

Drawing Circles

Cast

ACE: late teens - unintelligent and manipulative
ANNA: late teens - bossy, self-righteous, temperamental
AURELIA: late teens - stubborn and romantic
BEATRICE: young 20s - sweet, enthusiastic, and naive
BELLE: late teens - very neat, polished, and confident, though she starts to lose her composure
BOUNCER: middle aged - pleasant
COLTON: late teens - wild, immature, and unintelligent
DR. CLARENCE: 70s - reserved, patient, and very thoughtful, but creepy
FOX: Young Fox - Little Prince vibes
HALEY: late teens - ditsy, doesn't contribute much, self-absorbed and vapid
HOLDEN: Late teens- intellectual, questioning, Hamlet vibes
HOLDEN'S SISTER: Young girl
JESSICA: late teens - carefree, theatrical, dramatic, a bit bossy
JOSEPHINE: a fabulous nightclub entertainer
LAMIA: late teens - serious and conservative, then mystical, sad, and desperate
MR. MILLER: early 20s → old - dark, creepy, and just plain weird
MRS. WARREN: 40s - philosophical, troubled, introspective, and a wise soul
MS. BUGG: middle aged - no nonsense, pointed, and very serious
MS. SADLER: middle aged - no nonsense, pointed, and very serious
PETER: 20s (college student) - polite, pleasant, thoughtful
PEYTON: child → late teens - discerning, thoughtful, mature, disillusioned, and fearful
SCUMMY GUY: middle aged - scummy
SEAN: 40s - composed, insightful, mystical in a way
SUGAR: late teens → 30s - bold, honest, and tormented
TEACHER: late 20s - enthusiastic

TECH NOTES

Something special will happen when dream sequences begin and end.

Times and locations should be projected at the beginning of each scene.

Whenever Sean comes onstage, there should be a loud flash and sound. The photo he takes should be projected.

RUINS
Vulpes Parco
76 BCE

Lamia is standing in front of a decadent ancient palace. Throughout the scene, it is snowing. She is wearing a simple white tunic with many leather anklets. She stands still with her eyes closed and hums. Suddenly, she opens them and begins talking to the audience.

Lamia

Isn't it just devastatingly beautiful? I live here. I am adored. I was twelve when it happened. I blossomed, and the world blossomed with me. People began to take notice. I came from a family of circus performers. I had nothing to give but myself.

She lifts up her dress, revealing leather bracelets that go up to her thighs.

You must admire my leather bracelets. Look. Aren't they beautiful? I get one from each lover I take.

People slowly wander onstage and bow at Lamia's feet.

Look. They come from everywhere to delight in me. But just between you and me, what I really do is break hearts. I take everything from them, and get a leather bracelet in return. It's quite funny, really.

One person gets up and puts a crown on Lamia's head before walking offstage.

Then came the competition. Whoever takes the most lovers wins. You can guess how that ended.

One by one, Lamia's admirers stand up, place some article of jewelry on her body, and exit. All are gone except for Aurelia.

But at the end of the day, after I have been showered with gifts and pleasure, all I have left is myself and many empty rooms. Devastating. Beautiful.

Aurelia reaches up and grabs Lamia's hands.

But perhaps that's not true. I have Aurelia. She worships me. She loves me. And secretly, I love her too. But I can't have her. Not really. When my admirers are with me, I am a goddess. When they leave me, I am a whore. And I am not to be trusted with something so precious.

Aurelia stands up and gifts Lamia with Fox before exiting.

Maybe in another life, Aurelia.

Lamia bends down and curls up with Fox on a barren mattress. They fall asleep.

Dream Sequence

“Ring Around A Rosey” plays very quietly but grows into a crescendo until it seems to wake up Fox, but when he wakes the song stops abruptly. He sits up in the silence and begins to try and cuddle himself.

During this dance snow begins to fall.

Fox seeks warmth in a multitude of sources, including the sleeping Lamia. Also, potentially the sun, fire, or something similar. The essential point is that Fox seeks warmth to only find momentary, fleeting relief. The sun sets, fire goes out, etc. Lamia exits.

Fox develops a shiver.

A booming thunder startles Fox to his feet. As he finds his footing the bed is abruptly yanked off stage. Fox has a moment of loss for that source of comfort. After a moment of standing in the cold watching the snowfall, there is a blackout, and Fox runs offstage.

At some point, Sean enters and takes a photo of Fox.

End Dream Sequence

NIGHTCLUB
Cabaret on Fox Park
1922

We are in a swanky nightclub, with couples sitting at tables throughout the room. There is a small performance area at the front of the club, and a bouncer at the other end. A young Mr. Miller enters.

Bouncer

Name?

Mr. Miller

Mr. Miller. I'm here to see the singer.

Bouncer

Oh, Josephine! Yeah, she's swell. She your wife?

Mr. Miller

Nah, I know she has a ring on her finger, but that's not from me.

Bouncer

Oh?

Mr. Miller

Yeah, but if all goes as planned, she'll be my old lady soon.

Bouncer

Huh, Josephine Miller. That has a ring to it. Well pal, congratulations and have a swell evening.

Mr. Miller makes his way to an empty table in the front. A loud, booming voice comes from an unseen source.

Voice

And now, the moment you've been waiting for! Ladies and gents, the fabulous, magnificent, Miss Josephine!

Josephine, decked out and truly fabulous, appears from a curtain of feathers. She sings an original jazzy song about falling in love and being done wrong. Dakota, this one's on you sis.

During the song, Sean enters and takes a photo of her, then exits.

When she finishes singing, the crowd applauds and she bows. Then, she stands and spotlights come up on her and Mr. Miller, who also stands. They stare at each other. The voice again.

Voice

Did you really think this woman could ever truly be yours? Think, Mr. Miller. Just look at her. You must take her while you can. Capture her. Secure her. Leave this tormented place and take her to Santa Monica. Ride the merry-go-round. Inhale the smoke of her love. Then take it away, innocence and all. It really is that easy. You really do deserve all of her.

THE RAMBLINGS OF AN OLD MAN COMING OFF SEDATION
Fox Park Hospital
1948

There is a blackout. We hear, loud and shrill ...

Mr. Miller

(singing) Jack and Jill went up the hill ... to fetch a pail of wateeeeerrrr! Jack fell down and broke his crown and Jill came tumbling afteeeeerrrrr! *(Suddenly serious)* People. I hate ... people.

The lights come up. A hospital room. Mr. Miller, an old man, is laying in the bed. It is the 1940s. The audience should feel content and innocent. Lots of baby pink and blue. Cotton candy vibes.

Mr. Miller

Small eyes. Strange looking people. So strange.

There is a knock on the door, and Beatrice enters. She is a cutesy, done-up nurse carrying a tray, which she sets down next to Mr. Miller. During her entrance, Beatrice quietly sings Josephine's theme. Sean enters behind her, takes a photo, and then exits.

