INVINCIBLE ONES

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in the Theatre Arts Program of the School of the Arts

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
May 2, 2016
INVINCIBLE ONES

by Samantha Cooper
Characters (4 f, 1 m, 1 f voiceover)
ZOE (f) – late 20s
NATASHA (f) – mid 20s
WHIT (f) – mid 20s
PRESTON (m) – 21
PAIGE (f) – late 20s
MADISON’S MOM/NEWSCASTER (f) – voiceover

Setting
Friday to Tuesday, Now
One bedroom apartment on the Lower East Side, New York City

ZOE, NATASHA and WHIT all share the apartment. NATASHA and WHIT share the bedroom. ZOE sleeps in the closet. The apartment suffers from little natural light and low ceilings. The apartment has the bare minimum of furniture but feels, nevertheless, claustrophobic.

A portion of the apartment above, particularly the bathroom, can be seen. The bottom of a claw-foot tub should be visible. At the top, the water in the tub is running slowly, maybe barely a drip, but it continues to run throughout the play. The water should be always audible. Eventually the water overflows, flows onto the floor, and starts dripping into the apartment below. It isn’t immediately apparent but the bathtub water is not strictly water.

Playwright’s Notes
ZOE is often on her skates. PAIGE is occasionally on her skates. And please, please, please, actual roller-skating if at all possible.

Narration is done by all the women cast members at some point. THE GIRLS refers to ZOE, PAIGE, WHIT, and NATASHA and can be broken up however you see fit. Narration designated to ZOE should only be done by ZOE with the exception of quotes, if desired.

Casting Note
Families can be multi-racial, members of friend groups do not look like copies of each other, and the default appearance of characters should not be able-bodied, slim, Caucasians. In short, this should not be a homogenous looking cast, and certainly not all white.
I don’t want to be doing this
but
there were a lot of voicemails and
a big mess in my living room and
well,
I guess
after everything that has happened
standing up here isn’t the fucking
…
*God Zoe, don’t say ‘fucking’. Jesus.*
…
Uh.
I mean…
Anyway.
We’re here today to remember the best person in the world.
I don’t want to be remembering her.
I want to see her
alive
standing right in front of me.
I want to hear her
…
swearing at me
or elbowing me in the nose so I’d make room for her on the track.
I want her to be so drunk she’s puking in a trash can
because
sometimes
karma bitchez.

We have so many memories of her.
So many memories of her doing something…
really stupid.
I know I’m supposed to keep saying nice things or whatever
but
really.
She was usually doing something fucking stupid and…
No.
You know what?
I can’t believe I’m doing this.
This is…
This
is stupid
and
FUCK IT.
It’s about two girls, okay?
Two girls whose lives cross
and end
on adjacent corners.

THE GIRLS

One –
She was the last
chubby
ugly
too old
virgin
bitch.
Or so she thought.
She was called a “fat ass” in the East Village Thursday morning.
She’s strong so she did not flinch.
She just went home
ate a bag of Cheetos
and
killed herself in a way too morbid to mention.

She got called a “fat ass” on the regular
but this was maybe the most malicious it had ever been
accompanied by a little laugh
a little sneer
and a whole lotta disdain.
She swam in the disdain
she reveled in it
she snorted at it
but in the end
she also drowned in it.

And she really thought she’d make it through this year.

The other girl,
Madison…
Madison was the last
decent
intelligent
remarkable
friend
best friend.
She was run down by a taxi in the East Village Thursday morning.
She was too busy standing up for
everyone
to notice the blind right
and the blind man
driving like a maniac.

This isn’t the first time we’ve lost someone
but it is the loudest.
When we got the news
we all went home
gave up eating
gave up hygiene
gave up feeling
and got into bed for days.
But
then our lives called
and all at once
we had to wake up.

None of us had ever felt that before
felt that stop
felt that skipped heartbeat
felt that sort of reality
that
now
doesn’t seem to go away.
We’re swimming in that reality
we’re reveling in it
we’re snorting at it
we’re hiding from it
but
in the end
one of us is also nearly drowning in it.

ZOE
And we really thought we’d make it through this year.
interlude.

(Noise. With the noise we hear garbled portions of the voicemail below. It comes in and out and is, often, unintelligible.)

ZOE skates around as if she were on a track.

THE GIRLS go about their daily business as if it were any other day. But there is a certain level of chaos to it. They never fully settle into the calm and malaise that generally occupies their minds.

The chaos increases. Maybe we hear THE GIRLS join in the noise cacophony. Maybe it’s only outside noise.

By the end, PAIGE and ZOE have disappeared. NATASHA and WHIT are in the apartment.)

MADISON’S MOM

Zoe.
I’m at the flower shop.
I know. I know.
But I’m at the flower shop and for the life of me I can’t remember what her favorite flower is.
It was in my head and it went right out again.
Ha ha ha ha ha.
(awkward silence)
…did she have a favorite flower?
That seems so not like her.
But something morbid probably.
LILLIES.
It was lilies.
Thank you.
Talking it out seems to help these days.

So.
And well maybe there is no good way to ask you this
but
you were Madison’s best friend
and
you probably already know what I’m going to say
but
...
WILL YOU GIVE THE EULOGY?
Will you give the eulogy.

I think you are the perfect person for it.
Yes, it’ll be hard.
But you can do it Zoe.

Call me when you get a chance.
Call me sooner than that!
I need to know soon.

Okay.
Bye.
i. (WHIT and NATASHA sit on the couch watching television. NATASHA is in her waitress outfit. She has a stain on her shirt. A commercial comes on and NATASHA gets inordinately excited.)

NATASHA
Commercials are totally underrated you know?

WHIT
…what?

NATASHA
No no no. Hear me out. Like, these days, everything is streaming and shit. And like sure that’s cool most days. But…cereal, you know? Like, I don’t know what is happening in cereal these days. I always used to know what was happening in cereal, you know? Like shit whatever happened to Count Chocula?

WHIT
I don’t know.

NATASHA
Does he even exist anymore?

WHIT
That’s a really important question, Natasha.

NATASHA
Okay. I mean
NATASHA (cont.)
I know that’s a dumb…
I mean
Like does the cereal even exist anymore?

(ZOE bursts through the door, skating around the room as she talks.)

ZOE
All right bitchez!
It’s FUCK ME Friday
and y’all know what that means!
Get your fucking asses out of the fucking apartment
so I can get fucked!

(They stare at her. They don’t move.)

ZOE (cont.)
C’mon guys.
This is why we implemented FUCK ME Friday.
Third Friday of the month is my Friday.
So GET OUT.

WHIT (simultaneously) NATASHA
Yeah Yeah. We’ll leave soon.
I gotta sit a minute.

NATASHA
I had the most ridiculous afternoon at the restaurant.

WHIT
How was the wake?

ZOE
I almost bit it on my way home.
My toe stop got caught in this old lady’s cane and oof
I almost went down.
But I didn’t. Hey-o!
Zoe?
Will you / fill us in please?

(interrupting at ‘/’)
This guy touched my ass.
At the restaurant.
He touched my ass and then he just kept touching / my ass.

(interrupting at ‘/’)
Jesus.
How long you guys been watching tv?
I feel like it’s been for-fucking-ever. /
Turn that shit off.

(interrupting at ‘/’)
Girl. You’re making me dizzy.
Slow down.
Sit.

(The tv gets louder for a moment. We hear a newscaster under the next exchange. WHIT ad libs about the news report being about MADISON.)

New developments in the death of local roller derby star “Young and Ruthless”: the cab driver turned himself in today. Charges are expected to be filed…

(over the newscaster)
C’mon you guys.
I hate it.
You know that.
Turn that SHIT OFF.

(CRASH.)
ZOE has skated into the tv. NATASHA and WHIT stare at her.)

ZOE

Whatver.
It was an old tv anyway.

WHIT

Zoe. Sit.

ZOE

Fiiiinnneeee.

(ZOE sits and takes her skates off.)

NATASHA

This douchebag was like so coy, you know? One time he knocked his wine glass over which spilled on me and when I bent over to pick it up his hand went right to my ass. That sort of thing happened like five times. And like, every time he would like shrug and smile and gesture like “What are you gonna do about it?”

WHIT

Another day on the job, right Natasha?

NATASHA

Fuck you. This is / important.

WHIT

(interrupting at ‘/’)
You gonna tell us about the wake?
So, this douchebag.

So the douchebag with his wife by the way is like “What are you gonna do about it?” and I’m like what am I gonna do about? Like… nothing. I did nothing. I’m not gonna lose my job or whatever.

It’s not like you to keep your mouth shut.

About almost anything.

Whatever bitchez.

… It sucks because like I mean this terrible man just gets to go on thinking that it is fucking okay that it’s fucking acceptable to just touch your waitress’ ass. That it is fucking acceptable to just touch whatever you want.

You should have said something.

He tipped me a hundred bucks. A one hundred dollar bill. And left his digits at the top of the receipt.
Gross.

How was the wake?

Don’t call it that.

The “thing” then?

The “League celebration”.

That’s what I said.

It had an open bar bitchez!
Which I partook of heavily.
Oh but like don’t worry or whatever.
I sobered up before I skated home.
See?
Totally. Sober.

(She touches her nose or some shit.)

An old lady with a cane might disagree with you on that.

Fucking…whatever.

It’s good to talk about it, you know.
NATASHA
You didn’t want to hear me / “talk about it.”

WHIT
(interrupting at ‘/’)
You can’t hold all of it / inside of you.

ZOE
(interrupting at ‘/’)
Uggggghhhhh, Whitney!
It was drunk, okay?
It was like
...
It was nice. I guess.
It was funny.
Like really fucking funny actually.
Most everyone got up to say something
but most everyone only made whiskey sense.
Ash rambled on about
falling rose petals or dying bushes or
she didn’t know what the fuck.
And Tori decided she wanted to have a sing-along.
So she tried to sing fucking “Amazing Grace”
but forgot every word past
“How sweet the sound”
so she just like
sang a play-by-play in the tune and then
fucking
fell off the stage.

WHIT
It sounds like a mess.

NATASHA
I bet she would have loved it.

WHIT
You say anything?
ZOE

No.

WHIT

You gonna on Tuesday?

ZOE

I don’t even know if I’m gonna go.

WHIT

Madison’s mom called me.
She said you haven’t / picked up once.

ZOE

(interrupting at ‘/’)
Hey, here’s an idea.
Get out.

NATASHA

Relax Zoe.

ZOE

I can’t.
That’s why I need FUCK ME Friday.
I’m stressed
the fuck
out.
I need a little release.

NATASHA

Yeah yeah yeah. We’re going.
Whit’s gotta be in the studio and
I picked up / another shift.

WHIT

(interrupting at ‘/’)
We’re the least of your problems anyway.
What?

You have a visitor.

(There is a cough from behind the closed closet door. ZOE opens it. A wall of smoke wafts out. When the smoke clears slightly, PRESTON is visible, standing in his underwear and holding a glass pipe.)

Oh.
Hey sis.

(ZOE stares at him. WHIT and NATASHA stare back and forth between the two.)

Well, that’s our cue.

Yeah, if I don’t get moving I’ll probably be late.

When are you not late?

Shut up.

(They stare a bit more. Then they mumble some indications that they are moving and finally leave.)

What the hell are you doing here?

Mom and Dad thought I could use a little vacay.
Failed another drug test.

Really?
Again?

Something like that.

Jesus christ.

Look, I was so close to having a job
Like
don’t they know
pot is like legal now
in some places.

