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The Seven Torments of Craig and Amy: A Love Story

The Play

By Don Zolidis

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Cast of Characters

CRAIG, 17,
AMY, 18,
CAITLYN, 17, Craig's twin sister
BRIAN, 16, Craig's friend
GROASH, 17, Craig's friend
ELIZABETH, 17, Craig's friend
MOM
DAD

In addition, CHORUS members, which may be every other character except for Craig and Amy, play multiple additional roles.

AMANDA
LYLE
BUCK
UNCLE JIM
AMY'S MOM
SHELLEY HAMMER
YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT GIRLS
BARNEY
GUY
PARTYGOERS

(CRAIG enters by himself. No set.)

CRAIG

Hey there. My name's Craig. I have a problem. First I want to warn you for people who see the words romantic comedy on the title there and think this show is going to warm your heart. It's not. The couple does not get together at the end. Spoiler Alert.

(GROASH enters.)

GROASH

You're supposed to say spoiler alert first. And then give the spoiler.

CRAIG

No you say spoiler alert afterwards.

GROASH

You're totally doing this intro wrong. You've made a hash of it. Like it's, "It's a sled, Spoiler Alert." That doesn't work. I just told you it was a sled. There's no chance to opt out of learning that it's a sled.

CRAIG

What's a sled?

GROASH

Rosebud. In Citizen Kane, it's a big mystery, what Rosebud is.

CRAIG

What is it?

GROASH

It's a sled. Spoiler alert. See? The movie is already ruined.

CRAIG

We're doing a live show, what are people going to do when I say Spoiler Alert, put their fingers in their ears?

GROASH

Then maybe you shouldn't give away the ending in the beginning. Just saying.

CRAIG

Can I just tell my story?

GROASH

Show, don't tell. It's a storytelling principle.

CRAIG

Anyway, as you may have gleaned from the title of the show on our literature, this play is about a couple that breaks up seven times. Why, you ask?

GROASH

Pathetic desperation. Mental problems. Um… Stupidity. No other opportunities. Basic incompetence in human interaction. Self-esteem issues. I forgot one. Sorry.

CRAIG

To set the scene – Janesville, Wisconsin – the United States –

GROASH

Geekish awkwardness.

CRAIG

February. 1994.

(a company member equips CRAIG with an enormous coat, hat, and gloves.)

(A placard: Breakup #3.)

(Another placard: We're not really going in order, here.)

It's cold. The car: A white Subaru hatchback with rust spots on its hood, a spotty heater, and a general air of malice. Her car.

(a company member creates the car.)

(AMY enters, dressed in a similarly enormous coat, hat, and gloves.)

It's snowing. Romantic.

(Company members blow snow on them.)

(CRAIG and AMY shiver in the car.)

(REM's "Everything Hurts" is possibly playing.)

CRAIG

This song just thinks it's deep. Everybody hurts. Thanks, Michael Stipe.

AMY

Huh.

CRAIG

Like, are there people who are enlightened by this? `Huh, I guess that person doesn't hurt' and then they listen to this song and they're like, `oh wait, everybody does hurt.'

AMY

Yeah.

CRAIG

REM should teach Kindergarten. Everybody hurts, kids.

(AMY turns off the music.)

You don't have to turn it off.

AMY

No it's okay.

CRAIG

All right.

AMY

So um… hmmm…

CRAIG

What?

AMY

Hmm…

CRAIG

What's that mean?

AMY

You know how I said I was going to stop breaking up with you?

CRAIG

Wait a minute…

AMY

I think that –

CRAIG

Is this because of REM?!

AMY

No. I'm just in a weird place right now –

CRAIG

We're in a car in the woods!

AMY

I know that.

CRAIG

You drove us here!

AMY

A weird place emotionally.

CRAIG

Are you kidding me? You're breaking up with me *again?*

AMY

We don't really work.

CRAIG

We work great!

AMY

You think we work great. All we do is make out.

CRAIG

That's what great about this. We don't fight/ we have an awesome time –

AMY

We fight all the time!

CRAIG

No we don't! We're not even fighting right now!

AMY

Yes we are! We're fighting right now!

CRAIG

No! No. And if we were fighting, it's only because you're going crazy.

AMY

I' m not going crazy!

CRAIG

We're an awesome couple.

AMY

Sorry! I am just – I'm sorry – I don't mean to hurt you – but –

CRAIG

Arrrrrgh!

(CRAIG gets out of the car. The company dumps snow on him.)

AMY

Craig. Craig come on.

CRAIG

No!
Holy Jeez is it freaking cold out here!

AMY

Get back in the car!

CRAIG

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WEATHER? WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE CHOSE TO MOVE HERE?

AMY

Get in the car, Craig!

CRAIG

No. I will stand here and my heartbreak will keep me warm.

(AMY gets out of the car and goes to him.)

AMY

I'm sorry. I don't want to hurt you.

CRAIG

Well that's ironic.

AMY

Craig. Hug?

(She hugs him in her giant coat. The company throws snow on them.)

Okay? Better?

CRAIG

I just need to be alone for a little while.

(AMY looks around.)

AMY

Okay.

(AMY steps away from him and gets back in the car.)

(CRAIG stands sadly, freezing. More snow.)

CRAIG

Okay, I'm gonna need a ride home.

(He gets back in the car.)

(Scene change. AMY exits. CRAIG removes coat and hands to company members.)

Now to really give you insight to the person who would get dumped so many times, I give you the horror… of my family. My twin sister Caitlin.

(CAITLIN enters. They look at each other. They look nothing alike.)

Not identical. And one of my earliest memories. Our sixth birthday party. Which we always had together.

MOM

So what should the party's theme be?

CAITLIN

Barbie.

CRAIG

The Hobbit.

CAITLIN

The Hobbit isn't even real!

CRAIG

Oh and Barbie is? Barbie can't even stand up!

CAITLIN

You're weird –

CRAIG

Barbie would be cannon fodder in Middle Earth. They'd put her in front in the Battle of Five Armies! She'd be pierced with a million arrows!

(DAD enters)

MOM

Okay. Okay. Hon, can you settle this?

DAD

How about baseball?

CRAIG and CAITLYN

Nooo!

DAD

No I mean I'm gonna watch baseball instead of listening to this.

(He exits)

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

So we settled on two simultaneous parties – Barbie on one side and The Hobbit on the other, with a demilitarized zone in the middle, which is totally normal. Only one problem.

(Everyone in the company goes to CAITLYN's side.)

CAITLYN

Wooooo!

COMPANY

Yayyyyy this is so much fun!

CAITLYN

Please put all your many, many presents for me on this table.

(COMPANY mimes putting presents on a table.)

CRAIG

Hey does anyone want to play pin the tail on the dragon?

(No one looks at him)

That's cool. I can do it myself. It's probably more fun that way. You guys would probably mess it up.

(to the audience)

But then it occurred to me: Stephen.

(A company members enters with a STEPHEN stuffed animal – a white fluffy Persian cat)

STEPHEN *(unpleasant growling)*

Mwrarrrrr….

CRAIG

Stephen was our cat and he was so cute.

STEPHEN *(even more unpleasant growling)*

Mwwrrarrrr…

CRAIG

He mostly lived under a bed and hated anyone that came near him. But if there's one thing that six year old girls loved more than Barbie, it was a cute kitty.

