

Hope

by

Francesca Maslin

Cast of Characters

SOPHIE..... Hospital Patient, 16
 JAY..... Sophie's Roommate, 17
 ALEX..... Sophie's Roommate, 17
 CHRIS..... Sophie's Therapist, 26
 DR. KABIR HEEM..... Sophie's Doctor, 57
 JESS..... Hospital Patient, 14
 HOPE..... Hospital Patient, 17
 CHELSEA..... Hospital Patient, 16
 RAY..... Hospital Patient, 16
 MARY..... Hope's Mother, 38
 OFFICER 1..... Police Officer
 OFFICER 2..... Police Officer
 NURSE 1..... Nurse
 NURSE 2..... Nurse
 JANE..... Sophie's Mother

TIME: One week's time. April, 2013.

PLACE: Delaware, United States.

SETTING: Rockford Center: Behavioral Healthcare Facility.
 Delaware's first private psychiatric facility.

Hope
Act I
Scene I

[Lights up. Sophie has just arrived at Rockford Center. She is a troubled teenage girl who arrived at Rockford after her most recent suicide attempt. She is greeted by one of her new roommates, Jay. Jay is fairly new to Rockford as well compared to other girls in the adolescent unit. She is dealing with a lot but does not often show her struggles. Alex, their other roommate, is asleep on the bed next to Sophie's. Sophie begins to place her belongings on the floor next to the empty bed.]

JAY

Hey. Welcome to Rockford. I'm Jay.

SOPHIE

Sophie.

JAY

How'd you end up here, huh?

SOPHIE

Oh um, my attempt didn't really work.

JAY

Oh... well, I'm sorry. I'm glad it didn't work though. Everything sorta happens for a reason, at least that's what I've been trying to tell myself.

SOPHIE

Thanks, I guess. How 'bout you? How'd you end up here?

JAY

Honestly, I was really depressed and suicidal. I skipped school and wouldn't really talk much. My parents made me come here.

SOPHIE

I know that feeling. Are you sad a lot?

JAY

Yeah, I guess you could say that. I have Depression, anxiety, and PTSD.

SOPHIE

Wow. That's a lot. PTSD? I always thought of PTSD as something having to do with like soldiers or war.

[Jay laughs.]

JAY

Yeah, that's how a lot of people react. How 'bout you? I guess they diagnosed you at the hospital before coming here?

[Sophie is still trying to take it all in. She responds almost distractedly.]

SOPHIE

Severe Depression, Anxiety, and ADHD.

JAY

Damn. That's tough luck honestly, but hopefully they can help you quickly so you won't be stuck in this prison for too long.

SOPHIE

Have you been here long?

JAY

2 months in a couple of days. It's weird though. It feels like I've been here for an eternity. My parents only visit every other weekend, so that's probably why.

[Sophie looks around, fearful and disgusted.]

SOPHIE

I don't know if I'll be able to last here that long. Just look at this place! Barred windows? No door on the bathroom? How do you even live here? I might go insane!

JAY

In their eyes, you already are...

[Sophie takes this pretty deeply. She points at Alex asleep on the bed.]

SOPHIE

What about her? What's her story?

[Jay begins to sit on her bed.]

JAY

I think it's best if Alex tells you herself. Did they explain the rules to you when you checked in?

SOPHIE

They mentioned that I can't leave my room until instructed.

JAY

They just have a few tests they need to run on you. It's nothing too scary so don't worry about it. Also leaving the room is considered a *privilege*. Privileges here are based on a level system. The higher the level, the more privileges you have.

SOPHIE

So, what level am I on now?

JAY

Technically you're not. Tomorrow you'll go through the process of leveling up, completing different tasks and stuff. I can explain how it all works tomorrow. You should try and get some sleep though. This can be hard at first. I really struggled when I first got here. I refused the medication and wouldn't show up to group.

SOPHIE

Is that why you've been here so long?

JAY

I mean, yeah. I guess that's why. A lot of girls come in here for like a week and then leave. But there are some who have been here a lot longer than I have.

SOPHIE

I have a bad feeling about this.

JAY

It's a challenge, but we have to face challenges head on to get the best results. That's what Chris always says.

[Sophie sits on the bed, still intently focused but expresses some discomfort.]

SOPHIE

Whose Chris?

JAY

He's our group therapist. You're going to love him.

SOPHIE

These beds are pretty interesting. Feels like they're filled with cement. Are they?

JAY

Some nights it definitely feels that way. You get used to it after a while. I was tempted to sleep on the floor the first few nights.

[Sophie's memory is sparked.]

SOPHIE

Oh, Oh my god, the floor!

JAY

What about it?

SOPHIE

I forgot to ask you about the girl outside our door. She was crying on the floor when I came in. She looked at me like she knew me or something but I've never seen her before. Who is she?

JAY

No one knows her name. She refuses to sleep in a room, so she sleeps on the floor usually outside our door. She roams the halls a lot though, so her moaning shouldn't be too unbearable for you.

