my things...without my things, I am not, not, not, not, safe. Oh, I'm sorry, I don't ever want to lose you, wig and tiara. Oh, I'm sorry.

LANDON

I miss my boyfriend. He was always just a video call away. And you've ruined it.

*We hear a recording of Landon's voice mail.*  
*"Hello, this is Landon Brown. Leave a message and I will reply shortly." Nick leaves a voice mail.*

NICK'S VOICE

I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you...

*Everything off.*

### Scene Three

*Rose sits on a figure center-stage, wrapped in layers of clothing with beads of sweat dripping off her face. She places her hand on the zipper of her outer most coat and freezes, taking a deep breath. Her hands tremble as she closes her eyes and attempts to unzip it. Apocalyptic clips flash upon the screen behind her--nuclear explosions, epic stock-market crashes, oceans dried away, people starving on street corners, diagrams of deadly viruses, vicious armies invading a town, homes on fire. As Rose tries to move her hand downward and the images continue to play, The Man in Black appears behind her, extending his hands slowly outward and bringing them to her neck. Right as he is about to wrap his hands around Rose's throat, she lets out a scream, letting go*

(CONTINUED)

*of her zipper, and he recedes. Everything turns off. Rose gasps in the darkness. Rose puts the stethoscope in her ears and talks into it.*

ROSE

Terrance, Terrance! Will you ever forgive me? Terrance?

DR.'S VOICE

Forgive?

ROSE

Yes, forgive me.

DR.'S VOICE

Forgive what?

ROSE

Stop. We both know.

DR.'S VOICE

I'm afraid I don't know what you're talking about. I have to get to work, Rose. Important patients are waiting.

ROSE

Sweetheart--

DR.'S VOICE

(Robotic.)

Don't call me sweetheart.

*Now upon the figures are random merchandise--some of Rose's things. A teapot appears on the screen, talking to Rose in a high pitched voice.*

HIGH PITCHED VOICE

It's okay. We forgive you. We'll always forgive you.

VOICE 4

Just buy, buy, buy!!!

ROSE

Oh, Bethany, I wish so dearly that I could...

*Landon walks onstage seeing Rose as she sits by herself in shame and desperation. He can tell something is wrong. Images vanish from the figures and screen. Landon begins to walk towards Rose but stops when a figure appears on the screen. It is the image of a girl's back towards him.*

(CONTINUED)

ROBOTIC VOICE

Landon? He's weird.

*Another image of a male with his back towards the camera appears on a figure.*

ROBOTIC VOICE

Landon? He's goofy looking--pimples on his face or scarring from it.

*Several other images of people with their backs turned appear on the screen.*

ROBOTIC VOICE

I think he's conceited. I don't like the way he talks--it's too gay. I don't--

*The images disappear. Nick appears on the screen.*

NICK

All you need is me.

*Shelly appears on a figure.*

SHELLY'S VOICE

And me...

*Tonya appears on a figure.*

TONYA'S VOICE

And me! We're all you need. We'll never turn our backs on you.

*Nina appears on a figure.*

NINA'S VOICE

We'll never judge you.

LANDON

But you're not here.

NICK

I love you.

*Landon is silent.*

Don't connect to her, Landon. She's not safe. You never know what she's thinking. What she's judging.

LANDON

Maybe I don't want to be alone anymore.

(CONTINUED)



NICK AND FRIENDS

You're not alone with--

*They are cut off and dissappear from the screen as  
Landon walks toward Rose.*

LANDON

(Rather awkwardly.)

Is everything okay, Rose?

ROSE

I'm...I'm just dandy, thank you.

*Landon pauses.*

LANDON

Okay.

*He begins to walk away.*

ROSE

But it's quite nice of you for asking. Nice of you to care.

LANDON

Maybe it's the woods, but I find myself much more compelled to help others.

*Landon begins to walk away once more.*

ROSE

I...I can't get off my coat.

LANDON

It's colder than Antarctica and you need to take off your coat?

ROSE

Well, I have on three.

*Beat.*

LANDON

Do you need me to help you?

ROSE

Oh, yes.

*Landon goes toward her, putting his hand on her  
zipper. She lets out a scream. He backs away.*

(CONTINUED)

LANDON

Jesus Christ, people are weird.

ROSE

I'm sorry, just, just try again.

*Landon retries. Rose lets out another scream.  
Landon throws his hands in the air with  
frustration.*

LANDON

Okay, I'm done.

ROSE

No, no...take my hand.

*Landon is apprehensive for a moment, then takes  
Rose's hand with slight reluctance.*  
I must look like a total psycho.

*Rose looks at Landon, who stares intently at their  
joined hands. He sinks to the ground, keeping  
Rose's hand.*

LANDON

I'm so lonely.

ROSE

We all are, sweetheart.

LANDON

I was always so lonely. Being the observer is lonely.  
And for a second, I was constantly connected to  
something. And now I'm completely separated. Everyone  
is gone. The woods are empty.

*Rose shifts, beginning to move her hand.*

ROSE

Landon--

LANDON

No, don't move your hand. Keep it there. I forgot what  
it feels like--what reality feels like. A hand is  
warmer than a hundred instant messages.

ROSE

Maybe we aren't alone.

LANDON

Maybe. Maybe we aren't alone when we're so  
isolated...together.

(CONTINUED)

*Silence. Rose closes her eyes and tries to remove her coat as she holds Landon's hand. The image of her coat appears on the screen.*

HIGH PITCHED VOICE

Rose, don't leave me. I keep you warm.

*The image of the coat now appears on every figure. If you take me off, you'll put me down. If you put me down, you'll lose me. If you lose me, you'll be forever cold. Think of all of your things at home--sitting there, just waiting to be lost or stolen. Or, maybe, it's all being repossessed to pay for your debt. Rose, don't lose me!*

ROSE

I won't lose you, I just need to take you off. It's too much.

*Landon looks at Rose with annoyance.*

LONDON

Oh, for Christ's sake.

*Landon quickly gets up, unzips the zipper, and tries to remove the coat. Brand names (Prada, Gucci, KitchenAide, etc.) flash across the screen as faint sounds of screams and destruction are heard. Rose fights to keep her coat on. The Man in Black appears behind Landon. Rose stares at The Man in Black while she tries to retain her property from Landon.*

ROSE

(At The Man in Black.)

No! I'm not ready.

LONDON

Just give it to me, Rose. I'm trying to help you.

ROSE

(At The Man in Black.)

No, no, you want to kill me! You want to infest my body and devour my insides like the birth of termites in a wooden palace!

LONDON

What?

ROSE

(At The Man in Black.)

You want to multiply uncontrollably--cells splitting and splitting, ripping and ripping, eating and eating.

(CONTINUED)

LONDON

Rose!

*The Man in Black walks to her and grabs her wrist, placing his hand over her "T" bracelet. She lets out a gasp as she stares at his touch. She goes limp. Landon removes the coat from Rose's body and The Man in Black removes his hand. He exits. There is a moment of silence as Rose sits transfixed into space, staring in the direction The Man in Black walked. Landon stares at her with the coat in his hand.*

LONDON

(As if speaking to a child.)

It's going to be okay, Rose. We're going to put this in a very safe place where we'll never forget it. I promise. I'll never forget it.

*Landon takes Rose's hand.*

Rose?

ROSE

(Slowly coming out of her daze, feeling her "T" bracelet.)

I don't ever remember feeling so light.

*Everything off.*

Scene Four

*Rylie sits in the cabin on his cot alone. He has his journal out. He is writing.*

RYLIE

(Writing, strained, sincerely trying.)

End of week one. I've been thinking about this addiction, and I think I've come up with something, some reason. See, working on creative in advertising has always made me--

*Rylie is interrupted as Boss and Pretty Thang appear on the screen. Pretty Thang is in a dominatrix suit. Boss is in a leather slave outfit. Pretty Thang has a collar on Boss. On his forehead, "humiliate me" is written.*

BOSS

Rylie, you sound like you are getting too real!

PRETTY THANG

Hey, bitch. Did I tell you that you could speak?

(CONTINUED)

BOSS

No, Mistress.

PRETTY THANG

Bend over...

*Boss bends over, and Pretty Thang spansks him with a whip three times while Boss smiles.*

Now say thank you, idiot!

BOSS

Thank you. Can I have permission to speak? Business purposes.

PRETTY THANG

(Correcting him.)

You MAY, not can...

(To self, checking her nails.)

God, I can't believe he pays me for this shit.

