

Nuns
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Abstract

Nuns

Katie Cooke

The play *Nuns* is about Abby, a new student at Concordia University living in the Grey Nuns residence building. The play focuses on Abby's conflicted relationship with her own identity, and her mother. Despite a budding romantic relationship with a girl named Kaeli, she chooses to date a boy named Andrew to avoid acknowledging her own sexual identity. Her rejection of her identity allows her to fit within the role that her mother expects of her. On Halloween Abby's avoidance of her sexuality comes to a head during a Ouija board game. The game opens the veil and allows one of the previous Nuns, Margaret, to begin haunting Abby as a means of guiding her to accept her identity.

The play focuses on themes of identity, family, freedom and gender roles. Abby is motivated to maintain a positive relationship with her Christian mom through fear. She worries that by accepting her identity as a gay woman, her relationship with her mother will fail. On the other hand, she struggles with avoiding her very real feelings for Kaeli, the object of her desire, who continues to intrude into the fantasy relationship she has created with Andrew. Despite the expectations of her parents, she will eventually accept her identity and reject the lifestyle that she has been expected to follow. As such, the text also grapples with ideas of found family, and connection.

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Dedication

For my mom, who inspires me with her own creativity, who taught me that I can do anything,
and who always knew I could get it done.

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List of Characters:

Abby- *17 years old. A 1st year Concordia student.*

Kaeli- *18 years old. Abby's friend.*

Andrew- *19 years old. Abby's boyfriend.*

Riley- *22 years old. A current resident assistant and master's student.*

Nun/Margaret- *Age is unknown. She is one of the Grey Nuns.*

Mom- *55 years old, and Abby's mother.*

ACT I:

SCENE I

The stage is split into two parts. Stage right is a dorm room. In the dorm room, there is a bed set-up with a flower duvet cover, an armoire, a desk, an “anti-suicide” chair, a nightstand and a lamp. The room is decorated with various “university things”, think fairy lights and polaroids. Stage left is a common room. The common room is set up with three chairs. A loveseat to the left, a sofa in the middle, and an armchair to the right. All three sofas are made of the same fake leather, and are decaying, pieces of the plastic ripping off. In both the dorm room and the common room, a light hangs down with a large globe shade. Each of the rooms has an opening out of sight of the stage in the corner of the room for the NUN to enter and exit.

In this opening scene, lights turn on in the bedroom. ABBY enters wearing summer clothes, a cropped t-shirt and some jean shorts. She’s holding her phone in her hand. MOM’S voice is projected around the theatre as if she is on speakerphone. The voice is resounding, God-like.

MOM: Have you made any friends?

ABBY: Not really.

MOM: You’ve been there for a week.

ABBY: You can’t really put a time limit on making friends.

MOM: I’m just worried about you. You should have met someone by now.

ABBY: I wouldn’t have had to if you just let me go to the school I wanted to.

MOM: You know why we couldn’t do that.

ABBY: I don't Mom. Couldn't I have just promised to be better? You didn't need to punish me by sending me to a completely different province.

MOM: It's better this way. No temptations. You can focus on classes.

ABBY: But I don't have any friends.

MOM: You'll make friends.

ABBY: I haven't yet. Nobody seems interested in being friends with me.

MOM: Why don't you go to one of those welcome week events? Maybe you'll meet someone there.

ABBY: I have Mom. The only person who talks to me is the RA who moved me in.

MOM: Right, what was his name, Ricky?

ABBY: Riley, Mom.

MOM: Oh of course, how could I forget?

ABBY: Could I just come home? It's not too late, classes haven't even started. And I could go to the school I wanted to with my friends.

MOM: I'm not bringing you home Abby.

ABBY: I don't fit in here.

MOM: Maybe it's your attitude Abby. Are you even giving people the opportunity to get close to you? You can be very difficult to talk to sometimes.

ABBY: Thanks Mom. That's just great.

MOM: I'm not trying to insult you; I'm just telling you the truth. You've been moody lately, maybe people are scared to approach you.

ABBY: I'm moody? God, I can't imagine why.

MOM: Don't speak to me that way.

ABBY: Sorry Mom.

MOM: Just give it a chance, okay? Give other people a chance to get to know you.

ABBY: I'll try Mom.

MOM: Good. Now tell me, have you gone to explore your classrooms? I was looking at the map of campus and it looks like most of the buildings you'll be in are right next to Grey Nuns.

ABBY: Yeah, everything's convenient for travelling from Nuns Mom. I'll be fine.

MOM: If you get lost, I can always help you find them.

ABBY: I visited them Mom, they're not going to be that hard to find.

MOM: Alright Abby.

Beat.

I paid your tuition already.

ABBY: Isn't that a little early?

MOM: The fees were already showing up in your student center.

ABBY: Thanks Mom.

MOM: You're a good girl. You know that right?

ABBY: Yes Mom.

MOM: I think it's good that you finally agreed with me about aerospace engineering. You'll have far more opportunities with that degree.

ABBY: I still would have preferred to go into an arts degree Mom.

MOM: I know you would. It's not sustainable Abby.

ABBY: I really don't want to argue with you about this again.

MOM: It's not an argument; I just want you to know I'm proud of you.

ABBY: Are you?

MOM: Of course I am. You've really turned a new leaf this year.

ABBY: I'm trying my best Mom.

MOM: I can see it. Your father and I were talking, and we were thinking we could buy you some art supplies.

ABBY: Really?

MOM: Only a few things, but if you can keep your grades up, maybe we'll look at giving you more.

ABBY: I was thinking Mom, I know it's a little unconventional, but what if I do a studio arts minor? I'll make sure to prioritize my grades in my engineering classes.

MOM: I don't know Abby. That sounds like a lot.

ABBY: I could take the arts classes as electives almost; it wouldn't stop me from taking the engineering classes I need.

MOM: Why not do a different minor then, something that will enhance your career opportunities. Something in the sciences maybe.

ABBY: I thought that this way we could both have a bit of a say in my degree.

MOM: I think studio arts is a waste of time dear. There are better things you could focus your attention on. As a hobby it's fine, but as a serious career option...

ABBY: Fine Mom. I'll just focus on aerospace for now then.

MOM: Good, dear.

ABBY: Look Mom I think I'm going to go.

MOM: So soon?

ABBY: I just have to finish settling in. And maybe I'll go to one of those events you mentioned to me. I can meet people right, make friends. It would be nice to have people to hang out with.

MOM: Alright dear. Before you go, remember what we talked about okay? If your father and I hear of anything untoward happening, we'll bring you straight home.

ABBY: Don't worry Mom. I'm not planning on doing anything I shouldn't.

MOM: You'd better not. You know what we talked about.

ABBY: I get it. You'll stop paying my tuition and stuff. We've had this conversation a million times. I promise I won't do anything stupid.

MOM: Good. I'll talk to you later then.

ABBY: Goodbye Mom.

The phone hangs up. ABBY scrolls through Instagram, which is projected on the screen. It shows pictures of her friends enjoying themselves at university. She stops and looks up a username: RRebelBecca3. She clicks on the profile and finds that the account is private.

She puts the phone down next to her on the bed.

Blackout.

SCENE II

Lights come on in the common room as KAELI and ABBY enter. They are both dressed as characters from "Grease". ABBY is Sandy, and KAELI is Danny. They both sit on the sofa ABBY closest to the loveseat, and KAELI closest to the armchair. When they sit, they are both at the far end of the sofa on their respective sides.

As the scene progresses, they will move between sofas to indicate the dynamics between the characters in the room.

KAELI: Where did he say he was going again?

ABBY: No clue. He didn't really tell me, he just said that he wanted to get something.

KAELI: Of course he did.

ABBY: You don't have to stick around.

KAELI: I want to, okay? I'd leave if I really didn't want to be here.

ABBY: I'm sorry.

KAELI: What would you be sorry about?

ABBY: I don't know. I feel like we've been distant lately.

KAELI: You can ask me to hang out too you know. I don't have to be the only one reaching out.

ABBY: It's just felt... awkward.

KAELI: Yeah, well it is for me too.

ABBY: You still wore the matching Halloween costume. Part of me didn't expect you to.

KAELI: I mean we planned this weeks ago. I wasn't going to back out.

Beat. KAELI gets up and paces a little, sitting down in the armchair with her feet out. She relaxes.

KAELI: So how has it been?

ABBY: That's a little too vague.

KAELI: Dating Andrew. What is it like?

ABBY: I mean it's fine.

KAELI: *(scoffing)* It's fine?

ABBY: Okay, it's great. Is that what you want to hear? He took me out for dinner this week. We kissed. I thought about sleeping with him when we got back from the restaurant.

KAELI: Oh really?

ABBY: Yes really.

KAELI: And you actually wanted to? Or was it one of those things where you were going to force yourself.

ABBY: What the fuck Kaeli?

KAELI: I'm just asking. I mean it's not so different from how we got here.

ABBY: I'm not forcing myself to date Andrew.

KAELI: Yeah okay.

ABBY: Well what about you and Jenna? How have things been between you.

KAELI: What does any of this have to do with Jenna?

ABBY: You're dating her now, aren't you? That's what Andrew told me.

KAELI: What?

ABBY: You don't have to lie about it.

KAELI: I'm not lying.

ABBY: Then tell me about it.

Beat. When KAELI speaks, she's hesitant..

KAELI: We've been great.

ABBY: Come on, give me more than that.

KAELI: I mean, Jenna is out of the closet, so she told her parents about us. And she gets me. She doesn't play games with my feelings.

ABBY: I'm not playing games with your feelings Kaeli. I made my decision.

KAELI: Yeah, you did.

ABBY: You're not over it then.

KAELI: How exactly do you recommend "getting over it"?

ABBY: I'm not saying you have to. I just thought we were good now.

KAELI: Do you remember when you told me about Rebecca? That one night that we had a sleep over in my room?

ABBY: That's out of line.

KAELI: And how isn't it the same? You told me you regretted the way that had ended, you told me that you wished you could change things, but this is just the way things had to be. You were given that second chance, and instead of taking it, you just repeated the same mistakes.