SOPHIE

I mean, by the feel of the mattress can anyone blame her? I might have to join her.

JAY

Fair warning, she can be pretty loud when you're trying to fall asleep. I've grown used to it by now, but you may struggle. She's just really troubled I guess. I don't know. I've never talked to her. We are all kind of scared to.

SOPHIE

I noticed the carvings on her forearms; those are deep. I've never seen anything like it before. Her slippers are interesting too. It looks like she drew sad faces in on some of the polka dots.

JAY

It's pretty sad. No one really knows anything about her or how she ended up with those markings. She doesn't usually show up to group therapy or lunch... or really anything at all. I feel kind

JAY Cont'd

of bad for her. If you really want to know more about her, I would talk to Jess. I'm sure you'll meet her tomorrow.

SOPHIE

Has she been here long?

JAY

Who, Jess?

SOPHIE

Yeah.

JAY

Longer than most of the girls in the adolescent unit. She is a level 3. That's the highest you can go here. A level 3 is at least a year.

SOPHIE

And what about the other levels? What level are you on?

JAY

I'm on Level 2. So basically that means I can use the vending machine, get an extra hour of free time, and make 2 phone calls a night instead of 1.

SOPHIE

How is that different from level 3?

JAY

Level 3 is the highest. You actually get to go outside for an hour a day when you're a 3. You get 2 phone calls, stay up an hour later, use the vending machines, control the tv, and listen to music.

SOPHIE

And tomorrow I'll be a 1?

JAY

Yeah! So you can join us for group, in the caf., and you'll get 1 phone call per night! It has to be someone who is on your contact list though.

SOPHIE

That's not too bad I guess.

JAY

Don't worry, I have a good feeling about you. You seem to be different from all the other girls. Maybe tomorrow when you level up I can show you around and introduce you to some of them?

SOPHIE

That would be great, thanks.

JAY

Wow, I can't believe it's 8:50 already. Lights out's in ten minutes. I'll see you in the morning.

SOPHIE

Night!

JAY

Goodnight!

[Sophie lays down while Jay turns off the lights. She expresses great worry in her face as she is bombarded with emotions. Lights fade out. Lights fade in. Spotlight on the clock by Sophie's bed. It displays 2 a.m. Moaning is heard from offstage. Black Out.]

Hope

Act I

Scene II

[Lights up. Sophie wakes up to loud knocking on the door. She notices that Jay and Alex are no longer in their beds. She opens the door to find an innocent looking twelve-year-old girl, Jess, staring at her. She has breakfast materials in her hands. Sophie is still visibly exhausted.]

SOPHIE

Uh, Hello?

JESS

Hey. You're Sophie right?

SOPHIE

Uh Yeah...

JESS

I'm Jess! I'm one of the girls in the unit. Can I come in?

SOPHIE

Yeah, sure. Jay mentioned you last night. She said maybe you'd be able to answer some questions for me?

[Jess comes in and places the tray on the desk. She sits on the edge of the closest bed.]

JESS

Ok... well what kind of questions? I can tell you all about this place! I've been here for a little over a year now.

SOPHIE

Do you know anything about the girl with those carvings down her arms? I'm not trying to be nosey or anything, but the way she looked at me last night kind of stuck with me. It's almost as if she knows me from somewhere.

JESS

Hmmm... that's interesting. We call her Myrt. That's short for Myrtle, which is also short for moaning Myrtle. My roommate came up with the name, she loves Harry Potter.

SOPHIE

So no one knows her actual name?

JESS

I guess not. No one really talks to her. Everyone is pretty scared. A lot of people are just too annoyed, honestly.

SOPHIE

Why?

JESS

This is your first day here, so you have a lot to learn. Last night, what you heard while trying to fall asleep, is the main reason why no one tries to talk to her. She makes it pretty difficult to like her.

SOPHIE

Ok, so no one really acknowledges her? You all just go about your lives without talking to her?

JESS

I guess we really only think about her when we hear her constant moaning as we try to fall asleep. I've been able to block it out for the most part, but sometimes it can be overwhelming.

SOPHIE

So I'm assuming no one knows her story, huh?

JESS

No, sorry. Wish I could help you out but I don't know much when it comes to her.

SOPHIE

Well thanks anyway.

JESS

If it makes you feel any better, I brought some breakfast for you. I'm sure you're probably feeling kind of hungry.

SOPHIE

Yeah, kind of. Thanks.

JESS

No problem.

SOPHIE

Oh um, do you know when can I leave my room? They told me I couldn't but no one has really been in to check on me. A nurse came in this morning to draw blood but didn't even wait for me to wake up.

JESS

You woke up to a needle in your arm? That's terrifying.

SOPHIE

Yeah. Like, is that even legal?

JESS

I don't really know. It's scary though. But you can leave your room after we're done talking. Basically there is a whole level system that goes on here.

SOPHIE

Yeah, Jay mentioned that last night.