Beatrice

Good afternoon, Mr. Miller. I'm Nurse Beatrice. How are we feeling today?

He is looking off into the distance.

Beatrice

Sir? Sir? How are you feeling after the surgery?

Mr. Miller

Glorious.

Beatrice

Well isn't that just delightful! And guess what? It's time for lunch!

Mr. Miller

Lunch? As in lunch? Lunch ...

Beatrice

Yes, sir! Guess what you'll be having?

Mr. Miller

Hmmmmmm.....

Beatrice

Sir?! Come on! Guess!

Mr. Miller

There was a famous insect down in Santa Monica. An old wanderer.

Beatrice

Sir, your lunch is getting cold. You're coming off sedation. You have to eat.

Mr. Miller

I heard he tap danced too. Over the shouts of parents and politicians.

Beatrice

It's your favorite I hear...

Mr. Miller

I paid to see him. Real good stuff. Real good. Smug smiles.

Beatrice

You'll be having fried cod!

Mr. Miller

Blueberry pie. My favorite.

Beatrice

No, silly! Fried cod. Here, eat. *(She tenderly puts the food in his mouth as she sings.)*

Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of water. Jack fell down and --

Mr. Miller

-- And died of sexual exhaustion!

Beatrice

Mr. Miller!

Mr. Miller

Jill ... oh, Jill. Josephine.

Beatrice

Sir! That's indecent. I'm leaving right this very minute.

She angrily starts to clean up the tray, but his next words stop her.

Mr. Miller

Josephine. Do you remember me? Jos --

Beatrice

Sir, my name is not Josephine.

Mr. Miller

Yes! We saw Queen Anne's Lace together. And raccoons. And lion heads.

Beatrice

My name is not Josephine. I'm Nurse Beatrice. Remember?

Mr. Miller

Oh yes, I remember. You two look so very much alike, marvelous really. I see her now, in that pink and blue dress. Too stiff to blow in the wind. Marvelous.

Beatrice

Sir, are you feeling alright? Should I go get the doctor?

Mr. Miller

It comes to me in fleeting visions. Smoke. Knives. Josephine. It had to end once Anna was born.

Beatrice

Did you say Anna?

Mr. Miller

The world moves in abnormal circles.

Beatrice

How did you know her? Josephine?

Mr. Miller

We ... we snuck around.

Beatrice

Oh my goodness. How indecent.

Mr. Miller

That is the typical reaction. Especially since she was married ... and a nightclub singer.

Beatrice

Oh, how horrible! My grandmother was a nightclub singer too, but she never did anything like that!

Mr. Miller

Call me a bad person. Call me what you will.

Beatrice

That's one thing I wish I never knew.

Mr. Miller

We were in love. We used to go taxidermy shopping together.

Beatrice

(suddenly intrigued) Oooh! I love taxidermy!

Mr. Miller

She had light hair and small eyes. A tap dancer. Stiff clothing. Hated the free spirits.

Beatrice

What else?

Mr. Miller

Soft mouth. Bony hips.

Beatrice

Sir! I don't want to know that!

Mr. Miller

It's all part of her though. Invigorating. Rambunctious. Foolish.

Beatrice

Sir, I -- uhhh ...

Mr. Miller

Her unabiding love of a rodent tooth or perfectly pointed antlers. I always regretted that it ended in cigarettes and knives.

Beatrice

What did you just say?

Mr. Miller

Her blood was as feeble as her soul.

Beatrice

Oh my goodness. You didn't *(pause)* kill her did you?

Mr. Miller

I can't say I didn't.

Beatrice

(she arms herself with the lunch tray)

Sir. Murder is never okay! *(shouting)* Somebody help! This man is wild!

Mr. Miller

It happened in Santa Monica. She never was very smart.

Beatrice

Sir ...

Mr. Miller

I have a dark side. Don't we all. Even small dogs and Yugoslavian village elders.

Beatrice is stunned and upset. She can't talk, and she certainly can't support the weight of a metal tray. It crashes to the floor.

Mr. Miller

I hate people. With their smug smiles and little eyes. They come over to you and look strange and make you think you have something to do with them. You remind me of her. And now I'm starting to remember why I killed her.

Beatrice

(finally getting the words out) These are things I never wanted to know.

A doctor flings the door open and rushes in.

Doctor

Is everything okay in here?

Beatrice

Yes. Just the ramblings of an old man coming off sedation.

SPINNING
Fox Park Hospital
1954

The lights come up. A psychiatrist office with the clichéd chez-lounge chair. Dr. Clarence, an elderly man, is seated in an arm chair with a clipboard in hand. He wears a pair of well furnished spectacles. Fox enters and mauls itself. Bangs its head in a self harmful dance/fit. Sean takes a photo of this.

Fox

There is a great abyss that exists just behind my eyelids. I am alone. And it's cold. Do you feel it? You must. How do you keep warm?

Dr. Clarence

The symptoms you describe convey your realization of the way things are.

Fox

This is the way things are? If it is I fear I may not be able to carry on...

Dr. Clarence

Realizing your true state of isolation is merely a part of coming of age. It's how we know we are human and we are real.

Fox

I don't mean to be rude, but you haven't answered my question. How do you keep warm?

Dr. Clarence

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but you will never be warm. All you can hope to do is to find some sort of task that will convince you that you are worth the space you take up.

Fox

So this is what it's come to. Nothing will satisfy my unbearable lack of warmth.

Dr. Clarence

Well ... don't be surprised. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to conclude the size and scope of space. Time asserts a reality where your life isn't needed for the world to keep on spinning.

Fox

Am I to join oblivion? I have no choice. I've never had a choice. I did not choose to come into this world. I did not choose to be condemned to these unending years of solitude.

Dr. Clarence

That's what I would advise.

Fox

How do you mean?

Dr. Clarence

I mean you don't have to continue to live in a state of agony ... unless that is what you desire.

Fox

How can you simply say "I don't have to"?

Dr. Clarence

Because you don't. *(pause)* I can prescribe the oblivion you long for. A single permanent solution to all your strife.

Fox

Please ... what is it?

Dr. Clarence

Suicide... It is a logically common approach to treating your condition.

Fox

What condition?

Dr. Clarence

The human condition.

Fox

To finally have a choice. Relief. Warmth.

Dr. Clarence

It's only a bit of paperwork. Would you like to do it now?

Fox

That seems to be the most logical solution, but I am aware that it is binding. I need to sort my thoughts.

Dr. Clarence

Understandably so. I'll give you an application to take with you. Carefully consider.

Fox exits, we hear a knocking in the distance. The lights flicker and go out, abruptly coming back on to reveal Dr. Clarence asleep on the chez lounge chair. The knocking continues and Dr. Clarence is awoken by the noise, getting up sluggishly and appearing disoriented. He goes to the door and lets in Mrs. Warren.