(CRAIG gets down on his stomach to get STEPHEN.)

Come here Kitty.

STEPHEN *(low growl)*

Mrwwarrr…

CRAIG

Come on. Ow. Ow. Come on. I got you. Ow.

(CRAIG scoops up STEPHEN and carries him outside.)

(sing-song)

Hey look what I've got!

(holds STEPHEN aloft like the Lion King)

COMPANY

A KITTY! CHARGE!

(Everyone runs towards CRAIG)

STEPHEN

HISSSSSSS!

(STEPHEN claws the heck out of CRAIG.)

CRAIG

AAAAAH!

(to the audience)
Stephen ran for it. Right into the front yard, into the street, where he was… eaten by a German Shepherd. Maybe not eaten. Maybe just grabbed by the throat –
(The COMPANY member acts this out)
And then shook from side to side – and then tossed into the air, and then smashed into the ground – I like to imagine Stephen died as he lived: Hating all of us.
(CATILYN sinks to her knees and watching the horror.)

STEPEHN

Ack.
(She turns on CRAIG)

CAITLYN

YOU KILLED STEPHEN YOU MURDERER!!!!

CRAIG

Death had come to our 6th birthday party. J.R.R. Tolkien would have been proud.
(back to audience.)
Thus began a series of terrible events that always seemed to result in the death of every pet my sister ever owned.

CAITLYN

My Sea Monkeys, what has happened to my Sea Monkeys?
Mr. Fluff the hamster has committed suicide.

CRAIG

How can a hamster commit suicide?

CAITLYN

He stuck his head in the spokes of his little wheel, and then he pushed. His poor little neck…

CRAIG

William the turtle.

CAITLYN

Poisoned.

CRAIG

Bo-Dag the Guinea Pig.

CAITLYN

Assassinated.

CRAIG

Bo-Dag 2 the second Guinea Pig.

CAITLYN

Stepped on.

CRAIG

Son of Bo-Dag.

CAITLYN

Mom, can I talk to you about something serious?

MOM

What is it honey?

CAITLYN

I think Craig put a curse on me.

MOM

He didn't put a curse on you.

CAITLYN

My guinea pig got away and crawled behind the radiator. And he never came out. And now it smells really bad in the basement.

MOM

Oh honey –

CAITLYN

You did this! You drive them insane! From now on, we are enemies.

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

Anyway, just so you know where I'm coming from. Back to the story. March 1994. My basement. Still haunted by the ghost of a dead guinea pig.

(A placard. Breakup Number 5.)

(AMY has a letter. She's pacing back and forth. CRAIG enters the scene.)

AMY

Okay, before you say anything –

CRAIG

What's going on?

AMY

I want to say that I'm really sorry.

CRAIG

Aw man –

AMY

It's my fault – this is my fault – I thought I could handle this right now, and I've just got so much going on -

CRAIG

But I can help you with that. I can help you.

AMY

I appreciate that, but I don't think -

CRAIG

Amy – come on.

AMY

So I wrote down my reasons in a letter.

CRAIG

I'm not gonna read that.

AMY

Please. I needed to write it down.

CRAIG

This isn't going to stick, you know? You've tried dumping me four time before, and it hasn't worked so far. So whatever I got, you can't stay away.

AMY

You're going to find somebody so much better than me –

CRAIG

No I'm not. Have you seen the other girls around here? They eat cheese for almost every meal! An entire diet of cheese. I swear!

(CAITLYN enters.)

Do you mind!

CAITLYN

What?

CRAIG

We're in the middle of something.

CAITLYN

This is my basement too. Oh is she dumping you again?

CRAIG

I don't know, I haven't even read the letter.

AMY

Hi Caitlyn.

CAITLYN

Hey. You wanna hang out later?

AMY

Um…

CAITLYN

I'm kidding! Oh my god look at you Craig! You almost died right then. Ha ha ha – seriously though if you're done destroying my brother we should hang out.

AMY

I don't know.

CRAIG

Can you please go upstairs?

CAITLYN

Fine.

(CAITLYN exits.)

CRAIG

I preferred it, I think, when you dumped me in the middle of the woods.

AMY

I'm sorry.

CRAIG

So this is…

AMY

I explained how I feel in the letter.

CRAIG

Okay.

(He looks at it – it's three or four single-spaced pages.)

There's a lot of feelings here.

AMY

Yeah. Yeah there are. So will you read it?

CRAIG

Skipping Forward

This doesn't even sound like a real thing.

CRAIG

No it is! I need about three hundred dollars for the field trip, by the way.

DAD

Is this drugs? This sounds like drugs.

(CAITLYN enters.)

CAITLYN

Craig's not cool enough to do drugs, Dad.

DAD

What does that mean?

CAITLYN

He wouldn't even know where to get drugs.

CRAIG

I know where to get drugs!

MOM

What!

CRAIG

In a hypothetical way – I know how to get drugs.

CAITLYN

How.

MOM

Would you stop egging him on?

DAD

Do you know where to get drugs?

CAITLYN

Yes, Dad, because I'm not culturally illiterate.

MOM

I hate it when you talk like this.

CRAIG

Can we get back to my pressing need for three hundred dollars please?

CAITLYN

By the way, Youth in Government is teenager slang for cocaine.

CRAIG

Caitlyn!

DAD

All right I've give you the money, BUT… you are going deer hunting with me.

CRAIG

What?

DAD

To balance out the fruity government stuff.

CRAIG

I don't want to go hunting.

DAD

I don't want to give you three hundred bucks. Come on, every year I ask you and every year you come up with an excuse.

CRAIG

Fine.

(Lights change to the rec hall at the YMCA.)

The YMCA rec room was built in 1910 – it had been a smoking room for young men for about seventy-five years of its existence. It hadn't been painted since the sixties, and was frequently the home of several mutant mice who had been drinking Gatorade for generations. There was a slight air… of malice.

(GROASH enters as the company creates the room.)

GROASH

Where's the pool table?

(AMANDA enters.)

AMANDA

Hey I'm Amanda. I'm your college advisor. Um… Amy pretty much runs the show here. Whatever you guys want to do is cool. I'm not your baby-sitter. I don't even know what this group does. So… yeah. Don't wreck stuff. If you need me, I'll be over here playing pool.

(She spots GROASH and they take up pool cues.)

CRAIG

Now I may have given you the impression that I'm smooth with the ladies, however… that is a total lie, because soon it was time to craft legislation.

(CRAIG sits. AMY hovers over him, showing him what to do.)

AMY

So here's where the intro to the bill goes, where we state the problem.

CRAIG

Okay.

AMY

Is there a problem?

CRAIG

What?

AMY

Is there a problem you see?

CRAIG

Um…

AMY

I know! It's always so hard with me too, right? There are so many things to think about so I usually just say, I'll do healthcare.

CRAIG *(joking)*

Healthcare is for losers!

AMY

My Mom's a cancer survivor, so um…

CRAIG

Like, healthcare is arranged… to create… winners and… losers… which is unfair… and terrible. And someone… maybe me… should really write better laws to help people, since I'm all about helping people.

AMY

Huh.