Do not smoke in my bedroom.

It’s a closet.

It’s my bedroom.

No way.

(PRESTON stares at her for a bit and then
laughs. For a long time. Too long. It just
keeps going.)
Whatever dude. You want some?

Preston, look you got somewhere to be tonight?

Here! With you! The big sister I look up to so much.

You have to find somewhere else to be.

I’ve got nowhere else to be. You’re the only one I know here. C’mon sis!

(PRESTON goes in for a hug. ZOE stops him.)

You have to leave.

Whyyyy?

Because well because

(calling) Because it’s FUCK ME Friday.
Ew. What’s that?  

It means I got someone coming over  

Paige?  
You mean Paige / right?  

(ZOE interrupting at ‘/’)
so  
I get the apartment to myself  

Or  
you got a new / boo?  

(ZOE interrupting at ‘/’)
SO  
you have to leave.  
Everyone does.  
Thems the rules.  
GET OUT.  

PRESTON  
DUDE.  
I want a FUCK ME Friday.  
Sounds neat.  

ZOE  
Ew. It sounds so gross coming out of your mouth.
PRESTON

FUCK ME Friday.

ZOE

Stop.

PRESTON

Fuck. Me.

ZOE

Stop it.

PRESTON

Fucccccckkkkkkk me.
Oh man, I could say that forever.
Fuuuuuuuuuuccccccccccccckkkkkkkkkkkkkk meeeeeeerreeeee.
It just feels right.

(ZOE is about to pummel him when WHIT comes back through with enough gear to get her through a long night.)

WHIT

C’mon Preston.
You’re coming with me.
I’m overnight in the studio.

PRESTON

Studio?

ZOE

Whit’s a back-up singer.

PRESTON

Holy shit son!
Are you like famous?
God, no.

PRESTON

You singin’ for someone famous?

WHIT

Tonight, it’s some tracks for a children’s show I think.

PRESTON

That…
sounds fucking boring.

ZOE

Be nice, asshole.

(NATASHA enters buttoning up a new pristine white shirt. PRESTON stares clumsily at her.)

PRESTON

I wanna go with this one.

WHIT

“This one” has a name.

NATASHA

Natasha.

ZOE

You know that.

PRESTON

Yo girl, can I go with you?

(NATASHA smiles and gestures him over. When he gets really close, she slaps him upside the head.)
NATASHA
No way little boy.
Can’t have anything getting in the way of Friday night tippage.

PRESTON
I’ll be good.
I swear.

NATASHA
Oh! Okay.
Well that changes
nothing.

WHIT
You’re really making me feel the love / here Preston.

ZOE
(interrupting at ‘/’)
What if I give you twenty bucks?

PRESTON
Sold!

ZOE
Great.
And we’ll deal with you
this
this whatever this is tomorrow.
…
Now go put some goddamn clothes on.

PRESTON
Pants
OR
shirt.
You have to choose.
Gross.

Twenty dollars
OR
ZERO dollars.

(PRESTON thinks then stomps over to the closet and slams the door. PAIGE opens the front door, comes in on her skates and with a pizza.)

Delivery!

What did we talk about?

Oh! Right.

(PAIGE exits, closing the door behind her.)

Do we have to do this now?

Courtesy doesn’t wait.

(PAIGE knocks. WHIT goes to the door and opens it.)

Paige!
How nice to see / you!

(interrupting at ‘/’)

Aaaannnnnnnddddd late.
Bye ladies.
Hope no one grabs your ass tonight!

NATASHA

Unlikely.

(NATASHA is gone.)

ZOE

Hey baby.

PAIGE

Hey girl.

(ZOE goes to kiss PAIGE. WHIT makes some sort of noise.)

ZOE

Right!
Whit, thank you.
I owe you.

(We hear PRESTON light up.)

WHIT

How ‘bout you just do your dishes.
For / once?

ZOE

(interrupting at ‘/’)
Shhhhh. Do you hear that?

…

Preston!
Do not smoke in my bedroom anymore!

PRESTON

But I already have my pants on!
Come on Preston.
Let’s go.

(PRESTON comes out of the closet while he puts his shirt on. He sees PAIGE.)

Hey!
This is your same old boo.

What’s that now?

Ignore him.

Hey Paige.
Oh! Pizza!
Is that for me?

Preston.
Glad to see you are behaving yourself.

Come onnnnn, Preston!

(WHIT pushes PRESTON out the door. As he goes:)

But I gotta catch up with my girl!

Later Preston.
(ZOE follows them to the door, closes it, and takes a moment to collect herself. ZOE turns hungrily to PAIGE.)

ZOE

Thank fucking god.

(ZOE rushes to PAIGE and kisses her with the ferocity of a desert soaking up the first rain after a drought. ZOE starts to grab at her clothes. PAIGE pushes her off.)

PAIGE

Can’t we eat first?
I’m starving.

Me too.

PAIGE

Baby.
I mean literally hungry.
It took all I had not to devour the pizza on the way here.
A ravenous homeless guy followed me and this box for three blocks.
This is pure delicious cheesiness.

ZOE

I don’t wanna wait.

You have to.
Do you have any clean plates?

ZOE

What do you think?

PAIGE

Napkins?
Paper towels?
Anything?
ZOE
Why didn’t you get napkins when you stopped?

PAIGE
I had a singular focus.
C’mon. Eat.

ZOE
Not hungry.

PAIGE
When was the last time you ate?

ZOE
I don’t know.

PAIGE
Zoe.

ZOE
I don’t remember.
It’s probably been like
…
since that day, maybe?
I think I’m hungry and then I close my eyes and see it in my head
and my stomach drops.
…
But hey!
I washed my clothes.
No more blood stains or whatever.
Squeaky clean.
It’s like it never happened.

PAIGE
Except you won’t eat.
Eat.
I’m really
I’m not hungry.

Fine. More for me.

(PAIGE eats a slice of pizza looking directly at ZOE.)

God. I am so mad at you right now.
And so fucking turned on.

How was the celebration?

Want a beer?

(ZOE goes to the kitchen. PAIGE eats more.
ZOE returns with three beers.)

One for you.
Annnnndddd two for me.

(ZOE drinks one full beer and opens the other.)

C’mon. How was it?

Preston was a nice little surprise for me today.
I get home
opened my bedroom door
and
there he is.
Smoking pot in his underwear.
PAIGE

(laughs)
Yeah. I know.

(Nothing.)

PAIGE (cont.)

Your parents couldn’t get a hold of you.

ZOE

I haven’t been picking up the phone.

PAIGE

I know.
Your parents called me.
I knew he was coming.

ZOE

What a fucking stupid thing to keep to yourself.

PAIGE

You haven’t been picking up your phone.

ZOE

Fuck you.

PAIGE

Not tonight.
You’re avoiding my question.
Just the highlights, if you want.

ZOE

I think I tripped an old lady when I was skating home.
I hit a cane
heard a thud
and just kept on skating.
I’m getting pretty fast you know.
I’m probably up to almost fifteen laps in two minutes.
Fifteen?!
That’s insane and I think impossible.

ZOE
Girrrrrlllllll. I’m that good.

(ZOE goes in to kiss PAIGE; PAIGE stops her.)

PAIGE
Tell me about Madison’s life celebration.

ZOE
What a fucking stupid name for it.

PAIGE
How was it?

ZOE
Fine.
Everyone was there.
Nearly the whole league.
Except.

PAIGE
Me.

ZOE
Bingo.

PAIGE
I had to work. I told you.
Who has something like that during the day on a Friday anyway?
People with real jobs won’t be able to make it.
“Real” jobs? 

You mad? 

No.
It’s just

I’ll be there on Tuesday.
I took the day off.

Greattttttttttt.

Do you think / you’ll

(interrupting at ‘/’)
Paige.
It’s FUCK ME Friday
and you’re fucking putting it off.
C’moooooooooonnnnnnn.

Yeahhh, you aren’t gonna like this next thing.

What?

I’m in mourning.
ZOE
Yeah, so?
That’s pretty standard around here.
I’m pretty fucking sure every single person you walk past in New York City is in fucking mourning for something.

PAIGE
I have a strict “no fuck” policy when I’m in mourning.

ZOE
Since when?

PAIGE
Since now.
FUCK ME Friday has to wait.

ZOE
Noooooooooo.

PAIGE
Look, it’s a rough time now.
Madison was…important.
And her not being here anymore is fucking important.
I want to take the time to acknowledge this hole
this emptiness
before trying to fill it up with like fucking
fucking.

ZOE
That’s bullshit.

PAIGE
Death, sex, sadness, anger…are complicated things.
And put them all together and that’s like a recipe for disaster.
I wanna be there for you but trust me on this.
You're ruining my life.

Sorry darling. Starting now it's policy.

Well my policy is to fill up holes and emptiness with awesome things like liquor and fucking.

I'll drink the liquor. And there's pizza. That's something.

Not the right thing. This is the worst time to implement this.

For you, maybe.

... Well, I guess I can tell Preston he can come back for the night.

Ew. No. Tonight without your brother sounds even better than FUCK ME Friday.

(ZOE shoots her an “Are you fucking kidding me?” look.)
Comparable.
It sounds comparable.

(PAIGE (cont.))

(Long silence. ZOE lays her head on PAIGE’s lap.)

PAIGE

You sleeping?

ZOE

I’m resting my eyes.

PAIGE

Okay grandma.

(PAIGE and ZOE are comfortable. Some time passes. ZOE is mostly asleep.)

ZOE

I think I slipped in her brains.

PAIGE

…
what?
…
Zoe, what?

ZOE

I think…

(All of a sudden there is a leak in the ceiling. It’s slow at first but quickly becomes a constant drip. It drips on PAIGE and ZOE, snapping ZOE awake.)

ZOE

Fuck.
Great
 Fucking great.
Just what we need. A fucking leak.
I’ll go get a bucket.

A bucket? Ha.
Who do you think we are?
There are big bowls under the sink.
Grab one of those.

(PAIGE goes to the kitchen. A moment later she returns with a bowl and places it under the leak. They watch the leak for a bit.)
That girl upstairs,
we never learned her name.
We didn’t even try.
Isn’t that terrible and sooooo just like us.

No one ever learned her name.
When the whole world passed her on the street
the whole world
looked right through her.
Most days
she didn’t mind.
There were days when she wondered what it would be like
to be noticed
but it caused her to panic
and settle back into being translucent.

She existed in our lives if only by happenstance
just out of reach.
When she needed us to see her
to hold on to her
for her dear life
it was already too late.
She lived in the world as some sort of ghost
an apparition
a being we only ever knew as dead.
Now she’s gone
and
no space is wasted.

Everyone knew Madison’s name.
You couldn’t walk three feet without someone mentioning her
or loving her
or
more likely
cursing her.
She arrived in the world like a bat out of hell.
Her parents’ told me that they named her Madison
because it’s their favorite town.
She was their favorite everything.
She was our favorite everything.

She could not fathom what it was like to be unseen.
That’s why she picked her name
her derby name
she wanted everyone to know it
and everyone to say it back to her.
“Young and Ruthless”

ZOE

I never found the right name.

THE GIRLS

I mean, her name put all other names to shame.
Some names are announced and just hang in the air
like they’re waiting to be told what to do.
Not hers.
It’s an elbow to your fucking nose.

She existed in the world like she owned all the heavens and the earth.

Her name is out of commission now.
They’re going to retire it.
Normally, the names just go back into rotation
to be claimed again
by someone who can’t feel the history.