Mrs. Warren

Doctor Clarence! I was beginning to think you had forgotten my appointment.

Dr. Clarence

Mrs. Warren, I do apologize! I hope you can excuse my unprofessional behavior.
(He walks to the corner and gets his clipboard from his desk. He smooths his hair with his hands and moves towards the chez longue, pulling his arm chair up next to it. He sits)

Please, sit.

Mrs. Warren enters and lays in the chair.

Can I get you anything? Coffee, tea, a glass of brandy? *(He chuckles to himself. Mrs. Warren shakes her head)*

Very well. So, Mrs. Warren, how have we been feeling the past few weeks?

Mrs. Warren

Odd.

Dr. Clarence

Odd, Mrs. Warren?

Mrs. Warren

Yes Doctor, strange. Uneasy. It's the dreams again. It's like a part of my mind is trying to tell me something.

Dr. Clarence

Ah yes, the dreams. How would you describe these dreams dear? Nightmares? Stress dreams?

Mrs. Warren

Neither, Doctor.

Dr. Clarence

How so?

Mrs. Warren

They don't make me frightened. They aren't pleasant or unpleasant. They just felt . . . strange.

Dr. Clarence

Strange. Strange in what way, Mrs. Warren?

During these next few lines, there is a knock on the door. Dr. Clarence opens it, and Sean enters and takes a photo, then exits. The dialogue continues and neither Dr. Clarence or Mrs. Warren acknowledge Sean.

Mrs. Warren

Well, they almost felt like flashbacks. Vivid, with colors and piercing noises. Like when the lights would turn on in the classroom after watching a film and your eyes felt like screaming.

Dr. Clarence

And are they flashbacks? Memories?

Mrs. Warren

No, no, not exactly.

(Pause)

Well, I guess I'm not entirely sure if they happened or not. That's the issue, I believe.

Dr. Clarence

Well, that issue is simply one of humanity! Discerning between what is real and what is imagined will always be a downfall of the human brain. Surely an intelligent woman like you knows that.

Mrs. Warren

Yes, Doctor.

Doctor Clarence ponders for a moment, looking deeply at Mrs. Warren. Creepy vibes. He snaps out of it and returns to his clipboard.

Dr. Clarence

Mrs. Warren, is there any dream in particular that made, shall we say, a lasting impression on you?

Is there one that you simply can't seem to let go of?

Mrs. Warren

Yes Doctor. There is one that I cannot stop circling back to.

Dr. Clarence

Could you describe the dream for me?

Mrs. Warren

Well, I seem to be spinning, or floating, but I can also see the ground beneath me.

Dr. Clarence goes to a corner and grabs a stopwatch sitting on a table. He pulls his chair up next to Mrs. Warren and begins dangling the watch in front of her face, swinging it like a pendulum.

Dr. Clarence

Good. Now focus on the watch in front of you, very good.

Mrs. Warren becomes more focused on the watch, becoming more relaxed

Dr. Clarence

Keep describing the dream. Where are you?

Mrs. Warren

I'm six years old, and I am at the carnival with my father.

Dr. Clarence

Very good dear. Close your eyes now. What do you see?

Mrs. Warren closes her eyes.

A merry-go-round appears on the other side of the stage, opposite the psychiatrist office. There are bright lights and perhaps a Dakota song? A young girl enters, wearing a pink tutu and holding cotton candy in her hand.

Mrs. Warren

I am wearing my most adorable pink skirt, looking girlish as ever. I always used to say it reminded me of butterfly wings. I thought I could fly while I wore it.

Dr. Clarence

And what happens next?

The young girl begins to spin on the merry-go-round. She seems confused and over-stimulated.

Mrs. Warren

I am on the merry-go-round. It spins slowly, but my senses convince me I am in a vortex. There are children laughing. And colors. Lots of colors.

Dr. Clarence

Are you alone?

The young girl turns and points out a man in the audience. She squints and waves at him while spinning.

Mrs. Warren

I see Papa in the crowd. He waves at me, but his face is distorted. Everything is moving too fast for me to be sure it's him.

Dr. Clarence

Are you afraid?

Mrs. Warren does not respond.

Are you afraid Mrs. Warren?

The young girl continues spinning, looking confused and wary.

Mrs. Warren

(Pause)

I can't tell. *(She pauses again, then, with certainty)* No. Not yet.

Dr. Clarence

Are you sure about that?

The young girl starts to spin faster and faster, a look of terror on her face

Mrs. Warren

People are blending together, hurtling past me. I look for Papa but each individual is merging together. He is everywhere and nowhere..

I am afraid now.

Dr. Clarence

Are you afraid because you cannot find your father?

Mrs. Warren

It's more than that. I am afraid because I am realizing I can never get off the merry-go-round. I am afraid because I am finally understanding that it is perpetual.

The young girl tries to remove herself from her seat on the merry-go-round, but it is as though she is chained to the device. She struggles to get off.

Dr. Clarence

That what is perpetual?

Mrs. Warren

All of it. Me. My life. My innocence, its discovery and its destruction. I always thought it was a straightshot: we are conceived, we grow up, we die.

Dr. Clarence

And is that not how our lives are?

The young girl continues to struggle to get off the merry-go-round.

Mrs. Warren

No. People move in circles, constantly reintroduced to ourselves. There is no boundary we cross and suddenly we are who we were meant to be.

Dr. Clarence

Are you afraid of dying?

Mrs. Warren

No. I've known death since I was young. It's the living part that scares me.

Dr. Clarence

Why is living scary, Mrs. Warren?

Mrs. Warren

The expectation of it? The expectation that you'll one day have the answers, that *things* will be clear and orderly and that *you* will be clear and orderly. I never seem to reach that day.

She opens her eyes

Does that make sense?

Dr. Clarence

Eyes closed, please, Mrs. Warren.

She remembers where she is and closes her eyes again, nervously, anxiously.

Don't get lost in abstractions. Bring me back to the merry-go-round Mrs. Warren. Tell me what you are seeing.

The young girl is looking upwards and around her. She looks ill and petrified, tears in her eyes.

Mrs. Warren

I'm seeing through its facade. Things are disintegrated. The faces in the crowd are not parents observing their children. They are spectators, laughing. And the children are crying, wondering why nobody has come to save them.

Dr. Clarence

Why do the children need saving?

Mrs. Warren

Because they don't know. They don't know what is going to come for them, and they don't know that it will keep coming for them, no matter how old they get. They don't know that their mother is just as helpless as them, that even though their father makes the money he is sad. That people are worried, that everything is so. . .

Dr. Clarence

So what?

Mrs. Warren

Chaotic. Everything is so chaotic. It feels like being seasick. Transitioning from drowning to breathing. I can never tell if I'm sinking or reaching the surface.