CRAIG

But that's really complicated, so I'll probably deal with other problems. Um… like leaves. There's a leaf problem. In the fall. They fall down.

(Pause.)

AMY

I'm not sure I understand the problem.

CRAIG

Well my bill um… it's about the leaves falling…

AMY

O-kay. Well um… then in your intro you explain why that's a problem. And then in this section you propose your solution.

CRAIG

Super-glue.

AMY

What?

CRAIG

We super-glue the leaves. To the trees.

(Pause)

I'm kidding! I'm kidding. You totally thought my bill was about super-gluing leaves to trees!

AMY

Yeah I did. Cause you said that. That's why I thought that.

CRAIG

Yeah. No it's um… about mulching. How leaves in garbage bags contribute to the landfill problem and we should make people mulch their leaves or um… shred them. In shredders. Big leaf shredders.

AMY

Great.

(AMY calls out.)

Hey guys – can we please think of other ideas besides lowering the drinking age to eighteen and legalizing marijuana? Thank you.

(GROASH raises his hand.)

GROASH

What about legalizing hemp?

AMY

No.

GROASH

Man. I thought this was gonna be fun.

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

Anyway, this went on for a while until one night when nobody else showed and it was just me and her.

(short pause)

And Amanda.

AMANDA

All right nobody's coming. I'm out of here.

CRAIG

Way to supervise, Amanda.

AMANDA

I don't care.

(She leaves.)

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

So it was me… and her… in a romantic YMCA rec room that smelled faintly of decomposing Cheeto's. I gazed into her eyes. She looked somewhere else.

AMY

You wanna go for a walk or something?

CRAIG

DEAR GOD YES. I mean um… sure.

(Lights change. CRAIG talks to the audience.)

Downtown Janesville is not the most beautiful of all places. However, it does have a picturesque bridge over the river, which is where we happened to end up.

(AMY leans over a railing of some kind.)

AMY

I don't really want to go into politics. Like, when I started doing this, I wanted to, you know? I wanted to change the world. But I'm now I'm pretty sure I don't want to do that.

CRAIG

You're totally cool with the world as is.

AMY

No. But we can change the world in other ways than politics.

CRAIG

Sure. But if there's no leaf mulching bills then what's going to happen to the leaves?

AMY

First of all, in order to manufacture all the super glue you're going to need, you'll have to clear-cut all the forests for glue factories.

CRAIG

I'm cool with that. Price of change.

AMY

And then where are you going to get all the glue?

CRAIG

Probably have to kill all the horses.

AMY

But to get all those horses you're going to have to steal them from the people, so you'll probably have to institute martial law to get them – and of course once you've got martial law, then you'll have a dictatorship, and then after you become a dictator you'll start murdering your political rivals. But the leaves will stay on the trees.

CRAIG

Like I said, it's a small price to pay.

(She laughs, bumps into him flirtatiously.)

(Pause)

AMY

Anyway, so now I don't know what I'm going to do with my life.

CRAIG

I think that's okay. You're only seventeen.

AMY

Eighteen.

CRAIG

Ooh. You're an older woman. Ni-ice.

AMY

I got held back in second grade.

CRAIG

Really?

AMY

Yep.

CRAIG

You're like the smartest girl in the school.

AMY

No I'm not.

CRAIG

You're gonna be the valedictorian.

AMY

Well yeah but that's doesn't mean I'm the smartest.

CRAIG

I can't believe you got held back.

AMY

I couldn't spell. I mean, seriously, I hated school. As soon as we started having spelling tests they put me in remedial English. I mean nobody even bothered testing me for dyslexia at the time, so they just assumed I was stupid and made me repeat second grade.

CRAIG

Man I'm sorry.

AMY

I didn't get diagnosed until eighth grade. I just always assumed I was kind of dumb.

(She reaches down and takes his hand.)
(He notices.)
(Pause.)
(They say nothing.)
(She kisses him.)

(Big happy music.)

AMY *(to the audience)*

That's how we met. Well we met before that, but that's how we got together. Now, any realistic depiction of our relationship would probably gross everybody out right now, so that's why we've elected to use –

(AMY produces an "AMY" Puppet.)

(CRAIG produces a "CRAIG" Puppet.)

And basically, whenever anyone wasn't looking…

(The Puppets make out.)
(Some kind of romantic song, probably from Sarah Maclachlan's "Fumbling Towards Ecstasy" plays.)
(music stops. MOM enters.)

CRAIG

So um… me and Amy are going to be working on our bill upstairs.

MOM

Sure.

(MOM turns her back.)
(Music starts. Puppets make out.)
(Music stops.)
(AMY waves offstage.)

AMY

See you later, Dad!

(Music starts. Puppets make out.)

And sometimes it didn't even matter if there were people there.

(GROASH sits down. CRAIG puppet is sitting in AMY puppet's lap.)

GROASH

Yeah man so um…

(Music starts. Puppets start making out.)

Get a room.

(Music stops.)

AMY

At least I've got somebody to get a room with!

(Music starts again. Puppets make out once more.)

CRAIG

This had never been said about me my entire life. You have to understand, I had been the kid on the outside looking in – I had been the one cursed with killing small innocent animals for no reason – my life was one long –

GROASH

Pathetic, lonely, sad, incompetent, pathetic –

CRAIG

You said that one already. But now –

(Music starts again.)

GROASH

Stop!

CRAIG

All right, slight pause here to introduce the other important characters in this story. My friends. You've met this guy already. His name is Groash.

CAITLYN

Gross?

GROASH

Groash.

CAITLYN

That's not a name.

GROASH

It's short for Groashnewski.

CAITLYN

Wow. I am *so* fascinated by that.

GROASH

Well you asked.

CAITLYN

No I didn't.

(CAITLYN leaves.)

CRAIG

And Brian.

(BRIAN enters. Waves.)

BRIAN

Hi.

CRAIG

And Elizabeth.

(ELIZABETH enters.)

ELIZABETH

Am I supposed to say anything?

BRIAN

I don't know. I just went with hi. He's not being very clear about what he expects.

ELIZABETH

Typical. I'm sure that won't cause any problems in your relationship.

CRAIG

Anyway, we usually got together Saturday nights in my basement cause we were huge dorks.

(The company sets up a card table, one folding chair, and a series of folders and screens for BRIAN. He holds forth from behind his set-up as the Dungeon Master.)

BRIAN

The pit fiend seems unaffected by your lightning bolt.

ELIZABETH

Are you kidding me?!

BRIAN

Spell resistance.

ELIZABETH

What?

CRAIG

You've read the monster manual, right?

ELIZABETH

I haven't memorized it. I have other interests, you know.

BRIAN

Azmeralda, your turn.

GROASH

I hit six times for a hundred and twenty nine points of damage.

BRIAN

What?

GROASH

Boo ya.

BRIAN

Did you even roll?

GROASH

I rolled the dice already. See?

BRIAN

You just set them there!

GROASH

No I didn't. Right, Craig?

CRAIG

Yeah.

ELIZABETH

I saw it.

BRIAN

Okay, new rule: If you roll the dice before I tell you to roll the dice, you always miss.

GROASH

Dude, I hit the thing six times.

BRIAN

Fine. Whatever. You kill it.

GROASH

Boom!