BOSS

Look, Rylie, you sound like you are starting to buy into this hippie-bull-cock.

RYLIE

No, Boss, I just have to make my journal look like I'm trying. Scout's honor.

BOSS

I was a Boy Scout once. I got kicked out for showing my dick to a Brownie. Anyways, Rylie, Rylie, RYLIE, you just need to put the classic, normal shit in there. Like, uh..."Wow, the trees sure are changing me! Living out here in the fresh air makes me feel like a whole new man." Throw a Thoreau quotation in there, and you get bonus points. You are here for the ad agency, not this lunacy.

RYLIE

Yes, sir. I will cross this out.

*He scribbles out what he wrote in his journal.*

*Begins to write more.*

Thoreau once said, "To be awake is to be alive..."

BOSS

Mistress, did you bring the nipple shockers?

PRETTY THANG

I'll get to them on my own time, scum.

(CONTINUED)

BOSS

Now, give me some pitches. Ideas you've come up with for the ad campaign.

*Rylie picks another journal up off of the floor.  
He reads.*

RYLIE

Uh...cell phones are like ties, no outfit is complete without--

BOSS

Bad!

RYLIE

(Flipping to another page.)

Uh...those who say you can't live without your computer, aren't living life--

BOSS

Needs more pizazz.

RYLIE

Well, I wasn't finished.

BOSS

Don't care. Rylie, you're out here to do casework. You're out here to find a counter argument against these anti-tech yuckoes, and all you got for an ad pitch is--

*Rose enters. She wears only two coats, a sweater,  
and two layers of pants.*

Investigate her, Rylie. Get inside an addicts head, and find how we can use it.

RYLIE

Rose?

*Rose is happy to be engaged by Rylie.*

ROSE

Yes, Rylie?

RYLIE

Why are you so messed up?

*Beat.*

PRETTY THANG

Smooth, kid.

(CONTINUED)

ROSE

I'm sorry, what?

RYLIE

I mean. Why are you here?

ROSE

I...I got a little too attached to online--

RYLIE

But do you really think it's the computer's fault?

ROSE

Well--

RYLIE

Don't you think technology is really harmless, it's just us that do the damage?

ROSE

Rylie, what are you getting at?

*Beat.*

RYLIE

Nothing.

*Rose smiles and walks to Rylie and sits down on his cot with him. She examines the crucifix necklace he wears.*

ROSE

Are you a Christian?

RYLIE

Catholic.

*Pretty Thang and Boss laugh.*

ROSE

That's nice. I'm Methodist...

*Rose places her hand on Rylie's sholder. Rylie becomes uncomfortable.*

What have you been writing about in your journal? Can you tell me?

*Rose puts her eyes upon Rylie's open journal. He shuts it quickly.*

Oh, come on. I know barely anything about you! Your job, your place of living, your addiction...

(CONTINUED)

RYLIE

Pardon me, but I would rather not disclose such information.

ROSE

(Putting an arm around Rylie who does not like the touch.)

We are all friends, here, Ry!

PRETTY THANG

Tell her to butt out! You gotta push her away! She can't know. Don't touch! Don't let her touch you!

(Thrusting her pelvis.)

Push, Rylie, push!

RYLIE

I would like you to remove your arm.

*Rose is offended. Landon enters and sits on his cot.*

ROSE

Oh, is my touch just too titillating for you?

RYLIE

(Under his breath.)

No, your arm is too heavy.

*Rose stands, completely affronted. She quickly looks at her body and begins to shake as she crosses her arms over her stomach.*

ROSE

Excuse me?

BOSS

Call her somethin' real bad, Rylie! Puuush! Push like a baby is popping out of ya!

*Pretty Thang whips Boss again.*

PRETTY THANG

Shut up.

BOSS

Thank you, Mistress.

PRETTY THANG

Call her a fatty! Push her away!

RYLIE

(Getting up.)

I'm going to go to the lake.

(CONTINUED)



LANDON

(Interested.)  
Rylie, what did you say?

ROSE

Just go, Rylie. Just. Go to the lake.

*Rylie begins to walk out.*

PRETTY THANG

More pushing, Rylie! Push, push!

*Rylie stops.*

RYLIE

(To Landon.)  
I said her arm was too heavy to be weighing down on my back.

*Rose lets out a gasp. She fumbles with all of her bracelets.*

ROSE

(Walking to her cot, grabbing her pink duffel bag to hold.)  
I am going to pretend I did not hear that...

PRETTY THANG

You gotta be harder on 'er. She's not pushed away enough. Fat--

RYLIE

Go ahead and pretend, you lunatic. Clinging to your bag of god knows what.

*Rose releases a moan of disgust. She is shaking back and forth.*

ROSE

You...you...you...are not a gentlemen and I am not a lunatic, I am a lady thank you.

*She opens her duffel bag and begins throwing dildos and vibrators out of it and at Rylie.*

(While throwing and pointing to her tiara.)

My arm may be heavy now, but I was homecoming queen and Miss Greenville...I was a model...I was a doctor's wife...I was five ten and 140 damn pounds...I was everything you would want in a girl...I was beautiful...and things went to crap...and I got fat...

(CONTINUED)

*She finishes throwing her toys. All three stand in silence, stunned, as well as Pretty Thang and Boss.*

PRETTY THANG

Let's get the hell out of here.

*The screen goes blank and Rylie exits. Rose sits at her cot. Landon walks to one of the vibrators, which turned on as it hit the ground. He looks down at it.*

LANDON

(Incredulous.)

This is what's been in that bag? How many sex toys do you have?

ROSE

I prefer to call them intimate objects.

*Pause. Landon looks at the bag laying on the ground and all of Rose's toys.*

LANDON

Rose, you let go.

ROSE

(Ashamed of herself.)

What?

LANDON

(Indicating the sex toys on the floor.)

Rose, you LET GO!

*Rose gets it, and a smile comes to her face. She stands up.*

ROSE

You're right!

*She begins to collect the sex toys and starts throwing them out into the audience.*

I am letting go! I do not need these intimate objects! Outside with them! This fat lady is letting go!

*Rose freezes and stares at The Man in Black who is holding one of her toys in the audience, waving it at her with one hand and wagging a finger with the other.*

I'm afraid I will regret this...

*Everything off.*

Scene Six

*Landon and Regina are in their hiking gear, walking onto the deck upstage-center. Landon looks around him. They have reached the peak of Mt. Chocorua.*

REGINA

(Calling offstage.)

You can do it, Rose. Just a couple more feet.

ROSE

(Offstage.)

That's just it. I don't think I can!

LANDON

Well, you did kinda over pack your bag. We're both carrying some of your crap.

ROSE

(Offstage.)

Really, Landon, you must understand that a true lady never packs lightly.

*Landon and Regina exchange a look. Regina rolls her eyes.*

Why must we climb mountains again?

REGINA

Connection with the elements, independence, character building--

ROSE

(Offstage.)

I got it, Regina. Thank you.

*Rose finally enters, in excessive hiking gear and a huge bag. She looks like a mess, but there is a beautiful glow about her. Her wig is off, and her shoulder length hair hangs loosely with no tiara above it.*

Please tell me there is a fresh water spr--

*She looks around her in awe. On the figures and the screen appear images of the view of the mountain: the endless stretch of multi-colored trees, the enormous rock faces, the beautiful horizon outlining hills and mountains.*

I climbed a mountain! I climbed a mountain! I forgot what we could do on our own.

*Beat.*

We climbed a mountain!

(CONTINUED)

*A burst of thunder.*

REGINA

Don't get too comfortable. We have to leave quick enough to beat the storm back to our tent.

ROSE

Of course. There always must be a storm.

*The thunder continues and the lights go dim. On the screen appears a bright full moon. The images on the figures change to trees eerily lit in the moonlight, dead limbs glowing white. Gusts of wind and rain. Thunder and lightning. Regina is heard offstage.*

REGINA

(Offstage.)

Rylie, I need to speak to you in private.

RYLIE

(Offstage.)

May I ask what for?

REGINA

(Offstage.)

No.

*Regina and Rylie enter from behind the figures, walking downstage-center. While they are speaking, Rose sneaks in, hiding behind a figure and eaves dropping.*

It's two weeks in. We collected journals today.

RYLIE

Yes. Did you like my extensive implementation of Thoreau?

REGINA

About that, I found it quite shallowly used and overly academic.

RYLIE

Oh, then, I guess reading Walden was a waste.

*Beat. Regina begins to dig in her bag, removing a journal, which evokes an extreme flinch of fear from Rylie.*

That was not supposed to get to you. I thought I left it at camp--

(CONTINUED)

REGINA

I know.