ABBY: Are you hearing yourself?

KAELI: Yeah, and I feel like everything I'm saying makes a hell of a lot more sense than everything you've been saying to justify your actions.

ABBY: I regretted the way it ended Kaeli, it had to be that way. I'm not repeating the same mistakes. I made sure of it when we didn't...

ABBY hesitates.

KAELI: Say it. What didn't we do?

ABBY: Can we not? Can we just stop. I didn't want this to happen. I didn't want any of this to happen. I don't want to talk about this.

KAELI: You could have just told me from the beginning, instead of stringing me along like some sort of puppet.

ABBY: I didn't have a choice.

KAELI: Then why would you even let it go that far in the first place.

ABBY: Because I wanted to!

ABBY rests her head in her hands, tapping her feet. There is a long silence. The sound of doors being slammed shut and people whooping. When ABBY looks up, she is crying.

ABBY: I wanted to, okay?

KAELI moves back onto the sofa, hesitating, and then sits directly next to ABBY. She reaches out, possibly about to rub her back, or her leg, and then stops herself.

KAELI: I didn't know that.

ABBY: Why would you have known? It's not like I told you. I didn't want you to know.

More screaming in the hallway. ABBY wipes tears off her face.

RILEY enters the common room. ABBY gets up abruptly, and moves over to the loveseat, so that her back is to RILEY.

RILEY: Sorry, am I interrupting something?

ABBY and KAELI speak at the same time.

KAELI: Yeah.

ABBY: Not really.

RILEY: Are you alright Abby?

ABBY wipes at her face again, trying to get rid of tears without smudging makeup. She hides the movement from RILEY.

ABBY: I'm fine.

KAELI: What are you doing here anyway?

RILEY: I mean, you probably heard the noise in the hallway.

KAELI: Hard not to.

RILEY: You're not with that group, are you?

ABBY: No. We're waiting for Andrew to come meet us.

RILEY: Right, he's your other friend?

ABBY: He's, my boyfriend.

RILEY looks between the two of them.

RILEY: Okay cool. Well, I'll just go then. I have to go deal with –

Sound of crashing doors and laughter.

That.

RILEY exits.

KAELI: Can we talk about it?

ABBY: Talk about what?

KAELI: What you said. That you wanted it.

ABBY: I don't know if I wanted it exactly.

KAELI: Then what did you mean?

ABBY: I don't really know.

KAELI: I feel like I can never get a clear answer from you. Every time I feel like I'm getting somewhere with you, you start closing yourself off.

ABBY: Then why do you talk to me? Why do you even bother with any of this. I'm not going to change my answer, no matter how many times we talk about it. So what do you want me to tell you?

KAELI: I feel like you want to talk to me, you just don't know how.

ABBY: I'm broken? That's it? And you're going to magically fix me.

KAELI: I'm not saying you're broken.

ABBY: Then what are you saying?

KAELI: Sometimes you give me this glimpse of you, the real you, and then you hide it away. I want to know why. Why won't you talk to me?

ABBY: I'm talking right now.

KAELI: But you're not.

ABBY: I'm not avoiding you Kaeli.

KAELI: Not physically.

ABBY: Just forget it, okay. Forget what I said.

KAELI: So what? Are you just going to act like nothing happened?

ABBY: Yes. And you should to.

KAELI: I don't want to.

Beat.

ABBY: Did you know when we visited the crypt that day?

KAELI: What are you talking about Abby?

ABBY: How you felt, did you know?

KAELI: I thought about it.

ABBY: But you were too busy with Jenna.

KAELI: I don't know why you always come back to Jenna.

ABBY: Weren't you seeing her then?

KAELI: Abby.

ABBY: Weren't you?

KAELI: We weren't together. We weren't dating. It was never like that.

ABBY: Right, because she was just a hook up. She didn't seem that way though.

KAELI: She was a hook up to me. That's how I felt.

ABBY: Is that how you feel now? I mean you're dating her, so surely something changed.

KAELI: What are you even implying?

ABBY: I'm just saying, you keep telling me that what I'm doing is wrong.

KAELI: It is wrong. It's not what you want.

ABBY: And you know what I want?

KAELI: I'd like to think I do.

ABBY gets out of the loveseat and starts pacing.

ABBY: I don't know what to tell you Kaeli. I feel like no matter what I say, you'll never take no for an answer.

KAELI: I would leave it alone if you didn't keep showing me that it's not how you really feel. I'd forget it, I wouldn't even bring it up anymore, but you keep finding ways to show me that you're still thinking about it too.

ABBY: Like what?

KAELI: You're Sandy.

ABBY investigates her costume, leather pants, tight shirt, converse. She indicates her entire body.

ABBY: Seriously? The costume –

KAELI: Yes! The fucking costume. When we talked about Halloween that first time, I felt like I finally understood where you stood. I mean God, Sandy and Danny is the most obvious couples costume there is.

ABBY: I didn't mean it like that.

KAELI: Sure. I told myself when I came to meet you tonight that if you weren't dressed as Sandy, it meant there wasn't a chance. That you'd completely forgotten everything, and that I should just move on. But here you are, skintight leather pants and all.

ABBY: It doesn't mean anything.

KAELI: Isn't that why you're dressed up too? Because you wanted to confirm that I didn't feel that way anymore.

ABBY: That's so convoluted Kaeli.

KAELI: And what did Andrew say? When you told him we were going to wear matching Halloween costumes. Because when he saw me in Jean's room, he looked pretty surprised.

ABBY: It wasn't important.

KAELI: God you're so –

The common room door opens again, and ANDREW enters. He's wearing something that makes him look vaguely like one of the Beatles.

ANDREW: Finally. I've been looking for you both everywhere.

KAELI: We told you where we were going.

ANDREW: Cut me some slack, this building is a total maze. Besides I thought you were going to the common room downstairs.

KAELI: We changed our minds.

ANDREW: I tried to text you.

ABBY: Sorry, we were talking.

Beat. ANDREW sits down in the loveseat. KAELI looks at ABBY, who sits down next to ANDREW. ANDREW pulls her close, wrapping his arms around her shoulders.

KAELI: What did you want to do anyway?

ANDREW: Well I called the RA.

ABBY: Why would you do that?

ANDREW: I wanted something from the games room cupboard.

KAELI: You want to play a board game?

ANDREW: Of sorts.

KAELI: It's past midnight on Halloween and you seriously want to play a board game?

ANDREW: Look it doesn't matter. Anyway, you should see what that poor guy is dealing with in the hallway.

KAELI: We've heard.

ANDREW: Yeah, well, I don't think he's giving us the game anytime soon, so we might as well just get settled in.

KAELI: Honestly, I might just go to bed.

ABBY: Don't.

Beat. KAELI and ABBY stare at each other, ANDREW looks between them.

ANDREW: I mean, if Kaeli wants to leave, by all means.

ABBY: No offense, I'm not playing a board game with just you.

ANDREW: Full offense taken. Come on! It will be fun.

RILEY enters the common room with a full garbage bag.

RILEY: Sorry, uh.

RILEY awkwardly walks across the room, and throws the trash bag into a garbage can.

ANDREW: Finished busting the party?

RILEY: Finally.

ABBY: Didn't you say there was supposed to be another person working with you tonight?

RILEY: They're down for the count; they caught the flu or something.

ANDREW: You sure they didn't just skip out on you so they could actually do something fun on Halloween?

RILEY: Harsh.

ANDREW: Do you happen to have some free time now?

RILEY: Yeah, depends, what do you need?

ANDREW: I wanted something from the games room cupboard.

RILEY: Oh seriously, you're actually going to do that tonight?

ANDREW: It's Halloween. You're welcome to join in.

RILEY: You know what, sure. Beats dealing with drunk people screaming in the lobby all night. Come on.

ANDREW gets out of his chair and leans down to kiss ABBY. KAELI and RILEY watch awkwardly.

ANDREW: Be right back.

ANDREW and RILEY exit.

Beat.

ABBY: What did Jenna think? Since you're so quick to start judging me.

KAELI: Jenna didn't think anything.

ABBY: What a load of shit. Your girlfriend was totally okay with you wearing a matching Halloween costume with another girl?

KAELI: She didn't really have a say.

ABBY: Yeah. I bet she didn't.

KAELI: What is that supposed to mean?

ABBY: I mean come on. You've done what you've wanted since the beginning. Hang out with Jenna, hang out with me. I never even know what you want.

KAELI: You're one to talk.

ABBY: You're basically cheating on her.

KAELI: I'm not cheating on her.

ABBY: Okay, you're emotionally cheating on her. Is that better?

KAELI: I'm not.

ABBY: It sure seems like it.

KAELI: I'm not dating Jenna.

ABBY: What? But you just said –

KAELI: Well I lied. Looks like Andrew did too. Jenna and I were finished after that first two weeks of school, when you and I were getting closer.

ABBY: You still got meals with her, so I always thought...

KAELI: We're friends.

ABBY: Why would you lie about that?

KAELI: I don't know! To make you jealous, I guess? I'm so tired of running in these circles Abby. How many times have we talked about this? How many times since you and Andrew have gotten together.

ABBY: Then move on. Why would you even want to be with me anyway? After all of this.

KAELI: You don't get me at all.

ABBY: I want to. I want to understand you. I just can't give you that version of myself.

KAELI: You want to be friends.

ABBY: Yes. I like you Kaeli. I like hanging out with you.

KAELI: What if that's not enough for me?

ABBY: So that's it then, you're giving up?

KAELI: I guess I hoped you'd change your mind.

ABBY: I can't.

KAELI: Why?

ABBY: My parents, my mom. I don't have the same family that you do Kaeli. My mom didn't buy me pride merch when I came out. She didn't hug me and tell me that she'll love me always, no matter who I love.

KAELI: I understand.

ABBY: But you don't. Have you even thought about what you're asking me? Every Christmas I'd be alone. Holidays, reading weeks, summers. My family wouldn't want to see me. I'd be forgotten.