CRAIG

Oh, uh… so next week… um… is it cool if my girlfriend comes?
(Pause.)

BRIAN *(slowly)*

Is it cool if your *girlfriend* comes?

CRAIG

She's really fun.

GROASH

She's really fun for *you*.

ELIZABETH

You have a girlfriend?

CRAIG

You don't have to say that like I just had a virgin birth or something.

GROASH

She's hot too.

ELIZABETH

What?

GROASH

I know.

BRIAN

Does she play?

CRAIG

She wants to learn.
(groans from BRIAN and ELIZABETH.)

BRIAN

No. No. No. Craig –

CRAIG

She wants to hang out on Saturdays and I can't keep lying to her about what I do on weekends.

BRIAN

Craig. This cannot happen.

Skipping Forward

Oh.

CRAIG

I'm following the noble eight-fold path to enlightenment.

DAD

You're still going hunting.

CRAIG

I'm spiritually conflicted about that.

DAD

I'm not.

CRAIG

Dang it.

(To the audience)

So… November came and I was forced on the hunting trip. And I met the hunting crew…

(LYLE enters, in orange, waves.)

Lyle.

LYLE

I may have eaten some burritos on the way here. Just a warning. Steer clear of my rear.

CRAIG

Lyle was generally perceived to be the nicest of the group. Next up -

(BUCK enters.)

BUCK

Yo. My name's Buck. Some people think that's funny cause I shoot bucks. But I don't subscribe to that. I don't find anything funny. All right? So let's just get that out there right now. In addition, if you get in front of me when I'm seeing a buck, I will shoot you, dress you in a deerskin and put you on the hood of my Ford.

CRAIG

And lastly – Uncle Jim, even though he wasn't my uncle.

(UNCLE JIM, wearing orange, enters.)

UNCLE JIM

I been coming up here for fifty-seven years. That's about all I need to say. I am thirty percent bratwurst by body weight. Go Packers.

(They set up camp.)

UNCLE JIM

You don't want to shower on these trips. Deer can smell soap from a mile away. That's why I bathe in doe urine.

BUCK

Nice. Where'd ya get that?

UNCLE JIM

Persistence.

LYLE

Aw man this is the life. If I could be up here the whole year long – away from the womenfolk… man.

CRAIG

They'd probably appreciate that too.

BUCK

You ever got a buck, Craig?

CRAIG

No I believe in non-violence.

BUCK

Huh.

DAD

He's still learning.

BUCK

My friend's son believed in non-violence. You know what happened to him?

CRAIG

No.

BUCK

He's dead now. Killed by violence. So how about that?

CRAIG

That's ironic. Like being named Buck.

BUCK

Yeah it is. Irony's gonna kill ya one day.

CRAIG

You know what this reminds me of? All us men here together? Prison.

UNCLE JIM *(wistful)*

Yeah. Sure does.

(CRAIG steps out.)

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

I was pretty sure I didn't want to kill Bambi, so when I went out into my woods with my Dad, this is what I did.

(DAD crouches, trying to remain hidden in his orange vest.)

CRAIG *(singing)*

OKLAHOMA WHERE THE WIND BLOWS OFF THE PLAIN

DAD

Hey Craig.

CRAIG

Yeah?

DAD

You know, if you give hunting a chance, you might like it.

CRAIG

So if I give standing in the freezing cold in the woods for eight hours in order to kill one of God's creatures a chance, I'm gonna like that?

DAD

You never know.

CRAIG

I'm pretty sure I do.

DAD

Life is full of surprises. Especially for the deer.

CRAIG

I think I'm a conscientious objector.

DAD

Well, when the time comes, you'll know what to do.

CRAIG

Pretty sure I won't.

DAD

Pretty sure you will. Let me tell you something: I've been coming out here with these guys for twenty-three years. I have not missed a time. When your Mom was nine months pregnant, you know what I did?

CRAIG

You went hunting?

DAD

I went hunting.

CRAIG

Was Mom mad?

DAD

One of things you're gonna learn is that women get mad about all kinds of stuff. It's best not to even think about it. But… you know how many deer I've shot in twenty-three years?

CRAIG

How many?

DAD

Zero. You know how many times I've fired my gun? Nine. I've missed nine deer. But I took the shot.

CRAIG

Is there some kind of life lesson here?

DAD

Even if you miss, you gotta keep shooting. All right? And please stop singing the Oklahoma song.

CRAIG

I'll switch to A Chorus Line.

(CRAIG steps out.)

We saw no deer the first day. We saw no deer the second day. By the third day I had started in with choreography, so that really kept them away. And on the last day –

UNCLE JIM

I'll go out with him this time.

DAD

You sure?

UNCLE JIM

Yeah… I'm not gonna get a buck anyway.

(UNCLE JIM comes over and settles next to CRAIG)

Craig.

CRAIG

Hey Uncle Jim.

UNCLE JIM

You singing Showtunes?

CRAIG

It helps calm me.

UNCLE JIM

Sure. We all got our thing. You got a girlfriend?

CRAIG

I think so.

UNCLE JIM

Well you better find out. Let me tell you, though. That first one? Man. That's all the gold in Fort Knox, son. All the gold in Fort Knox.

CRAIG

Yeah.

UNCLE JIM

After that first one? Forget it.

CRAIG

Sure.

UNCLE JIM

Know what I'm saying?

CRAIG

Probably.

UNCLE JIM

Fort Knox. *Savor* it.

CRAIG

Okay.

UNCLE JIM

Cause before you know it… shoot, you're just an old dumb bastard sitting in the woods… and ain't nobody gonna love you like that again.

**The word idiot may replace dumb bastard*

(UNCLE JIM pats CRAIG's knee and walks off.)

CRAIG

I thought about what Uncle Jim said. And that night I wrote Amy a letter.

(CRAIG reads from his letter. AMY is opposite reading it.)

Dear Amy –

Greetings from the godforsaken woods in central Wisconsin. So far I have prevented the murder of all deer nearby, so I feel like I'm performing a public service. Actually, most of hunting is sitting and waiting. They should actually call it waiting, not hunting.

Anyway, it's kind of beautiful here. In the morning there's a sheen of ice over everything like pixies came in the night and pained everything. Actually, if there were pixies we'd probably kill them and strap them to the hoods of our cars and eat them.

I've got your senior picture in my wallet, and I take it out and look at it, which is really dorky and probably a little stalkerish, I guess. But I love looking at it. You have really pretty blue eyes, and they made you tilt your head just a bit to the side, like you were listening to the ground. But I still like that because I imagine you're looking at me.

So I like your eyes. And I like your hair. And I love the way you kind of dance with your hands out when you're listening to music. But, mostly, I like the way you think. I love thinking with you. And I hope we get to do a lot more of it.

I'll see you before you can read this but I won't tell you about it.

Affectionately, Craig.

And then I crossed off "affectionately" because that's a stupid way to end a letter. I thought about writing "Yours" or "Your servant always" or "With kind regards" but I hated all of that, so I just wrote "Craig."

(A company members brings out a placard: Breakup #4)
(A second sign, "this one is Craig's fault.")

(AMY bursts in, with her puppet on her hand.)
(CRAIG follows with his puppet.)

AMY

Are you serious right now?!