RYLIE

Can I have it back?

REGINA

(Throwing it at his feet.)

Sure. It's your property. But know I already read it. Rose thought she was being a good Samaritan by picking up the journal for you when she knew we were inspecting this weekend. Little did either of us know this was your *secret* journal.

RYLIE

You said you wouldn't judge what we wrote, so I don't know why you are being so severe with me.

REGINA

(Losing composure.)

Because you're betraying the camp! My camp! Our philosophy!

RYLIE

I don't know what you're talking about. I was just writing down my thoughts.

REGINA

Don't lie to me, Rylie. Don't be false. I know your history. I know your job.

RYLIE

Fine. The woods aren't healing me. I'll try harder. Promise. Can we go back to camp now?

REGINA

Why? So you can come up with more ideas on how to degrade the anti-tech crowd?

RYLIE

God, you don't even make sense right now.

REGINA

That book was filled with ad ideas to degrade our philosophy for...commercial gain. This is the best place to do researching for this project for your company, isn't it?

*Rylie is silent.*

But, stay, Rylie. Stay because that journal was filled with only invalid ideas.

*More silence.*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

REGINA (cont'd)

Is your addiction even real? Are you really addicted to online sex?

*Silence.*

RYLIE

(Cracking.)

Maybe I do not help...but I just can't ask.

*Rylie rushes offstage. Rose exits. Regina stands in place.*

REGINA

Rylie? RYLIE? Where are you going? The storm is only getting worse!

*Regina and Rose exit. Everything off. Dim lights on and the Man in Black on the dock, fiddling with a smart phone. Landon enters, a headlamp strapped onto his head as he feels his way upon the figures in the darkness like they are trees.*

LANDON

(To self.)

Where the fuck is that outhouse?

*Landon spots the Man in Black.*

Who are you?

ROBOTIC VOICE

I'm Landon Brown.

LANDON

Shut up. You're not funny.

ROBOTIC VOICE

No, really.

*The image of Landon's MyLife page is upon the screen. The Man in Black browses through it.*  
Let's see. How about a status update? Hm...I know:

*The Man in Black types on the phone, he is posting a status on the MyLife page.*  
"I don't even know who I am." Yes, perfect status for this situation.

LANDON

Get the fuck off of my page.

(CONTINUED)

ROBOTIC VOICE

You have no control from way out here in the woods. No, I have all the control. Try to come and stop me. Try.

*Landon is stuck in his place. He cannot move.*

LANDON

Hacker!

ROBOTIC VOICE

No, I'm Landon Brown. Let's see, I think it's time I chat with my boyfriend, Nick. Maybe I should break up with him.

*Lights off of Landon as he freezes, and Rylie enters stage left. His eyes are red, and he seems severely disrupted. The image on the screen changes. Pretty Thang and Boss appear on the screen, but Pretty Thang is dressed in a conservative black dress, and Boss is dressed in a suit, a monkey mask on his face. The screen displays them like they would be web chatting, two different pictures and a box for text chat. Pretty Thang's voice is solid and shrill, and Boss's voice is different, but maintains that brash, gritty, and violent tone.*

PRETTY THANG

What are you doing, Rylie?

RYLIE

I'm getting out of here, Mom.

PRETTY THANG

No, you need to get better, Rylie!

BOSS

The kid doesn't need anything. His cover was busted now let him get back to his real life.

RYLIE

It was all a lie anyways.

PRETTY THANG

(To Boss.)

I blame you for this...for this...mess!

BOSS

What are you talking about? Quit being a dumb--

RYLIE

Don't get to fighting! Please!

(CONTINUED)

*Light change to Landon. Screen change to Landon's MyLife page.*

LANDON

Don't do it! Don't talk to him, Nick!

ROBOTIC VOICE

No, you are going to talk.

*The Man in Black opens chat with Nick. The Man in Black types the words that Landon speaks. Landon's face becomes blank and as he mouths the words, as a recording of his voice is heard.*

LANDON'S VOICE

Nick, you made my life miserable. Leave, forever.

*The digital voice laughs.*

ROBOTIC VOICE

Well, now that that message was sent, let's delete him.

LANDON

No!

ROBOTIC VOICE

This is who you are! This is your life. Create your life, with MyLife!

*Light change to Rylie. Screen change to Boss and Pretty Thang.*

PRETTY THANG

This is not something you can just quit!

BOSS

You got no control over him anymore!

PRETTY THANG

Well, you sure do! God, I tried so hard to shield him from you. From your...sickness!

BOSS

I'm not sick!

RYLIE

Like father, like son!

PRETTY THANG

Please, Rylie, don't leave. Remember the morals I gave you?

(CONTINUED)



RYLIE

Oh, I remember. Don't touch the girls, don't touch the boys. Sickness lies in the flesh. STD's. Sex, sex is the enemy. Don't be your father. God this, Jesus that, Mother Fucking Mary!

BOSS

Spoken like my true son!

PRETTY THANG

And, you lost those morals! This is your chance!

RYLIE

I never had morals, just fear! Fear of my body, fear of everyone's body. Fear of this strange ritual that involves entering another person--of being inside the raw truth or having the raw truth inside of you.

*Back to Landon. Screen change to his MyLife page. The Man in Black is deleting Nick.*

ROBOTIC VOICE

Delete. Bye, bye.

LANDON

Please!

*Images of Landon's web friends appear on the figures. They are all in hospital beds, incredibly sick.*

SHELLY'S VOICE

Landon, he's made us catch this horrible virus. YOU'VE made us catch this horrible virus!

TONYA'S VOICE

How could you do this to us!

NINA'S VOICE

We're dying Kiddo! We need you back. We're dying without you.

LANDON

It's not me, it's him! It's not me!

ROBOTIC VOICE

But really Landon, who are you?

*Back to Rylie. Screen change to Boss and Pretty Thang.*

(CONTINUED)

PRETTY THANG

Don't say those things. You had morals, you--

RYLIE

No, mom. Fear. My life's become a chat room. Person after person in these chat rooms where you get linked up to some random stranger. Sometimes, you see each other, and they skip past you. Sometimes, you skip past them. And then, sometimes, you both look at each other with hesitation, waiting for the other to acknowledge you. Ah, the tension in those moments. Heart jumping. Until someone makes the first move. "Hey," one will say. And then, you'll ask where they are from and their age. Names usually aren't asked. You want them to stay a stranger. Then, you play the game of trying to see all of the person--every bit more you see, the higher you score, the better your grade. But, you usually never give the face and the body. Just one or the other. Never the whole. You can spend days playing that motherfucking game. Disconnected, looking for a random stranger. Disconnected, looking for a random stranger. Disconnected, looking for a random stranger. Disconnected--

PRETTY THANG

Stop! Please!

RYLIE

(Beginning to break.)

But you never have to touch! That's the beauty of it. Mom, I'm sick. But, at least, I've never been touched! So I can't have any virus.

BOSS

That's right, you tell her Rylie! Tell her it's just you. You're an animal! Primal. There ain't no changing it.

RYLIE

Dad's right. Ha. Dad is right!

BOSS

(To Pretty Thang.)

That's right. I win. Now, take off your dress! It's time for Rylie to see what you've been hiding. There's a secret under your clothes--a secret on your skin!

PRETTY THANG

Don't let him do this Rylie!

*Boss enters into Pretty Thang's box, his box going black and saying "disconnected, looking for a random stranger." He stands over Pretty Thang,*

(CONTINUED)

*who struggles with herself as she begins to remove her dress. She tries to control herself but is folding under some pressure as she unbuttons her own clothing.*

BOSS

Take off your clothes! I win! Show him what you really are!

RYLIE

Dad!

*Light change to Landon as he lunges at The Man in Black, hitting the phone out of his hand. Pretty Thang and Boss continue to struggle with each other on the screen.*

LANDON

I climbed a mountain today...

ROBOTIC VOICE

Big deal.

*Landon pulls his journal out of his bag, shielding him from The Man in Black and flipping open to a page.*

LANDON

I wrote this at the top of the mountain...

SHELLY'S VOICE

Put that away.

LANDON

(Reading.)

I used to write. Write until my hand would cramp. Write because I needed it. Write because it's where my mind went to play. But, then, MyLife happened, and my mind went to play in a different type of story. A story that was always by my side, kept me all warm and cozy on cold nights. Fiction became fact and my world became a mirage of digital haze.

TONYA'S VOICE

Don't say shit like that!