Dr. Clarence

You are the most brilliant patient I have ever had.

Mrs. Warren

(Opens her eyes and seems to snap out of it. The merry-go-round freezes, as does the young girl who is positioned on it. The lights and music stop as well.)

Do you understand what I have said?

Dr. Clarence

We think the same, you and I. My ex-wife used to say I had turned bitter with old age because of the way I saw things. But what you have said is simply the truth, my dear. There is always more chaos to discover.

(Beat)

You are not crazy, Mrs. Warren. In fact, you are quite remarkable.

Mrs. Warren

You flatter me, doctor.

Dr. Clarence

I refuse to have you enter my office as a patient again. From now on, I would like to see you outside, as friends, as equals. Is that okay with you, Jane?

Dr. Clarence puts his hand on Mrs. Warren's thigh and looks at her Mrs. Warren looks down uncomfortably at Clarence's hand and the merry-go-round and the carnival music both start again. She and Dr. Clarence freeze and the young girl unfreezes, and stops struggling to get off the merry-go-round.

BUTTERFLY
Fox Park Elementary
1973

Stage opens and we are in a classroom. Teacher moves to center stage and a projection of a butterfly life-cycle is projected onto the screen.

Teacher

Okay everybody, one-two-three, eyes on me!

Children

One-two, eyes on you!

Teacher

Thank you. We have a very exciting lesson today about butterflies.

The children "ooh" and "ahh" and seem very enthusiastic about the lesson.

Student One raises their hand.

Student One

Are butterflies those pretty orange and purple things that fly around in Fox Park and land on your hand and then fly away?

Teacher

Yes! There are lots of butterflies in Fox Park. Now, the life cycle of a butterfly can be tracked in four stages, beginning with the egg stage. Just like chickens, female butterflies lay eggs that will one day transform into full grown butterflies. Now, when the eggs hatch they enter the second stage of the life cycle. The scientific name for the hatched eggs is larva, but we just call them caterpillars. However, unlike our other friends in the animal kingdom, after they hatch, butterfly eggs are not yet complete butterflies. They still have another stage to complete, called the pupa stage. In this stage, once the caterpillar has eaten lots of vegetation and nutritious leaves, it hangs upside down like a bat, and wraps itself up into a tiny cocoon, or chrysalis. It is in this chrysalis where the caterpillar undergoes a transformation, or metamorphosis, where it turns into a beautiful butterfly. So this cycle is happening all around us, all the time.

Student Two raises their hand.

Student Two

What happens after the butterfly dies?

Teacher appears frazzled and does not know how to phrase her response delicately.

Teacher

Well, umm, I suppose the cycle starts all over again. But nobody really knows.

(Pause)

Who would like to draw some pictures?

**5528 Fox Park Drive
1985**

Set dissolves, and we are now in the bedroom of Peyton, a seventeen year old girl who was in the Fox Park Elementary class. There is a bed center stage. She is sleeping next to a large textbook and a pile of notebook paper.

Dream Sequence

Little Peyton is back in her elementary school classroom. She is looking at a butterfly specimen in a jar, fascinated and excited. Fox enters and gestures for Peyton to sit down. She sits next to him, and he takes the butterfly out of the jar. He begins to dissect it, as a projection of the live dissection plays behind them. When Fox has removed all the wings, he pins one to her shirt, then exits. Peyton begins to panic. She unpins the butterfly wing and puts it back in the jar. When nothing happens, she becomes hysterical, trying to will the wing to move.

End Dream Sequence

We hear footsteps and door swings open to reveal Jessica, dressed in flashy 80s garb and bright eye makeup. She swings her backpack onto the ground and plops onto the bed next to Peyton. Peyton abruptly wakes up.

Jessica

Hey!

Peyton

Oh, hi.

Sorry, I kind of dozed off ...

Jessica

She gestures to the textbook
Have you started these notes yet?

Peyton

Yeah, I'm like halfway through. I had to stop because it's kind of depressing.

Jessica

God, I know. It makes me, like, *sad*.

Peyton

I've just never been able to wrap my mind around things like that. You know? Like, the big things, the things that are always there but easy to forget.

Jessica

Yeah. U.S. History is just grody in general. Good thing we aren't in 1945 anymore.

Peyton

The bomb they dropped on Hiroshima was nicknamed "little boy!" How screwed up is that?

Jessica

Yeah why didn't they call it little girl? Women haters.

Peyton

No not like that. I mean to put such a gentle name on such a destructive thing. They named murder after life, after innocence.

Jessica

I haven't started my notes because it turns out my missing textbook was in Brody's car. He just got it back from the auto repair place.

Peyton

He *just* got it back?

Jessica

I know. The front bumper was totally hosed from impact and the axle broke or something. He also had to file all these police reports because they treat auto-deer collisions like any other accident.

Peyton

Woah.

Jessica

He said he could have died, which is such a lie. He sprained his wrist. That's it. He's so melodramatic.

Peyton

Yeah, that still must have been terrifying for him though.

(Pause)

I mean, can you imagine doing the most ordinary thing and suddenly, in a split second, you just killed something? I keep seeing shit like that, just popping up where I least expect it.

Jessica

(clearly not listening) He didn't even *break* his wrist, it was like, a hairline fracture or something. I had one of those when I was six! From falling off a tricycle or some shit! *(sigh)* Anyway, are Haley and Anna are still cool to come over here before the party?

Peyton

Oh shit I totally forgot... I was going to try and finish this.

Suddenly lights change and Anna and Haley enter through the door very enthusiastically and high energy. Haley jumps on the bed and Anna runs in giggling behind her. Both girls have vibrant makeup, glitter and sparkles, big hair. Very 80s.

Haley

Hey airheads, are you ready to party tonight?!!

Anna

Always!

Haley

Not you Anna!

OMG Peyton we have gotta get you glammed up, you look like a total Joanie right now.

Jessica

Yeah, Pey, why don't you let me do your hair?

Peyton

Okay, sure.

There is a pause, each girl picks up a handheld mirror and regards their reflections, putting on lipstick, fixing hair. Peyton is holding her mirror but not looking into it, staring into space instead. Jessica back-combs Peyton's hair and puts it into a high pony with a scrunchie.

Jessica

How about some glitter?

Peyton

Jess, you know I'm not into that.

Haley

What's your problem? You've been lame all week.

Peyton

Nothing.

Haley

We have to go soon. Just put on some makeup and let's go.

Peyton

I just think Colton is such a prick, so I don't really want to go to his party. It's like I'm endorsing him by showing up.

Anna

Everyone is going. Don't have a cow about it.

Haley

No duh, it's just a chance to hang out and have a good time. We are going to a *party*, that's supposed to be what we do on a Friday night.

Anna

Exactly. We have our whole lives left to be practical or whatever. We're supposed to be stupid right now, remember?