KAELI: But I'd be there.

ABBY: And what if you change your mind? What if you decide I'm not worth the trouble anymore? Andrew is safe.

KAELI gets out of the chair, maybe moves closer to ABBY, reaching out, and then paces.

KAELI: So, you want to spend the rest of your life playing it safe?

ABBY: I get to go home for the holidays, I get to see my parents. My mom even tells me she's proud. You can't give me those things.

KAELI: You're happy to just live in perpetual disappointment for the rest of your life.

ABBY: Maybe I won't be happy, but I'll be fine. And that's enough.

KAELI: You can't live for other people for the rest of your life.

ABBY: I'm living for myself. I'm protecting myself. No one else is going to do that for me. And you may want to live in this fantasy, but I don't.

KAELI: You can't change who you are Abby.

ABBY: I can try.

KAELI collapses into the armchair so that she and ABBY are opposite each other.

ANDREW and RILEY re-enter the common room, ANDREW holding a Ouija board in his hands.

KAELI and ABBY look at each other.

ANDREW: Did we miss anything?

ABBY and KAELI: No.

ANDREW sits on the loveseat with ABBY, and RILEY takes a seat on the sofa. ANDREW sets the Ouija board on the table.

ANDREW: I had this brilliant idea.

KAELI: Unlikely.

ANDREW: Wow, thanks. It's Hallowe'en right, so why not use a Ouija board?

RILEY: There's always at least one resident who thinks that a Ouija board is a good idea.

ANDREW: Damn, and I thought I was original.

KAELI: Why do you want to use a Ouija board anyway?

ANDREW: For fun.

RILEY: The veil between the spirit world and our world is thin on Hallowe'en.

KAELI: Is that really a thing?

RILEY: I'm pretty sure. Depends on if you believe in that kind of thing. Grey Nuns in general is said to be haunted, so the chances of speaking to a ghost in this building are higher than ever on Hallowe'en.

ANDREW: See! This is totally a good idea, and just think, it will make for a great story tomorrow, even if nothing happens.

ABBY: I'm not sure about this Andrew.

ANDREW: Why not?

ABBY: I mean, I've told you about my mom. She's super Christian, she always said that Ouija boards were bad luck. Or at least, that they shouldn't be messed with. It's like playing with the devil, right?

ANDREW: I mean, I know your mom is like some Christ fanatic, but she's not here, right? Live a little Abby.

ABBY: I'm not sure if I should.

ANDREW: Come on Abby.

RILEY: If she doesn't want to participate, she doesn't have to.

ANDREW: I mean of course, but it's just some harmless fun, right?

KAELI: Just let her do what she wants Andrew.

ANDREW: Yeah, okay. No Ouija board.

RILEY: I could always just regale you all with ghost stories, I have lived here for four years.

KAELI: Four years? That seems excessive.

RILEY: What can I say, I guess this place speaks to me.

ANDREW: What kind of ghost stories do you have anyway?

RILEY: Well, when I was a first year RA, I moved into the building. We move in a whole week before all of the students right, so I was alone in my hallway. And I heard this noise coming from down the hall, someone humming a church hymn.

ANDREW: Damn.

RILEY: I went to explore right, and when I got to the room it was coming from the humming stopped. At this point I thought I was being pranked, so I looked around the room. I half expected someone to jump out at me, but there was no one there. I even checked all the drawers because I was paranoid that I'd find a speaker hidden somewhere or something.

KAELI: And you think it was a ghost?

RILEY: Oh sure, with the history of the building it totally could have been a ghost.

ABBY: I thought you didn't believe in that kind of thing.

RILEY: You don't have to believe for it to be true.

KAELI: Do you know much about the history of the building?

RILEY: I'm writing my thesis on the Grey Nuns building. I'm in the history department, and I've lived here for so many years it felt right to write my thesis about living here.

ANDREW: Any fun facts you can tell us?

RILEY: I mean, I told you about the crypt at the beginning of the year.

KAELI: Oh yeah. After you told us where it was, we went and checked it out.

ABBY: I didn't realize you could see the crosses so clearly through that door.

RILEY: Yeah, well the really cool part isn't even the fact that you can see the tomb in the building, it's why they were buried there. Some of the nuns died of the Small pox and were buried beneath the building, but the other nuns? They don't actually know how they died, or what contagious illnesses they had. The Quebec ministry of health won't allow them to be moved.

ANDREW: So that's why they haven't moved the nuns to a separate burial ground?

RILEY: Exactly.

ANDREW: Great. Dead nuns with untold diseases.

KAELI: Wasn't there a fire on the west side of the building as well?

RILEY: Yeah. On Valentine's Day in 1918. Grey Nuns used to operate as an orphanage as well, and on the west side of the building a fire broke out in the orphanage. It killed around 52 orphans, though they couldn't be sure of how many people it killed.

ANDREW: Talk about a tragedy. On Valentine's day, seriously?

KAELI: Jenna told me at the beginning of the year that she was having night terrors about disfigured children in burnt clothes.

ABBY: When did she tell you that?

ANDREW: Sounds like total bullshit.

KAELI: (*To Abby*) Does it matter?

ABBY: I was just wondering.

ANDREW: I've had some weird dreams in this building. It doesn't really mean anything.

RILEY: There have been plenty of people who have spoken about having ghostly dreams or visions in this building. It wouldn't surprise me.

ANDREW: My friend Jean was telling me about how all these kids in the daycare have seen the ghost of one of the kids who died in the fire.

RILEY: That's a popular story as well, all of these kids who have the same imaginary friend, wearing the same ragged and burnt clothing.

ABBY: What about the nuns? Did the fire kill any of them?

RILEY looks at her, seems to be thinking.

RILEY: Yes, I think it did. Though the record shows that no nuns died in the fire.

KAELI: That's sad.

RILEY: I'm actually writing my thesis about one of the nuns.

ABBY: Really?

RILEY addresses ABBY.

RILEY: Yeah, her name was Margaret Rien. I don't know much about her family, but believe she began her work at the nunnery to avoid marriage. I'm doing a close reading of her journal for my thesis.

ANDREW: What inspired you to do that?

RILEY: Like I said, living in this building has given me an appreciation for ghost stories.

ANDREW: All this talk of ghost is really making me want to try out the Ouija board.

ANDREW elbows ABBY, who looks uncomfortable. He gets up and starts opening the box. KAELI gets up to stop him. The two of them end up in a position that makes it look like they are fighting over the box.

ANDREW: What are you doing Kaeli.

KAELI: Come on Andrew, she doesn't want to do it. Just let it rest.

ANDREW: It's just a game.

RILEY: I can take the game back to the games room cupboard.

ABBY: You know what, I've changed my mind. Andrew is right, it will be fun. And it's Hallowe'en.

KAELI: We don't have to play Abby.

ABBY: I want to.

KAELI: You do?

ABBY: I'm telling you that I do.

ANDREW: Loosen up Kaeli, she wants to play.

KAELI, defeated, sits back in the armchair.

KAELI: You're going to have to explain how it works to me. I've only ever seen it in movies.

ANDREW: I mean, it can't be that difficult right?

RILEY: I don't think so, no.

ABBY: I'd really rather read the rule book if we're going to do this. My mom always told me not to mess around with Ouija boards.

ANDREW: You said that already Abby. I promise I'll be careful.

The group set up the Ouija board on the floor. The board is projected so that you can see their crossed legs at the edges, and the board and their hands. ABBY faces the audience. ABBY and KAELI sit opposite each other, with ABBY sitting so the board is right side up. ANDREW and RILEY sit opposite each other on the right and left side of the board.

ANDREW: I think you have to say hello to start?

KAELI: You think?

ANDREW: Cut me some slack.

RILEY: Who should lead?

ANDREW: Abby why don't you do it?

ABBY: Me?

ANDREW: Yeah, that way we can go at your pace, right?

ABBY: Oh, that's nice of you.

KAELI: You don't have to Abby.

ABBY: I can make my own decisions Kaeli.

Beat. ABBY inhales and exhales deeply.

Okay, everyone put your fingers on the planchette.

They all place their fingers on the planchette.

I almost feel like you should be leading us Riley, since you're the resident ghost expert and all.

RILEY: That sounds like a far more entertaining job than RA, but no you lead. If I get a call, I'll have to leave.

RILEY pulls out a flip phone and shows the group.

ANDREW: No way the RA phone is a fucking flip phone.

RILEY: Its remarkably efficient.

ABBY: How should I start this?

ANDREW: Like I said, just say hello.

ABBY: This feels so stupid.

Beat.

Hello?

Nothing happens. ABBY laughs nervously.

ANDREW: Try asking again.

ABBY: Okay. Hello?

The planchette moves a little bit.

ANDREW: Holy shit.

KAELI: That doesn't mean anything, it barely moved. It could have just been your fingers twitching.

ANDREW: Then ask again.

ABBY: How many times do I have to ask before we decide nothing paranormal is going to happen tonight?

KAELI: Maybe ask something different.

ABBY: Good idea.

RILEY looks around the room, searching for something. His eyes land on a corner and he startles a little bit.

ABBY: You okay Riley?

RILEY: Just startled by the planchette moving.

ABBY regards him suspiciously and looks back down at the planchette. Until ABBY asks the next question, RILEY stares at the corner.

ABBY: What should I ask it next?

ANDREW: How should I know?

ABBY: You're the one that wanted to play. What's a good guiding question.

RILEY: Ask it a yes or no question.

KAELI: Not bad. Then if the planchette moves it will be super clear.

ABBY: Is anyone here with us?

The planchette moves to hover over yes, and RILEY returns his attention to the board.

ABBY: Oh my god.

ANDREW: Okay, well it moved. Is that proof enough for you?

KAELI: You probably moved it yourself.

ANDREW: I did not.

RILEY: I think it moved on its own.

KAELI: Seriously?

RILEY: That's what it's supposed to do, isn't it?

KAELI: I guess so.

ABBY: This is freaky.