JESS

Oh, cool! Ok so after you finish breakfast, you'll meet Dr. Heem. He'll talk about a treatment plan and boring doctor stuff. As soon as you're done your meeting with him, you get promoted to level 1.

SOPHIE

Well that's simple enough. I don't know why I was so worried about this.

JESS

I'm a level 3 so I can do a lot of cool stuff like go outside and stay up an hour later; I can even use headphones to listen to music.

SOPHIE

How long did it take you to reach that?

JESS

Well, I did a lot of good deeds and things, constantly helping the nurses and other patients, little things. Kind of like what I'm doing now, bringing you breakfast. After about a year, they decided to promote me to level 3.

SOPHIE

Wow, that's really great.

JESS

Thanks! [Jess stands] Well hey, I'll let you get ready, and I can walk you over to Heem's office. Just come grab me when you're done. I'm in room 4.

SOPHIE

Sounds good!

JESS

Ok, perfect. See you in a sec.

[Jess exits. Sophie begins to get ready as lights fade to black.]

Hope

Act I

Scene III

[Lights up. Sophie and Jess are walking to doctor Heem's office.]

SOPHIE

Thanks for walking me over.

JESS

No problem. It's nice to have someone to talk to, makes us feel less alone.

SOPHIE

Yeah, that's true.

[Beat.]

Hey you know what's strange?

JESS

What?

SOPHIE

The shower. I showered this morning and the water shut off every 5 seconds! Why is it so short? Are they trying to save money or something?

JESS

Burning.

SOPHIE

What?

JESS

It's because of the burning. They don't want the water to stay on for more than 5 seconds at a time because we can burn ourselves with it.

SOPHIE

You can't be serious?

JESS

When I first got here, one of the girls in the unit burned herself in the shower. She left the hot water running and stayed in it for so long that she had to get transferred out. She had like 2nd or 3rd degree burns or something. After that, they decided to set the showers so that couldn't happen again.

SOPHIE

That's crazy.

JESS

Hey, be careful throwing that word around. A lot of these girls are pretty sensitive and unpredictable.

[Hope enters from off stage and stares at Sophie as she walks passed. Hope continues off-stage.]

SOPHIE

Please tell me you saw that too!

JESS

Yeah, I see what you mean now. She looked at you like she was gonna say something. Are you sure you don't know her?

SOPHIE

I'm positive. I've never seen her in my life.

JESS

That's pretty strange. Well, listen, I hope your session with Heem goes well. By the time you're done here, maybe you'll be able to catch group today!

SOPHIE

Yeah. Maybe I'll catch you there.

JESS

See you later.

[Jess exits. Dr. Heem opens the door.]

HEEM

Ah Hi. Sophie?

SOPHIE

Yeah.

HEEM

I am Dr. Kabir Heem. I will be working most closely to you during your time here at Rockford.

SOPHIE

Ok.

HEEM

Let's chat a little. Please, sit.

[Sophie sits. She stares around the room as Heem closes the door and takes a seat across from her.]

How was last night for you? Did you get some sleep?

SOPHIE

Not too great. I woke up to a nurse sticking a needle in my arm, and it was also kind of noisy. It was kind of hard to sleep.

HEEM

Well, tonight should be better for you. I'm going to prescribe you some sleeping medication along with a few other medications that will help with your anxiety and depression. I noticed your chart also mentioned ADHD. I believe we should work with the anxiety first and make sure that isn't a cause.

[Heem begins writing prescriptions.]

SOPHIE

Oh no, I don't think you understand. I don't need sleeping pills. I sleep fine. The other pills would be great but I've never had a problem with sleeping.

HEEM

You need to be on them. I will write the prescription and you will start all of the medications tonight.

SOPHIE [Raising her voice]

No. I don't want the pills! I don't have trouble sleeping!

HEEM

I think it is best that you refrain from raising your voice unless you want to receive a shot.

SOPHIE

A shot?

HEEM

Yes. Shots add up. The more shots, the worse the punishment. I trust that knowing this information will change your decision to refuse treatment.

SOPHIE

I'm not refusing the treatment, I just wanted you to know that I don't have trouble sleeping.

[Heem ignores Sophie.]

HEEM

We will also be getting your blood and urine test back very shortly. I will talk with you about your results and we can go from there. For now, I'd like you to head over to group therapy with Chris, and tonight you will need to go to the front desk

HEEM *Cont'd*

and take the medications, the sleeping pills included. Nice meeting you Sophie. I will see you soon.

[Heem stands and motions to the door. Sophie stands and exits the doctor's office, and heads towards the multi-purpose room for group therapy. She is greeted at the door by Chris, the very enthusiastic therapist.]

CHRIS

Hi! You're just in time. Sophie, right?

SOPHIE

Uh, yeah.

CHRIS

Welcome to your first group session. I'm Chris. I lead most group and individual sessions. We are just taking a little break right now so feel free to find a seat and chat. Oh, here is a little snack for you.

[Chris hands Sophie crackers and juice.]

JAY

Hey Sophie. How did it go today? [Jokingly] Level 1 looks good on you.