Jessica

Also, what's so bad about Colton in the first place?

Haley

Yeah, he's never done anything to you. You guys barely even talk.

Peyton

Not even! He represents everything I despise about American culture. He just mooches off of Daddy's big corporate dollars, he hasn't worked for anything in his life, has no respect for any of the girls at school, yet he gets to be this idolized golden boy who gets an immediate pass for any wrongdoing.

Jessica

He's an airhead but he's probably gonna get into Harvard or some shit just because his Daddy will pull some strings.

Peyton

Exactly! It's just not fair is all. I hate watching terrible people who make terrible choices escape every consequence and somehow attain each goal that everyone else has worked so hard for.

Haley

Chill.

Peyton

You guys asked! And I'm just being honest.

Anna

Alright. Well, I'm for sure going to this party tonight.

Haley

Tough, me too. Sorry if that's against your intense moral convictions Pey.

Peyton

I'll still go, don't get all worked up. It's not like any of this matters anyways.

Haley

What's that supposed to mean?

Peyton

I just mean . . . it's just always the same stuff. That's just how these things go. We never stop and look at the big picture is what I mean.

Anna

The big picture is that it's a Friday night and I want to have fun.

Jessica

Just drop it Pey. Let's go.

Haley

Or stay home and hole up in your stupid pink room like a scared little girl.

Haley applies more lipstick, drops her mirror, and exits. Anna follows. Jessica gives an exasperated sigh, gives Peyton a look, then drops her mirror and exits. Peyton looks in her hand-held mirror for a moment, looks at her girlish room, and seems to register what Haley has said. She throws the mirror onto the ground and exits.

Fox Park Country Club

1985

The stage transitions. Actors move the kiddie pool center stage, and grab props, squirt guns, beers, etc.

Music blaring, obnoxious voices chatting, screaming, laughing. Should not be quiet during this transition. After a minute of the noise in darkness, the lights come up to reveal twenty or so teenagers onstage dressed in 80s pool garb. Very flashy, garish, and obnoxious. Actors ad-lib, smoke cigarettes, sip from red solo cups, hug and greet one another. Peyton lingers in back of crowd, noticeably timid.

After a minute of ad-libbing, Colton moves into the middle of the kiddie pool, standing in the ankle-deep-water.

Colton

(Shouting over the noise)

Everybody! YO! Thanks for rolling by to kick off our senior year.

(The crowd hollers and shouts.)

There's drinks in the cooler, don't smoke in the house, and other than those few disclaimers... LET'S
GET MENTAL!

Colton downs the drink in his hand, throwing the red solo cup carelessly across the stage. He then retrieves a squirt gun from the kiddie pool water, hoists it into the air, and begins to spray his guests. Others run and grab squirt guns from the pool and join in, laughing, screaming, crying with laughter, mania ensues. During the fight, the lights are crazy, colorful, and constantly changing. "Get Got" by the Death Grips is playing.

At some point, Sean enters and takes a photo of the action, then exits.

Suddenly, the sound is cut and everyone freezes. It is silent. Peyton takes a flashlight out and slowly inspects the splatter on each person. She is curious, but also appears disturbed and worried. She then turns the flashlight to herself, noticing a splatter on her clothing. She inspects it, then closes her eyes and holds the stain to her chest. Suddenly, the party resumes and Peyton is left standing still, eyes closed, clutching her heart. Eventually the actors all exit except for Peyton, staying rowdy and boisterous. The red and blue light come up on the subsequent parts of the stage and the audience follows their tracks, leaving Peyton alone.

HOLDEN
Fox Park
1996

Scene opens on Holden's younger sister blowing a dandelion. She should sport the same hunter cap as Holden, the one that is a Catcher in the Rye staple. After it is blown out she exits, and Holden enters with a cigarette. A voiceover of his voice plays, saying:

Holden

All my youth, metaphorically, wrapped up in this cigarette (*sparks cigarette*). All I can do is watch it diminish, inhaling the flavor... savoring it... only to let out the smoke which presents itself to me in a beautiful dance that is lost in its ephemeral-ness. Like my youth, I watch the smoke vanish.

CRYPTIC

Dream Sequence

Sugar is asleep, but awakes to a stage open in a black light. There are two actors, one laying face down and one laying face up on the floor. Their clothes are lying beside them, providing a neat template of what they look like on. The actors are in nude bandeaus and nude spanx/shorts. They do not move.

ENTER TWO ACTORS

(terminally lovesick by infinite bissous possibly playing)

The two actors walk center stage and pause, looking at each other. They kiss, then begin to mirror each others movements, putting their hands together at the same time as though they are the same person, separated only by a glass window pane or mirror. They grab hands and walk in tandem to one side of the stage and begin to take off their clothes. They lay out their articles neatly until they are left in the nude bandeaus and spanx. They then lay down next to their clothes, mimicking their shape. They do not touch, they do not speak.

4-5 more groups of 2 enter and do the same motions until we are left with motionless bodies lying on the floor next to their clothing. At the song's end, the first group of two stands and exits, leaving their clothes lying out on the floor as they were. The second group of two does the same, followed in order by all groups except for the last (Ace and Sugar), in which one Ace exits while Sugar walks to center stage, looking in confusion at the clothing that is on the floor in front of her. Sugar grabs at her skin, trying to feel for clothing but discovers only nakedness. She hunches into a ball on the floor.

End Dream Sequence

**5528 Fox Park Drive
1997**

Sugar awakes and arrives at Ace's house, where he is sitting. She knocks on the door, and he gets up to answer it. She is now very pregnant.

Ace

Wow um , I didn't expect to see you today. Ummm ... Sit down. *(tidying up frantically)*

Sugar

Ok.

Ace

I got you something.

Sugar

Ok.

*He hands her a poorly wrapped gift. She opens it. It is a loudly colored butterfly stuffed animal.
This is terrible.*

Ace

Oh -- ummm. It's for, you know ...

Sugar
Got that.

Ace
Ok. Sorry it's so muggy down here.

Sugar
I grew up by a river. I know.

Ace
How are you feeling?

Sugar
Fine.

Ace
Seriously?

Sugar
Seriously, why do you care how I'm feeling?

Ace
Wow ... alright.

Sugar
Grandma told me to check in on you. She hasn't heard from you lately and wanted me to make sure you're ok.

Ace
I'm great.

Sugar
Good, ok, so I think I should get going now.

Ace
Sugar?

Sugar
Yeah.

Ace
What else did Grandma want?

Sugar
Nothing.

Ace
Come on, you and I both know that Grandma never sends a messenger without a mission.

Sugar
Ok, Ummm ... she wanted me to give you this. *(She hands him a Bible with many bookmarks in it)*

Ace
I knew it.

Sugar
Read the verses, ok? She marked them just for you.