KAELI: Do you want to stop?

RILEY: I think you should ask it another question.

ABBY: What do I even ask?

ANDREW: Ask it if it's one of the nuns.

ABBY clears her throat.

ABBY: Were you one of the Grey Nuns?

Beat. Nothing happens.

ANDREW: Weird.

KAELI: You totally moved it last time.

RILEY: Or maybe the answer is yes.

KAELI: How's that?

RILEY: The planchette is still on yes, isn't it? Maybe the ghost didn't move it because the planchette is already showing the right answer.

ANDREW: Why don't we ask where it lived then?

KAELI: Like the room?

ABBY: What room did you live in?

The planchette begins moving quickly, and the group speak together.

ALL: G-3-1-1.

ABBY: There's no way.

ANDREW: This is beyond freaky.

KAELI: Andrew be honest right now; you totally have to be moving it.

ANDREW: I swear I'm not! Didn't you see how smoothly the planchette was moving?

KAELI: You know Abby's room number.

ANDREW: You know her room number too, why couldn't it be you?

RILEY: There's no need to fight about it.

ABBY: I really don't like this.

RILEY: Ask its name Abby.

ABBY: *(Hesitantly)* Yeah, okay.

Beat. RILEY stares off into the corner again, before returning his eyes to the planchette.

If you were a nun here, what's your name?

The planchette begins moving.

ALL: M-A-R-G-A-R-E-T.

ANDREW: Isn't that the name of the nun you were talking about?

RILEY: It is.

KAELI: You guys can't seriously think this is some sort of coincidence.

ABBY: So, when Jenna isn't the one talking about ghosts you suddenly don't believe in them?

KAELI: I never said that.

ABBY: You didn't question her dreams though, even when she only started having them after talking to some ghost tour guy about the history of the building.

KAELI: She's not lying.

ABBY: Whatever you want to believe.

ANDREW: Who cares Abby. They have some sort of thing going on. Just let her believe what she wants.

ABBY: Why are you taking her side?

ANDREW: Why do you care if she believes in ghosts?

ABBY: I just think its hypocritical.

ANDREW: They're together, Abby. Let it go.

KAELI: We're not dating.

RILEY: Guys, why don't we just play the game.

ANDREW: Aren't you?

KAELI: Why would I lie about that. We're not dating.

ANDREW: My mistake. You two are just so close.

KAELI: That's such fucking bullshit.

ANDREW: No need to blow a gasket.

KAELI: Why would you tell Abby that if you know it's not true?

ABBY: You knew they weren't dating?

ANDREW: I swear I didn't.

RILEY: There must have been some sort of misunderstanding.

KAELI: This doesn't involve you, Riley.

RILEY: I'm just trying to help.

KAELI: If Andrew admits why he lied, then I'll just let it go.

ANDREW: And I'm telling you that I didn't lie.

KAELI: And I know that's bullshit.

ABBY: He's right though Kaeli, how does it benefit him to lie?

The duty phone starts ringing. They all look over at RILEY, who pulls out the phone and waves it.

RILEY: I'll uh, just step out for a second.

As he leaves, he answers the phone.

RA duty phone, this is Riley speaking.

RILEY exits.

The group all stand up and take seats on different sofas. ANDREW in the loveseat, ABBY in the armchair, KAELI on the sofa. By the time RILEY enters the scene again, ABBY will be sitting next to KAELI on the sofa.

KAELI: Are you going to explain yourself?

ANDREW: I don't understand why you're so upset that I assumed you were dating Jenna, you've been hooking up with her since August.

ABBY: You're still hooking up with her?

KAELI: This is what I mean, I haven't been with Jenna since the first week of school.

ANDREW: I find that hard to believe.

KAELI: I had different priorities. I cut it off.

ANDREW: Well, you both were still hanging out, I figured you were together.

KAELI: We're not.

ANDREW: Okay, got it. Jesus, I don't even know why you care so much.

KAELI: First of all, just because you see two gay people hanging out doesn't mean they are dating, and secondly, I don't need that rumour getting around.

ANDREW: Why?

KAELI: I like someone else.

ANDREW: Seriously? Who?

KAELI: It doesn't matter.

ANDREW: Oh my god, come on Kaeli. Tell me who. Maybe I could even wingman or something.

KAELI: Seriously Andrew, it's not important.

ANDREW: Okay, okay. But I'm still going to try and get it out of you.

KAELI: You can try, but I'm not going to tell.

ABBY: Is it someone we know?

KAELI: You know her.

ANDREW: You'll tell Abby but not me?

KAELI: Abby and I are close.

ANDREW: Wow, hurtful. What advice is a straight girl going to give you anyway? I like girls Kaeli, I'm like the perfect person to talk to about this.

KAELI: I don't have a chance anyway.

ANDREW: Why is that?

KAELI: She's scared. To come out of the closet, to talk to her parents about being gay. To trust me.

ANDREW: That's stupid.

ABBY: You don't know how she feels Andrew, maybe it is scary. Maybe she's afraid of losing everything.

ANDREW: Every day we might lose everything. If you really like this person Kaeli, you should put yourself out there. Show that you're trustworthy. Show her that you're worth risking it all for.

KAELI: Thanks, but I think she's made up her mind.

ABBY: Maybe she hasn't.

Beat.

RILEY enters the room.

RILEY: Did you guys keep going without me?

ANDREW: We waited.

KAELI: Pretty sure we already fucked up Ouija board etiquette.

ANDREW: Aren't we supposed to say goodbye before we let go of the planchette?

ABBY: Probably, I don't really know.

ANDREW: Probably means someone is going to get haunted after. Tell me if you see Margaret in your room later Abby.

ABBY: That is so not funny.

Beat.

RILEY: Should we continue?

KAELI: Why not. It's all bullshit anyway.

They retake their seats in front of the Ouija board.

ANDREW: What do you think Abby, what next?

ABBY: Are you still here Margaret?

The planchette moves to yes.

KAELI: Still just as weird as the first time. It's seriously not you Andrew?

ANDREW: I swear to God it's not.

ABBY: Margaret, when did you live here?

The planchette moves slowly.

ALL: 1-9-1-7. 1-9-1-8.

ANDREW: What does that even mean?

KAELI: It can't be months, could it?

RILEY: I don't think so.

ABBY: Years?

RILEY: What were they?

KAELI: 1917 and 1918.

RILEY: The same year the fire happened in the orphanage.

ABBY: Margaret, did you die in the fire?

Beat. Nothing happens.

ANDREW: Do you think she didn't hear us?

The planchette moves to yes.

KAELI: Whoa.

ABBY: I guess you were right Riley, a nun did die in the fire.

ANDREW: Only if you believe in ghosts.

ABBY: Why are you talking to us Margaret?

The planchette moves slowly.

ALL: H-E-L-P.

RILEY stares off into the distance.

KAELI: What the hell.

ABBY: Help? Help with what?

The window slams open with a huge crash. ABBY, ANDREW and KAELI scream, and they lose hold of the planchette. RILEY startles, but only because they screamed. The screen in the background goes black, like cracked glass.

ANDREW: Jesus.

KAELI: That's enough Ouija for me. For a lifetime really.

ANDREW: I agree.

RILEY: I think we should call it a night.

ANDREW: I agree.

KAELI and ABBY close the window, while ANDEW and RILEY pack up the Ouija board.

RILEY: Goodnight everyone, call me if you need anything.

RILEY takes the Ouija board box and exits.

KAELI: I don't know if I'm going to be able to sleep after that.

ABBY: Me either.

ANDREW: Seriously? The whole thing was weird, but not so weird that I won't be able to sleep.

KAELI: To each their own.

Beat.

I'm going to go now, Happy Hallowe'en guys.

Looking at ABBY, KAELI hesitates before leaving and then exits.

ANDREW: Do you want to sleep in my room tonight?

ANDREW hugs ABBY around the waist and peppers her neck with kisses. ABBY lets him but looks unsure.

ABBY: I don't know. I think I might sleep in my room tonight.

ANDREW: I thought you were scared of the ghost? Wouldn't you want some company?

ABBY: I don't know. I'm not feeling great.

ANDREW: Oh no, why baby?

ABBY: Not sure.

ANDREW: Come over, I'll make you tea. Or I can give you a massage or something.

ABBY: It's okay Andrew, seriously. I'll just stay in my room tonight.

ANDREW: Are you sure?

ABBY: I am.

ANDREW: Goodnight, then.

ANDREW kisses ABBY.

See you tomorrow?

ABBY: Of course.

ANDREW exits.

ABBY sits down on the sofa and rests her head in her hands. The light overhead flickers, and the NUN steps into the room, standing near the walls observing.

The lights flicker again. Blackout.

SCENE III

Lights on in the bedroom. ABBY enters wearing a fall coat, hat and boots. She's dressed for colder weather. She's holding her phone in her hand. MOM'S voice is projected around the theatre like she is on speakerphone. The voice is resounding, God-like.

MOM: How did your midterms go?

ABBY: Haven't you just been looking in my student portal?

MOM: I want to hear it from you.

ABBY: But you looked.

MOM: Of course I looked.

ABBY: Well then you know that I did fine.

MOM: Fine is a bit of an overstatement.

ABBY: I mean I fucked up one of my midterms, but I studied for that test for days. I'm pretty sure it's going to get curved Mom. He put questions on the exam that he hadn't even taught us yet. I got one of the better grades. My friend Marshall didn't even get above 50.

MOM: I didn't ask what your other friends were getting Abby.

ABBY: I know Mom, but in this case, I feel like the context is important.

MOM: You promised me that you were going to keep your head down and focus on grades this year.

ABBY: I was. I am. I'm going to study super hard for the final.

MOM: If you can't keep your grades up, how can your father and I trust you.

ABBY: I'm doing my best Mom.

MOM: Are you really Abby?

ABBY: I am.

MOM: I feel like you've been distracted. I saw that you skipped your class the other day.

Life360 showed you in the dorm. Were you hanging out with that Kaeli girl again?