LANDON

(No longer reading, looking at the Man in Black.)

Up on top of that mountain today, I could see the world. Thousands of feet up with the most beautiful view of an endless horizon. And I saw you nowhere in sight. You're not real.

(CONTINUED)

*Landon hits The Man in Black with his journal very hard on the head. It knocks the man to the floor. You're a fake and your world is fake. I climbed a mountain today, and I did it without you. I forgot who I was.*

*Landon kicks The Man in Black in the gut. You hacked my life, you dick. My life, MyLife, MyLife. It's my life, and you do not create it.*

NINA'S VOICE

Don't say that! Think of the secrets we hold. All the information.

SHELLY

You think you could take on the world without us? You'd be so alone, Landon. And you'd be so vulnerable.

ROBOTIC VOICE

Think of all you are losing! You lose the life behind the screen, and you'll be a murderer.

LANDON

THERE'S NOTHING FOR ME TO LOSE! YOU'RE NOT REAL. I MADE YOU ALL UP! YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A SHITTY STORY!

*Pretty Thang's dress now hangs off of her shoulders.*

PRETTY THANG

Oh, God! He's winning!

RYLIE

He's already won.

FOUR DIGITAL VOICES

We are real, we, we, we are rea, rea, reeeeeeeal...

*Boss begins to remove Pretty Thang's dress.*

BOSS

Let's show these folks what's under your hood!

*Everything off. Complete darkness, but, then, all of the figures glow an incredibly bright gold. The sounds of the storm are gone. Silver leaves gently fall to the ground intermixed with copper mist. Boss's voice whispers, "Find the Beauty." Pretty Thang stands like a majestic statue at the deck, naked, and her body glowing gold in the light. In one hand dangles a nun's veil, in the other is a silver apple, a bite taken out of its side and a leaf sticking out of its stem (very similar to*

(CONTINUED)

*Apple's icon). On the deck below her are article's of a nun's habit. On her chest is written, "BEAUTY." Landon is in a ball on the ground, covering his ears and closing his eyes as he repeats, "not real," to himself. The Man in Black is incapacitated on the floor. The screen is black with white words "DISCONNECTED, SEARCHING FOR A RANDOM STRANGER," flashing on it. Rylie walks to Pretty Thang. He reaches out to her.*

PRETTY THANG

You cannot touch me.

*Rylie removes his hand.*

RYLIE

I know.

*Pretty Thang drops the apple to the ground.*

PRETTY THANG

Take it. Apple has a worm in it.

*Rylie bends down to retrieve it and just as he is about to take a bite out of it, there is lightening. Light change to a small pool of light focusing on Landon, who opens his eyes and crawls to The Man in Black, passed out on the ground. The Man in Black grabs Landon's wrist. His hand clenches Landon's bracelet as Landon stares in fear.*

ROBOTIC VOICE

Remove my mask.

*Landon removes the black ski mask. Nick is behind it.*

NICK

And what do you see about me?

LANDON

*(Amazed at his own clarity.)*

You left me because of my addiction. And now...I'm a murderer.

*Nick begins to back away.*

No, no you didn't leave. I take that back. No, stay.  
STAY!

*Nick continues to exit.*

(CONTINUED)

NICK

(Robotic.)

I love you, I love you, I love you. REPLY!

*Nick is gone. He left the smart phone on the ground.*

LANDON

You're still here, dammit, you're still mine!

*Landon picks up the smart phone, his hands shaking as he stares at it in fear. It begins to ring louder and louder. Landon lets out a scream and drops the phone. We see there is now blood on his hands. There is a lightening strike, and the stage is back to being the display of a forest. The storm is gone, and the woods are barely blowing in the wind. The moon on the screen is now hidden behind clouds. Pretty Thang, the phone, and the apple have disappeared. Landon sees Rylie.*

LANDON

Rylie, where's the outhouse?

*Rylie walks to Landon quickly and begins to forcibly kiss and grope him. Landon pushes him away. They stare at each other.*

No...Rylie.

*Rylie runs offstage. Regina and Rose rush onstage.*

REGINA

He'll be back. I've just got this gut feeling. That guy needs help.

*Everything off.*

Scene Seven

*Rose and Landon sit on figures with their journals.*

ROSE

Ugh, I am still sore from climbing that mountain. I can't believe I have an appreciation for being back at this wretched camp.

LANDON

I--

*He is interrupted by the entrance of Rylie, whose eyes are swollen red, his hair disheveled, and his body bruised.*

(CONTINUED)

ROSE

Rylie, you're back! Where have you been over the past three days? What, what happened to you?

*Rylie walks to Rose in silence. He embraces Rose, silent and still.*

It's okay...it's okay...

*Regina enters with a triumphant look upon her face.*

REGINA

The runaway returns.

ROSE

I...I don't know what happened.

*Rylie removes his "S" bracelet from his pocket, crumpled. He throws it on the ground.*

RYLIE

I don't need it anymore.

*Everything off. END OF ACT TWO.*

ACT 3Scene One

*Rose enters upstage in a dress and shawl with a light amount of jewelry and her stethoscope. She is walking to the dock but is interrupted by the high-pitch, Elmo-like voice that came from the phone. A picture of one of her vibrators appears on the screen.*

HIGH PITCHED VOICE

Rose, I've missed you so much.

ROSE

Oh, Johnson, I told you it was over.

*Another picture of a bright pink vibrator appears on a figure. It speaks to Rose in the same voice.*

HIGH PITCHED VOICE

Rose, you said you needed each and every one of us. Each of us hits a different spot.

ROSE

Peter, I know you all desire me back, but I have moved on.

*Another vibrator appears.*

HIGH PITCHED VOICE

You said you loved me! I knew it wasn't true!

ROSE

Now, let's not get dramatic, Willy.

*Another vibrator appears. It is red, white, and blue.*

HIGH PITCHED VOICE

I hate you!

ROSE

Oh, shut up, Uncle Sam! That is just childish.

*Buzzing fills the stage as more toys appear.*

HIGH PITCHED VOICE

Take us back!

ROSE

LEAVE ME ALONE!

(CONTINUED)



*The vibrators disappear, and the buzzing ceases. Rose lets out a sigh of relief and proceeds to the dock, sitting down on it and facing the audience. Rylie enters wearing a T-shirt and shorts.*

RYLIE

Rose, is everything all right? I heard loud voices.

ROSE

Oh, things are fine. I was just settling some old affairs.

*Beat.*

RYLIE

Okay. Um...I have something I want to talk to you about.

*Rylie sits next to Rose on the deck.*

ROSE

Yes, you have been quite more talkative lately. Open, I should say. Fire away, my dear.

*Rylie takes Rose's arm and puts it around him.*

RYLIE

I'm sorry I called you what I did. And, I'm sorry I said your arm was too heavy to weigh down on me. See, it's on me now, and it's fine.

*Beat. Rose chuckles to herself in a mixture of pleasure and annoyance.*

ROSE

Well, I always have been somewhat Christian so I suppose I should forgive. But at a trade. I need to ask for your forgiveness.

RYLIE

For what?

ROSE

For turning in your journal when I wasn't supposed to.

RYLIE

You only made a mistake.

ROSE

No, sweetheart, I didn't. I knew it was a secret journal...I, uh, read some of the passages. Quite bright ideas you have!

(CONTINUED)

*Pause. Rylie removes Rose's arm from around him. I just thought Regina should know. Plus, I was still mad at you.*

*Beat.*  
If you don't forgive me, then this fat B-I-T-C-H won't forgive you...

*Rylie looks at Rose, who attempts to smile cutely. Look, when you said what you said, it pushed something out of me--it made me let something go. And, when I did what I did, I think it did something for you as well. Look at you! You're back and seem better than ever. Open. Real.*

RYLIE

*(Getting up.)*  
Well, I guess we should be thanking each other.

ROSE

Is that a "I forgive you, Rose?"

RYLIE

Sure, if that's how you want to interpret it.

*Rose hugs Rylie. The touch is strange to him.*

ROSE

Rylie, may I just ask what happened to you when you ran off? You're so different now. You don't even need your bracelet.

*Rylie lets out a sigh. He digs through a day bag and removes his journal, flipping to a page. He indicates for Rose to read with his finger. She takes the journal and walks downstage, reading it aloud. Rylie pulls the "S" bracelet out of his pocket and puts it back on his wrist.*

"I had it all planned out from the moment I came here. I knew I was going to run away on that exact date. I already arranged to be in the movie of my favorite director who was shooting in Maine of all places. I was going to be inside the beauty."