[Sophie takes a seat in between Alex and Jay.]

SOPHIE

What the hell is up with Dr. Heem? He prescribed me pills I don't even need.

JAY

He's *THE* worst. He is known for pulling stuff like that.

ALEX

Ah, good ol' Dr. Heem. What a fucking prick. He can rot in hell.

SOPHIE

Alex, right?

ALEX

The one and only. You're the new cell mate huh?

SOPHIE

Yeah that's me.

ALEX

Welcome to Rockford where every day is an eternity and the only doctor here is a complete fucking asshole.

SOPHIE

So I take it you're not a fan of him then?

ALEX

He's a literal piece of shit. He's given me so many shots. When my parents came to visit, He always put me into a session so

they couldn't see me. They didn't want to keep making the commute so they just stopped coming all together because of him.

SOPHIE

I'm so sorry... I can't even imagine.

CHRIS

Alright ladies, let's get back to our seats. We have a new friend joining us for the rest of this session. Sophie, would you like to introduce yourself?

SOPHIE

Um... I don't know.

CHRIS

Alright, how about we go around in a circle and talk about why we are here?

ALEX

Like on Earth? Well that's easy. I'm Alex and I'm here because my heart is still beating, unfortunately.

CHRIS

Ok... Thank you for that thoughtful response Alex. Why don't each of you share your name and then a fun fact, maybe something we wouldn't know just by looking at you? Jay, let's start with you.

JAY

Ok, sure. I'm Jay, and most people don't know that I collect quarters from different states.

CHRIS

Thank you Jay. That's really nice. Let's continue in this fashion. Sophie?

SOPHIE

Um, ok. Well, hi, everyone. I'm Sophie. My favorite movie is Bridesmaids.

CHELSEA

I'm Chelsea. I'm a huge Harry Potter fan.

RAY

Name's Ray. My girlfriend is a huge Harry Potter fan, so I guess that makes me one too.

[Chelsea smiles shyly at Ray.]

JESS

I'm Jess and I LOVE chocolate.

CHRIS

Thank you everyone for sharing. Who would like to start? Tell us a little bit about your plans for today, how you're feeling, and maybe how your progress is coming along?

[No one volunteers.]

Anyone? [Pause.] Jess, how 'bout you doll?

JESS

Sure thing. Well this morning I woke up and...

[Hope grudgingly enters. She stares at Sophie.]

CHRIS

Hi, welcome. Please come in and grab a seat wherever you can.

[Hope sits directly across from Sophie and stares. At a whisper, Sophie and Jay begin.]

SOPHIE

Do you see her? Why does she keep staring at me like that?

JAY

I don't know. Try not to look at her.

JESS

So anyway, I woke up this morning and I brought some breakfast to Sophie.

CHRIS

And how did that feel? Doing something good like that.

JESS

It was really great, actually. It felt good to be helpful. My plan for the rest of today was to write letters to my family. It's been a couple months since I've heard from them.

CHRIS

Wonderful. You are so very thoughtful.

JESS

Thanks Chris. Oh, what was the other question?

CHRIS

Your progress. How do you feel about your progress? Do you have any tips that maybe could help some of our newer group members?

JESS

I'm, well... I guess today makes 407 days clean now. My progress has been great. At first I really struggled with it, but everything got easier after a while. I find talking helpful.

CHRIS

That's great Jess, thank you. Alex. How about you?

ALEX

Well today sucked. Umm I woke up with a headache. Was forced to take medication I don't even need. I sat in the cafeteria and forced myself to eat the slop we are served. I'd rather starve actually, no offense to those struggling with all that shit. Then I came here and now I feel kind of annoyed.

CHRIS

Why are you feeling annoyed?

ALEX

I hate being here. I'm so over all of this. I'm not making progress. I just want to go home and see my family.

CHRIS

I've noticed a great change in you Alex. You are doing better than you think.

ALEX

You get paid to say shit like that. You don't actually have to mean it.

JAY

Alex, calm down.

ALEX

I am calm dude. I just don't want to be here.

SOPHIE

I don't think anyone does.

[Beat.]

CHRIS

Why don't we wrap up early today and that will give you all some extra time for your free time activities before lunch. Thank you, girls.

[All of the girls seem to disperse into their own rooms. Sophie, Jay and Alex head back to their room. Hope stays behind in the room, watching Sophie as she exits. Sophie is unaware of Hope's looks.]

SOPHIE

Hey, Alex. Are you alright?

ALEX

Yeah. I'm fine. Thinking about Dr. Heem just made me so mad and I couldn't think straight after that.

SOPHIE

I'm really sorry. I didn't know about your parents or anything.

ALEX

They haven't been here in 6 months. No visits, no letters, no calls. I just don't think they care about me anymore.

[Jay opens the door and they all sit in their beds.]

JAY

I'm sure they care about you.

ALEX

My family has never been like yours Jay. Your mom and dad visit almost every weekend. You don't even know what it's like.