Ace
Yeah. There'll be a quiz, probably.

Sugar
Yeah, also, just read them. Please.

Ace
(He opens the book to a marked place and reads) "None of you shall approach any one of his close relatives to uncover nakedness." Leviticus 18:6 *(He turns to another marked place)* "It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans" Corinthians 5:1 Oh my God, she knows?

Sugar
Everybody knows, Ace.

Ace
Like ... everyone?

Sugar
Yeah, he's my brother Ace, so yeah. He knows.

Ace
Wow, I'm sorry.

Sugar
What?

Ace

I mean, like if the whole family knowing causes you any embarrassment or anything...

Sugar

(she begins laughing and can barely get her words out) You're -- ohhh my gosh.

Ace

I mean, isn't apologizing the right thing to do? Repent for my sins? I mean --

Sugar

Right. Ok.

Ace

You've got to tell me how you're feeling. We never talk.

Sugar

I'm not feeling a thing. Actually, no. I am feeling comfortable. Force and discomfort are things I've lived with my whole life.

Ace

What? But it didn't happen that long ago. You know, between you and me.

Sugar

(she sits on the couch)

Do you remember that old merry-go-round we used to ride on?

Ace

When the carnival came to Fox Park?

Sugar

Yeah, um ... We would spin and spin all day. Then when it got dark, we would lay on it and look at the sky. Do you remember that?

Ace

Wow, I do remember that.

Sugar

I don't know if you remember this, but ... well, once, we were riding on it together, and, um ... a similar situation, uhh, happened. You know, similar to what happened a few months ago.

Ace

Ok.

Sugar

And, I've thought so much about it, and, uhhh, I think I don't blame you.

Ace

Really?

Sugar

No. I'm not mad at you.

Ace

Why?

Sugar

Because it was someone else's fault. Someone else did that to you, so you did it to me.

Ace

You can't look at it that way, because something good came of it. The baby... it's, it's just blood and flesh. And like ... stardust.

Sugar

Ok.

Ace

Yeah ... it's like ... spiritual. And precious.

Sugar

Ok. I think ... I think I just need to leave here. There are too many memories in Fox Park. Not just mine ... everyone's. It's haunting here, it's ...

Ace

Do you want a cigarette.

Sugar

Yes.

He grabs a cigarette and hands it to her

I hate you.

Ace

I know.

Sugar

You've ruined my life.

Cigarette cheers.

Ace and Sugar recreate the movements in "Lovesick."

PRESTIGIOUS
Fox Park Boarding School
2006

We are in a very nice office at Fox Park Boarding School. Two principals, Ms. Bugg and Ms. Sadler, are sitting across a desk from Belle, who is in an ugly school uniform.

Ms. Bugg

So. Do you realize how lucky you are to be a student at Fox Park Boarding School?

Belle

Yes ma'am.

Ms. Bugg

Don't refer to me as ma'am. I'm from Maine. That's an insult to me.

Belle

So sorry ma'am. I mean I'm sorry. Sorry.

Ms. Sadler

This is the most prestigious boarding school in the country.

Belle

I know. I am very grateful to be here.

Ms. Bugg

Are you?

Belle

Yes.

Ms. Sadler

Then why would you behave the way you have?

Belle

Sorry?

Ms. Sadler

Do you know why you're here?

Belle

Honestly? No.

Ms. Bugg

So you haven't heard the rumors?

Belle

I mean, I have noticed that one of my roommates has left my room and is staying in the infirmary. Is that what this is about?

Ms. Sadler

Why do you think that one of your roommates has opted to leave the room?

Belle

I don't know.

Ms. Bugg

Did you lick Genevive's ear?

Belle's mouth drops open, just as Sean enters and takes a photo of her unflattering expression. He exits.

Belle

What? No. No, no.

Ms. Bugg

Okay. Because there are some pretty serious allegations against you here.

Belle

Apparently.

Ms. Sadler

Genevive is saying that you licked her ear and grabbed her breast.

Belle

No. I never did that.

Ms. Bugg

Are you sure? Really think.

Belle

I mean ... um ... once I, uh, adjusted her bra strap? Because she asked me, of course.

Ms. Bugg

Interesting ...

Belle

And I never licked anyone's ear. That's disgusting. I wouldn't do that.

Ms. Bugg

Did you give Mia a lap dance?

Belle

No!

Ms. Sadler

Really think.

Belle

No.

Ms. Bugg

But you did say that you wanted to get quote dicked down, didn't you?

Belle

What?

Ms. Bugg

Dicked down. You said you wanted ... that.

Belle

Uhhhh ... I believe you're referring to the song by Kevin Gates.

Ms. Bugg

I don't know, am I? Did you say that?

Belle

It's on Genevive's playlist, and we sometimes play it in the morning. I've probably sung along, yes.

Ms. Sadler

We don't tolerate that kind of language here at St. Bonaventure's School.

Belle

I realize that. I'm sorry.

Ms. Bugg

Why did you tell Genevive that she has quote gorgeous tits?

Belle

Ms. Sadler, you told us that if our roommates were feeling down about themselves or their bodies, we should lift them up and make them feel better. Clearly, that was what I was doing.

Ms. Sadler

Well, clearly, that's completely inappropriate and made her very uncomfortable.

Belle

What? She walks around without a bra on, singing crass songs all the damn time!

Ms. Bugg

Excuse me?

Belle

Sorry. All the time. She does this stuff ... all the time.

Ms. Bugg

One last question. Then you can go and the staff will talk.

Belle

Ok.

Ms. Bugg

Ms. Sadler, go ahead.

Ms. Sadler

Do you think that it's ever okay to make fun of people's sexual preferences?

Belle

No.

Ms. Sadler

Then why have you been making fun of George for being sexually attracted to toes?

Belle

I'm pretty sure that's a joke. George doesn't actually have a toe fetish, that was a joke he started.

Ms. Sadler

But you spread sexual content and made fun of him. That is a double offense.

Belle

Shouldn't he be getting in trouble for talking about his sexual preferences in the first place?
Doesn't that violate like every rule?

Ms. Bugg

No. He was just trying to express himself.

Belle

May I just say, and, I'm not trying to throw anyone under the bus here, but the boys talk all the time about vulgar, inappropriate, and quite frankly, illegal things. I know you hear some of that stuff. I mean, our phones are tapped and our walls are paper thin! So why aren't they getting in trouble? I really want to know.

Ms. Bugg

Don't bother going to class today. Please wait in the dayroom. Soon we will have a verdict on whether or not you may stay at this school.

Belle

Yes, ma'am.

HOLDEN
Fox Park
2007

Holden is asleep.

Dream Sequence

We are at a checkout counter. Holden is the clerk.

Fox

There is a great abyss that exists just behind my eyelids. I am alone. And it's cold. Do you feel it? You must. How do you keep warm?