*Boss walks onstage dressed in a showy suit.*

BOSS

Would you be Rylie?

RYLIE

Yes. It's an honor meeting you. The way you really know how to--

(CONTINUED)

BOSS

I've heard it all before--to make porn so raw, so aggressive, really show domination. Heard it all before. Now...

*Boss feels Rylie's crotch. Rylie's posture stiffens with awkwardness.*

Gotta make sure you weren't lyin' about dick size. Take off your shirt.

*Rylie takes off his shirt.*

Pretty as you were in your picture. Pretty enough to be in my gay flicks. That pays big money. Oh well, I have Lillianna here for you now.

*Pretty Thang enters, dressed in daisy dukes, a white lace bra and panties, high-heal cowgirl boots, and a cowgirl hat.*

PRETTY THANG

(In a southern accent.)

Do you think I should change my image? Is the cowgirl suff gettin' old? I feel like I'm gettin' too mature for this.

BOSS

Lillianna, stop worrying about age. That's what surgery is for.

PRETTY THANG

Right.

*Pretty Thang removes a bag of cocaine, sniffing it.*

Alright, this girl's ready to ride!

*She walks up to Rylie.*

You're pretty cute. Give me a spank.

*Rylie is still and silent.*

BOSS

Go ahead, show her who's boss.

*Rylie doesn't move, he just looks at his hand, puzzled. Is this what he always wanted?*

Rylie!

RYLIE

You know what, I don't think this was a good idea. I'm...I'm gonna go.

(CONTINUED)

PRETTY THANG

(To Boss.)

I told you this cowgirl crap was gettin' old!

*She takes another sniff from her coke bag.*  
Your loss, kid.

BOSS

What's the deal, man? You email me this big, long letter about how you'll be in Maine, and you'd love to be in one of my movies. I was hesitant--you had no resumé in porn, but you sent me some pics and I thought, why not? He'll work for free! I'll give the kid a chance. But look at you, you won't even spank the girl.

*Boss walks to Pretty Thang.*  
You gotta show her who's boss.

*Boss spans Pretty Thing hard. She lets out a chuckle and a "woo-hoo." Rylie winces.*  
What? Does this disturb you? This is what we want, we want to be animals, we want to be nothing. That's what porn is all about! Be the beast, or be the beaten. Fuck being human.

*Boss directs Rylie to Pretty Thang.*  
Now spank her. Spank 'er hard.

*Long pause as Rylie looks into Pretty Thang's eyes. The image of Pretty Thang in her nun habit flashes on the screen, half undressed. Camera lenses stare threateningly out into the audience as they appear on the figures. A green light by the web-camera on the proscenium arch turns on. Then, live video of what is occurring onstage is on the screen, a close-up on upstage-center where Rylie stands. Rylie looks at the screen.*

PRETTY THANG

God, he won't even touch me. First time for everything. I just thought this would come way later in my life. Are my tits beginnin' to sag or somethin'?

RYLIE

I'm a virgin!

*Long pause.*

BOSS

You're a what?

(CONTINUED)

RYLIE

I've never had sex. This is just awkward. I'm going to go.

BOSS

No, no, no, my friend. You stay. Now, on your application, it said you liked boys too?

RYLIE

(Unsure.)

Maybe I do.

BOSS

(Thrilled.)

Oh...money, money, money! A virgin! Beautiful. I'll pay you for this kid. The deflowering of this nice little twink! Nothing will be better than that. Men love nothing more than to make white into black! Tommy!

*The Man in Black enters. Boss turns to him.*  
Tommy. Drum role please!

*Boss holds his hands out at Rylie.*  
A virgin.

*The Man in Black walks up to Rylie, circling him.*  
Tommy is my most aggressive actor. I'll be interested to see him paired up with the holder of a golden V-card.

*The Man in Black spansks Rylie, leaving a black print on his butt. Rylie stares at the print on his own behind.*

RYLIE

Uh...no, I'm, I'm gonna go. This was a mistake--

BOSS

You're makin' a mistake if you leave...

*The Man in Black grabs Rylie's wrist as he begins to leave, covering Rylie's bracelet. Rylie stares at his covered wrist.*

This is sex, kid. Sex is this evil dude, covered filthy in black who calls us to do his dirty work. It's the dark side of us--the confused animal that howls in our mind, telling us to devour flesh. He wants us to destroy, kid, others and ourselves.

*Rylie pushes away The Man in Black.*

(CONTINUED)

RYLIE

No, he's not sex, he's something else. And I'm done with it.

*The Man in Black grabs Rylie's wrist one more. Rylie pushes him away harder. Another grab, then, Rylie punches The Man in Black. The Man in Black lunges at Rylie. They begin to fight.*

BOSS

Hey, now!

*Fighting.*

Woah, kids. Calm it down!

*They continue to fight.*

Rylie, virgins are supposed to be submissive.

*More fighting. Boss turns to Pretty Thang.*

Should I be taping this? Would someone get off on it?

*Pretty Thang shrugs.*

PRETTY THANG

I kinda am.

*Rylie pins down The Man In Black to the floor.*

RYLIE

(Looking into the mirror on the Man in Black's chest.)

You're all disgusting.

BOSS

Hey, you think disgusting is a bad thing. It pays the bills and then some. You love my films, what did you want when you came here? What do you want?

*Rylie takes off his "S" bracelet and places it on The Man in Black's wrist.*

ROSE

(Reading.)

"I wanted to feel but not touch; I wanted to cum but not clean up; I wanted to fuck but not face; I wanted to be there but be far away; I wanted to be torn into but not cry; I wanted to tear but not see blood, I wanted to taste but not swallow; I wanted to live but never die!"

RYLIE

Not this.

(CONTINUED)

*Beat. The Man in Black lays limp on the floor.  
Rylie gives him a kiss.*

BOSS

Then. Stay. Behind. The screen.

*The cameras disappear from the figures. Boss and  
The Man in Black exit. The light from the web-cam  
turns off. The screen goes blank. Rylie walks to  
Rose.*

RYLIE

There's no beauty in the object, Rose. Not if you're in  
it or if you are it.

*He is close to Rose.*

But, when I came to you and you held me close, there  
was beauty in you--in that. I had forgotten what the  
endorphins from touching were like. It's like an  
explosion of electricity to the heart, like fire  
warming ice. The screen is cold, but the skin is  
burning. It's beautiful.

*He kisses Rose lightly.*

You're beautiful. I'm sorry.

*Rose slaps him.*

ROSE

Don't you ever say or do anything that stupid ever  
again.

*Rose storms offstage, Rylie awkwardly exiting in  
the opposite direction. Landon enters with a big  
bag of stones. Landon kneels stage-right, laying a  
stone on the ground. A picture of Shelly appears  
on the figure. It's a close up on her face. Her  
eyes closed as she lays on top of white satin.*

LANDON

Shelly, you gave me one hell of a sense of adventure.  
You went all over the world when I was stuck in my  
bedroom. You had pictures of every major city proudly  
displayed on your profile. You basically lived on a  
plane and in hotel rooms, being the elegant fantasy  
every woman dreams of.

*Beat.*

But...you were a dream. I dreamed you up, and, now it's  
time to put you down.

*Beat*

Rest in peace, Shelly Singame.

(CONTINUED)

*Beat. Landon takes out another stone.*  
Nina, you were the grandmother to take place of my--

*Landon appears on the screen.*

LANDON ON SCREEN

Why would you throw friends out like that?

LANDON

Because I don't need them anymore.

LANDON ON SCREEN

But you will need them, when you go back into the world--and your papers get C's, and it's hard to make friends--

LANDON

They weren't real.

LANDON ON SCREEN

But they protected you.

LANDON

No, they protected you--an image on a screen.

LANDON ON SCREEN

(Smiling.)

So you've learned to tell the difference?

LANDON

Yes.

LANDON ON SCREEN

So then...you should be able to address the most important image.

LANDON

What are you...no. No, I'm not ready.

LANDON ON SCREEN

Then I win.

LANDON

No, you don't.

LANDON ON SCREEN

You still need me to protect you.

LANDON

No.

*Beat.*

I don't.

(CONTINUED)



*A look of disgust and fear appears on the eyes of Landon on the screen as Landon closes his eyes. The screen goes blank. We hear a phone ringing.*

LANDON

Hello.

*Landon reopens his eyes. Nick is on the screen.*  
Nick.

*Light change to Rose, who is stage left, weeping as she holds a vibrator.*

ROSE

I'm so sorry. Why did I throw you out? Why?