CRAIG

Well if you did that with other guys, why wouldn't you do that with me?

AMY

Because we're not there yet!

CRAIG

When are we getting there?

AMY

Never at this rate!

CRAIG

I just don't think it's fair that you've done that with other guys and –

AMY

Not fair?! Did you just say that to me?

CRAIG

Well –

AMY

Just because I've done things with other guys doesn't mean I'm required to do them with you, you got that? DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?

CRAIG

Well I –

AMY

DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?!

CRAIG

Yes, but -

AMY

We're breaking up.

CRAIG

But –

(AMY takes the CRAIG puppet off his hand and slams it on the ground. She storms off.)
(CRAIG stands there.)
(Talks to the audience.)

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

So um…

(CAITLYN enters)

CAITLYN

Your fault.

CRAIG

Huh.

CAITLYN

No seriously. You are dumb as hell. Just… really, really stupid. I mean beyond stupid. Whatever is beyond stupid, that's what you are. You and every guy like you is an immature little goblin, okay? You think she owes you something? You think what she's done with previous boyfriends requires her to do that with you? That it's an obligation? You don't get to hold anyone's previous actions against them. Period. You got that?

CRAIG

Yes.

CAITLYN

Now say, "I am dumb."

CRAIG

I am dumb.

CAITLYN

Thank you.
(She exits)
(CRAIG picks up his puppet and talks to the audience)

CRAIG

My apology took place outside her house at 2 in the morning, and it went kind of like this.
(He mimes throwing a rock.)
I'm throwing rocks at her window, by the way.
(He throws another one)
I'm missing.
(throws another rock)
Really bad at this, actually.
(throws another rock)

(AMY pops her head in.)

AMY *(stage whisper)*

What are you doing out there?

CRAIG *(in basically one breath)*

I am so sorry. I was an idiot. I don't know what's wrong with me. I probably wasn't raised right, and I never meant to get all jealous like that. That was so stupid, and I realize that I don't control your past and I can't judge you for anything you've done before, and there's like a horrible double standard thing and I don't even want to get into that right now, but it's okay, and of course it's okay. You've done things and that's completely fine – it's great actually, it's great, and I think the important thing is that I'm madly in love with you. And I know that you might not be in love with me, and I know that you are having a really hard time right now, in life, and I never, never want to make things harder on you. But I figure I don't want to hide my feelings towards you because you're the best thing that's ever happened to my life, even better than that time I went to Disney World. Way better than Disney World. Disney World actually kind of sucked because I threw up on Space Mountain and the puke got on these people behind me and they were screaming, and I thought they were going to kill me. So as soon as the ride was over, I ran away from the ride and got lost, and I ended up in the Hall of Presidents, which is basically horrible.

AMY

I hated the Hall of Presidents too. All right.

(Breakup #1)
(Amy's place.)

AMY

This is the one that breaks my heart.
October 28th. 1993. My house.

CRAIG

I like your dog.

AMY

Bear? He's a maniac.

CRAIG

I probably shouldn't pet him. I don't have um… very good luck with animals.

AMY

You can pet him.

CRAIG

No I don't want him to run in front of a car or get pierced by an icicle or something.

AMY

Don't worry about it. We got him from a rescue shelter and he's criminally insane. In his spare time he chews on the walls. Seriously. He's eating his way out of the house.

CRAIG

Oh man.

(AMY'S MOM, a very friendly woman, opens the door.)

AMY'S MOM

Knock knock.

AMY

Hi Mom.

AMY'S MOM

I thought I saw you sneak through here.

AMY

This is my friend Craig. We're doing some studying.

AMY'S MOM

Oh sure. Let me see you. Are you ready for a hug? I hug everybody.

Skipping Forward

AMY

I could get in.

AMY'S MOM

She says that – she always overestimates herself.

AMY

I'm the valedictorian of the school, Mom.

AMY'S MOM

Her SAT scores were not great. They look at that, ya know. Amy's only first because she works so darn hard – doesn't have the natural smarts like some people.

AMY

Mom.

AMY'S MOM

It's true.

CRAIG

I think Amy's really smart and she could probably get into any college she wanted to. And that fact that she works really hard is, you know… good.

AMY'S MOM

Okay then. I guess.

AMY

We're actually gonna study now.

AMY'S MOM

Right. Well I'll just be on my way then. You want snickerdoodles?

CRAIG

That sounds great yes.

AMY'S MOM

Snickerdoodles it is!

(She exits.)

(Pause.)

AMY

I am so sorry.

CRAIG

She's really nice.

AMY

She is. She is nice. She is very friendly. So glad I'm not genetically related.

CRAIG

Your room is nice.

AMY

Thanks.

CRAIG

It's like a grown-up lives here. I stapled comic books to my walls. It's not cool. This is like… this is like cultured. You've even got pictures in frames and stuff.

AMY

Thanks.

(CRAIG picks up a book.)

CRAIG

The Tao of Pooh.

AMY

Have you ever read the Tao-Te-Ching?

CRAIG

Not lately.

AMY

It's really cool. I mean it's like, it's basically like Pooh just is, you know? Like Eeyore and Rabbit and Piglet are complaining and nervous and everything, but Pooh is like – Pooh is like effortless, you know? He is Pooh. And he doesn't want to be anything other than Pooh. And that's basically how you should live your life. Well, at least, one way to live your life. Just being.

CRAIG

So is that what you think about when you're by yourself?

AMY

Yeah.

CRAIG

You're like the coolest hot chick I've ever met.

AMY

So… um…

(She looks down at her hands.)

(CRAIG gets out the Craig Puppet.)

No um…

(He puts away the Craig Puppet.)
(AMY looks down.)

CRAIG

Are you okay?

AMY

No.

CRAIG

Can I do anything?
(AMY starts crying.)
What is it?

AMY

I think you're gonna hate me.

CRAIG

No I'm not. Hey. No. No I really like you.

AMY

I know. I really like you.

CRAIG

See?
(AMY is really starting to lose it)
It's okay it's okay –

AMY

I have a boyfriend.
(pause)
I'm so sorry I'm so sorry I didn't mean for this I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm so stupid I'm sorry. I really like you and you're so nice and I thought… I don't know what I was thinking – he's a year older he's in college – I'm so sorry, Craig. I should've told you - I never - I should've…
(pause.)
(AMY looks down.)

CRAIG

Have you told him?

AMY

About what?

CRAIG

About us?
(pause)

AMY

I don't think there can be an us.

(now CRAIG is starting to lose it.)

CRAIG

I want there to be an us.

AMY

I know. I know.

(He turns away from her.)

(She hugs him.)

I'm so sorry… It's okay if you never want to talk to me again…

(Pause)

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

I stayed there a long time. I don't think I wanted to believe that what she said was true. And maybe if I stayed in the room long enough it would go back to the way things were before… but then I saw one of those pictures in a frame on her desk. In a heart-shaped frame. Eventually I made it to the door, and I made it out into the street –

(The Company forms stars.)

And it was so clear that night you could see all those millions of galaxies that I had thought about – and all that cold mystery of us all alone – all of us alone – all of us looking for something that we can't hold on to –

(Lights down)

(End of Act 1)

Act Two

(Lights up on Craig's House.)
(He's laying down, moaning in pain.)
*(A company member holds up a placard, "the aftermath.")_*
(A second company member holds up a placard, "the first aftermath")

(CAITLYN enters, looks at him.)