JAY

You're right. My family has never been like yours because I didn't have one for a while. You know my mom's death put me in the system. [Pause.] I bounced around homes for years until my adoptive parents, Charlotte and Gary, took me in.

SOPHIE

You didn't mention you were adopted.

JAY

I grew up in a home with a few siblings, 2 brothers and 1 sister. My mom couldn't take care of us, but it wasn't her fault. My father was a disappearing act. I barely even remember what he looked like. My mom was caught in a crossfire during a robbery and the police couldn't find my dad so me and my siblings were put in the system. I collect quarters because that's what the police found on her. She had 5 quarters in her pocket, all different states. I thought maybe collecting the rest of them could help me feel closer to her.

SOPHIE

Jay, I'm so sorry. I don't even know what to say.

JAY

It's ok, Soph. [Sharply] But you know what Alex? I may have a different family life now, but I know what it's like to feel alone and discarded by everyone.

ALEX

Jay, I'm so sorry. I knew you were adopted but I didn't know about your mom.

JAY

Why don't you tell Sophie why you're here, huh? You know everything about me now. Why are you here in the first place? I can answer that for you; you lie all the time. You know the real reason why your parents don't come and you can just never admit it.

ALEX

Fuck off, Jay. I don't need this shit right now. I don't lie all the time.

JAY

Then why don't you just tell Sophie the truth? Why are you here Alex?

SOPHIE

Alex you don't have to if you don't want...

ALEX

I'm here because I lied to my parents, ok? I told them I was a part of a play at school, but I would actually go to my boyfriend's house. It worked for a while. They actually believed

ALEX *Cont'd*

I was a part of something, but I knew they would find out as the school's show got closer.

SOPHIE

So you lied about being in a show and they put you here?

ALEX

My parents are very religious people, so I was not allowed to date. My boyfriend at the time knocked me up. I was too young and I couldn't handle it, so I had an abortion. My parents found out about all of it through my texts with him.

JAY

You never told me you had an abortion?

ALEX

I was destroyed by what I did. I tried killing myself and now I'm here. I can't even think about it. Jesus, what the fuck is wrong with me?! Why did I get to decide who lived and died? That was my damn kid and I killed it. It should have been me! I killed my fucking kid.

[Alex begins to mentally break. She becomes physically affected and creates attention from medical personnel.]

I killed it. I KILLED IT!! I KILLED IT!! I KILLED IT!!

[Nurse 1 opens the door accompanied by Nurse 2. Hope is seen in the hallway as the nurses carry the inconsolable Alex out of the room. Alex is seen screaming even while carried off-stage. Hope looks unaffected by the situation. Sophie and Jay are visibly disturbed. Lights out.]

Hope

Act I

Scene IV

[Lights dim. Sophie and Jay are trying to fall asleep, lying in bed. They whisper about Alex as Hope is heard moaning offstage. It is 2 a.m., 2 days after Alex was taken.]

SOPHIE

What do you think they are doing to her? It's already been 2 days!

JAY

I don't know. I just know this was my fault.

SOPHIE

This wasn't your fault.

JAY

I shouldn't have pushed her to tell you.

SOPHIE

It was her choice though. We all break sometimes. Just don't worry about it.

JAY

God, this girl won't shut up! I guess it's 2 a.m. huh? It's like clockwork. I just want to go to bed.

SOPHIE

It's kind of soothing.

JAY

Usually I don't even realize it's happening, but tonight It's just too hard to ignore it.

SOPHIE

You know what Alex would say?

JAY

What?

SOPHIE

She would say, Jay? Stop being a little bitch.

JAY

Oh my god. You're so right. She'd probably get out of bed and tell moaning Myrt to shut it.

SOPHIE

Oh, definitely.

[Silence fills the room.]

Why don't you try and get some sleep?

JAY

Yeah, I'll try.

[Black out. Hope is still heard moaning until lights come up.]

Hope

Act I

Scene V

[Lights up. It is the 2 days after Alex's break down. Sophie is in a session with Heem. Both of them are seated across from one another. He begins grilling her after her results return. He becomes hostile very quickly.]

HEEM

Do you want to tell me why there were traces of THC in your urine sample?

SOPHIE

What is that?

HEEM

I was hoping you could tell me.

SOPHIE

I have no idea what you're talking about.

HEEM

Marijuana. Traces of THC were found in your system so do you want to tell me why you are using illegal drugs? Are you self-medicating?

SOPHIE

I've never smoked before. I've only ever seen pictures of marijuana in health class.

HEEM

(Aggravated) Why are you lying about this? It is clear that you have used marijuana in some form. Lying will result in a shot, Sophie.

SOPHIE

You have to believe me Dr. Heem, I've never touched it.

HEEM

I'm giving you a shot for lying to your doctor. Do you want to tell me why you are using this drug?

SOPHIE

Please. I've never touched it. I don't know how it got in my system.

HEEM

That's 2 shots. Don't try me Sophie. I don't have time for games. I have a lot of other patients who want to get help.