*The vibrator is silent.*  
Why, Johnson? Answer me!

*The vibrator remains silent.*  
Why can't you talk to me anymore, dammit! TALK!

*She begins breaking it on the floor, smashing it to pieces.*  
After all those years, and you won't say a word to me?  
After all those moments you were inside me? After all the love we shared? You won't talk to me?

DR.'S VOICE

It's because we're separated, Rose.

*Rose is excited and puts the stethoscope in her ears and talks into it.*

ROSE

Oh, Terrance. Please stay here. I need you! I need to hear your voice.

DR.'S VOICE

I can't stay for long. I came only to get some of my things.

ROSE

NO! Please don't take your things. Especially the clothes. I still need them for smelling and for feeling and for laying them in my bed at night. Sometimes, right before dawn breaks, in those brief moments of sleep-deprived delusion, I can grab onto a suit jacket of yours and it's almost like there's real skin and hair and bone and blood inside of it. Almost like we're whole again.

(CONTINUED)

DR.'S VOICE

But it's empty.

ROSE

But, isn't it better to have something that lets me pretend the opposite? Better to have a shell than only air?

DR.'S VOICE

It's time we move on.

ROSE

Then, it's time you forgive me.

DR.'S VOICE

For what?

ROSE

You know, just say it. You know. It's time you tell me.

DR.'S VOICE

I have no idea--

ROSE

You hated me for getting cancer.

DR.'S VOICE

Never say a thing like that again!

ROSE

You hated it because it was cervical cancer, which came from my HPV, which couldn't have come from you because we were both virgins when we met. You had only slept with me and I had--

DR.'S VOICE

I have patients, Rose.

ROSE

No! It's time you forgive me! I was lonely when you were in med school in the Caribbean. There was no one around.

*The Man in Black enters and takes Rose in his arms. He has Rylie's "S" bracelet on his wrist.*  
I needed to feel touch again. I needed to feel love. Love can't be felt with all that distance in between.

*The Man in Black sways Rose in his arms.*  
I needed to feel something, someone. And that someone left a memory of himself within me that ate away at me from the inside out.

(CONTINUED)

DR.'S VOICE

I always took care of you.

ROSE

But, you hated me. You hated me because I broke the rule you never could break. You left me without leaving. You would be right next to me in bed, but there was this unbelievable fissure between us. No talking, no touching, no love. Our bed was emptier than your suit jacket. I had no chest to put my head on and listen for a heartbeat that could calm me to sleep.

DR.'S VOICE

You were sick--I was afraid to break you with any touch.

ROSE

Even after my sickness!

DR.'S VOICE

Well, it's because you went crazy.

ROSE

Because I needed something. Because without you I had nothing. I felt so naked, so unsafe. I needed to have something, consume something to even feel human again. I had cancer. I thought I was going to die, thought my world was about to end. You don't understand what that does to a girl.

*The Man in Black begins to consume all of her in his embrace from behind.*

Cancer is like a Man in Black who you can never feel safe from. He paid an unwelcome visit to you one night, taking all you have. And, even after he left, you'll always be afraid of walking into a dark room because when you flick on the lights, he could be right there, smiling at you and ready to work his evil once more. You'll do anything to escape him--put up as many barriers as possible, taking every object you have and forming a wall to rival that of China's.

DR.'S VOICE

I need to go now.

ROSE

Then, forgive me!

DR.'S VOICE

I can't.

(CONTINUED)

ROSE

Why?

DR.'S VOICE

Because, Rose...you're talking to yourself.

*Silence. Rose stares at the stethoscope in her hand then removes it from her ears. She lets out a small laugh at herself. Her and the Man in Black sink to the ground, holding each other. Rose strokes The Man in Black's face while she looks into her stethoscope. She looks into the reflection on the Man in Black's chest.*

ROSE

Oh, Rose. Look at you. Look at how beautiful I was just four years ago. I loved you back then.

*Long silence. The Man in Black removes a large, beautiful rose, giving it to Rose. She runs it along her face, then removes a pedal and ingests it. She smiles.*

ROSE

I forgive you.

*Rose and The Man in Black share a very slow but light kiss with the stethoscope in between their lips as they rest their foreheads together. Rose stands up. She directs The Man in Black to the dock by hand. He begins removing her clothes. Images of all of Rose's things flash on the screen.*

Cancer is a cell that keeps dividing, changing from a spec into a collection of deadly shards. It multiples, creating an endless chain of production--a constant flow of materials that crush down upon you until, under such massive weight, you become merely a material yourself. The production is endless. Until the whole world is a warped assembly line working for the evil master of cancer, working to death to bury its own body. And, every cell you gain scares you horribly because with each object added, you have so much more to lose.

*Rose is completely naked; however, her stethoscope still hangs around her neck. She places it in her ears and listens to The Man in Black's heartbeat and smiles. She removes the earplugs and hands the stethoscope to the Man in Black. She takes off her "T" bracelet and puts it on the wrist of The Man in Black.*

Things are not the protection, they are the disease.  
Things.

(CONTINUED)

*The Man in Black nods and exits. Rose lets out a gasp of relief.*  
I have never felt so safe.

*Rylie enters, seeing her naked.*

RYLIE  
Oh, sorry.  
(Begins to exit.)

ROSE  
NO! Look at me.

*Rylie does so for a long moment.*

ROSE  
Why can't we be naked? It's how we're born?

RYLIE  
Protection from climate?

ROSE  
I don't buy that. Why must we have all these things?  
All these walls? Why does our world make us cover up?  
Is it only to give mystery to what's beneath? Is it the  
mystery we crave? Or do we just want to hide ourselves  
so deeply away in layers of shame? Well, here I am,  
naked, naked for you. You can see everything and I can  
feel everything. Touch me, Rylie.

*Long pause. Rylie walks up to her and puts his  
hand over her heart.*

RYLIE  
You know your world is backwards when the most natural  
thing is the most foreign. Say what you said again,  
Rylie.

RYLIE  
(Confused.)  
You're beautiful?

ROSE  
Yes, yes I am. Thank you. Now come swimming with me!

*She jumps off of the dock upstage. We hear a  
splash of water. She calls to Rylie.*  
Come! The water feels so good.

*Rylie pauses, then quickly strips to nothing and  
runs to the dock and jumps off into the water.  
Light change to Landon, who is still stage-left.  
Nick reappears on the screen.*

NICK

None of those rocks are for me, right?

LANDON

No.

NICK

I know how hard this must be on you, losing them.

LANDON

It's actually liberating.

*Beat.*

NICK

I love you.

LANDON

We...we need to talk. I have some things I need to tell you.

NICK

Nothing bad, I hope. You can still come to my graduation party, right?

LANDON

I owe you some apologies. I've been thinking about it, and I wasn't the best boyfriend. I was horrible at understanding--I couldn't imagine someone functioning differently from me. I couldn't imagine someone showing love differently or showing hurt differently. I shouldn't have judged you so much based on my own perspective. But...I always trusted you, and you made me feel safe. And, you supported me so much--you really believed in me. You were my shelter from big bad reality.

NICK

Why are you saying these things? I'm not threatening to leave. Are you threatening to leave?

LANDON

It's just time that I tell you. Now is the time.

NICK

Well, you don't need to go on a rant like you are for these guys--these dead characters. I'm real.

LANDON

Yeah...

(CONTINUED)

NICK

Landon, I'M REAL.

LANDON

See, I've been thinking about that. Being here has made me see that you never seemed that real.

NICK

What? What are you talking about? Can you just be normal for once? Can we just have a nice, drama-free conversation?

LANDON

You always ask that!

NICK

I wonder why.

LANDON

Why? Because what we had drove me crazy.

NICK

Have. What we have.

LANDON

I know, I know I made your life hell with all my bitching. I know I freaked out if you fell asleep without texting goodnight. I know I regulated that we FaceTime for at least a half an hour a day. I know I picked everything you said to pieces, and I know I wanted to control every shred of what we had. And I'm sorry, I'm sorry I wasn't normal. But what we had wasn't normal.

NICK

No. It is perfectly normal.

LANDON

It was long-distance. Maybe you don't understand, but for me, it was so draining to be giving my heart to a machine. To a computer. To a cellphone.

NICK

Well, thanks for making me feel like crap about our relationship, asshole.

LANDON

Please, just listen! I'm sorry for how I behaved, but there were just so many moments where you didn't seem real. Moments where I didn't understand how I could have a boyfriend whose skin I could only feel roughly once a month. Only kiss a mere forty days out of the year. Whose hand was only mine--

(CONTINUED)

NICK

My hand was always yours. You just have trust issues.