CRAIG *(moaning in sadness and pain)*

CAITLYN

Did she dump you?

CRAIG

I don't want to talk about it.

CAITLYN

My twin sense was tingling. I could feel your pain.

CRAIG

Thanks.

CAITLYN

Also you're moaning really loud and it's super annoying.

CRAIG

My life has no meaning any more.

CAITLYN

Hey.
(She pats him.)
Your life didn't have any meaning before. All right good talk.
(She turns to exit as MOM enters.)

MOM

Oh honey.

CAITLYN

You're up.
(She exits as MOM comes over to console CRAIG.)

MOM

There will be another girlfriend, don't you worry. You are a very attractive boy. You remember your second grade teacher, Mrs. Williamson? I ran into her the other day and she said, "Craig was also so cute," and I said, "you should see him now."

CRAIG

I'm not sure this is appropriate, Mom.

MOM

I'm your mother, I don't need to be appropriate.

(She pats him)

You know what I do when I feel bad? I make little wishes. Not big ones. Just like, `I wish it would be sunny today,' or `I wish there was an air freshener in the doctor's office.' That helps. Does that make you feel better?

CRAIG

Not really.

MOM

Because you haven't tried the wishing yet. And remember, there are other girls out there. Your father went through a bunch of slutty tramps before he found me. A whole bunch. Just a whole squad of them. And that turned out all right.

(CRAIG gets up)

Remember: Little wishes.

CRAIG

I made a little wish that night. I wished that wolves would eat Amy's boyfriend.

(GROASH, ELIZABETH, and BRIAN enter.)

GROASH

Just think: In thirty years she won't even be that hot anymore. She might still be kinda hot. She might be dirty. You know what I mean?

ELIZABETH

She's making a big mistake. The best thing to do now is just be yourself.

BRIAN

What? That doesn't make any sense. Being yourself is what got you dumped.

ELIZABETH

Just live your life. Be who you are and girls will like you.

GROASH

I'm who I am and girls don't like me.

ELIZABETH

Right.

GROASH
That's why I got a thing where I pretend to be an orphan.

BRIAN
Can we focus please? You guys are fighting the Association of Darkness today and you have no idea what you're up against.

GROASH
Hey you want her back? Pheromones. I'm telling you. That's the secret if you want her back.

BRIAN
He doesn't want her back.

CRAIG
I kind of want her back.

GROASH
Just slather yourself in pheromones. She'll walk by you, and she'll be like, what's that powerful smell? It's Craig. Boom.

ELIZABETH
That's moronic.

BRIAN
If pheromones work, why aren't you using them?

GROASH
I got a natural funk. I don't need to. I think you set your sights too high, dude. For a guy like you, you need to go down the ladder, seek out some wounded antelopes, you know? Sophomores. That's your sweet spot.

ELIZABETH
You're like a scholar of the human condition.

GROASH
I just know women.

BRIAN
Can we please focus on the task at hand? You guys are in the middle of a battle and I put a lot of effort into designing this.

CRAIG *(to the audience)*
And that's when it struck me. A lot of effort. I didn't need pheromones –

GROASH

Yeah you do.

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

Or to be myself, I needed to put effort into this. And there was one great thing I could do to win her back: write perfect legislation and take it to the Youth in Government conference.

(The company brings suits for GROASH and CRAIG. GROASH is putting on a tie.)

GROASH

Dude.

CRAIG

What?

GROASH

How do you do this thing?

CRAIG

You don't know –

GROASH

I don't have a father figure.

CRAIG

Right.

GROASH

So what is your sister looking for in a guy?

CRAIG

Obedience.

GROASH

Cool.

CRAIG

Seriously, if you touch her, I'm going to lose it.

GROASH

Oh. Huh.

CRAIG

Stop it.

GROASH

I've got the fever.

CRAIG

I have access to firearms.

GROASH

Okay. Just putting that out there. Just floating ideas. Just thinking out loud.

(lights up on the Youth in Government Senate.)

(SHELLY HAMMER enters with a group of girls. She has a gavel.)

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

December, 1993. The Youth in Government special session in Madison, Wisconsin. At the state Capitol. This is about four weeks after breakup number one. Shelley Hammer –

GIRLS

Hammertime!

CRAIG

Was from Steven's Point –

GIRLS

THE POINT!

CRAIG

And she was Senate Majority Leader. Amy was Speaker of the House.

SHELLY

What's up, Senators!

GIRLS

Wooo!

GROASH

Yes.

CRAIG

Oh I forgot, Groash and me were in the Senate.

GROASH

These chairs are amazing. I feel like I'm being held by a lover.

SHELLY

Quiet in the Senate please. I don't know how it happens in the other chamber, but in this chamber, we're going to be amazing.

CRAIG

I have a bill I'd like to propose –

SHELLY

Silence. We will respect Robbett's Rules of Order. Step out of line –
(She bangs the gavel)
You will be eliminated.

SHELLY

The Chair recognizes Marcia from Steven's Point –

MARCIA

I speak today about a bill to mandate equal pay for equal work -

SHELLY

The Chair recognizes Dani from Steven's Point –

DANI

I speak today about a bill to slash state funding for men's athletics -

SHELLY

The Chair recognizes Greta from Steven's Point –

GRETA

I'm here to legalize pot.

CRAIG

They were unstoppable. They were like a gang of well-dressed teenage girls rewriting the entire Wisconsin Constitution for their own feminist agenda, which was kind of awesome but also terrifying. If you weren't from Steven's Point, they crushed you.

GROASH

I'm scared, Craig.

MARCIA

I speak today in support of a bill requiring maternity leave for all state employees -

CRAIG

And finally, it was my turn. My chance to pass a bill to make Amy fall in love with me.

SHELLY

The Chair recognizes Craig from Janesville. Get your butt up here.
(CRAIG approaches)

CRAIG

So I've got a bill today –

Skipping Forward

GROASH

Why'd you dump Craig?

(CRAIG puts his hand over GROASH's mouth.)

I mean, cool.

CRAIG

Just watching movies.

AMY

Mind if I hang out?

(GROASH is about to say "yes" but CRAIG stops him)

CRAIG

Nope, not at all.

(AMY sits down.)

(GROASH sits down in-between her and CRAIG.)

(He watches the movie.)

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

The Godfather lasted forty-three hours.

GROASH

Ha ha ha yes.

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

I spent the whole time trying to figure out if Amy liked me.

GROASH

Boom! Death.

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

And afterwards…

AMY

So I'm gonna go for a walk.

CRAIG

It's really cold out.

AMY

Nevertheless, Craig, I am going for a walk. You want to come with me?

GROASH

Okay.

AMY

Just asking Craig.

GROASH

I didn't want to go anyway.

CRAIG

Why yes I would like to go for a walk.
(The company forms stars.)
(Scene change.)
(AMY and CRAIG walk side by side.)

CRAIG

That was a really chipper speech today, by the way.

AMY

I didn't want it to be another rah-rah we're so awesome kind of thing.

CRAIG

When you finished there was like utter silence. If you listened closely you could hear people's dreams dying.