ABBY: I forgot my phone in the dorm Mom. I was running late.

MOM: I don't believe you Abby. This is like when you were secretly meeting with that Rebecca girl.

ABBY: We weren't secretly meeting Mom. I always told you when you were hanging out.

MOM: But the things you were doing together, you kept that a secret. You're lucky I didn't send you off to some camp.

ABBY: That wasn't keeping secrets Mom. You just didn't like what I was doing, so you act like it was some secret.

MOM: You didn't tell me; that's exactly like keeping secrets.

ABBY: Why would I? Look what happened when I did!

MOM: Watch your tone with me Abby.

ABBY: All I'm saying is that you didn't want me to be me.

MOM: So is that what this is? You and that Kaeli girl? Are you admitting to it?

ABBY: No. There's nothing going on between us.

MOM: I can't trust you. Maybe your father and I should have held you back a year. You could have worked, saved up. You could go back again next year.

ABBY: That makes no sense, we've already paid for the semester, I've already done my midterms.

MOM: And you've proven that you're distracted. Honey this is for your own good.

ABBY: Mom, I promise I haven't been distracted by a girl.

MOM: Who then?

ABBY: There's this guy, Andrew. I've been seeing him.

MOM: A boy?

ABBY: Yes. And I have been studying for midterms, I promise. He's just been asking me to hang out a lot, and it's so hard to say no. I can work on it. I can stop hanging out with him as much.

MOM: No, no you don't have to do that. Abby this is great news, I'm so happy to see that you've turned a new leaf.

ABBY: Yeah, I am too.

MOM: Really such a relief, maybe I'll talk to your father about that studio arts minor you mentioned.

ABBY: I thought that was a hard no?

MOM: Think of it as a reward, dear.

ABBY: Okay Mom. I'll talk to you later. I love you.

MOM: Goodbye dear.

The phone hangs up.

ABBY: Fuck. God I'm such a fucking idiot.

Blackout.

SCENE IV

It is after Halloween. Lights on in the dorm room. There is a box of Halloween decorations that are being packed away. ABBY is standing in her room with her arms crossed, RILEY inspects under the bed, the dresser, the desk.

RILEY: I can't find anything.

ABBY: Really?

RILEY: I can bring you a sonar machine, and maybe something for under the door. But I can't find the mouse anywhere. How often has this been happening?

ABBY: I've been hearing the scratching since Halloween.

RILEY: For two days? And you haven't seen a mouse? That's weird.

ABBY: Yeah, I mean that's why I called you. I thought there might be an animal trapped in the wall. Or something.

RILEY: Or something.

RILEY starts looking around again. The ceiling light flickers. Someone knocks on the door.

ABBY: Come in!

No response. ABBY opens the door and finds that no one is there. They are both puzzled.

RILEY: There wasn't anyone there?

ABBY: No. It's super annoying actually, someone started up the ding dong ditching right after Halloween too. It's driving me nuts. I can't sleep because either I'm listening to the mouse scratching all hours of the day, or the idiot in my hall is knocking and running away.

RILEY: That would be frustrating.

ABBY: I'm seriously going to fail my exams at this rate.

The scratching noise starts up. ABBY and RILEY look around again.

ABBY: There it is again.

RILEY: That's not an animal.

ABBY: What?

RILEY: Never mind. Look I'll just go and grab you that sonar machine.

RILEY tries to leave and ABBY grabs onto his arm.

ABBY: You know something.

RILEY: No.

RILEY pulls out of her grip.

Call the duty phone if you hear more scratching. Someone will come deal with it.

ABBY: Riley wait.

RILEY: I'll be back with that sonar machine.

ABBY follows RILEY out the door. The NUN walks into the scene, standing next to the bed. Blackout.

SCENE V

Lights on in the empty common room. ABBY and KAELI enter.

ABBY sits down in the loveseat, and KAELI sits down in the armchair. KAELI has a laptop, which she sets on her lap. Similar to the first scene, characters will move between chairs to represent their relationships.

ABBY: I'm surprised you agreed to meet us for movie night, after Hallowe'en, anyway.

KAELI: I can't keep surprising you Abby. Have you considered that maybe I just really enjoy spending time with you?

ABBY: Sure I have.

KAELI: What do you want to watch?

ABBY: Shouldn't we wait for Andrew?

KAELI: He's going to defer to your choice anyway. Just pick something.

ABBY: I'm never really the person that gets to pick the movie. How about *Jennifer's Body*? I've been meaning to watch it.

KAELI: You haven't seen it yet?

ABBY: Not with midterms going on.

KAELI: And with Andrew.

ABBY: Yeah, that too. I don't know, it felt like I should wait until we were together to watch it. You're the one that recommended it.

KAELI: Too bad we didn't watch it on Hallowe'en.

ABBY: We should have. The Ouija board completely freaked me out. I knew we shouldn't have used it.

KAELI: It was kind of fun, in a way.

ABBY: Kaeli, can I ask you something?

KAELI: Sure.

ABBY: How did you know that you were ready to come out?

KAELI: I got the part of Romeo in the school play, and when I kissed Juliet, I think I realized that I really was gay. I kind of knew before. I didn't look at boys the same way as my friends. I didn't feel the same way either. But girls, that I understood.

ABBY: I'm sorry Kaeli. If I'm being honest, I didn't expect you to show up today because of the way things were on Hallowe'en.

KAELI: I shouldn't have pushed you that hard.

ABBY: You were right, though. It reminds me a lot of the way Rebecca and I used to fight. Before my mom found out about her. She said a lot of the same things.

KAELI: I can't expect you to change for me Abby. I knew that when we started to get closer. You told me about your mom, and a small part of me thought that maybe I could get through to you. That I could prove to you that we were meant to be together. But I was wrong. You made your choice.

ABBY: So, you're finally giving up?

KAELI: Shouldn't I be? You're with Andrew. You've decided he's who you want.

ABBY: Yeah, I have.

KAELI: Then I'm letting you have what you want.

ABBY: And you still want to be friends with me, even after all of this?

KAELI: I do.

ABBY: Okay.

The door opens and ANDREW enters. He's got a bunch of snacks with him, chips, a bag of popcorn.

ANDREW: Movie night!

He drops the snacks on the sofa, sitting down on it. ABBY gets up and moves so that she can sit next to him. He wraps his arm around her shoulder.

ANDREW: Did you guys pick a movie?

KAELI: Yeah, Abby decided on *Jennifer's Body*.

ANDREW: Seriously? Isn't that movie one of the worst movies of the 2010's?

KAELI: I'm not taking criticism from someone who thinks that Marvel movies are the pinnacle of cinema.

ANDREW: Hey, I'm just saying. I'll watch it, but I've heard it's not the best.

ABBY: It sounded interesting to me.

ANDREW: Since when are you getting into horror movies? I suggested *Carrie* one time and you seemed freaked.

ABBY: Carrie hits a little too close to home.

ANDREW: What? I mean sure, it's got a crazy Christian mom.

ABBY: I'm not turning over a new leaf or anything Andrew, I just really wasn't into Carrie.

ANDREW: Why didn't you tell me you wanted to watch *Jennifer's Body*? I totally would have watched it with you.

ABBY: I wanted to watch it as a group.

ANDREW: Right, you mean you wanted to watch it with Kaeli.

ABBY: She's the one that recommended it.

ANDREW: Maybe you two should just watch the movie. Jean invited me to hang out tonight anyway. I don't want to interrupt... whatever this is.

KAELI: Maybe I should go.

ABBY: No. Andrew you're my boyfriend, I... I love you.

ANDREW: You do?

ABBY: I do.

KAELI: I'm going to go.

ABBY: What, why?

KAELI: Just have movie night with Andrew. I'll see you tomorrow.

KAELI exits.

ANDREW: So, you love me huh?

ABBY: It's a little too early to say that right?

ANDREW: No, I love you too.

ANDREW leans in to kiss ABBY and the two of them start making out sloppily. ABBY pushes him away after a second.

ABBY: I should go after her, right?

ANDREW: After Kaeli? She said it herself; you can catch up with her tomorrow.

ABBY: I don't know, it feels wrong. I promised her I would watch this movie with her.

ANDREW: Am I not enough?

ABBY: Of course you are.

ANDREW: Relax, it was a joke.

ABBY: Sorry, I'm just...

ANDREW: Tense?

ABBY: Yeah.

ANDREW: What's up with the two of you anyway? You were so close at the start of the year, and now it's like you hate each other or something.

ABBY: I don't hate her; we've just been having disagreements.

ANDREW: About what? After we met at the welcome barbeque you and Kaeli were basically inseparable.

Beat.

ABBY: I don't know. When we got together, I think she realized she wasn't going to get to hang out with me all the time anymore?

ANDREW: Oh, okay. I totally get it. She's one of those girls. I guess it's even worse because we were a friend group of three before. She probably feels like she's losing both of us, right?

ABBY: That must be it.

ANDREW: Okay, I've totally got this. I'll go talk to her, alleviate her worries or whatever. I'll be back.

ANDREW kisses ABBY and then exits.

ABBY: Fuck. What am I doing?

The NUN enters, walking so that she's directly behind ABBY'S chair. A cold breeze sweeps through the set, and ABBY shivers. The NUN moves into her line of sight.

Beat.

ABBY screams.

ABBY: What the fuck! This is not funny.

ABBY wields a chip bag like it's a weapon, holding it between her and the NUN. The two are locked in some form of staring contest. The window bursts open with a resounding bang, and ABBY startles, looking over at it. The NUN exits.

ABBY: What the actual fuck?

ABBY closes the window, and RILEY enters.

When ABBY turns, she startles and screams, holding the bag of chips up again like a weapon.

RILEY: Wow, sorry. I didn't mean to scare you.

ABBY: Sorry, I shouldn't have screamed.

RILEY: Are you okay?

ABBY: Yeah. You didn't see anyone on your way in here, did you?

RILEY: Uh, no? Who would I have seen.

ABBY: No one.

RILEY: Okay, well what are you doing?