SOPHIE

(Sarcastically) Ok. Ok. Yeah I smoke, a lot.

HEEM

Now, was that so hard? Let's just focus on a treatment plan. We have a lot to figure out. What's your experience with self-harm? Based on your body map, your self-injury is extensive.

SOPHIE

I guess it started in 6th grade.

HEEM

Why?

SOPHIE

I was just upset about what was happening to me and took it out on myself.

HEEM

And what was happening?

SOPHIE

I never really felt safe at home or school or really anywhere. I guess I cut because it feels like the negative thoughts and feelings I have kind of left me. I don't know how to explain it, but the feeling of those thoughts leaving me is almost numbing.

HEEM

Why so many negative thoughts and feelings though? Where does this all stem from? Mainly family?

SOPHIE

I think it kind of stems from my dad's wife and her kids. They made seeing him so difficult that I had to stop going. They ruined my relationship with him.

HEEM

Do you talk to him at all? Have you told him how you felt?

SOPHIE

I've told him before but he kind of just took her side. He didn't seem to care.

HEEM

Let's try and discuss some coping mechanisms. What seems to help you other than cutting?

SOPHIE

I usually just cut or burn or snap rubber bands.

HEEM

Have you tried any breathing exercises? Maybe Yoga?

SOPHIE

No, I haven't. Sometimes I'll listen to music. That helps a little bit.

HEEM

When was the last time you inflicted pain upon yourself?

SOPHIE

I guess it's already been 4 days.

HEEM

What was the longest you've gone without harming yourself?

SOPHIE

[Pause] 4 Days...

HEEM

This is the longest you've gone?

SOPHIE

Yeah. I was used to doing it every day.

HEEM

I'm hopeful that this medication I put you on will be very helpful to you. It will be a great aid in combatting those thoughts that make you want to inflict pain on yourself. Along with the medication, I want you to try and do some deep breathing exercises. Simply breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 7, and then out for 8. This will calm you.

SOPHIE

I can try that.

HEEM

Let us try it together, okay? Ready?

[Heem counts as Sophie follows his instruction.]

In for 4...

[Sophie inhales for 4 seconds.]

Hold for 7...

[Sophie holds her breath for 7 seconds.]

Out for 8...

[Sophie exhales for 8 seconds. Heem asks as she releases.]

How did that feel for you?

SOPHIE

That felt ok.

HEEM

It has been my observation after watching you these past couple days in different sessions that you will be okay to go home tomorrow. You have this new breathing technique and your medication will start to work for you. Next week you will begin outpatient therapy. I feel as though your time living here need not be longer than warranted.

SOPHIE

I'm going home? Tomorrow?!

HEEM

Yes. Why don't you head over to the multipurpose room and join the other girls for creativity time?

SOPHIE [Uncertain]

Thank you, Dr. Heem.

[Black out.]

Hope

Act I

Scene VI

[Lights up. Sophie walks in to the multipurpose room and tells Jay she is leaving tomorrow. Jay is seated at a table with crafts and art supplies. Sophie has a sudden realization.]

JAY

Hey girl. How's it going?

SOPHIE

I don't know. Honestly I don't know what's wrong with me.

JAY

Sit down. What happened? Is it because of Alex? I'm sure she's okay. It's only been 2 days since they took her. She most likely just keeps cursing them out, extending her time.

SOPHIE [Refusing to sit.]

It's not about Alex. Yeah I mean, I'm upset about her but Dr. Heem is sending me home tomorrow. I'm starting outpatient next week.

JAY

That's so great! Aren't you excited? I'd be thrilled.

SOPHIE

I can't go home. Everything's gonna be different.

JAY

Why?

SOPHIE

Everyone knows I'm a fuck up now. I can't come back from this.

JAY

Calm down. It's going to be ok. You need to try breathing.

SOPHIE

That doesn't fucking work. I need an actual release.

JAY

You're doing fine. Just relax.

SOPHIE

I couldn't even kill myself right. [beat.] That's how much of a failure I am. Now I have to go back and face my family. I'm not ready to go home. I can't.

JAY

You are not a failure! Listen, I'm gonna be late for my session with Heem. Why don't you try to calm down? Try drawing or something. That might help. Let's talk when I get out ok?

SOPHIE

Yeah, I guess.

[Jay exits. Sophie tries drawing and ends up writing a note. She reads the note out loud as she writes.]

SOPHIE

Ok. You are stronger than you think. Don't give up hope.

[She begins sobbing. She has a sudden realization. She peers into the hallway and sees the Nurse 1 go into the bathroom. She grabs a golf pencil from the basket and sticks it, and the note, in her sports bra. She heads back to her room and passes Hope in the hall. As Sophie walks by, the pencil slips out and falls to the floor. Hope sees but keeps walking, seemingly unaffected. Sophie quickly recovers the pencil and runs

into her room. We see her cut a hole into her pillow and stick the pencil inside. Black Out.]