Now that she’s gone, that history
is a big
fat
fucking empty space.
(WHIT and NATASHA stand staring at the bowl catching the leak in the living room.)

WHIT

I can’t live like this.

NATASHA

I probably would have just put towels on the floor. She’s smart.

WHIT

What are we supposed to eat out of?

NATASHA

What would you have used?

WHIT

Buckets.

NATASHA

What buckets?

WHIT

We have buckets.

NATASHA

We have bowls. One of which is expertly being used to catch this leak.

WHIT

Goddammit Natasha! This place is disgusting. I’m so tired of living in this hole.
NATASHA

PMS?

WHIT

You’re the fucking worst.

NATASHA

You seem grumpy.

WHIT

I’m fucking fed up.
The only thing I ask of everyone is that we have some semblance of clean.

NATASHA

We do.

WHIT

When I take care of it!

NATASHA

Huh. Is that how it gets clean?

WHIT

I wait and hope and fucking dream of a fucking clean place to live and no one ever helps me out.

NATASHA

It’s not dirty.

WHIT

Your piles of shit are everywhere.

NATASHA

That’s messy. Not dirty.
I swear to god…

What?

I’m gonna move!

You won’t move.

I feel like your mother.
I’m the mother of fucking adult babies.
I don’t even want kids!

You won’t move.

I just wanna live in my own fucking space.

This place is too fucking cheap to move.

I make a good living.

And you’re fucking stingy.
You won’t spend an extra dime if you don’t have to.

Don’t push me Natasha.
Stop being a cunt, Whit.

(Stand-off.)

I miss her.

She didn’t live here.

Whit...

I know.
I know you do.

You wouldn’t move?

... I don’t like being here since...
It feels so empty somehow.
I keep waiting for her to just show up like she used to.

With a six pack.
... I hate talking about her like she’s gone.

Well, she is / gone.
NATASHA

(interrupting at ‘/’)
Stop it.

WHIT

Sorry.
I forgot the rules.

NATASHA

We’re all trying to…

WHIT

What?
Y’all aren’t trying to deal with a single damn thing.
Instead, we’re fighting about bullshit.
...
I mean, Zoe is a mess.

NATASHA

Ha. That’s for fucking sure.
...
She’s better at hiding the mess than I am.

WHIT

No.
...
Madison’s mom calls me twice a day.
She doesn’t think anyone else can do the eulogy.
Zoe won’t even / acknowledge her.

NATASHA

(interrupting at ‘/’)
She hates to be prodded.

WHIT

Well, if we do nothing
she won’t do anything either.
NATASHA
You’re so put together.

WHIT
The practical shit has devoured my grief.

NATASHA
Whit?

WHIT
Yeah darling.

NATASHA
Do you think we’ll ever all be put back together?

(The door flies open. ZOE enters dragging PRESTON by the ear.)

PRESTON
Oh.
Hey dudes.

WHIT
What happened?

PRESTON
Some lady slapped me in the fucking face!

ZOE
Tell them why, Preston.
Natasha, you’ll just get the biggest kick out of this.

(PRESTON doesn’t say anything.)

ZOE
Use your words kiddo.
(quietly)
I touched some lady’s ass.

What was that?

(louder)
I touched some lady’s ass.

That’s not what the security guard said, asshole.

I grabbed some lady’s ass.

You did what?
Christ Preston
you don’t touch anyone / without their permission.

That’s exactly what I said.

I get it.
I GET IT.

Really?

Like hell you do.

Would y’all stop bitching at me already?
Fuck no.

Alright alright. That’s enough ladies.

Seriously?

(zSimultaneously) Seriously?

What??

(NATASHA walks over to PRESTON. ZOE and WHIT stand confused.)

Oh. Hey baby.

Hey Preston.

(NATASHA leans in like she might kiss him. Then she wacks him upside the head.)

Do you know how many fucking times a day I have to deal with this kind of fucking bullshit?!

I mean you’re hot.

Oh my god. Biiiiiigggg mistake.

(WHIT’s phone rings. She sneaks away and talks quietly.)

Should I get some popcorn for the show?
(NATASHA shoots ZOE a laser beam look that is more serious than she expected.)

ZOE

Good luck kiddo.

PRESTON

(quiet desperation)

Help?

(As ZOE wanders over to WHIT, we hear NATASHA start laying into PRESTON. Maybe not everything she says is about him but...most of it is. We hear her continue throughout the next.)

When ZOE reaches WHIT she is finishing up her phone call. WHIT does not see ZOE approach.)

WHIT

Text me the address and I’ll be there in an hour. Less than an hour.

ZOE

Where ya goin’?

(WHIT is so startled she hangs up the phone.)

WHIT

Jesus!
Hey Zo.

ZOE

Hot date?

WHIT

Ha. No.
I have a meeting…with a client.
ZOE
I didn’t know you took meetings outside of the studio.

WHIT
Trying something new.
Taking my career into my own hands.

ZOE
Bullshit.
You don’t care about your career.
Never once have I heard you use the word “career.”

WHIT
Then what do you call my job?

ZOE
A job.

WHIT
I have to go.

ZOE
Where’s the fire?
Why don’t you sit?
For like a fucking minute?

WHIT
I can’t.

ZOE
You’re being fucking weird.

WHIT
I’m seeing an apartment.
ZOE
WHAT??

WHIT
Shhhhhhhh!
I don’t want Natasha to know I’m seriously looking yet.
I don’t think she’ll take it well.

ZOE
SHE won’t take it well?

WHIT
DUDDE. Keep it down.

ZOE
What the fuck do you mean
you’re looking for an apartment?

WHIT
It’s time I move out.

ZOE
This place is too fucking cheap for you to even consider moving.

WHIT
You make enough temping to cover your portion.

ZOE
I’m on a “leave of absence.”

WHIT
A “leave of absence.”

ZOE
Mandatory “leave of absence.”
(loud)
Fired from another temp agency?!

ZOE
Shhhhh.
Natasha doesn’t know yet.

WHIT
Jesus Christ Zoe, you are a piece of work.

ZOE
They said I was “not very pleasant.”

WHIT
Whatever.
If you really need someone to help with the rent
you could let your brother move in.

ZOE
Have you lost your fucking mind?

(They look over at PRESTON and
NATASHA. NATASHA is pacing in front of
him in the middle of an unstoppable tirade.
PRESTON, mostly, just looks scared.)

WHIT
Okay. He’s not the best.
But he’d be some cash.
You move into the bedroom with Natasha.
He can occupy your closet.
Permanently.

ZOE
It’s my
bed
room.
It was a joke.

You can’t.

Look.
This was supposed to be temporary anyway and we’re long past that.
I need my own space.

There’s no way in hell you can afford that.

Actually.

Fuck you.

(NATASHA has said something that finally gets to PRESTON.)

Jesus christ woman.
You’re not my fucking mother!

Well apparently your mother didn’t teach you any fucking manners so someone has to.

Hey!

PRESTON & ZOE
NATASHA

Not you Zoe.
But, I mean
c’mon.

(ZOE looks at PRESTON who expects her to come to his defense.)

ZOЕ

Can’t argue with that.

(PRESTON leans into NATASHA.)

PRESTON

You know
you’re sexy when you’re mad.

(She pushes him into the closet and slams the door.)

NATASHA

(yelling through the door)
YOU DON’T GO OUT ANYMORE WITHOUT A FUCKING CHAPERONE.
GOT IT?

PRESTON

Yeah
yeah.

(WHIT starts to gather her stuff to go. ZOE stops her.)

ZOЕ

Why the hell would you spring this on me right now?

WHIT

Bitch, I wasn’t going to!
You kept pushing me and…
I’m not a good liar.
You know that.

ZOE

You and Madison were the first two people I met in the city.
Natasha’s not going anywhere.
And I’ll be in the city.
Well, in my price range
I’ll probably be far out
way way out
but you know
just a few trains
a bus or two
and a short twenty minute walk away.

Things’ll calm down, you know.
Once we get past Tuesday.

One of us has to be the first to grow up and move on.

Who says?

I’m almost thirty.
I’m tired of having roommates.

Thanks.

Zoe…
Don’t say anything to Natasha yet, okay?
She thinks me moving is a
maybe
distant future thing.

Whatever.
You’ll be fine Zoe.

(WHIT exits.)
(Narration.)

THE GIRLS

We’d pass her in the hall occasionally. But none of us ever met that girl upstairs. Unsurprisingly. It’s a shame really. She was always only one flight up.

But the system isn’t set up for that. You pick up your mail. You drag your ass up six flights of stairs. And you breathe a sigh of relief when you successfully find refuge from the swirling mass that is the streets of New York City.

She was never with anyone. She lived alone and she loved it for the longest time. Because it was quiet.

Then, one day, we moved in downstairs. “Those girls are loud.” she’d say to herself. “They laugh too much. They never stop talking.” We didn’t. We were always making noise. She never said anything. We were always only one flight down but you never meet anyone in this city.

Her life wasn’t empty like she started to believe. But one day all the noise, started to mean the world to her. She’d go to her job she’d go meet those people she was always seeing. She’d pass her perfectly well-meaning neighbors in the hallway then settle in to listen to the goings on of “those girls.”
And here we were simply living our lives trying to pay our rent and only being successful a small percentage of the time. Here we were cycling through jobs and lovers and favorite coffee shops. Here we were missing our homes and years in the recent past when anything was possible.

We gave up our dreams so quickly because we had to because a certain logic seeps in when you have to grow up. Here we were just fucking trying to make it to tomorrow.

Here we were thinking “Who is this quiet person who lives upstairs? The one who sort of smiles in the hall and always seems to be alone.”

No.
We weren’t thinking that.

You never meet anyone in this fucking city.
iii.

(ZOE stares at the broken tv for a long time. Then, there is a knock. ZOE goes to the door. It’s a surprise: PAIGE. PAIGE is holding a box.)

ZOE

This is a surprise.
This is…a happy surprise?

PAIGE

Not exactly.
Is Preston here?

ZOE

I sent him to the store with Natasha.
He’s her bitch for the afternoon.
It’s kind of / cute actually.

(PAIGE enters fully.)

PAIGE

(interrupting at ‘/’)
Good.
I have a gift for you.

ZOE

Great.

(ZOE goes in for the kiss. PAIGE stops her.)

PAIGE

An actual gift.

ZOE

Tease.

PAIGE

Here.
(PAIGE hands her the box. ZOE takes it to the couch and opens it. It’s a box full of derby gear.)

ZOE
You know
this is nice and all
but I already have my own gear.

PAIGE
It’s Madison’s.

(ZOE pulls out Madison’s jersey as PAIGE says this, immediately puts the stuff back, closes the box, and moves away.)

PAIGE (cont.)
Tori volunteered to clean out her locker after the celebration. Everyone agreed you should have her stuff.

ZOE
You wanna go out or something?
Grab a beer?

PAIGE
You could frame her jersey. Hang it up somewhere.

ZOE
We have nothing here.
No food.
No drinks.
Nothing.

PAIGE
Nothing else seemed fitting enough. We didn’t want her to get lost.

ZOE
We?
Me.
Giving you the stuff was my idea.

ZOE
It’s been like a week.

PAIGE
I thought seeing her stuff might help you decide whether or not you want to give her eulogy.

ZOE
...
Toss it.
I don’t want that shit in my house.

PAIGE
She was your best friend.

ZOE
I’m still washing parts of her out of my whites.
Let’s swing by the dumpster on our way out.