AMY

I think they were moved.

CRAIG

Maybe next time throw in a joke.

AMY

Yeah.

CRAIG

Like, hey, what's wearing a suit and failed today? You guys.

AMY

Shut up.

CRAIG

`By the way, it's my job to prepare you for a life of crushing disappointment. That horrible feeling you're feeling right now? Expect it to continue. In conclusion, this is the best moment in your lives, some of you will die in a car crash soon.' I should've written you speech for you, I could've done a great job. `People of Wisconsin! Kneel before your leader!'
(She pokes him.)
Don't poke me, I didn't come up with the speech celebrating despair.

AMY

It was failure, not despair. And I thought it was deep.

CRAIG

I thought it was about me, actually. Cause I failed.

AMY

How?

CRAIG

My bill went down in flames. I had this whole plan to write a bill and then it would come to you to sign it and you'd be like, `oh my gosh this legislation is amazing I never should've dumped Craig.'

AMY

That sounds pretty realistic.

CRAIG

It was supposed to be a surprise. It's obviously not a surprise so the effect is kind of lost. Like, I almost did this awesome thing. Partial credit.

AMY

What was your bill about?

CRAIG

Um… so I wrote a bill about um… funding diagnostic testing for learning disabilities in elementary school. So… just funding for people to test for dyslexia and other things in elementary school… I thought it would be a good idea.

AMY

Oh.

(They stop walking)

So I broke up with the guy.

(Happy music plays)

(Lights change.)

(The basement.)

AMY

So which die do I roll again?

BRIAN

The twenty.

AMY

Which one is that?

CRAIG

This one.

AMY

Okay.
(she rolls the die.)
Fourteen.

CRAIG

You hit.

AMY

I hit?

CRAIG

Okay now roll two of these.

AMY

All right. Okay. Nine.

CRAIG

Now add your bonuses.

AMY

Where are my bonuses?

CRAIG

Right here.

AMY

Okay, so, plus three, plus six, plus eight –

BRIAN

I can't take it! I cannot take this anymore! This is killing us! No girls. No girls allowed.

ELIZABETH

Hey!

BRIAN

Except for you. You're not even a girl.

AMY

Dude. Hey.

BRIAN

Look, it's not hard. You have a strength bonus, you have a magical weapon, you have specialization, you have proficiency, and you have a preferred enemy bonus. Plus seventeen. Jeez. So that's twenty-six points. Azmeralda?

GROASH

I hit six times for a hundred and thirteen points.

(Lights change.)

DAD

So are you and…

CRAIG

Amy –

DAD

Amy getting… serious?

CRAIG

I'm not sure.

DAD

So what are your plans with her?

CRAIG

I think it's pretty clear that I'm winging it, Dad.

DAD

Right. Mmhm. Winging it.

CRAIG

Relationship-wise.

DAD

Winging it. I'm gonna… I'm gonna put this out there. She seems like a nice person. I'm glad that she seems to like you. I am not ready to become a grandfather.

CRAIG

Dad – that's not what's happening.

DAD

Good. That is good. To know. It's good to know things like that.

CRAIG

Okay.

DAD

I guess this is about the point where I should tell you a few things about love. Um…
(deep breath)

CRAIG

We get it in health class.

DAD

No I mean – love. You're gonna do some really stupid things in your life. I mean, bone-headed, impossibly dumb, unfathomably stupid mistakes. When you were a baby – when you were like four months old, you know what you used to do?

CRAIG

I don't remember. Probably because I was a baby at the time.

DAD

You had dry skin and used to claw your face – and you'd scratch yourself so much that you'd draw blood, so we wrapped your little hands in mittens all the time – And it occurs to me, that that is basically what you're going to do your entire life and my job is to put some damn mittens on you so you don't beat yourself up too much. Okay?

CRAIG

I think I'm all right.

DAD

You think that, but that's because you're stupid. No no no – that's okay, you're seventeen, it is an age of stupidity, you can't help it – you're gonna be dumb as a box of rocks for at least four or five more years. Just don't do something so dumb that you're gonna wreck the rest of your life. And those things are, in order:

CRAIG

Dad.

DAD

One. Get a girl pregnant. Two. Get arrested. Three. Get Married. Four. Not go to college. Do none of those things… and you will be all right.

CRAIG *(to the audience)*

I wasn't doing anything of those things. But I was super annoying. And that's what led to –
(A company member enters with a placard "Breakup #2)
(Second placard: About "three weeks after they got back together")

(Placard: Breakup #2.)

CRAIG

Ever since we had gotten back together it had been like this:

(AMY enters, stands there.)
(CRAIG grabs hold of her, doesn't let go.)
(AMY tries to walk in one direction.)
(CRAIG walks along with her, holding on to her the entire time.)
(She goes the other direction.)
(CRAIG goes with her.)

AMY

So I need to go the bathroom.

CRAIG

I'll miss you.

AMY

Right.

CRAIG

I'll be thinking about you!

(He waves to her as she leaves.)

Yeah I was annoying. And it reached a head on December 28th, 1993.

(AMY returns.)
(CRAIG grabs hold of her again.)

For Christmas I got her a copy of Fantasia. And a copy of the Te of Piglet. And a necklace. And candy.

AMY

Wow. Twelve coupons for back massages.

CRAIG

Yeah.

AMY

What happens when I run out?

CRAIG

I'll just make more.

AMY

So this is not actually a Christmas present.

CRAIG

I guess it's mostly just a promise. Like I will be there for you. When your shoulders hurt. And all other times.

AMY

Skipping Forward

I'm adding the three weeks we were together the first time! Seven weeks total!

AMY

Arrrgh.

CRAIG

I'm not afraid of this! I love you. There I said it.

AMY

This is too much, Craig. You're really freaking me out right now.

CRAIG

I'm freaking myself out too! It's great.

AMY

But you hold the door open for me to go the bathroom.

CRAIG

I'm being a gentleman.

AMY

You call me all the time, just to listen to me breathe. It's bizarre. I get like six notes a day from you that just say, "thinking about you."

CRAIG

I am thinking about you! Those notes are true.

AMY

Let's take a break.

CRAIG

What break?

AMY

Like a… relationship break.

(REM's "Everybody Hurts" plays again)

(CRAIG flops down, moans.)

(MOM darts in.)

MOM

Little wishes.

(She leaves)

CAITLYN

Stop. It.

(She leaves)

(BRIAN and GROASH enter.)

BRIAN

This is a picture of a human female.

GROASH

Yes.

BRIAN

There are somewhere around three billion of these on the planet.

GROASH

Yep.

BRIAN

Pick another one.

(CRAIG steps out.)

CRAIG

Fast-forwarding. We break up a third, fourth, and a fifth time. We get back together a third, fourth, and fifth time.

BRIAN

What does she see in you?

ELIZABETH

I have to admit I'm confused.

CRAIG

My 2nd grade teacher thinks I'm very attractive, all right?! I have skills.

(They shake their heads)

BRIAN

My theory is that Amy picked up a cursed artifact that's causing her to do this.

ELIZABETH

That makes sense.

GROASH

I'm going with that.

CRAIG

You're not even in this scene. Get off the stage.

(They leave)

CRAIG

April 14th, 1994.