LANDON

No! Remember how before we said I love you, we would tell each other, "you're important to me?" We said it every night at least, sometimes throughout the day. Too soon to say I love you but feelings too strong to not have anything to say at all. You were really important.

NICK

I know I am. And, you are to me too.

LANDON

You were so important. So important that you consumed me. So important that I was wrapped around my technology. Just sitting by my phone, waiting for a text. Just staring at my laptop waiting for an email. Ignoring you so you would initiate FaceTime. My stomach would have knots if I went an hour without a reply from you, and I was always so scared the person on the other side of the screen didn't care like I did, wasn't as plugged in as I was. It's like you hacked my life, Nick. I spent so much time being connected to you that I was isolated from everything else.

NICK

I'm going to hang up if you keep saying these things.

LANDON

I'm sorry, you didn't hack it, but the relationship did. A technological relationship hacking a human being's life, his mind. I couldn't think straight when always waiting for the buzz of a phone.

NICK

Then, I guess you should just have left me.

LANDON

But I couldn't! I couldn't because I was addicted. I was addicted to something that didn't even seem real. That's why I was so horrible to you at times because I felt like I was giving myself away to thin air--to a piece of metal and computer chips. When we were on two sides of a screen, I forgot so much. I forgot your breath. Forgot what exactly your face looked like in person. Forgot the sensation of your skin. Forgot the beauty of your voice. Forgot that you must have your own array of feelings. How could I understand you for who you were when you didn't even seem like another human being, only a picture on a screen? If I couldn't touch you, how could I know you were real?

(CONTINUED)



NICK

Because you just know.

LANDON

But, I didn't.

NICK

Then, why did you stay with me?

LANDON

For the short moments we *could* touch. For you kissing my ear. For me putting my head on your patchy chest hair like it was a cushion. For the garlic flavored taste of your breath. For the nights I could drift instantly to sleep because you were by me. For being held closely by you as you became my first person that summer night in a tent in your back yard. For waking up to your pancakes. For...for when you were real. I lived for the moments when I knew we were both alive. When I could feel your heartbeat.

NICK

I was always alive! I am alive.

*Long pause.*

LANDON

(Very sad.)

But, Nick, most of the time, I couldn't feel you or taste you or truly hear or see you. When separated by a screen, we weren't human. We were just...intimate objects. We were constantly connected, but I don't think I ever felt more alone.

*Long pause.*

NICK

(Robotic.)

I love you.

*Long pause.*

Landon, reply! Landon, reply! Landon, reply!

LANDON

I can't reply!

NICK

Why, not?!

LANDON

Because you left me because of my addiction! Because you're not real!

(CONTINUED)

NICK

Then, how did you talk to me?

LANDON

Magic of the InstaGlimpse glasses. Record our conversations, edit out my voice, memorize my responses to say back to you. The past never seemed so real with the amazing InstaGlimpse Glasses!

NICK

You're delusional.

LANDON

I was. But now I see it: you're...dead.

*The screen goes blank. Nick appears on the dock, waving to Landon. He is in the suit of The Man in Black. He wears Rose and Rylie's bracelet but does not have the mask. Landon watches him jump off.*

No, you're going to drown!

*Landon runs to the dock and jumps off.*

Nick! I can't save you anymore!

*The stage darkens and the screen lights up with a smiling child upon it.*

VOICE 1

Buy an online child--the child that always smiles.

*The image of a video game appears.*

VOICE 1

Massive Violence, the closest gaming is going to get to real life. It's so real, you'll be wondering if life is the liar.

*The image of a full lecture hall with all the students on their InstaGlimpse glasses.*

VOICE 1

Class will never be boring again.

*The image of a phone appears. A heart appears on the phone, beating quickly.*

VOICE 1

Your phone loves you too.

*The video of Landon in the lake is played with no sound accompanying it. He dives down into the water repeatedly, emerging breathless, his eyes very red.*

(CONTINUED)

LANDON'S VOICE OVER

I reach for you so deep in the water, every memory of us like a diamond hidden under the grey-green mass of liquid. I reach so deep to just feel, hear, and see you again. I try to imagine that you're still in that little, boyish blue room of yours with your name in white block letters on the wall behind you. Imagining that that room has a person within it--that it's still full of flesh, you still breathing its air. Like you could always and only be within those four walls, and nothing could tear you out.

*The screen is now black with the words, 'CANNOT SAVE DATA,' flashing on it.*

But, I can't save you. Not anymore. Your room is empty.

*On the screen, we see a close up of Landon's hand grabbing Nick's under water. Landon's hand lets go and ascends and Nick's descends. The video cuts to Landon and Nick in a car with Landon driving. It is raining very hard outside of the car.*

LANDON

I just don't understand why you couldn't just delete him from Facebook. You had no real friendship with him. You met him online.

NICK

I really don't wish to revisit that part of my life. Can't you just understand that?

LANDON

Can't you just do what I ask?

NICK

FINE!

LANDON

Delete him now.

*Landon removes his phone. We hear the phone ring. It is the same phone ring that has been plaguing Landon's mind throughout the play.*

Here, do it on my phone. Oh, Tammy is calling me back. About time.

*Landon looks at his phone, answering the call. There is the sound of a horn.*

NICK

LANDON! I LOVE YOU!

(CONTINUED)

*The screen goes completely black and the stage is completely dark as the deafening crash of two cars is heard. Then, there is a boisterous chorus of cell phones ringing from the audience chaotically. The noise dies down.*

LANDON'S VOICE OVER

You left me because of my addiction. Both cars fell into a ditch. All of the people involved went unconscious, stranded on the side of a country road. We were upside down, my mouth and nose just above the water of the ditch and yours just below it, the black water invading your lungs. You were at your end. Your life was flashing before your eyes, and you could only say...

NICK'S VOICE

LANDON! I LOVE YOU!

LANDON'S VOICEOVER

And I could not reply. I will never be able to reply.

*On the screen, we see Landon shivering in a body of water, looking like a vulnerable child. Nick's arms are around him, but Nick begins to sink into the water, leaving Landon alone. Landon looks into the audience. The screen goes blank. Bright, natural lighting floods the stage. All of the figures are gone, the screen cannot be seen, and an enormous, lively tree stands center stage. The sounds of birds chirping and the blowing of wind play a sweet melody. Landon, screaming, pulls himself onto the dock and runs to the tree, completely soaked. He runs to the tree and screams in pain as he lays upon its roots, grabbing it for comfort. Regina runs up to Landon.*

REGINA

Landon, do you need something, someone? What happened?

LANDON

I'm okay. I'm ready to be alone now.

*Blackout.*

### Scene Two

*There is the loud sound of wind as Landon, Rose, Rylie, and Regina cross from stage right to stage left. They all wear warm hiking gear.*

(CONTINUED)

LONDON

If I see another stack of rocks for us to climb--nope, there it is, another stack of rocks. And look, after that one is another one. Wow, the beauty of nature.

REGINA

It's a mountain--what did you expect?

ROSE

(Struggling to continue.)

Well, I expect a gondola ride for the return hike.

REGINA

Mt. Washington is pretty developed but not that developed.

LONDON

Regina, you really know how to plan a hiking trip. Give us the COLD, WINDY, TWELVE HOUR hike on the last week of camp, that way, we'll never want to come back. We'll stay addiction free forever.

REGINA

Bingo.

*Rylie points offstage.*

RYLIE

Look!

*All of the characters freeze and stare offstage.*

LONDON

There's a train. And, a road. Running to the top.

ROSE

And look at the size of that building. It looks like a mini-prison at a mountain peak.

*Long pause.*

RYLIE

We're going back to the real world. Hello Mt. Washington.

*They cross the stage as lights dim. An advertisement for a cellphone is placed stage left. Next to it is a waist-high figure with little white boxes on it. Rose enters and stares at the artificially beautiful woman on the cell phone ad. Rylie enters.*

(CONTINUED)

RYLIE

Isn't it something? A gift shop on top of a mountain.

*Rose turns to Rylie slowly.*

ROSE

I can't go back.

RYLIE

What do--

ROSE

I can't go back! To all of this! Look around. Look at all of the things in this shop. Look at this beautiful woman. I can't go back to that. I'm not ready. I'm not strong enough.

*Rose picks up one of the white boxes and chucks it at the ground. A gift shop worker enters.*

WORKER

Ma'am, you're going to need to buy that.