PAIGE
Baby, just look through it.
See if there’s anything you want. /
Then we’ll go from there.

ZOE
(interrupting at ‘/’)
I don’t need to look through it.
Fucking get rid of it.
It doesn’t feel right to get rid of it.

Okay.
I gift it to you then.
It’s yours.

This doesn’t help your decision at all?
You can’t avoid this / forever, you know.

(interrupting at ‘/’)
She was your size.

What?

She was your size.
You take it.

She was your / size.

(interrupting at ‘/’)
What’s the point of letting all that go to waste?

I’m not going to use Madison’s gear.

Why the fuck not?
She bought good shit.
New skates. Barely used. All yours.
Zoe, take the box.

Thanks but no fucking thanks.
I don’t need a fucking tangible reminder
that she won’t
ever
be sitting next to me again.
You think that shit should stick around
then you take it.

It’ll kill me to have it.

Join the club.

(They look at the box for a bit.)

I know this is hard, Zoe.
I’m just trying to
I don’t know
help you?
…
I love you Zoe.
I don’t want to lose you in the depths.

Paige…
I appreciate it
you
I appreciate everything you are trying to do.
Everything feels wrong right now.
But I’ll get there okay?

You can’t stop me from trying to help.
ZOE
And that’s one of the things I love about you.

... 
So. Beer?

PAIGE
I need to sit for a minute.

ZOE
Okay, I’ll pick something up and bring it back.
Not to worry!
Gatherer mode: activated.

(ZOE starts to go.)

ZOE
Paige?
Please.
Get rid of the box by the time I get back.

(ZOE leaves the apartment but stays on stage. When she speaks for the rest of the scene, it is narration.)

ZOE (narration)
None of us remember how we became friends with Madison.
One day our lives were empty
and the next
there was Madison.

(As ZOE speaks, PAIGE reluctantly starts to go through the box. She smells MADISON’s jersey. WHIT walks in.)

WHIT
I hope that isn’t dirty.

PAIGE
It’s Madison’s.
Well…

Madison had this life motto:
“You don’t have to meet people. You just have to know them.”
What a load of

ZOE & WHIT

shit.

PAIGE

Some of the girls wanted Zoe to have her gear but she wants to get rid of it. I don’t know why I expected anything different.

ZOE (narration)

It was somehow true for all of us.

WHIT

You’re optimistic. Good for you.

PAIGE

Fuck you.

ZOE (narration)

Whitney and I have this story we tell about the first time we saw her. We were new roommates. It been like a week. Maybe two. Neither of us were sure if this “whole thing” was gonna work out. Whitney is a little… very anal.
WHIT

Why don’t you take the stuff?

PAIGE

Oh. No no.
I can’t have this around.

WHIT

You could keep it safe.
She’ll want it eventually.

PAIGE

Really. I
it would not be good for me to have it.

WHIT

Why not?
It didn’t seem like you and Madison were that close.

PAIGE

Yeah.
Well, we were once.
Impossibly so.

(WHIT looks at PAIGE for a bit. She goes to sit next to her when she gets a text.)

ZOE (narration)

I was careless
and new to the city
and scared to leave the apartment.
Whitney suggested a “bonding activity” or whatever
and somehow we picked roller derby.

WHIT

Paige, is Zoe coming back?
I hate to leave / you but
PAIGE  
*(interrupting at ‘/’)*  
She ran out for beer.

WHIT  
Of course.  
Tell you what. I’ll take the box to our storage unit.  
Neither her nor Natasha know it exists so she’ll never look there.

PAIGE  
You guys have a storage unit?

WHIT  
Yeahhhhh I’ve been stockpiling shit down there for years.  
Planning ahead for my own place.  
I’ll tell them about it when I move.

PAIGE  
Which is…?

WHIT  
I’m going to look at a place now, actually.

PAIGE  
Seems hasty.

WHIT  
It’s been a long time coming.  
Madison’s…  
well, this whole thing sort of expedited the process.

ZOE (narration)  
We trekked our asses out to Coney Island one summer afternoon planning to stay just as long as we could stand each other.  
There was an excess of cheap beer some surprisingly good conversation and this thing before us.
Gimme.

(PAIGE hands her the box. WHIT starts to go.)

In the break between bouts
this electric lull
new teams skated on to the track and
that’s
when I saw her.
Them, actually.
Both of them.

Hey.

Yeah?

I know Zoe is hard right now.
Selfish and like so

immoveable?

Yes. Good word.
But she’s in there somewhere.
And look, she’s not the only one who lost someone.
Natasha and I are here if you want
We miss her too.

You never think you’re going to lose someone
so
indestructible, right?
Makes you see that life is a
fucking
bitch.
Anyway, we’re here to talk so.
If you want.

PAIGE

Thanks.

ZOE (narration)

I didn’t know it then but one of them
Paige
would eventually become
the person I love more than anything in the world.

(WHIT’s phone dings. She starts to exit with
the box.)

PAIGE

Wait?

WHIT

Yeah?

(PAIGE goes to WHIT, takes MADISON’s
jersey out of the box.)

PAIGE

I can’t let this go.

ZOE (narration)

The other
yes, Madison
would become my best friend by the end of the night.
And, not consequently
all of our best friends.

(WHIT smiles and exits with the box. She
then joins ZOE onstage and they share the
rest of the narration.)
Through ZOE and WHIT’s final narration of the scene, PAIGE puts on MADISON’S jersey and puts her other shirt on over the top. She wears it like this for the rest of the show.

ZOE & WHIT (narration)

I don’t think we could tell you what happened on that track now.
Madison was fierce, unafraid.
When she put those stars on her helmet her ladies smiled and the other team cringed.

When the bout was over we both sat stunned waiting to regain our fucking minds.
Eventually, Zoe turned to me and said “I think I’ve found my religion. I want to do it.”

“Then just fucking do it, bitch” Madison said.
I said “Uh, hi” as she skated over.
And she said “Look, we don’t need to ‘meet’ or whatever. You don’t need to meet someone. You just have to know them.”
I thought I would vomit my heart out of my mouth.
Madison invited us to the after party and later lent me some pads and skates and I started classes the next week.

And the rest, as they say is legend.
(A surprisingly jovial voicemail.)

MADISON’S MOM

Hi Zoe.
It’s Madison’s mom. Again.
You cleaned out your voicemail box.
That’s a good sign!
That’s a good sign, right?
You’re getting my messages?
Whitney is relaying them to you?

There’s so much to do.
I feel like my mind hasn’t stop spinning since —
And you’re the last piece.
We’re running out of time, Zoe.
The minister wanted to set the program yesterday
but he’s graciously being patient with me.
Tuesday at 6pm.
It doesn’t have to be a long speech
a few words.
Nice words, preferably
but I’ll take any words.
Anything that will do justice to my daughter’s memory?
No.
To her life.
You’re the best one to do that.

If I could have your answer soon.
Or some indication that you’re getting these?
Anything.

I hope you are getting rest!
Eat something healthy for me, okay?

Well, I’ll try Whitney again.
Talk soon?
iv.

(PRESTON is asleep facedown on the couch in only his underwear and socks. He’s holding a pipe in his hand. He snoozes. He is not a pretty sleeper.)

ZOE opens the door, sees PRESTON, and rolls her eyes.)

ZOE

Goddammit.

(NATASHA enters. She is in her underwear, bra, and socks. She’s eating something weird. Like probably cottage cheese and Cheetos, or ketchup on something ketchup should not be on, or pickles dipped in pudding. Something like that.)

NATASHA

Shhhhh. Bro is tuckered out.

ZOE

Natasha…what the fuck?

NATASHA

Shhhhhhhhhhhhh.

(PRESTON readjusts. ZOE and NATASHA stand perfectly still. PRESTON is out cold so it doesn’t matter. NATASHA and ZOE move closer together. The dialogue of the next part nearly overlaps.)

ZOE

Natasha.

NATASHA

You want some?
Natasha.

I don’t really know what I’m eating. But it’s good.

Natasha, where are your clothes?

It’s goooooood.

Why are you in your underwear?

Gooooood. Good.

Maybe go get some pants please.

Good.

A shirt. I would settle for a shirt.

Damn, this shit is good.

NATASHA! Focus.
NATASHA

SHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH! SH!

(NATASHA eating. Only NATASHA eating.)

I fucked your brother.

ZOE

What.

NATASHA

You want some?

ZOE

What did you say?

NATASHA

You want some?

ZOE

No. Before that.

NATASHA

Uhhhhh
oh. yeah.
I fucked your brother.

(laughs weirdly)
Yeahhhhh. It just happened.
Like ten minutes ago.
It’s a good thing you didn’t come home any sooner.
You know what I’m sayin’?

(Nothing.)

ZOE

I’ll kill him.

(ZOE advances towards PRESTON. NATASHA holds her back while still
attempts to hold on to her food. They struggle for a bit. Finally, they stop.

NATASHA

Not worth it, Zoe.

ZOE

Right.
You're right.
I'll kill you, you motherfucking bitch.

(NATASHA drops her food and runs from ZOE. NATASHA is surprisingly fast. They chase each other for a while. Then they come to a stand-still.)

ZOE (cont.)

I can't believe this is beyond anything
I mean, I ask you to watch him for like a part of a day
I knew you were like super fucking
but this is like
I don't even / know what to
jesus fucking christ
this is like the last thing I need right now.

NATASHA

(interrupting at '/')
Zoe... Zoe.
Zoe Zoe Zoe Zoe Zoe
ZOE.

ZOE

What?!

NATASHA

It was a joke.
...
A joke.
Ha ha ha ha.
ZOE

A joke?

NATASHA

You thought I’d…

ZOE

Pssssh no.
Of course not.

NATASHA

Yeahhhhhhhh no.
I wouldn’t sleep with your brother.
Gross.

ZOE

Hey! He’s not so bad.
Give him a chance…
Oh god.

(fake vomit sound)
What did I just say?

NATASHA

Whatever.
I wouldn’t sleep with him because
you know, the code.

ZOE

The code?

NATASHA

The, uh…the bro code.
I mean, whatever the lady one is called.
I wouldn’t sleep with your brother because it’s against the code.

ZOE

Why are you in your underwear?
NATASHA
(looks down)
Oh shit! We never finished our game of strip poker.
Maaaaaan. I was gonna win too.

ZOE
You look like you were gonna lose.

NATASHA
Aw shit. Totally.

ZOE
How stoned are you?

NATASHA
Somewhere in between
very
and
the most.
Your bro’s got some good weed.

ZOE
WILL YOU GO PUT A FUCKING SHIRT ON.

NATASHA
Geez. Okay!
...
Did you see where my food went?

(PRESTON stirs and lifts his head up.)

PRESTON
God.
Can’t a dude catch a little nappage around here?

ZOE
Preston.
Oh. 
Hey sis.

PRESTON

We’re finishing our game dude. 
I’m gonna win all your cash.

NATASHA

Is that… 
HA HA HA HA. 
I don’t have any cash. 
I just wanted to see your tits.

PRESTON

See? I told you. 
Gross.

NATASHA

(laughs)
I mean, it almost worked.

ZOE

NATASHA

Ugh. 

(NATASHA leaves to go put some pants on. 
Probably.)

PRESTON

Hell yeah! 
Almost worked. 
High five!

ZOE

Scoot over asswipe.

PRESTON

That’s not very nice.
ZOE
You’re my brother. I don’t have to be nice.

PRESTON
Touché.
Wanna smoke?