ABBY: I was supposed to be having a movie night with Andrew and Kaeli.

RILEY: That sounds fun, what movie?

ABBY: Are you always working?

RILEY: No.

ABBY: I feel like I've been seeing you all the time.

RILEY: Trust me, with the shit that happens in this building I'd rather die than be working all the time.

ABBY: I can imagine. You must have some crazy stories.

RILEY: In my first year there was this guy. He used to call the duty phone all the time because he was seeing the ghost of one of the nuns in his room.

ABBY: Really? What did he do about the ghost?

RILEY: He couldn't do anything really. It didn't stop haunting him until he figured out why it was there.

ABBY: And how did he figure that out?

RILEY: He wouldn't say.

Beat.

Well, I'm going to continue my round.

ABBY: Riley, I'm scared that I'm making a big mistake.

RILEY: Surely it can't be that bad.

ABBY: I think I could really hurt some people.

RILEY: Then don't.

ABBY: What if I do anyway?

RILEY: Then make sure to apologize.

ABBY: You're not going to say something profound?

RILEY: Mistakes happen Abby. The important part is what you do after you've made them.

RILEY exits.

ABBY moves, almost as though she is going to follow him. She stops, and then looks up at the ceiling, inhaling and exhaling slowly.

Blackout.

SCENE VI

Lights on in ABBY'S room. She and ANDREW are making out in the bed. The NUN stands in the corner, watching, and ABBY catches sight of her. ABBY shoves ANDREW off her. He gets off immediately, putting space between them on the bed.

ANDREW: Woah, are you okay?

ABBY: Totally. Totally okay.

ANDREW: Okay, can I...

ANDREW reaches out towards her, like he's going to touch her.

ABBY: You know what I think? I'm just not in the mood right now.

ANDREW: That's fine, you don't have to be in the mood or anything. We can stop.

ABBY: I know Andrew.

ANDREW: What's wrong? You've been acting off for a couple of days. Since that movie night with Kaeli. I feel like you're distancing yourself from me.

ABBY: I've just had a lot going on recently.

ANDREW: Tell me about it. Maybe I can help.

ABBY: You wouldn't get it.

ANDREW: Try me.

ABBY: Finals are approaching for one. And my parents have these huge expectations about my grades.

ANDREW: I have parents too you know, they have an idea of what grades I should be getting as well.

ABBY: Does your mom access your student portal?

ANDREW: Jesus. No. Does yours?

ABBY: She's had all of my passwords since I was eight.

ANDREW: That's kind of crazy. She's always checking your grades?

ABBY: Yeah.

ABBY looks at the NUN who starts moving around and out of the corner. ABBY flinches a bit.

ANDREW: What's wrong?

ABBY: I just can't afford to fail.

ANDREW: What if we started a study group or something? We could spend some time in the library, really start working on studying for exams. Maybe you wouldn't be so worried then.

ABBY: That's a great idea. Yeah. Let's do that.

ABBY watches the NUN inspect ANDREW, who doesn't react.

ANDREW: What? Do I have something on my face?

ABBY: No. No not at all. This isn't a great time, why don't you come back later?

ANDREW: Woah, hey. You don't need to send me away Abby. I can help you study.

ABBY: That's nice of you, but I think I just need to be alone for a while.

ANDREW: Alright. But before I go, why don't we go out this weekend? It's the last weekend before schoolwork will really start picking up. Maybe it will let you de-stress a little bit.

ABBY: That sounds nice.

ANDREW: Okay, I'll catch you later then. Tell me when you're feeling better.

ANDREW exits. ABBY breathes in a sigh of relief. The NUN has returned to the corner of the room.

ABBY: Can you just tell me what you fucking want? How many days has it been since you showed up here? And you just stand there watching me, saying nothing. I don't know how to get rid of you.

The NUN exits.

Oh my God.

What a waste of time. You never talk to me anyway, I don't know why I even bother.

ABBY sits down on her bed, and takes out her phone. She opens Instagram, which is projected on the screen. She looks up the username: RRebelBecca3. When she clicks on the account it is no longer private, and there's a photo of two girls kissing. The one and only post. ABBY shuts the phone off and buries her head in her hands.

SCENE VII

Lights on in the common room. ABBY and KAELI enter, both wearing clubbing outfits that are not weather appropriate. They are laughing. They shed their jackets which fall to the floor, and both sit down on the sofa together.

KAELI: Do you think he'll be okay?

ABBY: He just needs to sleep it off. Jean said he'd check in on him again later.

KAELI: I had a lot of fun with you tonight.

ABBY: Me too.

KAELI: You have some great dance moves, where did you learn to dance like that?

ABBY: Would you believe me if I said ballet?

KAELI: No way.

ABBY: I wasn't very good at it, but I learned how to move.

KAELI: That's so wild.

ABBY: You have some pretty good dance moves yourself.

KAELI: Thanks, years of rehearsals for musicals in my high school.

ABBY: They paid off.

Beat where the two girls look at each other.

KAELI: Andrew told me you were worried about your grades, and he wanted us to go out tonight so you could relax.

ABBY: I'm not really that worried about them. I just told him that.

KAELI: Why?

ABBY: He thinks we've been distant lately.

KAELI: Have you?

ABBY: I guess so. I've been distracted.

KAELI: Distracted by what?

ABBY: Can I be honest?

KAELI: Of course you can, always.

ABBY: You. You're the reason I've been distracted. I haven't stopped thinking about you. Ever really. Haven't stopped thinking about what nearly happened. Tonight, it felt like I was closer to you than ever. I haven't felt that close to you since September. It felt like we forgot about all the bad things that happened, and just got to enjoy being with each other.

KAELI: I felt that way too. I wanted to forget. I wanted you to just be the Abby I met in August. I wanted you to be the Abby I fell in love with.

Beat.

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that.

ABBY: You love me?

KAELI: Why else would I have stuck around for so long?

ABBY: What about Jenna?

KAELI: Jenna isn't you.

Beat.

ABBY: I love you too.

The two hesitantly move towards each other.. KAELI takes ABBY'S hand, and their faces hover in front of each other. ABBY initiates the kiss.

They make-out for a few seconds (the kiss is more passionate than any we have seen between ABBY and ANDREW).

KAELI: Wow. I've wanted to do that for ages.

ABBY: Me too.

They embrace again, the kiss more heated.

ABBY: Come on.

ABBY drags KAELI off the sofa, and they collect their things off the floor of the common room.

They stumble out the door giggling, drunk on their own passion.

Lights stay on in the common room for a moment after, as though the NUN will appear like in previous scenes. She is nowhere in sight.

Lights out.

SCENE VIII

Lights on in the ABBY's room. The lighting is more like the morning sun filtering in through curtains. The overhead light isn't on. ABBY and KAELI are tangled up with each other in bed. Their clubbing clothes are discarded on the floor. Both wear tank tops and underwear.

KAELI wakes up first, and pulls away from ABBY, getting up. She is elated, a huge smile on her face. She rubs her hands over her face as though checking that it is real. She opens one of ABBY'S drawers and takes out a pair of pajama shorts. She caresses ABBY'S face and then leaves the room.

ABBY wakes next, feeling the space in the bed next to her. She sits up and looks around. For a moment she looks happy, and then her face transforms to a look of horror. KAELI re-enters the room, and closes the door behind her softly, so that it doesn't make much noise.

KAELI: You're awake.

ABBY: Just woke up.

KAELI: Sorry I left, I went to the bathroom. Did you sleep well?

KAELI crawls back into the bed with her, and ABBY distances herself.

ABBY: Yeah, I slept great.

KAELI: What's wrong?

ABBY: We slept together.

KAELI: We did. I had an amazing time last night Abby, didn't you?

ABBY: Of course I did. But we shouldn't have done it.

KAELI: Are you serious?

ABBY: Did anyone see you going to the bathroom?

KAELI: No. The hallways are empty. It's Sunday, everyone went out last night.

ABBY: Good. God, what a huge mistake.

KAELI: It wasn't a mistake to me. I wanted to do it. I thought you did too.

ABBY: We were drunk. It was a mistake.

KAELI: Would have been nice if you knew that before we slept together.

ABBY: I didn't mean to.

KAELI: God, I'm such an idiot.

ABBY: You're not. It's me. I should have known better.

KAELI: You said you love me. Was that a lie?

ABBY: It wasn't.

KAELI: Then why can't we have this? I love you too.

ABBY: I already told you.

KAELI: Your parents.

ABBY: Yes.

KAELI: This is what it's always going to be like, isn't it?

ABBY: No, it's not.

ABBY'S phone rings. She takes it off the nightstand.

Fuck. It's Andrew.

KAELI: Just let it go to voicemail.

ABBY makes a shushing motion and answers the call. The NUN appears in the corner of the room, observing. KAELI gets out of the bed and starts dressing in her clubbing outfit from the night before. KAELI looks more frustrated as the call continues.

ABBY: Andrew, how are you feeling? That's good. Yeah, I'm fine. I'd love to meet you for lunch. I just slept in my room last night. Yeah, it was okay, I missed you. Yeah, sure. Get dressed and shower. I'll meet you in a bit.

ABBY hangs up the phone.

I'm so sorry. What were you saying?

KAELI: Just forget it Abby. It'll be like nothing happened, okay? I'll just go back to the way things were.

ABBY: That's a relief, thank you for understanding.

KAELI: Yeah, no problem.

ABBY: Close the door quietly when you leave okay?

KAELI exits, she slams the door and ABBY winces.

ABBY gets out of her bed and turns on the overhead lights, which flicker.

ABBY: Stop that.

She starts dressing herself. The lamp on the desk falls off, creating a loud clattering noise. ABBY picks it up.

ABBY: Enough, okay. I made the right decision for me. I know I did. Last night was just a mistake, I was drinking. My judgment was clouded. It's better for both of us that things just go back to the way they were.

ABBY finishes dressing. A second later there is a knock at the door. ABBY answers the door, and RILEY enters.

RILEY: Good morning.

ABBY: Good morning. What are you doing here?