ROSE

I'm bankrupt, bitch!

*Rose throws another figure upon the ground.*

All this time, we thought we were being isolated from the real world. When we were back home, we thought technology was isolating us from the real world. But, when we were at camp, we thought we were being isolated from the real world of damn modernity by the woods!

*Rose sticks a figure in her mouth and begins to gnaw on it.*

But, it's all real. Everything! It's all on the same plane. Every tree and every pixel. Every mouth and every instant message. Every mountain and every gift shop. It's all on the same screen, and there is no escaping it.

WORKER

Security!

RYLIE

Rose, please calm down!

ROSE

Rylie...Terrance is gone. He will never want me back again. I can never make myself beautiful in his eyes like before!

(CONTINUED)

*Rose lets out a painful gasp as she knocks the figure over. Then, complete blackness and the gift shop props are removed as stars begin to appear over the heads of the audience and over the stage incrementally. Eventually, we have a sky full of stars. We hear the splashing of water. Gentle wind blows.*

ROSE'S VOICE OVER

Oh, look at the stars in the lake's reflection! It's like we're swimming in the night sky!

LANDON'S VOICE OVER

Like we're going to fall into another galaxy. I mean, that is what we're about to do when you think about it. Tomorrow, we'll be falling back into the strange dimension of the real world.

ROSE'S VOICE OVER

Yes. Yes. Landon, Rylie, let's take one last swim in this lake. Let's swim to the island and celebrate there. We have made it through camp!

*The noise of more water splashing is heard for quite sometime.*

RYLIE'S VOICE OVER

Rose, do you need help keeping up?

*Beat.*

Rose? Landon, where is Rose?

LANDON'S VOICE OVER

Rose?!

*Long pause. The two men shout Rose's name repeatedly to no avail. Bright, natural lighting fills the stage. Rylie sits under the tree with his journal in his hand. His eyes are red from tears. Landon walks on with his hiking bag and a suitcase. He is wearing the coat that he helped Rose remove earlier in the play.*

LANDON

My mom is here.

*Rylie is silent, looking up at Landon with saddened eyes. Landon reaches down and embraces Rylie.*

We're going to be okay Rylie. I promise.

*Long pause.*

(CONTINUED)

RYLIE

I did this to her. I was an ad man. I was the seller of the unattainable material world. I killed her.

LANDON

Don't say that.

*Rylie hands Landon the journal.*

RYLIE

I read the last entry in her journal last night before Regina could get to it. I copied it down.

*Landon reads it as the lights begin to dim to very dark. As Rose's voice says the following, the tree onstage is quietly removed.*

ROSE'S VOICE OVER

The modern world is a place petrified of its own reflection. We are horrified of the dark, so we insulate ourselves with light. We are terrified of the outside, so we build fortresses around us to seal out the natural world. We have incredible fear of the mountains that could swallow us whole and, most of all, the person inside of each and every one of us that could bring us the most pleasure but also the most pain. It seems that every invention made today is an escape from the inescapable--a temporary mirage that obstructs the mirror or even makes the surface itself disappear.

In my attempts to shield myself from myself, I buried my body alive. I buried my body in a mountain of things because I was afraid of seeing myself in the sky. I was afraid to fly above everything and see the true world below me. I would have rather been a mole than a bird. Blindness was bliss.

But, here, away from everything, as I dug myself out of my grave layer by layer, I began to feel the weight of the world sliding off of me, and I could finally breathe again. Naked, I could see the vulnerability of my own blood and make peace with it--make peace with my humanity. Stripped to the world, I could finally see everything. I could see the sky and ascend to the heavens, looking down at the chained bodies below.

I have decided to stay in the sky, floating among the stars as a happy angel. Complete clarity will capsule me, and I will be free of all those earthly chains. And I will see cancer below me, extending his long, black hand at my body through murky waters but unable to reach it. I will have escaped him. Forever.

(CONTINUED)



The modern world is afraid of it's own reflection. But a reflection can save a life. A reflection can even pull you out of your grave and perform a resurrection.

How beautiful it is to see the world and feel alive. When you find that moment, never let it go.

*The stage is now completely black, and the screen is back. The screen is lit with the image of Boss at a desk in his office. Pretty Thang walks in with a tight, yet conservative red dress on her body, placing a cup of coffee and Bailey's on Boss's desk. As she bends, Boss stares at her ass.*

BOSS

Thanks, Pretty Thang.

PRETTY THANG

Yes, Boss.

*Beat.*

Herbert, if I catch you staring at my ass again, you'll have a lawsuit on your hands. And my name is Angela, not "Pretty Thang." Now, enjoy your coffee and alcohol. I made it with lots of love.

*Boss stares at Pretty Thang as she exits from the frame.*

PRETTY THANG

*(Off Camera.)*

Hello, Rylie.

*We hear a door shut. Rylie remains off camera for the following.*

BOSS

Rylie, you're back! What do you got for me?

RYLIE

*(Removing a tie from his neck off-camera.)*

Your technology is like a tie.

*Silence.*

BOSS

And?

*Rylie throws the tie on Boss's desk.*

(CONTINUED)

RYLIE

You can strangle yourself with it.

*Beat.*

That's it. That's my pitch. I quit, Boss. Thanks for the rehab.

*Boss begins to laugh hysterically.*

BOSS

Rylie, you're quitting? What the hell are you gonna do with yourself?

RYLIE

Something real.

*We hear a door shut, and the screen goes black. Rylie enters stage right. He pauses and stares off for a moment in the darkness. A light then begins to grow, and he begins to walk away. With every step he takes, the light grows brighter. He exits, leaving a fully-lit stage with Landon's desk at the center, his computer on it. Landon rushes onstage, a charger in his hand.*

LYDIA

*(Offstage.)*

Landon! Let me into this room! Don't get on that computer! Not yet! I thought you were better!

LANDON

Mom. I just have something I need to take care of. Trust me.

*Pause.*

LYDIA

You have five minutes.

*Landon rushes to his computer, charging it. The image of his desktop appears. He logs onto MyLife, getting on Nick's profile. Nick walks onstage in The Man in Black suit, but without the skimask. He wears Rose's and Rylie's bracelets.*

*Landon and Nick embrace.*

NICK

I miss you.

LANDON

I miss you too.

(CONTINUED)

*Nick and Landon shuffle from side to side as they grasp each other like life depends on it.*

NICK

You too. Landon, I'm cold.

LANDON

Here.

*Landon takes Rose's coat off of his body and puts it on Nick.*

NICK

Can, can we sit down, I'm feeling really...weak.

LANDON

Yeah, yeah.

*They sit, Nick laying in Landon's lap.*

LANDON

I'll keep every letter you wrote me and every picture you emailed. I'll always keep you with me.

NICK

I'll always be with you. I'll always be there for you. I'll always believe in you.

LANDON

I will too. And it will get me through.

*Nick kisses Landon and runs a finger across his cheek, leaving a fine streak of blood upon it, he then lays back down, closing his eyes.*

NICK

Good. I love you.

*Nick falls asleep.*

LANDON

Lonliness is a Man in Black who you desperately run from because in his presence, you see yourself naked. It is frightening. See yourself, Landon, and don't be scared. Uncover the ugly and find the beauty.

*Landon takes off his bracelet and places it onto Nick's wrist. Landon gets up, gently setting Nick's head upon the floor. He goes to his desk, getting onto MyLife, which is shown on the screen. He goes to settings and hits "Deactivate your account." A question appears: "Are you sure you want to deactivate your account?" Landon hits yes.*

(CONTINUED)

*Then pictures of Shelly, Nina, Tonya, and Nick all appear on the screen: "We will miss you. Are you really sure you want to deactivate your account?" Landon hits yes. Everything goes black. Lights come back on. Landon clutches only Rose's coat in his hands as he sits on the floor where Nick once was. In front of Landon, the "S," "T," and "L," bracelets lay on the stage without a wearer. There is also the black glove which Nick was wearing from his Man in Black costume. On the screen is a live-action close up of these objects on the floor.*

LANDON

(Numb.)

I loved you too, Nick. I will always love you. I'm sorry.

*Landon looks around his room. He takes in a deep breath of air, as if this is the first time he has been able to breath in months. He lets go of the coat. It falls to the floor and covers the bracelets and glove. We see this action on the close up on the screen. As soon as the coat hits the floor, the screen goes blank, and the words "SHUTTING DOWN" blink upon it.*

God, how beautiful it is to be alive, to be awake.

CURTAIN.