ZOE
I think you’ve had enough for today.

PRESTON
What happened to you, man?
You used to be fun!

ZOE
I’m still fun.

PRESTON
So smoke with me.

ZOE
No.

PRESTON
FINE.

(A little bit of silence that feels like forever.)

PRESTON
I’m gonna smoke.

ZOE
How long you gonna be here?
PRESTON

…
You sure you don’t want some?

ZOE

How long?

PRESTON

I think I’m gonna move to New York.

…
Eh? Eh?

ZOE

New York will eat you alive.

PRESTON

I’m a grown-ass man.
I could handle it.

ZOE

There’s nothing for you in the city.
You need a place to live.
You need money. A job.
Who’s going to hire you?
You never put on pants.

PRESTON

I’m on vacaayyyyy!

ZOE

From what?

PRESTON

Life, man!
Life is hard!
ZOE
You don’t fucking do anything!
Look, you’ve got two days to find somewhere else to be or to go home.

PRESTON
I’d check in with the parental units first.

ZOE
I don’t need their permission.

PRESTON
Oh yeah?
When’s the last time you talked to them?

ZOE
What’s that supposed to mean?

PRESTON
Like
you know how they are.
Fucking like
always telling us what to do and shit.
They maybe wouldn’t even let me come home yet.

ZOE
What are you hiding douchebag?

(Before PRESTON can respond, the ceiling leak increases.)

ZOE
Ah, fucking christ!
Go get another bowl idiot.

(PRESTON disappears. Comes back with a very small bowl.)

PRESTON
This good?
ZOE
No.
But we’ll change it out later.
Remind me.

PRESTON
I’ve had a lot of pot today.

ZOE
Fine. I’ll just remember.
…
Go put on some clothes.
Let’s go to a movie or something.

PRESTON
Invite Natasha?

ZOE
God, you’ve got it bad.

PRESTON
I was so close Zo.
Like super close.

ZOE
You have no idea how far away you actually were.

(PRESTON gets up to go to the closet.)

PRESTON
Pants and a shirt?

ZOE
And shoes.
PRESTON

Fuck.

(PRESTON disappears into the closet. NATASHA comes gingerly walking into the room. She stops, gets on the floor, and tries to hold on.)

NATASHA

(whispers)
Zoe.

(louder)
ZOE.

Yes, Natasha?

NATASHA

I think I’m falling through the floor. Will you pull me up before I sink into the next apartment?

…
This feels cold and I like it.
…
…
Help?
v.

(NATASHA, ZOE, and PAIGE in the living room. NATASHA and ZOE stare at the broken tv. PAIGE reads.)

NATASHA

It’s too quiet in here.
...
If Madison were / here

ZOE

(interrupting at ‘’)

Don’t.
Don’t do that.

NATASHA

I can’t talk about her at all?

ZOE

I’d rather you didn’t.
No.

NATASHA

That isn’t fair to anyone else Zoe.

ZOE

Death isn’t fair.

(ZOE looks at her. They are quiet for a bit.)

NATASHA

We should get a new tv.

ZOE

With what money?
NATASHA
I’ve been making good money lately.
That douchebag keeps coming back.
Aannnnnmd
the more he touches my ass
the bigger the tips get.

PAIGE
The bigger the harassment gets.

NATASHA
I need this job.
I need the money.
I need the…distraction.

ZOE
It’s gross.

NATASHA
What do you suggest I do about it?

PAIGE
Say something.
That’s what managers are for.

ZOE
I suggest a meeting between that douchebag’s dick and your foot.

(They are quiet for a bit. NATASHA looks at her shirt.)

NATASHA
Shit. Is that a stain?
Look.

(PAIGE looks closely at NATASHA’s shirt.)

PAIGE
No? No.
It just looks not quite as white as the rest of the shirt.
NATASHA

Shit.
Shit shit shit.
I don’t have any more back-up shirts.
Do you have one...just like, around?
A white button up.
Must be pristine.

PAIGE

I don’t live here.

NATASHA

Ha.

ZOE

I have one.
In the closet in your room.
Recently dry-cleaned.

NATASHA

You’re a life-saver.

ZOE

I do what I can.

(NATASHA exits to the bedroom.)

PAIGE

Baby.
Natasha doesn’t do well with the quiet.

ZOE

And I don’t do well with the noise.
So.

(PAIGE goes back to reading for a second.)
Wait.
You have a dry cleaned shirt?!

You know, for emergencies.

*Emergencies?*

Don’t start.
I’m not even thinking about it.

You’re gonna have to / make a

*(interrupting at ‘/’)*
You see Preston today?

Oh yeah.
I sent him out.

Where?

I gave him my metro card.
Told him “the city is yours kiddo! Today, you ride!”
He stared at me at first
said “uhhhh” and drooled a little bit.
Then I took his pipe and he seemed more eager to skiddattle.
I said “don’t come back until it’s dark.”
So, you sent him “out”?  
Like no destination. Just “out.”

I sent him into the city.  
That’s a destination.

Okay. Okay.  
So he’s dead now.  
You sent him out and he went out by himself and he’s dead now.

Calm down Zoe.  
He’s an adult…  
Something like an adult.

God, Paige.  
I really didn’t want to add “rescue my brother from an unknown location somewhere in fucking New York City” to my list of to-dos today but thanks to you it looks like I have to.

Zoe…C’mon.

No Paige. You c’mon.  
You know he’s not reliable.  
You know he’s negative reliable.  
Eventually, I have to send him back to my parents alive you know.  

(ZOE gets ready to leave.)

I made him reservations at Natasha’s restaurant for 8.  
If he doesn’t show, Natasha is gonna call us.  
Then you can panic.  
Until then  
shut the fuck up.
You know he’s going to fuck up that restaurant.

He won’t.
He’s scared of Natasha.

He’s like “mad” in love with her.

That’s what I said.

That place has a dress code.
It’s fucking fancy.

Natasha always keeps one of the “boyf”s” suit jackets on hand.

You’ve thought of everything.

I’ve thought of everything.

Now, are you gonna come join me on the couch or do I have to beg?

(Whit comes through the open door in the middle of a story just as Natasha appears from the bedroom buttoning up her shirt.)

…a pot brownie without any pot in it.
He just wanted to see if we reacted.
Psycho-sematic or something.
That is literally the last time I even walk near the studio when Willy Nelson is there.
A regular brownie?  

NATASHA

Just a regular brownie.  
F*ck that guy.  

WHIT

So a good day in the studio?  

PAIGE

No.  
Hey Zoe. Someone called my phone for you today.  

WHIT

Who was it?  

ZOE

Madison’s mom.  

WHIT

Maybe I’ll join Preston for dinner.  

ZOE

She’s worried Zo.  
She hasn’t heard from you yet.  
You don’t take her calls.  

WHIT

I’m not taking anyone’s calls, thank you very much.  

ZOE

She doesn’t know what to tell the priest.  
Minister?  
Reverend?
Minister.

She doesn’t know what to tell the minister.

ZOE

Natasha?
Does your restaurant have a dress code for girls?
Or can I can show up like me?

WHIT

She really wants you to do it.
No one knew Madison quite as well.

ZOE

Maybe I’ll take him out tonight.
Do a little of that sibling bonding thing.
DUDES CONEY ISLAND!
Paige, where is he?

WHIT

She thinks you’ll do a wonderful job.
That’s what she said:
“I think she’ll do just a really really wonderful job.”
…
And then she cried for a while.

ZOE

He’s got his cell phone?

WHIT

And you know I don’t really do crying.
It was just like
terrible silent heaving sobs.
And I don’t know
I think I may have said “There. There.”
ZOE
It doesn’t matter.
I’ll find him.
I bet he didn’t make it any farther than the end of the block.
He hates people so
he wouldn’t have gone somewhere crowded.

WHIT
I said “There. There.” Zoe.

NATASHA
That’s kind of douche bag-y.

WHIT
Well I didn’t fucking know what else to say.

NATASHA
Good hustle.
…I guess.

WHIT
Fuck you.

ZOE
You guys can join us for dinner if you want.
Preston and I will probably already be fighting by then so
you know
bring ice.

WHIT
She’s a really nice lady. Just tell her something.

PAIGE
You know.
You can say no if you have to
that’s okay.
WHIT
But you have to say something.

PAIGE
This is what Madison would have wanted.

ZOE
FUCK YOU.
Fuck what Madison would have wanted.
And fuck you for constantly pressuring me.
And fuck her for calling you and making me…
Paige, where the fuck is my brother?!

(stand-off)

PAIGE
Corner bar.

ZOE
Ha. I knew it.

WHIT
She’s calling again tonight.
What should I tell her?

ZOE
Nothing.
Don’t tell her a fucking thing.

WHIT
God, fuck you Zoe.
We all fucking lost someone you know.

PAIGE
Maybe we should take a minute?
WHIT

No Paige.
This is fucking bullshit.

NATASHA

Yeah! I have a minute.
Let’s all go meet your brother for a drink.

WHIT

No way. I hate him.

ZOE

Well he’s not so fond of you either.

NATASHA

Madison always had a minute / for a drink.

ZOE

(interrupting at ‘/’)
I told you
don’t fucking talk about her.

WHIT

Jesus, Zo
when will your fucking cone of silence mourning period be over?

ZOE

I’m dealing, okay?
It’s better than your
clenched ass
uptight
roommate tyrant / bullshit.

WHIT

(interrupting at ‘/’)
I found an apartment.
What?

You did not.

As of this afternoon.
It’s perfect.
And I’m moving Friday.

This Friday?
This coming Friday?

I’m sorry Natasha
I was gonna tell you later / but it sort of

Don’t blame this / on me.

Yeahhhhhhh.
This is not something I’m gonna deal with right now.

It’s happening
so there’s not a / whole lot you can do about it.

La la la la la la la.
PAIGE

Natasha.

NATASHA

Nope. I can’t.

WHIT

Natasha.

NATASHA

No way la la la la la la la la la la la la.

WHIT & ZOE

NATASHA

For fucks sake
what??!!

NATASHA

This is good news.
Be happy for me.

WHIT

This is not good news.
We haven’t had any good news since Madison…
Listen to us.
We’re all a fucking mess.
You’re running away.

NATASHA

WHIT

No I’m not.

NATASHA

And Zoe won’t talk about anything.
ZOE

Leave me / outta this.

NATASHA

_and interrupting at ‘/’_
And I keep letting the same douchebag touch my ass
over and over
because he has money
and I need that money
and maybe I’m just too sad to stop him
and protect myself
because some times protecting yourself
sends your friends into a spiral of depression /
and terribleness.

ZOE

_and interrupting at ‘/’_
Okay Natasha.
We get it.

WHIT

Yeah.
You’re being a little dramatic.

NATASHA

FUCK YOU.
Fuck both of you!
This is so stupid.
We’re all lost.
We’ve all lost each other.
and we’ll probably never find each other again.

_(Nothing.)_

WHIT

Is it out of your system now?

NATASHA

Goddamn bullshit eating cocksucker motherfucker!

_(NATASHA gathers her stuff angrily.)_
PAIGE

Natasha…

NATASHA

Sorry for all that Paige. You’re the only one who seems to have it together around here. See the rest of you bitchez later.

(Almost out the door when:)

NATASHA

Actually, I’m gonna stay with the boyf tonight. I need a little air. See you when I see you.

(NATASHA exits.)

PAIGE

Well, I don’t know about you but after all that I’m fucking starving. So date night?