RILEY: I was checking up on you, since you still have that mouse in your room.

RILEY stares at the NUN in the corner of the room for a moment, and then returns his gaze to ABBY who is throwing clothes in her laundry basket.

ABBY: Mouse problem?

ABBY looks at the NUN.

Mouse problem! Right. It's fine, I haven't heard the mouse in a while.

RILEY: Great. I guess I can take that sonar back.

ABBY unplugs a white device from the wall and hands it to RILEY.

ABBY: If that's all you need...

Beat. RILEY looks over at the nun again and then looks away quickly.

RILEY: Has something been going on with you?

ABBY: Why would you think that?

RILEY: I mean, I know I'm your resident assistant and all, but I feel like we're kind of friends now. I eat with you in the cafeteria, I've joined you and your friends to watch a movie in the common room a couple times; I'm worried about you.

ABBY: There's nothing to worry about.

RILEY: I've noticed something is up. I came here more for that than the mouse to be honest. You've been acting... weird.

ABBY: Do you want to sit down?

RILEY: I don't need to.

ABBY: Please?

RILEY takes a seat in one of the armchairs, observant. He practices 'active listening' techniques.

I don't really know how to explain this. Or even where to start really.

RILEY: Why don't you just start from the beginning?

ABBY: This semester, it's been kind of crazy, right? I mean my parents sent me here in the first place because they wanted me to have some kind of epiphany, and, like, get on with my life you know? They want me to be an aerospace engineer and get a good job. And they have these crazy expectations.

RILEY: That sounds difficult.

ABBY: It is but it isn't, you know? I'm doing well in classes, and I have friends. And I finally felt like I was succeeding, right? Except then I start hanging out with Kaeli all the time. And she's super nice. The best person ever really. And we get along. We had matching Halloween costumes. I don't know if you remember them.

RILEY: I do. Sandy and Danny, right?

ABBY: Yeah exactly. And everything is great. Andrew is like this awesome other friend, and I actually enjoy going to the dining hall now. Unlike during that first week when I'd just sit alone every day and I'd wonder if I was going to have to sit alone all year, and everything was just depressing and sad.

RILEY: It sounds like things are going well for you.

ABBY: They are, but then I had to go and fuck it all up.

RILEY: I'm sure you didn't fuck it all up.

ABBY: Oh I did. I had to go and get this crush on Kaeli. I mean, it's not like I've never been into a girl before, okay? This isn't some sort of university sexuality crisis. I've known for ages. But in high school, there was this girl. Her name was Rebecca, and it was the same. I was best friends with her, and then I had this crush, and it was great because it was reciprocated and everything. But that's not what my parents wanted for me. And I didn't want to destroy all their expectations.

RILEY: What do you want, Abby?

ABBY: I want Kaeli. I mean obviously I want Kaeli. I kissed her last night, you know? Andrew was so drunk, he was throwing up and everything, and I didn't want to spend the night in his room. I was alone with her for one night and I ruined everything. We slept together. I made a

promise to my parents that I'd try to be this person that they want me to be. And Kaeli is like this giant neon sign in front of my white picket fence that announces to the whole world that I failed.

RILEY: That makes things complicated, but like I said before. Mistakes happen, you just have to decide what you want. Talk to Andrew, tell Kaeli the truth.

ABBY: I sent her away this morning. Kaeli. I sent her away. God, I feel crazy.

RILEY: You're not crazy.

ABBY: But I feel like I'm going insane. I finally hit this point where I told myself that maybe it doesn't matter if I let go of what my parents want. That maybe I could just do what I want. But every time I try to call my mom, every time I try to give up on that promise, it's like I can feel this noose wrapped around my throat that stops me from moving. And then she showed up, and she just makes everything worse.

RILEY: Who is she?

ABBY: This is going to sound even crazier than everything else.

RILEY: I've seen plenty of crazy things before. Just tell me.

ABBY: After we used that Ouija board on Halloween, Margaret is like following me around or something. She's haunting me.

RILEY: You've been seeing her?

ABBY: Yes! I mean that's a sign, right? That I'm going down the wrong path. I never believed in God the way that my mom does. Maybe that's my fault. But Margaret's everywhere, and I can't fucking get rid of her.

RILEY: Abby, I understand that this is scary.

The lights flicker in the room. And the window rattles. The NUN exits.

ABBY: See! It's like she's tormenting me, for making the wrong choices.

RILEY: I don't think you've made any wrong choices.

ABBY: Do you even believe me?

RILEY: I understand Abby, and I believe you.

ABBY: I must look insane right? The resident that finally crumbled under all of the pressure.

Fuck I'm sorry. I'm standing here talking to you about ghosts and you don't even believe that they are real.

RILEY: *You* believe.

ABBY'S phone starts to ring, it resounds through the entire theater.

ABBY: Fuck, it's my mom. Look you have to go.

RILEY: Abby I still want to talk to you about this.

ABBY: Just forget I said anything, okay? This never happened.

ABBY ushers RILEY out the door. She slams her back up against the door and answers the phone, holding it to her ear.

Blackout.

MOM'S voice resounding and God-like in the darkness.

MOM: Abby?

SCENE IX

Lights on in the common room. It remains empty for a beat, and then ABBY enters and sits on the sofa.

ANDREW enters next and sits next to ABBY. KAELI enters after, sees them, hesitates and then sits next to ABBY on her other side.

ANDREW and ABBY become more cuddly as the scene progresses. A couple displaying too much PDA.

ANDREW: How is studying going for you guys?

ABBY: Not great if I'm honest. I'm having a lot of trouble with this one equation.

ANDREW: Yeah. Same for me. I feel like preparing for finals is way worse than midterms.

KAELI: I think it's meant to be.

ANDREW: I needed this break.

ANDREW squeezes ABBY'S thigh.

Movie night was a great idea.

ABBY: I mean it's kind of our thing at this point.

KAELI: Your thing?

ABBY: All of us, I mean. Since October when we went out to the theater.

ANDREW: That was fun.

KAELI: I especially loved the part when we were walking back and the homeless man asked if we wanted molly.

ABBY: Seriously? I don't remember that.

KAELI: It was when you went into McDonalds to use the bathroom. Andrew was lighting a cigarette, and he asked for a light, and then offered us molly.

ANDREW: That was funny.

KAELI: For a second I thought you were going to say yes.

ANDREW: Maybe I was.

KAELI: Yeah, until you were reminded that Abby was with us.

ABBY: Why would that have changed anything?

KAELI: He was trying to impress you.

ANDREW: That is not what I was doing.

KAELI: It totally was.

ABBY: Really?

Beat.

ANDREW: I mean yeah. I had a huge crush on you.

ABBY: Even back then?

ANDREW: From the day I met you.

KAELI: He was waxing poetic about you every time I saw him. Does Abby like me? Should I ask her out?

ANDREW: Cut it out.

ABBY: Wow.

ANDREW: I mean I lucked out, somehow, I got you.

ABBY: You did.

KAELI leans back against the arm of the sofa, distancing herself from ABBY.

KAELI: What do you guys want to watch tonight?

ANDREW: Nothing horror, I put in my time when we watched *Jennifer's Body*.

KAELI: I thought you said you liked it.

ANDREW: I did.

KAELI: You're weird.

ABBY: How about we watch a Marvel movie? Even things out. We watched Kaeli's favourite genre last time, so we can watch a super-hero movie this time.

ANDREW: Sounds good to me.

ANDREW looks around.

Shit, I forgot my laptop. I'll be back in a minute.

ANDREW exits.

ABBY and KAELI move away from each other on the sofa, and go on their phones. ABBY peeks at KAELI a couple times and then looks back at her phone. The energy of the room becomes awkward. When KAELI does finally look up she sighs heavily, and then slips her phone into her back pocket. She stands.

KAELI: I'm just going to go.

ABBY: I didn't think you'd mind a Marvel movie. We can just ask Andrew to watch something else. As long as it's not horror.

KAELI: It's not that.

ABBY: Then what is it?

KAELI: Do I really have to spell it out for you?

ABBY: I don't even understand what you're talking about.

KAELI: I can't have you, Abby.

ABBY: I know. We've talked about this before.

KAELI: I don't want to do it anymore.

ABBY: I'm not changing my mind. What happened between us...

KAELI: Was a mistake. I got it. But I'm not doing this anymore. As a lover or a friend.

ABBY: What are you saying?

KAELI: I'm done. This is it for me.

ABBY stands.

ABBY: You're going to give up?

KAELI: What am I giving up on exactly? Because you've told me time and time again, we can't have this. You're hot and cold every second of the day. I never know which version I'm going to get Abby. I'm tired.

ABBY: What can I do to fix this?

KAELI: You can't fix this. I don't want to be your second choice for the rest of my life. I don't want to wonder if you want me every second of the day. I want you to make up your mind.

The window blows open, cold air and snow blasting into the room. ABBY goes to close it, but KAELI stops her.

You can have what you want Abby. But I'm asking you to choose.

ABBY: I can't.

KAELI: You already have; I just need you to say it.

ABBY: I won't.

KAELI: Then this is it.

KAELI makes a move to leave, and ABBY grabs onto her wrist.

ABBY: Wait.

KAELI: I'm done waiting.

KAELI tries to pull her wrist away, and ABBY guides her to sit on the loveseat. ABBY kneels in front of her, holding onto her hands.

ABBY: Give me a chance. Just let me figure out what I really want.

KAELI: Don't you see how many chances I've given you? And every time you just keep going back to Andrew, and I let you.

ABBY: Kaeli please.

KAELI: Make your decision. Your final decision. And I'll accept it, no matter what you do. But I'm not going to be some mistress. I don't want to go behind Andrews back anymore. Tell him the truth, or don't. I don't care. Just know that if you pick him, we're done.

ABBY: Kaeli don't do this.

KAELI exits.

ABBY sits back down on the sofa, and ANDREW returns to the room.

ANDREW: Laptop acquired! Wow it's cold in here. Why'd you open the window?