(A company member lifts a placard that says "Breakup #6")

A party at Debbie's house. Just outside of town. Her parents owned like twenty acres of farmland with a faint air of malice. Amy wasn't going to be there. I wasn't going to be there. But at the last minute –

CAITLYN

Craig.

CRAIG

I'm not doing it.

CAITLYN

Mom's not going to give me a ride.

MOM

Are their parents going to be home?

CAITLYN

Yes.

MOM

If I call, are their parents going to answer the phone?

CAITLYN

Yes.

MOM

Hmm.

(CRAIG steps out for a moment.)

CRAIG

By the way, I'd just like to point out that Caitlyn can lie better than anyone I've ever met. I know their parents aren't going to be home, Caitlyn knows it, she's basically just daring Mom to call her bluff here. Awesome technique.

(He's back in)

CRAIG

I'm not taking you.

CAITLYN

You can just drop me off. I don't care. I don't really want to be seen with you anyway.

CRAIG

You know maybe if you hadn't gotten three speeding tickets/ then you'd actually have a license.

CAITLYN *(mocking him)*

Meh meh meh meh. Come on.

CRAIG

No. Walk.

CAITLYN

It's five miles out of town.

MOM

Does the bus go out there?

CAITLYN

I'm not taking the bus to a party, Mom.

MOM

Some people have to take the bus.

CAITLYN

I'm glad I'm not those people. Craig. Give me a ride. You're not doing anything.

CRAIG

My friends are/ coming over -

CAITLYN

Nerdfest can survive without you.

CRAIG

Fine.

CAITLYN

Thank you. Was that so hard?

(Lights change. Music. The company creates the party.)

CRAIG

First, let me say, I hate parties. Just a bunch of people standing around. It's not fun. There's no fun here. You know what's fun? Hanging out with your girlfriend and making out. I don't see any point in going somewhere where you can't make out with your girlfriend without everyone getting ticked off. Plus, my sister has like ten billion friends and they are –

(BARNEY, a big happy guy, interrupts him.)

BARNEY

Craig! Dude!

CRAIG

Hey.

BARNEY

Listen to this guy! "Hey." Oh man give me some loving!

(BARNEY hugs CRAIG, then calls out to the rest of the party.)

This guy! This guy right here is AWESOME!

CRAIG

Yeah, thanks.

BARNEY

No man I am serious. I am dead serious! This guy here is like Bill Gates and that other guy like wrapped up into one person, you know what I'm saying! He's like a genius! Like this brain, this brain right here! IT'S AWESOME!

(BARNEY speaks into CRAIG's brain.)

Hello!

(CRAIG breaks out for a second)

CRAIG

I just want to point out that I did not know this guy's name.

(He's back in.)

BARNEY

This guy is gonna be like running stuff one day! Like companies and stuff! Oh man! You want a beer?*

**Feel free to cut the lines until "that's beautiful" if necessary.*

CRAIG

I'm actually the designated driver.

BARNEY

No way! That's so cool man! I respect that. That is worthy of respect. You wanna do a keg stand?

CRAIG

I'm still the designated driver.

BARNEY

Oh yeah. That's like INTEGRITY man. That's beautiful. Can I ask you something? Honestly? Man to man?

CRAIG

Sure.

BARNEY

You hate me right? You totally hate me.

CRAIG

No. Not at all.

BARNEY

Oh man that's great. I was sweating it – I was like Craig hates me. He's just standing here like who is this idiot, you know? And now I'm like – you are good people, man. I love that about you.

CRAIG

Thanks.

BARNEY

I want another hug.

CRAIG

You're already kind of hugging me.

BARNEY

I know, but I'm gonna hug you more. Gimme some.

(BARNEY wraps CRAIG in a bear-hug, probably picks him up.)

Yesssss! That is the stuff.

(He lets CRAIG go.)

I'm so glad you came to this party, man.

CRAIG

I repeat: I did not know this guy was. And as I turned around I saw-

(He spots AMY. AMY is there with GUY.)

(CAITLYN spots her too.)

CAITLYN

Crap.

(The party separates, into the crowded room from early in the play.)

(AMY spots CRAIG across it.)

(She takes a step towards him)

AMY

Hi.

CRAIG

It took me a second before I recognized the guy. I'd seen him before. In a heart-shaped frame.

CAITLYN

Oh man.

(CRAIG leaves)

CRAIG

Outside the house was about twenty acres of woods. I didn't care where I was going – I just couldn't be in that house with her and that guy anymore –

(The company forms trees.)

(In the dark.)

(AMY is chasing after him, weaving in and out of the trees.)

AMY

Craig! Craig, come on!

(She catches him)

Stop! It wasn't what it looked like!

CRAIG

Did you know he was going to be here? Did you plan this?

AMY

There was nothing going on!

CRAIG

You had your arm around him! I'm not an idiot!

AMY

He's a friend. He's just a friend.

CRAIG

He's your ex-boyfriend!

AMY

He was just being nice!

CRAIG

Okay, sure!

AMY

Listen to yourself! You sound like a jealous boyfriend right now!

CRAIG

WHAT?! I am the least jealous person in the universe! I'm also the dumbest! You're lying to me! You lie to me all the time!

AMY

No I didn't!

CRAIG

How long have you been back with him?

AMY

I'm not back with him!

CRAIG

Is this just like us? Do you break up with him all the time, too? Do you just alternate between us?

AMY

I can't do this. I can't. I'm sorry.

CRAIG

Fine. Don't do it then. Just run away like you always do.

AMY

I was sad and I wanted someone to talk to.

CRAIG

You looked really sad.

AMY

You don't know.

CRAIG

Call me if you're sad! Talk to me! Lean on me!

AMY

I don't want to lean on you all the time!

CRAIG

Tell me anything then! I have been nothing but kind and thoughtful and great with you and you're out here cuddling with your ex-boyfriend!

AMY

I can't do this – I'm sorry… I just wanted one minute where I wasn't dealing with crap in my life; and he called up, and I thought it would be fun. You hate these things; you didn't want to come out, so I went with him. And, fine, I was having a good time, but I can't…You can't force these expectations on me like I'm supposed to be perfect! I wasn't doing anything. I love you, but I just…I can't be with you right now.

CRAIG

You can't be with me?! You weren't with me! You were with him!

AMY

Stop it! I'm not having this stupid fight!

CRAIG

Maybe you should've thought of that before –

AMY

My Mom's got chemo on Monday, okay? She's going in on Monday. Her cancer came back. All right?

CRAIG

…I didn't know that.

AMY

I didn't tell you. I didn't wanna… burden you with it.

CRAIG

How long have you known?

AMY

About two months.

CRAIG

…oh.

AMY

My mom's probably going to die, okay? And you're right. I don't know how the hell I am. So I can't… How can I be with you when I don't know who I am? And I just keep hurting you. I keep hurting you all the time, and I can't help it.

(She moves away from him)

You want so much from me that I can't give you right now! I wish I could just be a good, happy person—in love and happy and all that, but that's not me right now! And I'm sorry that I keep blowing things up and—

(She runs off and runs face-first into a tree branch and hits the ground.)

CRAIG

Amy?! Amy?!

(AMY gets up, holding her face.)

End of Excerpt.
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