ZOE

My fucking brother.

PAIGE

With your brother!

ZOE

Yeah. Fine.

PAIGE

Whit?
WHIT
You know, I’d better sit this one out. Someone has to answer the phone calls around here.

ZOE
Well, fuck you too.

WHIT
Zoe… Give the eulogy on Tuesday. Please.

ZOE
I’m really happy for you Whit. I know you’ll like having the space.

(ZOE skates out. PAIGE follows.)
(Narration.)

THE GIRLS

That girl upstairs she was optimistic for everyone else. Her hope for the whole of mankind was that they be peaceful that eventually they achieved the peace they needed for their lives. She wanted everyone to have some quiet in this city of constant and fucking excessive noise.

That girl upstairs she was oddly optimistic for herself at times. But she was never peaceful. Though she tried she could not find quiet anywhere. She stood in the middle of streets in the middle of fields and forests on the edge of oceans on the edge of the world. She didn’t know where to find it.

Madison didn’t feel anything for anyone else. She didn’t have hope for mankind but she didn’t condemn it either. She saw everything exactly as it was.

Madison didn’t hope. She knew. And she knew only one thing to be true for certain. She knew even if something bad happened we were invincible and through each other we would all live on no matter what. That was our duty. That was good enough.

ZOE

And Madison hated the quiet.
(It’s dark and quiet. PRESTON drunkenly sort of falls in the door. ZOE drunkenly follows behind. They leave the lights off.)

PRESTON

I’m fucking hungry!
Do you have anything / to eat around here?

ZOE

(interrupting at ‘/’)

Preston.
Shhhhhh. Shh shhhhhhh shh.
I have roommates, remember?
They actually sleep.
So shut your damn mouth.

PRESTON

You.

ZOE

YOU.
Shhhhhhh.

(PRESTON flops on the couch.)

PRESTON

Seriously, though.
You got any grub?

ZOE

Where do you think you are?

PRESTON

You eat though.
I’ve seen you eat.

ZOE

Yeah. Out. Or we order.
PIZZA. Let’s order a pizza.

You got any cash?
I’m broke.
I’m not working right now.

Of course I’ve got cash!

You do?

Yeah. I smoked it.

(PRESTON laughs for a while.)

Why is it so dark?

(ZOE goes to the light.)

And god said
“Fuck man, I can’t see.”
So he created light and like made it work and

(ZOE turns on the light.)

And it turned on or whatever and he was like
“Fucking cool, man.”

God, you’re weird.
YOU.

... We should go to bed.

You want the closet tonight?

That’s my bedroom!

I can take the couch.

When’s the last time you smoked in there?

... I should probably just sleep in there again.

(Neither of them move.)

You tired?

Nope. You?

I don’t sleep much these days.
Let’s play a game.
I think I have Monopoly around here somewhere.

You find that.
I’ll find more beer.
(They split up. PRESTON goes to the kitchen and comes back with a six-pack. ZOE goes to her bedroom and pulls out a really worn Monopoly.)

ZOE

Beer me!

(He tosses one. She doesn’t catch it.)

ZOE (cont.)

Beer hand it to me.

(He does.)

ZOE (cont.)

Yessssssss.

(They drink in silence. She sets up the game. She starts to hand out the money.)

PRESTON

Nope. You don’t get to be banker. No way.

Why?

ZOE

You cheat.

I don’t cheat.

ZOE

Yes you do. You did when we were kids.

PRESTON

We’re not kids anymore dude. Well. At least I’m not.
No fucking way.
Gimme the money.

(Preston stares at him for a while and then throws a handful of dollars in his face.)

You’re a fucking bitch.

Preston

Dude. It’s just a game.

(Zoe picks up the money. They set up the game.)

So, you just killing time or what?

Preston

So, you gonna be sad forever or what?

Zoe

What the fuck do you know about it?

Preston

You’re my sister.
I can tell when you’re sad.

Zoe

Well, thanks for noticing.

Preston

Time to buck up.

Zoe

Very helpful.
PRESTON
You’re making everyone miserable.

ZOE
I haven’t said anything.
I’m not saying anything.

PRESTON
Exactly.

ZOE
Fuck you. I’m dealing.
…
Preston, what the fuck are you even doing here?

PRESTON
Vacay!

(Nothing from Zoe.)

PRESTON
Looking for a job?

(Nothing from Zoe.)

PRESTON
Visiting my big sis!

ZOE
It’s a fucking inconvenient time, dude.
There are too many people in this apartment already.
And everyone requires my attention
my decision
and Madison is
well, if she were here she would have fucking watched you that’s for damn sure.
And god, SO much pot.
When are you fucking gonna grow up a bit?
PRESTON

Mom and dad sent me.

ZOE

What?

PRESTON

They think you’re unstable.
That you’re gonna throw yourself out a window or something.
I’m here to keep an eye on you.

ZOE

Bullshit.
What the hell do they know about it?

PRESTON

Well, nothing actually
because you fucking turned off your phone.
They’re really freaked out, dude.

ZOE

Everyone thinks I’m so goddamn fragile.
I can take care of myself, you know.

PRESTON

You aren’t doing well, that’s obvious.

ZOE

I’m handling it.

PRESTON

You have a history of being dramatic
and we just wanted to make / sure this is

ZOE

(interrupting at ‘/’)
Fuck you Preston.
ZOE (cont.)

And fuck the parents.
FUCK THIS WHOLE FUCKING APARTMENT.

WHIT (o.s.)

SHUT UP ZOE.

ZOE

I’m sending you back.

PRESTON

I have a bus ticket for Tuesday afternoon.

ZOE

They thought you could handle it in a week?

PRESTON

They thought if you saw me maybe you’d come home for a bit.

ZOE

Whatever. Between now and then, don’t fucking talk to me.

(ZOE picks up her skates and goes to leave.)

PRESTON

Where the hell are you going?

ZOE

To fucking skate and sweat.

(She leaves. PRESTON follows her to the door.)

PRESTON (calling after her)

It’s the middle of the night, you fucking lunatic!
ZOE

(calling, interrupting at ‘/’)
I SAID DON’T TALK TO ME.
(A voicemail. Quiet [at first], seething, anger.)

MADISON’S MOM

Zoe.
I bought a little more time.
For an answer.
I wish you would just pick up my phone calls.
You know,
it’s okay to say no, Zoe.
I’ll understand.
But
will you
SAY SOMETHING???

I mean
JESUS
at least come to the thing.

…

…
I really can not believe you keep avoiding me.
Do you know what kind of position this puts me in?
She was my daughter
and she’s fucking gone now
…
and
sorry but
SOMEONE HAS TO DO IT.

(Shesighs.)
Look…
Will you tell Whitney thank you for me?
She’s not very good at it but every time I talk to her she
at least
tries.

That’s all, I guess.
I need to know by 10am
at the absolute latest
and then I’ll figure out that to do from there.

Madison loved you, you know.
More than probably anyone else she’s ever known.
Now’s not the time to be a fuck-all of a friend.
interlude^.

(ZOE, alone on her skates. She stands for a bit. She starts to do derby exercises. They are slow at first but eventually speed up. They are much more controlled and concentrated than in the intro. Even still, she seems more off and unsteady in the non-chaos than she does in the chaos. Every time she loses her balance or falls or just missteps a little, it takes her longer and longer to get back on track.

WHIT sings a version of “Willow Weep for Me” in the background. She is singing alone, maybe with a ukulele or, maybe, with something less cheesy. This is her time to sing how she really wants to. Her playing and singing devolves a bit too, mirroring ZOE’s.

They both end in a way that is unfinished.

ZOE has the beginnings of injuries…that will multiply.)

^The interlude can begin during MADISON’s MOM’s voicemail, if desired.
Jesus fucking Christ!

(NATASHA runs through buttoning her shirt and trying to gather all her belongings. As she opens the door, ZOE clumsily skates in. She is bloodied and bruised from having fallen over multiple times.)

Hey Zoe.
Can’t talk. I’m late, as per ush.

(NATASHA timidly goes past ZOE as ZOE stands limply in the doorway. NATASHA comes back.)

I know you probably don’t have a whole lot to say to me right now butttttttttt
what the hell happened to you?

Fell.

Where?

Outside practice.
Then again on a grate.
Then again coming up the stairs.

Well
fuck girl
are you okay?
ZOE
Yeah?
Yeah.

(ZOE falls to the ground. NATASHA does her best to pick her up. They struggle together until eventually NATASHA leads ZOE to the couch. NATASHA laughs. A lot.)

ZOE
What?

NATASHA
I’m sorry.
it’s just
...
like
you’re fucked Zoe.

ZOE
Uh, thanks?

NATASHA
Just when I think nothing else is gonna happen to you
you fucking fall on your face
and knees
and ASS
like you’re a fucking four year old.

ZOE
Yeah, Natasha.

NATASHA
I’m sorry, Zoe.
...
I’m sorry about everything actually.
I know.

(ZOES starts laughing again.)

Holy shit, you’ve got bad luck.

(NATASHA keeps laughing. ZOE tries to talk over her.)

Natasha.

…

Natasha!

…

NATASHA!

What?

(ZOE)

Aren’t you late?

(Fuck!

I’m sorry Zo. I am.

I would help you but

you know

now it’s mucho important that I make rent and stuff.

You better get going.

(I’ll be back later.

Just, like, maybe take the skates off for a bit.

Okay?

Love you.)
(Natasha runs out the door leaving it open. ZOE skates over to shut it. She immediately loses her balance and falls on the ground. She lies there for a moment. She laughs a little at first. Then she cries.

The closet door opens and a wall of smoke comes out. PRESTON stands there in his underwear and a shirt [for once]. He hears ZOE crying and wanders closer to her. He leans over and looks at her until she looks back.)

PRESTON

Oh.
Hey sis.

(Nothing.)

PRESTON (cont.)

You’re bleeding
so
I think that null and voids the silent treatment.

ZOE

....
Yeahhhhhh.
Okay.

PRESTON

So. What’s wrong?

ZOE

Oh. You know.
Just everything.

PRESTON

Right. Cool.

(Nothing.)
You want some help?

PRESTON

No. I’m gonna lay here for a bit.

ZOE

Okay. Cool.

PRESTON

(Nothing.

Then, PRESTON goes over to ZOE, helps her get up, and rolls her to the couch. He takes her skates off for her.)

ZOE

I haven’t been this unsteady on my skates for a long time.

PRESTON

You’re having an off week.

ZOE

And I fear it isn’t over.

(PRESTON disappears into the closet.)

ZOE (cont.)

It was a rock.
The first fall was because of a rock.
I was skating away from practice and I saw this little fucking rock
taunting me and I thought “shut the fuck up rock.”
But it wouldn’t.
So I tried to kick it with my toe stop
and I kicked too hard
and missed the rock
and fell flat on my ass.
I think I bruised my tailbone.
Sitting is painful.
Everyone laughed at me.
(PRESTON comes out of the closet wearing pants.)

PRESTON

Not at you, right?
Not at you.

ZOE

At me.
I mean, I laughed too.
But damn dude, my ass hurts.

(PRESTON disappears into the bathroom.)

ZOE

The second time
my toe stop
this goddamn toe stop
got caught in that grate outside the F train.
That train is sooooooooooooooo
...
No one laughed though, you know?
I mean, I laughed.
Because it was funny.
Fell on both my hands and knees.
And as I tried to get up, I fell back on my elbow.
But no one else laughed.
And no one helped me back up, that’s for goddamn sure.