Hope
Act I
Scene VII

[Lights up. Sophie is lying in bed. She is staring at the pencil and holding toilet paper on her leg (quad). She is visibly upset. Jay enters and notices.]

JAY

Hey! I'm back.

SOPHIE

Hey.

JAY

What are you doing? What is that?

SOPHIE

I'm not doing anything.

JAY

What the hell is in your hand?

SOPHIE

It's a pencil.

JAY [Raising her voice.]

And why do you have it? We can't have those out of the room. How did you even get that in here? That's so dangerous!

SOPHIE

Shhh! Keep your voice down! I needed it for something.

JAY

What kind of something?

SOPHIE

The breathing didn't work and we can't have music as a level 1 so I had to improvise.

JAY

Oh my god. You fucking cut? Please say no.

SOPHIE

I had no other choice!

JAY

You need to put the pencil back. Let me see your leg.

[Sophie unwraps her leg. There are a plethora of cuts. The skin is irritated and red.]

Jesus Christ Soph. What were you thinking?

[Sophie covers her quad up.]

SOPHIE

I don't know. I guess I wasn't.

JAY

You're right. You didn't think AT ALL!

[Jay turns her back to Sophie as she walks towards some of her belongings.]

SOPHIE

I'm sorry, Jay.

JAY

Don't apologize to me. You should apologize to your body for destroying it. Why would you want to do that to something you have to live in for the rest of your life?

SOPHIE

I guess I never thought about it like that.

[Jay turns back around.]

JAY

Don't you know that people really care about you? Damn it Soph.

[Jay sits next to Sophie on the bed.]

Why don't you bring it to group and then put it back after we finish?

SOPHIE

Can you stay with me when I do?

JAY

Yeah, I will.

SOPHIE

I guess we should probably head over now so we aren't late.

JAY

It's 7:00 already? Jesus. Yeah, let's head over.

[Sophie and Jay get themselves together. Sophie throws on pants to cover up her quad.]

SOPHIE

I can't believe this is it.

[They leave their room and walk to the multi-purpose room.]

JAY

I know we aren't allowed to give our numbers out, but we should try and stay in touch. I'll find a way to give you something before you go.

[Sophie and Jay stop at the door. Enter Jess from inside of the room. Chelsea and Ray are already in the room waiting.]

SOPHIE

I'd really like that. Thanks Jay.

JESS

Hey guys! We are just about to start up. Chris has a surprise for us.

JAY

God I love him.

SOPHIE

He's pretty great.

[Chris enters.]

CHRIS

Okay ladies! I have a nice surprise for you all. Tonight's session is going to be a little unorthodox. I decided, because I got the news that Sophie will be leaving us tomorrow, we can turn tonight into a party! I have some chips and other snacks and I rented Bridesmaids for us to watch.

SOPHIE

I kind of wish Alex was here.

JAY

Me too.

SOPHIE

Hey, I'm gonna run to the bathroom real quick.

JAY

Ok. Hurry up though, the movie is about to start.

[Jay sits. Sophie heads through the hallway, not realizing the pencil falls from her bra. While in the bathroom (offstage) Hope enters. She is seen in the hallway. She grabs the pencil and hides. Sophie comes out from the bathroom and goes back to watch the movie. Black out.]

Hope

Act I

Scene VIII

[Lights up. The movie has just finished. Sophie and Jay hang back. Everyone leaves. Sophie frantically searches for the pencil.]

SOPHIE

Fuck!

JAY

What?

SOPHIE

It's gone! I know I had it before the movie started.

JAY

Okay don't worry. You went to the bathroom before the movie! It probably just fell out in there.

SOPHIE

I don't know. We need to check.

JAY

It's suspicious if we both go. Let me check and then I'll bring it back, okay?

SOPHIE

Yeah, that's fine.

[Jay exits. Sophie is visibly upset. She begins to panic and pace the floor. She tries to recount her steps in her mind. Jay re-enters.]

JAY

It wasn't there, but don't panic. A nurse probably found it and put it at the desk or something. It's not your problem anymore, okay?

SOPHIE

Shit.

JAY

Let's just head back to the room. It's your last night here! Try to enjoy it.

SOPHIE

You go on without me. I'll be there in a little bit, I just need some time to think.

[Jay exits. Sophie sits as Hope walks in and sits across from her.]

SOPHIE

Do I know you from somewhere?

HOPE

Hi, no. I don't think we've ever met.

SOPHIE

Every time I've seen you I feel like you've wanted to like say something to me

HOPE

I don't. I don't really talk to people here. I mean, I don't mind talking but no one really wants to talk to me anyway.

SOPHIE

Why's that?

HOPE

I don't really know. I just always felt kind of different from everyone else. Maybe I bother them.

SOPHIE

Well you're talking to me now so, that's a start.

HOPE

You're different, I guess.

SOPHIE

How?

HOPE

You have this certain nature about you. You just seem like someone I'd be friends with. Like the other day in group, when you talked about writing poetry and shared your poem with us!

SOPHIE

How does that make me different?