Holden

Hell... I'm not sure I understand what you're looking for. How can I help you? You're cold? We have a large selection of winter apparel. Is that what you need?

Fox

What I need is to know how to keep warm. To cope. I've been thrust into a world that doesn't care for me or care to know me. How can I find consolation in such chaos and resentment?

Holden

Well . . . ummm . . . there's a 50% holiday discount on our winter mittens.

Fox

I beg your pardon?

Holden

The mittens. They're half price for the month of December.

Fox

I do not intend to distract you from your task, I just can't help but perceive the warmth you describe as artificial, man made, and unreal. What is one to do when they forget their distractions? Are you satisfied? *(Pause)* You're likely as cold as me. You've just managed to forget.

Holden

Ummm, are you sure you've come to the right place? I'm sorry, but this is just not in my job description, I just sell mittens. Now please either buy or ... bye.

Fox

OK. Can I have this? (*places jug of water onto the counter*)

Holden

Certainly! That'll be 1.99.

Fox

I... I don't have that.

Like Fox's bed, the counter is abruptly ripped offstage, transporting Fox. Does same "cold" dance.

End Dream Sequence

We are at the Cabaret on Fox Park, which has transformed from glamorous to a dive bar. Josephine memorabilia is hung up around the establishment. Sugar is bartending. Holden enters and sits down on a bar stool.

Holden

Sugar?

Sugar turns around, sees him, and quickly turns back, pretending like she did not see him.

Sugar.

Finally she works up the courage to turn around and smile.

Sugar

Hi, Holden.

They hug awkwardly over the bar.

Holden

How are you?

Sugar

I'm good. How are you?

Holden

Fine, fine.

Long pause.

Sugar

I don't normally come here.

Holden

Don't you ...? (*he points to her nametag*)

Sugar

Right. Right. I work here. Yes. I work here. Sorry.

Holden

Don't apologize.

Sugar

I guess I'm just a little nervous. It's been a while.

Holden

Like ... five years almost.

Sugar

Oh. Yeah. You're right.

Long pause

So why exactly are you here?

Holden

What do you mean?

Sugar

Well I'm sure you didn't just coincidentally "pop in" to this shithole for a beer. It's not really your scene.

Holden

It's been five years, Sugar.

Sugar

Right. Sorry.

Holden

Don't apologize.

Sugar

Okay. So ... what can I get you?

Holden

I don't want anything, Sugar.

Sugar

Okay. Well, either buy or ... bye! *(she laughs awkwardly)*

Holden

Okay, Sugar. You're right. I would never come to this shitty bar. I came to talk to you.

Sugar

To me?

Holden

Yes, Sugar, to you. I just, I dunno. It sounds crazy but I've been thinking about you a lot.

Sugar

Ummmm... okay ...

Holden

Not like, in a weird way. I've just been getting these signs, like little reminders of you from the universe or something.

Sugar

Are you serious?

Holden

I mean, yeah.

Sugar

Really? We haven't spoken in five years.

Holden

I know. I just, I heard that song like five times on the radio last week. Just randomly, after years of not hearing it.

Sugar

Holden.

Holden

And the hostess at this diner that opened up by my place, her name is Sugar. Her nametag says it big and bold. And how you told me about that merry go round, I saw one last week when I was walking to the library. It wasn't there before, it just popped up in the last couple of days.

Sugar

Holden, stop.

Holden

And that red dress you always wore that made you look so glamorous, I saw one just like it in the window of a shop the other day. And how you always talked about wanting to just fly out to space one day, just go up in the stars and never come back, and I've just been looking at the sky and thinking of you, and how we just stopped talking, how you just left me and -

Sugar

Interrupting

(Shouts) Holden! It was a job for Christ's sake! A job that got me through the first years with Addy after she was born.

Holden

Sure, maybe it started like that. But it became so real for me. It had to have become real for you too Sugar. Didn't it?

Sugar

That's why you came here? After five years? To ask me that?

Holden

You didn't answer the question.

Sugar

You were paying me to forget your loneliness! Quit deluding yourself! It was never romantic, or serious, or something more than what I always said it was, a business relationship.

Holden

You're just saying that. You stopped making me pay towards the end, we were just being people, just talking.

Sugar

I felt bad for you! Okay? I felt bad because you were so miserable and awkward and naive. That's why I stopped taking your money. That's why I quit the whole thing! I started hating it, the creeps, the pitiful old divorcees, the lonely young men with so much potential! It made me sick. You made me sick.

Holden

Is that why you never called?

Sugar

There were lots of reasons why I never called.

Holden

Well would you tell me? Sugar, I want to know what I did wrong, where I messed up.

She goes to the other side of the bar and sits next to him.

Sugar

See, *that!* *That* is exactly it, that is where you messed up. You thought it would go somewhere, you thought it was real. And it never was. I'm sorry Holden, but sometimes you just need to grow up a little.

Holden

Okay. I'm sorry.

Sugar

Stop apologizing! Jesus!

Holden

Okay.

(A drunken customer staggers into the bar)

Sugar

Holden, I have work to do, okay?

Holden

Yeah, of course. Because that's all it is and all it ever will be. Work. A job.

Sugar

Yeah. It is.

(The customer falls over and passes out on the floor)

Holden

I did grow up, by the way.

Sugar

(Sarcastically) Yeah, you're really proving that right now aren't you.

Holden

I'm not some scared kid anymore. I came here because I'm not scared.

Sugar

(Long pause. Deep breath.) Holden, I don't think you understand what things are like for me now. Addy is seven. I pack her a lunch, I make sure she has clothes with sequins and pictures of animals

on them. I make sure she can eat every night. I try and give her everything I never had so that history doesn't repeat itself. So don't tell me about growing up, okay?

Silence

Sugar

Would you please just leave?

Holden

Fine, sorry I ever came in. Sorry I ever fell for it in the first place.

Sugar

Goodbye Holden.

Holden

Goodbye.

Holden leaves. Sugar starts to cry, distraught. Blackout.

RUINS

Fox Park

2020

Two young women are standing next to each other, looking around at the park. The scene should be played very slowly, with the characters taking plenty of time to make realizations and deliberate what to say next.

Lamia

It's devastatingly beautiful.

Aurelia

You haven't seen it before?

Lamia

No. I haven't.

Aurelia

Funny. I come here every day. It's peaceful. And remeniscent.

Lamia

I'm not from here.

Aurelia

Oh.

Lamia

My grandmother was though. She used to talk about this place. I've been dreaming of it ever since I was a child. It's as eerie as she said.

Aurelia

Eerie. That's a good way to describe it. Because you know what used to be here --

Lamia

-- But it's gone now. Now it's just ... grass.

Aurelia

Yeah.

Pause

Do I know you?

Lamia

Sorry?