(PRESTON returns with first aid supplies.
He starts bandaging up ZOE’s bloody knees.)

PRESTON

No one?

ZOE

No
one.
People don’t do that around here.
Well, no one I’ve run into anyway.
(Quiet as PRESTON cleans and dresses ZOE’s wounds.)

I fell up the stairs Preston.
The last one.
I fell up the stairs.

Again?

Fuck you. This time it was

Let me see your elbow.

(She shows him her elbow. He cleans and dresses that wound.)

– different.

There. Good as new.

Oh.
Thanks bro.

Pay back.

…
PRESTON

I hated you, you know. As kids. You were a bossy shit, sis. And pushing me into that beehive that one time?

ZOE

Nah dude. That was funny.

PRESTON

Nah dude. That was fucked.

ZOE

Hey, we found out you aren’t allergic to bees.

PRESTON

But then, I don’t know. There were real moments of like clarity, you know? Like I’d fall or some shit someone would make fun of you whatever. But at the end of the day it was the two of us playing outside and like, it was good and easy and fun. No real problems.

ZOE

No real problems.

PRESTON

Do you remember when I was like three? And we were taking turns biking down the gravel driveway? You remember? I was like just a little too fucking adventurous. I didn’t have any sense of danger yet.
I’m still waiting for you to get it.

Dude. Shut up.
I’m telling a story.

(She shuts up.)

So I tried to do a wheelie.
A badass training wheel wheelie.
Just like showin’ the fuck off.
And I bit it.
Face first into the gravel.
You didn’t stop for one second.
You scooped me up
carried me inside
and had me bandaged up before either mom or dad could take a breath.
Sometimes that memory just hits me in the middle of
…
fuck
…
everything
you know?

Memories are funny like that.
Always coming when you least expect them.

They’re good like that.
That’s why I’m here, you know.
The two of us
we gotta look out for each other.

I’m not going home, you know.
I know.

(PRESTON goes to put his shoes on.)

You’re wearing pants.

Thought it would be a nice change.

Where you going?

Natasha is at work.
Whitney is at work.
Paige is…?

I don’t know.

Okay well, whatever.
You could use some alone time.
I’m gonna give you some time.
Cool?

You need some cash?

Nah Zo.
I got this.

Yeah. Cool.
See you later?
PRESTON leaves. ZOE checks out her bandages and takes the cleaning supplies to the bathroom. PRESTON pokes his head back in the door.

Uh Sis?

...

SIS.

(ZOE comes back on.)

Yo. What?

Do you know where I can get some pot? I’m all out.

(PAIGE enters the apartment. She isn’t quite sure why she’s there.)

ZOE.

I found Paige!

Hey Paige.

Heading out?

PAIGE

Yeah. Gonna give you some time.

...

Hey.

Do you know where I can find some pot?

ZOE

Bye Preston.
Yep. Hint taken.

(PRESTON exits. PAIGE stands near the doorway. They are silent and awkward.)

What are you doing here?

(PAIGE doesn’t answer.)

There’s more leak, you know.

Okay.

Are you gonna take care of it?

I’m good.

Fine.
I’ll take care of it.

(PAIGE grabs a bowl and puts it under the new leak.)

I have some boo-boos.
Why don’t you take care of me?
Kiss ‘em and make ‘em better.

Noooooope.
ZOE

Fuck Paige!
This is excruciating.

PAIGE

I know.
It’s fun to see you get this frustrated.

ZOE

It’s like my vagina is on fucking fire.

PAIGE

Ha.
“fucking”
fire.

ZOE

Shut up.

PAIGE

What do you want from me Zoe?

ZOE

WELL
I keep sitting here thinking
like
“Fuck. If she doesn’t fucking touch me fucking soon
I’m gonna have to find someone who will.”

PAIGE

Ha.

ZOE

I will Paige.
Don’t test me.
No you won’t.

ZOE

Oh yes I will.

PAIGE

You won’t.

ZOE

Hell yes I will.

PAIGE

No.

ZOE

Yes.

( PAIGE crawls down the couch until her face is an inch away from ZOE’s.)

PAIGE

Na-uh.
You wouldn’t dare.

(They sit like this for a moment. ZOE goes in for the kiss. PAIGE relaxes into it before pulling away violently.)

ZOE

WHAT THE FUCK PAIGE.

PAIGE

I told you, not right now.
It feels too confusing.

ZOE

This is going to tear us apart, you know.
Come on, Zoe.
It’s been like three days.

It feels like forever.

You
have an overactive sex drive.

When??

I have to work through some stuff first.

(The drip from the ceiling increases slightly
and at a faster pace. The ceiling groans
under the weight of the water.)

Jesus fucking Christ!

(ZOE goes to the door, opens it, and stands
in the hallway.)

(yelling upwards)
Hey asshole!
Turn off your faucet
sink radiator bathtub
whatever the hell is running.
I’m trying to avoid the rain, okay?!?!

(ZOE comes back in, closes the door, and
goes to the kitchen.)

Goddamn douchebag.
PAIGE

Why don’t you go upstairs and ask them?

(ZOE returns with two buckets. She stands in the middle of the room.)

ZOE

Fuck you.
I tried.
I even sent Preston up there.
Tried to get him to charm the door open.

PAIGE

Well, there’s your problem / right there.

ZOE

(interrupting at ‘/’)
No one answered.
Goddamnit, someone owes us for these buckets.
We shouldn’t have to buy buckets to stay dry.
What kind of fucking hellhole is this?

PAIGE

(gently)
Hey, hey.
Zoe, calm down.
It’s okay.
We’ll get the super or something.
They’ll fix it.

ZOE

Are you kidding me?
They aren’t going to fix this shit.
Nothing ever gets fixed around here.
Nothing ever gets fixed in this city.

PAIGE

Well
can’t argue with that.
(ZOE shoves buckets at PAIGE.)

ZOEPaige

Would you fucking make yourself useful?

PAIGEPaige

You can’t talk to me like that.

ZOEPaige

Look, Paige,
fucking help me clean up
fuck me
or get the fuck out.
Those are your three options.
Pick one and stop wasting my time.

PAIGEPaige

I didn’t do a goddamn thing to you.
You know that right?
I’m just trying to navigate this
everything
the best I know how.
Cut me some slack.

ZOEPaige

I can’t.
I can not.
The sky is falling and I can’t cut you any slack.
Pick one.
Clean
fuck
or leave.

PAIGEPaige

Those are the options?

ZOEZOEPaige

Those are the fucking options.
Okay.

(PAIGE takes off her shirt and throws it towards ZOE. She is wearing MADISON’s jersey. She turns to leave.)

Wait.

What?

What the fuck is that?
Are you wearing her fucking jersey?
I fucking told you to get rid of that shit, Paige.

I wasn’t just going to throw her away Zoe.
What’s the big deal?

The big fucking deal is
Paige
I’ve paid attention to your needs all fucking weekend.
And it turns out you’re fucking around on me.

What the hell does that even mean?

You’re with Madison right now.
You’re not with me.

I’m in mourning.
I know.
So I waited.
And I kept waiting because
you know
that’s what you do for people you love.
But you’re waiting
because…
why?

Because…
because.

At least tell me why you still have that fucking shirt.

It would have been wrong to get / rid of it.

(interrupting at '/')
It’s wrong to keep it.

I won’t ever let you see it again
but I’m not getting / rid of it.

Paige, she died in / my arms.

(interrupting at '/')
No. Zoe, / don’t.

(interrupting at '/')
I saw the light drain from her eyes.
I can’t hear this.

If you are gonna force me to look at her fucking shirt then you can fucking hear this.

I’ve gotta get out of here.

(PAIGE tries to leave. ZOE grabs her and forces her to listen.)

Fucking listen to me!

(PAIGE tries to leave. ZOE grabs her and forces her to listen.)

I don’t / want to.

She left.
She’s gone.
Stop making her / reappear.

Madison was my first, Zoe.

(There is no movement. Although, maybe ZOE sits down at some point.)

And she was my only until you.
Because, you know, she like she reallllly fucked me up.
But then she died
and I think part of me died with her.
(There is no movement.)

PAIGE (cont.)

(quickly)
It was like five years ago, right?
A year or two before you even got to the city.
I had just joined the derby.
Fresh meat and all that.
Madison, she
she made my life hell there for a while.
One time she hit me in the nose
and I was sitting there bleeding all over the place
and she skated up to me and said
“Hey. You know how little boys pull the ponytails of little girls they like?
Yeah.
It’s like that.”
I smiled through bloody teeth and I was so fucking happy.

(There is no movement.)

PAIGE (cont.)

It was so hot.
Hot and fast and just
like
fucking furious.
I was in love in a nanosecond flat.
I like to think she loved me too.

(There is no movement.)

PAIGE (cont.)

She hated me almost as quickly as she loved me.
It was over in a minute
and I was
wrecked.
My skating was off for like a whole fucking year.
She wouldn’t touch me in matches.
Wouldn’t even look at me.
Stopped talking to me
about me.
…
I was so fucking
angry
at her for a long fucking fuck fuck time.
I mean, listen to me.
PAIGE (cont.)
She’s fucking dead now and I feel like she left me yesterday.
But I don’t know.
I skated her into a railing one night and then kicked her in the shin for good measure.
And just like that
I loved her again.
I love her still.

(There is no movement.)

PAIGE (cont.)
I thought she was perfect but
she was a cunt, you know?
Just a little bit of a cunt.
…
I was worried I had
lost that little part of myself that learned so much from her.
That’s the reason for all this off-limits stuff.
But,
I don’t know
I was doing it for the wrong reasons, you know?
I think you are the right reasons.
I think you had what I was looking for all along and I was just looking in the wrong places.
…
Zoe.
I love you.
Like so fucking much.

(They sit together in silence for a long time.
ZOE barely moves. PAIGE seems to understand what that means. She grabs ZOE, kissing her as hard as she can. ZOE pushes her away.)

ZOE
Get off me!

(PAIGE tries kissing her again. ZOE pushes her away. PAIGE tries again.)

ZOE
Don’t FUCKING touch me!
(ZOE pushes her away harder. This time, when PAIGE comes towards her, they erupt into an all out fight. They struggle. Punches are thrown. They are adept at fighting and could really hurt each other if they wanted to. Finally, PAIGE lands an elbow on ZOE’s nose. ZOE yelps and they come to a stop. ZOE is bleeding. They breathe together for a bit.)

(ZOE quietly)
It’s time for you to go
Paige.

(PAIGE slowly goes to the door and picks up her stuff. She turns back to ZOE but ZOE doesn’t look at her. She exits closing the door quietly behind her.)

(ZOE)
Fuck.

(ZOE is trying hard to hold everything in. Then, a big hole opens up in the ceiling, water and debris falling all over ZOE. She doesn’t move for a minute. Finally she looks at her surroundings and realizes something is off about the water.

It’s blood.

ZOE looks up at the ceiling. Bloody water continues to pour through. She isn’t sure what happens next.)
(MADISON’S MOM, leaving a final voicemail for ZOE.)

MADISON’S MOM

I’ve done all I can think of
beyond maybe carrier pigeons.
Would you respond to smoke signals?
It’s funny, the longer I don’t hear from you
the more hope I hold on to.
Should probably be the opposite, huh?

I mean, I guess you can avoid these phone calls forever.
You don’t have to deal with it.
But I am concerned about you Zoe.
I’m worried you will disappear from my life too.