HOPE

Being able to write the way you do just kind of proves it. None of these girls could make connections like you do. It was so moving.

SOPHIE

Well, thanks. That means a lot.

HOPE

Yeah, no problem.

SOPHIE

What's your name?

HOPE

Hope.

SOPHIE

That's a pretty name.

HOPE

Thanks. So, I heard it's your last night, huh?

SOPHIE

Yeah. This is it. I start outpatient next week. I just don't know if I'm ready to be home yet.

HOPE

Well how'd you end up here?

SOPHIE

Oh, um just a failed attempt. This was my 6th.

HOPE

I got these on my 6th.

[Hope shows Sophie her wrists. There are deep vertical cuts from the wrist to about half way up her arm.]

SOPHIE

God, I'm so sorry.

HOPE

Don't be. I'm hopeless, a lost cause. This was place was my last chance at a normal life.

SOPHIE

Hey, don't talk like that! You are going to be fine. How long have you been here? I'm sure everything will start to work out for you, just watch.

HOPE

It's been almost 2 years. I told myself I would let them try and fix me, but I don't want to be in pain anymore. This is all just too much for me you know?

SOPHIE

Hope, you are going to be ok. Maybe try switching your meds?

HOPE

We've switched my meds several times and nothing is working. I just can't get over this.

SOPHIE

What happened? How did you end up in all of this?

HOPE

My dad killed himself when I was 5. My mom worked herself half to death to take care of me, but I was so messed up from finding him that way, I made it difficult for her. I know I did.

SOPHIE

Hope, I'm so sorry. I really wish there was something I can do. I know I'm leaving but maybe I could try and visit? You could put me on your visitor list! I'm gonna try and visit my roommates too. I know, well at least for me, it's easier to talk to someone my age than a doctor.

HOPE

I'm not allowed to have visitors. I haven't seen my mom in over a year. It's the price I pay I guess.

SOPHIE

Why can't you have visitors?

HOPE

Only family can visit, and I can't see my family. I refuse. I ruined my mother's life. I ruined my life.

SOPHIE

You didn't ruin anything. Don't talk like that.

HOPE

It's the truth.

SOPHIE

I really wish there was something I could do to help.

HOPE

It's ok. There isn't really much you can do.

SOPHIE

I'm gonna give you this...

[Sophie pulls the note out of her bra.]

HOPE

What is it?

SOPHIE

Well, I wrote it for myself, but I thought maybe you could use it as a reminder. Maybe it will be just enough to help even in the smallest way.

HOPE

Thanks Sophie, for everything. You've helped me more than you know.

[Sophie looks at clock and stands.]

SOPHIE

Shit, it's already 9:00. Hey, See you on the other side, Hope.

[Sophie exits. Black out.]

Hope

Act I

Scene IX

[Lights dim. Sophie turns to look at the clock. It's 2 am, and there is utter silence. Sophie is seen tossing and turning in her bed. Black out. Lights up. Clock is displaying 8:00 am. Jay is awake and excited for Sophie to leave. Jay hops out of bed while Sophie is lying in hers, facing Jay.]

JAY

Hey! Good morning. And to think, you are moments away from freedom.

SOPHIE

It depends on how you look at it. I just feel so uneasy.

JAY

How'd you sleep?

[Sophie sits up.]

SOPHIE

You'd think those pills would help. It just didn't feel right last night. I slept like crap.

JAY

Well when you get home, you can sleep the whole day away. No mandatory meetings or activities!

SOPHIE

Yeah that's true.

JAY

That fresh air is going to feel amazing.

SOPHIE

I can't imagine not feeling that for 2 months.

[Jay hands Sophie a folded piece of paper.]

JAY

This is for you. I know we aren't supposed to do it, but I needed you to have my info so you could reach out.

[Sophie unfolds it, reads it, and puts it in her bra.]

SOPHIE

Yeah, definitely.

JAY

Maybe when I get out of here we can get together in person?

SOPHIE

That would be great!

JAY

I'm gonna miss you Soph.

SOPHIE

You too Jay. [She stands to hug Jay.] Oh hey, if Alex ever comes back can you do me a favor?

JAY

What's up?

SOPHIE

Tell her she did what she had to do. She shouldn't blame herself so much. Like you said, everything happens for a reason.

JAY

I will. See you on the outside?

SOPHIE

I'll see you soon.

[They embrace. Black out.]

Hope

Act I

Scene X

[Lights up. Sophie is walking outside with Jane. Officers 1 and 2 are outside along with Mary.]

SOPHIE

What happened?

[Officer 1 walks by with a bloody golf pencil in an "evidence" bag and exits. Officer 2 heads over to Mary who is weeping on the ground.]

OFFICER 2

Ma'am, I am very sorry.

[Officer 2 hands Mary Hope's slippers and the note Sophie gave to Hope. Officer 2 exits as Mary unfolds the paper and reads.]

MARY

NOOO!!! HOPE WHY?!? HOPE!! HOPE!!

[Spotlight on Sophie. Mary screams. Black out.]

THE END