Aurelia

Have we met before?

Lamia

Ummm ... I don't think so.

Aurelia

No. We definitely have met.

Lamia

Really, I don't think we have.

Aurelia

Let me see your face.

Lamia hesitates, then turns towards Aurelia.

Oh my god. Yes, I remember you!

Lamia

Look, I really should get going. I'm meeting a friend for dinner, and I'm going to be late ...

She starts to leave.

Aurelia

No. You stay with me. Right here.

Don't you remember? You won the competition. Here. We used to meet right here. Yes. It's all coming back to me. Historians wrote about you. You were famous. And I helped you.

Lamia

Sorry. Nothing.

Aurelia

Most people block out their past, but you have the choice to embrace it! Why don't you embrace it, Lamia?

Lamia

Excuse me? How do you know my name?

Aurelia

Do you really need me to reintroduce you to yourself? Come on, you have always been Lamia. You were always so glamorous. Miraculous. You seem to be that way still.

Lamia

That's not who I am anymore.

Aurelia

What are you talking about? Of course it is. You're the same person.

Lamia

No. I'm not. I'm different. I'm quiet and I'm studious. I want to be a doctor, and I want to be responsible.

Aurelia

Do you remember when this place wasn't ruins? When it was thriving? This park has always been a place where people come to discover the world. To be lifted out of their innocent hypnosis. This park has been cursed and blessed since you put on your first leather bracelet. Repeat the cycle, Lamia. Please! Let yourself go again. Discover something new.

Lamia

I don't win competitions like that now. You know, I'm not that kind of person.

Aurelia

But historians said you took the most lovers. They did! Women came from all over to worship you.

Lamia

Please stop. I have to go.

Aurelia

I worshipped you.

Lamia

I know you did. But that was ages ago.

Aurelia

Please. Let's just stay right here. I wait for you every day.

Lamia

She timidly walks back to Aurelia.

Only for a moment.

Aurelia

I don't remember much, but I remember you.

Lamia

I remember you too.

They grasp hands and walk deeper into the park. When they are almost offstage, Sean takes a photo of them.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Fox Park

2035

There is a park bench upstage center. Black fabric is cut into a winding circle that branches off into different routes, mimicking a park pathway. There is a projection of trees on the screen. Seated on the park bench is Sean, a rugged looking hipster in his early 40s. He has a large leather satchel slung over his shoulder and a camera around his neck. He seems tranquil and relaxed. Enter Peter, a boy in his 20s. He has headphones in and wears a t-shirt and slacks. He walks on the path by the park bench.

Sean looks up.

Sean

Excuse me?

Peter does not hear Sean with his headphones in. Sean waves his hands and speaks louder,

Sean

Young man, excuse me!

Peter looks around and sees Sean, and takes out his headphones.

Peter

Oh, sorry. Can I help you with something?

Sean

Would you mind if I took your picture?

Peter

(A bit taken aback) Oh. Um, I suppose not. May I ask what for?

Sean

(Fiddling with his camera and positioning it towards Peter)

Documenting this place is a habit of mine, if you want the short answer.

Peter

Huh. Okay. . . it's not going to go anywhere, the photo?

Sean

Just in the bag, then on a wall or in a pile. I don't publish my work.

Peter

Cooooo . . .

Beat

Would you like me to just stand here or...

Sean

As you are is ideal. The composition is best when you don't tamper with the natural moment.

Peter

Oh, so you take candid photographs? A "real people doing real things" sort of deal?

Sean

To an extent. I really just enjoy watching who comes and goes, who returns. Who thinks they are the same when really they are so changed.

(Sean snaps a photograph of Peter, then puts the lens-cap back on the camera.)

Peter

Did you get it?

Sean

Walking back to the bench and sitting down

Dunno. It's film. Always a surprise.

Peter

Only guy I've ever known to have a film camera was my grandpa. My dad was always trying to convince him to get a DSLR but he refused, said film was like vinyl records in that way. *(He pauses and approaches the bench)* Do you mind if I sit?

Sean

Certainly not.

Peter sits down on the bench. There is a contemplative pause as Sean watches Peter intently, who is checking phone.

Sean

Would you like to see some photos? I carry my favorites with me as reminders, tokens. I think it is wise to revisit the past every now and then.

Peter

Sure. *(Sean starts to dig through his satchell, pulling stacks of film photographs from its inside)* God, how many have you got in there?

Sean

Loads. But I always know which are the best to reminisce upon when, and what pictures to show to whom.

Sean stacks five photographs into the palm of his hand and thumbs through them, showing the first to Peter.

It's like palm reading, tarot cards, but with images. I always find pieces of myself and of others within them. I think you'll enjoy these.

Peter

(Admiring the first photograph) Wow. Great picture. Too small to look so lonely. *(Photo of the young Mrs. Waren on the carousel is projected. Sean passes him a second)* Wow, look at that. That must've been during Christmas time. *(Photo of fox in the cold snow is projected)*

Sean

Yes, December of '98 I believe. This one was taken in summer.

Sean hands Peter the next photograph from the pile.

Peter

(Looking confused, slightly alarmed at the picture)

Wait a minute. That... that's me, and my sister, Belle! Oh my god, and that old tricycle. It really is us!
We would come feed the ducks at the pond on Sundays. I must've been ten or so.

Sean

I thought I recognized your face.

Peter

(Flustered) How did you know? How could you possibly have known that? Who are you?

Sean

A mere hunch, I suppose. I see lots of people, some faces you don't forget.

Peter

Why did you stop me? Did you know I was the little boy in the picture?

Sean

Not with certainty, no. Subconsciously, perhaps. After close observation of one place, you begin to see patterns. Especially here, where everything is constantly changing, but always in patterns, loops.

Peter

(Mutters under his breath) What is going on right now?

Sean

During the rest of the scene, Sean leads Peter, along with the audience, into the Black Box, where the Finale will take place.

You spend your life pretending that these patterns don't exist. That these people don't exist, that this park doesn't exist, that everything contained in a life is merely memory. But I have realized that it all exists, always, coming and going. Like water, evaporating like it never existed, appearing again in a different way. I am constantly meeting these people again, and consequently re-encountering myself. That's why I take the photographs.

Peter

What the hell...

Sean

Do we ever truly know anybody? Do we ever truly know ourselves?

They arrive in the Black Box and sit with the rest of the cast in front of a screen. Everyone is whispering, sharing popcorn, etc. They are waiting for the film to start. When it begins, it looks like an old film, and goes through all the photos taken throughout the show. They begin slowly, in order, then descend into flickers of photographs in no particular order. The images begin to blend together. It begins to snow. Fox enters and sits in the center of the semi-circle, drawing the attention of the cast. He

looks up at the snow and shivers, but then sticks out a tongue and allows a flake to fall on it. Sean takes a photo of them observing. Blackout.