And
beyond that
I think it would be really lovely
really really nice
for you to do this.
Probably therapeutic?
Maybe that’s not –
This is a way to make sure she lives on Zoe.
The best way, in my opinion.

I don’t mean to push you, really.
I just wanted you to know I’m thinking about you and
I miss seeing her
so much.
And I miss seeing you too
here every so often.
And, you know
maybe
if you need it
this is
closure.
Or something like closure
if that’s what you’re looking for.

Hope to see you Tuesday.
ZOE

You see there is this
pit.

…
Some say they are just ‘off’ for the day.
Some say they’re ‘a little blue.’
Some are incredibly honest about what is happening inside of them.
Some don’t say much of anything and
well
you never really know.
Most often I think it’s just called

…
loneliness
but with extra adjectives:
supreme
severe
debilitating
jovial – at times –
necessary – almost always –
loneliness.

So on that day
that particular day
when that girl upstairs
dressed herself up for the millionth time
put on a little lipstick
and geared up to make that trek to this weekly thing
this cocktail hour
turned light appetizers
turned long dinner party
turned tables full of empty wine bottles
and definitely an expensive cab ride home
she thought
“Today it is timid.
It is necessary.
It is content, some how.
But it is still loneliness.”

“Another day to be unattached.”
No.
“Another day to be alone.” she thought.
That girl upstairs got there okay.
She got there just fine and was lovely and funny and charming.
Because she is.
She has to be.
And her people never expected anything less.

But in her head was a storm.

“I can’t sit through another dinner” she thought.
“Where we talk about their ‘haves’
and we avoid talking about my ‘have nots.’
If I’m not already dead by the end of it”
she chuckled
“I’ll kill myself then.”

And
she did.
Not that night. Of course not.
She laughed too hard for that.
It wasn’t the next even.
Or the next.
It was days
months
years later.
But it would still come.

It would come because not enough changed between that one particular
weekly extended dinner party
and this night.
It would come because of some other seemingly small trigger.

And yesterday afternoon
her life leaked out on to the heads of those below her
and really fucked everything up.

... and really fucking
put some shit into fucking perspective.
(ZOE and PRESTON stand near the overflowing bathtub in the apartment above. They are looking at their dead neighbor who has killed herself by slitting her wrists.

The hole in the ceiling allows them a natural barrier from the bathtub. It’s obvious ZOE has climbed up from her apartment. The front door to this apartment [if we can see it] is wide open. Water continues to pour into their apartment below.)

ZOE

We should turn off the water.

YOU.

PRESTON

You can’t be helpful just once?

(They stare at the tub for a while.)

ZOE

We should really turn the water off.

I’m not going over there.

PRESTON

ZOE

…

Okay!
I’ll…okay.

(Neither of them move.)

PRESTON

Let’s just call someone.
Preston!

What?

That’s a good idea actually.
Like a really good idea.

I have ideas.
I have good ideas even.

Okay
so
let’s call someone.

Yeah. Yes.
Let’s.

(They stand not moving for a long time. WHIT enters their apartment below. She sees the mess.)

What the fuck.

Yeah, hey Whit.
The leak got bigger.

Zoe? Where are you?

(ZOE leans forward so she is visible through the hole in the ceiling.)
Hey.

Um, hi. How’d you get up there?

Climbed. Preston’s here too.

(PRESTON leans forward.)

Oh. Hey Whit.

Hey Preston. …

So. Funny question. What the fuck happened?

Ceiling broke.

I see that. Um… what’s weird about this water? It looks weird. Don’t tell / me that it’s

(interrupting at ‘/’) You should probably just come up here.
Dude. Sis.

Oh. Yeah.
Fair warning, it’s a little gruesome.

Try, like,
fucking gruesome.
Like slasher film gruesome.

Yeah, that sounds appealing and all but I think I’m gonna stay here.
Clean up a bit or something.

I wouldn’t touch that / water.

(interrupting at ‘/’)
Whit. Please.
I need you up here.

(WHIT takes a moment to prepare. She disappears from the apartment and eventually reappears where ZOE and PRESTON are. She tries to remain calm.)

Uh. Hey.

Hey.

Hi.

(They all stare for a while.)
WHIT

Is she…?

ZOE

Yep.

WHIT

So we’re standing in an apartment with…?

ZOE

Yep.

PRESTON

The water’s still running.
It’s kinda soothing actually.

(PRESTON makes a water sound)

WHIT

…
Fuck.
Fuck no.
No no no.
Fuck. No.
Fuck.

…
Is this all you guys have been doing?

ZOE

We were gonna turn off the water but…

PRESTON

Yeah. And then we were gonna call someone but…

ZOE

So, yeah. This is all we’ve been doing.
(It’s finally too much for WHIT. She finds somewhere to vomit. ZOE and PRESTON don’t move.

WHIT comes back. From now on she refuses to look at the bathtub. She starts to pull PRESTON away.)

WHIT

All right.
All right.
Show’s over.
Let’s go call someone.
I’ll call someone.
But both of you come
come on
you have to come with me.
We can’t stand here anymore because
this it is doing nothing and I can’t stand around doing nothing.
That’s goes against every moral fiber
I was taught to
I’m supposed to
someone said once that we should have these moral fibers and and standing here just staring at a at a fuck you guys LET’S GO.
We can take care of this downstairs.
Outside.
Down the street.

ZOE

Yeah.

PRESTON

Yeah. We should.
YES.
We are. Now.

(WHIT drags PRESTON out of the apartment. ZOE does not move.

WHIT and PRESTON get all the way out the door before they notice ZOE hasn’t moved.
WHIT comes back on.)

WHIT
He’s laughing.
He’s laughing hysterically in the hallway.
It would be sad
if it wasn’t so funny.
Or is it the other way around?
…
Come on. You’ve had enough.
You’ve fucking had enough Zoe.
Please. Let’s go.

(WHIT leaves again. ZOE still doesn’t move.
WHIT comes back again but not as far into the apartment this time.)

WHIT
Zoe?
Aren’t you coming?
Please come?
…
Zoe?

ZOE
You’re gonna call someone?

WHIT
Yeah. Of course.
I’m not leaving without you though.

ZOE
Nah. I’m gonna stay.
Thank you though.
I know you’re trying to take care of me but
I want to stay.
I don’t want her to be alone.

I don’t
I really don’t think that’s a good idea.

I’m staying.

…
Fine.
I’ll give you ten minutes.
Then you are coming downstairs with me.

Yes.

(WHIT leaves reluctantly. ZOE sits on the floor.)

Hey. I’m Zoe.
I don’t think we ever officially met.
But you probably hear us all the time, right?
Sorry by the way.
I’m sorry for yelling at you
and being loud and all that.
We’re like super fucking loud down there, right?
Close quarters
and…
anyway, sorry.
…
Do you need anything?
I could turn off the water or something.
…
I’m not going to turn off the water.

(ZOE moves a bit closer to the tub.)
ZOE (cont.)
You know, you're like the second in a week?
I’m starting to think there is something wrong with me.
Like I’m causing this shit.
That seems logical.
That seems so fucking logical that it’s fucking hilarious, you know.

(PAIGE enters the apartment below. She has flowers or a gift or food. Something kitschy and sweet and dorky. She’s trying. She looks around for ZOE, clocks the mess, and then hears ZOE speaking from above.)

ZOE (cont.)
So this other girl.
Madison.
She’s…
fuck man.
You guys would get along great.
You seem like you are really easy to get along with.

(WHIT enters the apartment below.
NATASHA follows slowly behind. They all acknowledge each other. PAIGE makes a “quiet” gesture and they all listen to ZOE.)

ZOE (cont.)
Anyway, she’s gone now.
Too.
And it’s funny, you know?
Like fucking funny because it was
BAM
outta nowhere.
I totally laughed at first.
Because it was this guy this prick on the sidewalk saying something disgusting about my boobs or making some lewd gesture and I like
I got shy and uncomfortable and I like
you know, instead of standing up for myself
and like standing up for fucking feminism, I guess,
I like fucking turned away
because that shit
god
that shit scares the shit out of me.
Like, what if you say something to the guy and today is the day
today is that extra shitty day when that dude decides you’ve like
disrespected *him* or something.
Like, you’ve insulted him because you didn’t respond to
“Hey baby, nice tits”
or like “why don’t you smile?”
or like that fucking lecherous look he gives you when you’re just trying to walk home
and he decides to teach you some sort of lesson
with a
with a
slap or a
kick or a
knife or a
gun or his
FUCKING WORDS
because sometimes that’s worst.

*(PAIGE starts to climb up into the
apartment. She climbs slowly and quietly.)*

Anyway, this prick said something terrible to me and I looked away.
I looked at Madison and she
gave me this little half smile and off she went.
She went right up to him
and fucking yelled at him
skating circles around him
jumping on and off sidewalks
showing off
fucking
it was beautiful.
And the circles got bigger
and she’s in the road
and she’s so fucking fast
like lightning
but
the cab was faster
and
SPLAT
and
off the cab went
and everything stopped.

(ZOE is at the tub now, maybe holding the
girl’s hand. PAIGE is in the apartment now,
watching ZOE. ZOE doesn’t see her.)

ZOE (cont.)

…
I sat with her for a while.
People tried to pull me away I think
but I wouldn’t dare.
I wouldn’t dare move because
I figured if I didn’t move for long enough
I would just
wake up from the nightmare.
I wouldn’t dare
because I realized something
I haven’t been able to say out loud until now.
I realized that her
death
was my fault
and I didn’t know what to do about it.

(PAIGE makes some sort of noise or
movement and ZOE sees her.)

ZOE (cont.)

I don’t know what to do about it.
It’s my
It’s my fault and
I really really don’t know what to do about it.
It’s my fault
and
I’m
…
I’m so sorry.
I don’t know what to do about it.
I don’t know what to do Paige.

PAIGE

I know.
(PAIGE and ZOE settle together for a moment. NATASHA and WHIT do as well in their apartment below. There is nothing for a bit.)

PAIGE

C’mon.

(ZOE transitions into a new space. All the girls are there and help with the final narration.)

THE GIRLS

That girl upstairs
she wasn’t afraid of death.
It was her companion,
a sort of comfort
always there.
She walked down streets
she passed people in hallways
she sat next to people on subways
trying to guess when they would die.
It was a little game she liked to play.
Predicting the ‘when’ they would die,
that was easy.
But the ‘how’ they might die?
Impossible to guess.

That girl upstairs
she wasn’t afraid of death.
It lived so deep in her veins that
she never really saw it coming.
She didn’t have to.
It was a slow rumble at first
a constant noise in her quest for quiet
grey clouds on the horizon.
She never knew what clear skies looked like.

None of us were afraid of death either.
Madison taught us that.
Death will happen no matter what.
You can’t stop it so don’t even try.

We all wanted to ask her what would happen when we die.
She seemed to have that knowledge.
We could see it in her as a sort of light. We tried to reach it but she locked it away. It was her little secret. Death was not the danger to her.

So. Even now We aren’t afraid of death. But everyday it rolls in like a dense sticky fog. In a city of 8 million people it looms large. Though we try good god, we fucking try to ignore it it always hangs in the air. It is on the news down the street in the sirens that blare in the middle of the night in the eyes of strangers passing by in the fucking apartment above our heads at the edge of our hearts.

Death isn’t something you can name so we never speak about it. It is an unavoidable constant.

ZOE

Madison was right not to be afraid it. We were right to follow her lead. Because in the end the worry is not disappearing completely. The worry is our own destruction.

End of play.