ABBY: The window? I uh, I was hot. I opened it.

ANDREW puts the laptop down.

ANDREW: Hey, where's Kaeli?

ABBY: She had to go study.

ANDREW: That's too bad. Can't complain though. I've been excited for some alone time, I feel like we haven't been able to hang out alone much lately.

ANDREW leans in to kiss ABBY and she leans away.

What's wrong?

ABBY: Nothing.

ANDREW: I know that's not true. You've been acting like this for ages. What's going on?

ABBY: I don't want to talk about it.

ANDREW: Fuck. I love you but you can be so annoying sometimes. Why can't you just tell me what's happening?

ABBY: There's nothing going on, why can't you just believe me?

ANDREW: Because I know it's not true! You've been distancing yourself from me ever since Halloween, and then right when I thought things were getting better again, we went out, and you started acting even weirder.

ABBY: I'm just going through some things right now.

ANDREW: Then tell me about it.

ABBY: Can't I keep some things for just me?

ANDREW: Not when it's effecting our relationship.

ABBY: Let's just watch the movie.

ANDREW gets up and grabs his laptop.

Where are you going?

ANDREW: I'm going to hang out with people that actually enjoy talking to me. When you want to talk about whatever is going on with you, come find me.

ANDREW exits.

Beat where ABBY closes the window and appears to be thinking about the two choices laid out in front of her.

Blackout.

SCENE X

ABBY enters her dorm room and turns on her lights. She is dressed for winter, wearing a hat, boots, mittens and a large puffy winter jacket.

She takes off her winter clothes, and grabs a PJ set, she undresses to her underwear and bra. The NUN steps into the scene, hiding behind the desk. When ABBY catches sight of her she screams, holding the clothes close to her chest.

ABBY: Jesus Christ!

ABBY approaches the desk, and the lights flicker out. When they come back on the NUN is gone.

ABBY: Oh my god, oh my god. Can you just go away!

ABBY aggressively puts on the PJs.

God forbid anyone can have some privacy around here!

There's a knock on the door. ABBY answers it, and RILEY is standing there.

Oh, Riley.

RILEY: Hey, I've been looking for you. Do you have time to chat.

ABBY: Sure.

RILEY: You seem stressed.

ABBY: I thought you were someone else.

RILEY: Waiting on someone?

ABBY: No. Not really. I just hoped it would be someone else. Oh God, sorry that sound rude.

RILEY: It's fine, I get it.

ABBY: What are you doing here anyway?

RILEY: Our conversation the other day.

ABBY: I told you to just forget about it.

RILEY: I mean I couldn't, not really. And I haven't seen you anywhere since. The cafeteria, the study room, the common room. You completely disappeared.

ABBY: I've been avoiding the common spaces.

RILEY: Do you want to talk about it?

ABBY: I guess so. I just feel bad.

RILEY: What about?

ABBY: I feel like I don't love him the way that he wants me to.

RILEY: Your boyfriend?

ABBY: I don't think I can ever love him the way that he wants me to.

RILEY: Why stay with him then? It sounds like it might be easier to just let him down gently.

ABBY: My Mom likes him. Or the idea of him I guess. I'm dating a boy.

RILEY: But you don't. Shouldn't that be all that matters?

ABBY: My mom isn't like that. She's not understanding. She sees him as a good thing.

RILEY: But how do you really feel?

ABBY: I don't know. I like the way that my mom feels when I'm with him. It's the first time she hasn't seemed disappointed by me. Now that Andrew and I are dating, I haven't fought with her about anything. It's like he made it go all away.

RILEY: Can I ask you something?

ABBY: Of course.

RILEY: On Hallowe'en, did you see her? Margaret.

ABBY: Why are you asking?

RILEY: I could hear you, talking to someone before I came in.

ABBY: You think I'm crazy.

RILEY: I never said that.

ABBY: You don't believe in that kind of thing.

RILEY: I believe this.

ABBY: What do you know about her?

RILEY: She was one of the nuns who lived here before the fire in the orphanage.

ABBY: You seriously expect me to believe that's all you know?

RILEY: No. I came here today to talk to you about her. When you told me you'd been seeing her the other day, it made me think back to my first year.

ABBY: You have some of your own ghost stories?

RILEY: You and your friends aren't the first or last group of people to use a Ouija board in the building.

ABBY: You used one too?

RILEY: I did. On Hallowe'en. And because the border between us and the spirit realm was thin, she spoke back.

ABBY: I think you mentioned that.

RILEY: I could see her after that too.

ABBY: That story about the boy who could see her, it was true?

RILEY: It was about me.

Beat.

ABBY: She appears sometimes. In my room. Mostly she just stands there. It creeped me out the first few times. I still get jump scared occasionally, but we're like cohabitating this place at this point.

RILEY: That's why I heard you scream earlier?

ABBY: Yeah. Is that what it was like for you?

RILEY: I lived in this room too, you know. Used the same common room and everything. She's attached to this place. Just like you, I heard the scratching right after Hallowe'en.

ABBY: That wasn't a mouse really, it was her, wasn't it?

RILEY: It was.

ABBY: But why, why us?

RILEY: Because we're all the same. You, me, her. We're all gay. Margaret became a nun so that she could escape the expectations of her parents. She recorded it in her journal. Her parents wanted her to marry a man and settle down, but as a woman devout to her religion she was able to escape the dreams of her parents and create a new life here, in the Grey Nuns motherhouse.

ABBY: She could live as a gay woman.

RILEY: Exactly. She died that day in the fire protecting the person she came to love, one of the other nuns.

ABBY: How do you know that?

RILEY: The last entry was recorded the day of the fire. In it she details that it's St. Valentine's day, and that her lover is meant to be working in the orphanage. I don't know if she succeeded in saving her, but that's why she was on the west side that day, so far away from her room.

ABBY: What does any of this have to do with me?

RILEY: You haven't accepted who you are. Just like I hadn't when I first moved in.

ABBY: That's why she always seems to show up when I'm with Andrew then? Not because I'm making the right decision, but because I'm making the wrong one?

RILEY: You want to be with Kaeli, don't you? You said it yourself; you don't think you could ever love Andrew the right way. Doesn't that tell you what you should do?

ABBY: But what about my parents?

RILEY: You know your parents better than anyone. You know how this will make them feel. I guess it comes down to what you're willing to live with.

ABBY: You're right. I know what I have to do.

ABBY exits.

RILEY looks over at the NUN, who's hidden in the corner of the room. He waves and then exits as well.

Blackout.

SCENE XI

Lights on in the common room. ANDREW is sitting on the sofa, tapping his knees. He keeps checking his watch every couple of seconds. ABBY enters.

ANDREW: Abby. You wanted to meet me, are you finally ready to talk?

ABBY: I am. I wanted to start by telling you how sorry I am. I have been distant since Halloween, and it's my own fault.

ANDREW: It's fine, just tell me what's going on.

ABBY: I'm gay Andrew. I have been since we started dating, I just couldn't tell you.

Beat.

ANDREW: I don't know what to say.

ABBY: I shouldn't have lied to you for so long. It was just so... perfect, I guess? Too perfect. You're exactly what my parents have always wanted for me.

ANDREW: I'm just not a girl.

ABBY: I've told you about my mom. About my parents. They want me to have the perfect job, perfect degree, perfect life. They wanted me to be with a man. I didn't want to disappoint them.

ANDREW: Did I even matter to you at all?

The NUN enters the stage, moving along the walls, observing. ABBY acts like she doesn't notice her.

ABBY: Of course you mattered to me. I love you, just not in that way. You're one of my best friends. My only best friend possibly. Unless Kaeli forgives me.

ANDREW: That's why you and Kaeli have been acting weird. She's the one that you really want to be with. God I'm so clueless, she's been enamoured with you since the start of the year. I should have known.

ABBY: I didn't mean to trick you.

ANDREW: Were you with her? On Halloween? When this all started. Is that why you've been acting so strange.

ABBY: We weren't together that day, but I wanted to be. And God I'd give anything to go back and make different decisions, but these are the mistakes I've made. I lied to you about wanting to date you, and I lied to Kaeli about what I really wanted. I cheated on you Andrew, that night that you drank too much at the bar. Kaeli and I, we were together. Even after that, I still couldn't admit what I really wanted. I was too scared.

ANDREW: Why now then? Why did you finally decide that it was time to tell the truth?

ABBY: Because I realized if I didn't, I'd lose Kaeli forever.

ANDREW: You realized you wanted her more.

ABBY: I hope you can forgive me.

ANDREW: I... don't know if I can. I need to think.

ANDREW moves closer, grabbing onto ABBY's arms with gentle touch, he leans in and presses a kiss to her cheek.

ABBY: What was that for?

ANDREW: I think it was goodbye.

ANDREW exits.

ABBY looks at MARGARET, and then sits down in the armchair.

ABBY: This is goodbye to you too, isn't it. That really wasn't as hard as I thought it would be. Maybe because I know that I don't care about what my parents want now. Or maybe I've just started living for myself. I can't say I've loved having you follow me everywhere, but for what it's worth, I'll miss you, Margaret.

ABBY stands.

I'd better go find Kaeli now.

ABBY exits.

The lights flicker out in the common room.

Lights come on center stage, right in front of the dorm room and common room. ABBY can be heard in the distance.

ABBY: Kaeli! Wait up, Kaeli!

KAELI enters stage right and keeps walking until she is directly center stage. She looks back, and ABBY enters stage right, running to catch up to her.

ABBY: Hey.

KAELI: Hey.

ABBY: I'm sorry for chasing you down like that.

KAELI: It's fine. Not like I was going anywhere important.

ABBY: I thought about what you said.

KAELI: If you're here to try and convince me...

ABBY: I'm not!

Beat. ABBY steels herself.

This whole year, I've been preventing myself from being me. Because of my mom, because I wanted to make friends. When I started dating Andrew, I was scared.

Beat.

I didn't want to disappoint my mom. I didn't want to repeat my old mistakes. I didn't want my mom to find out and bring me back home. I didn't want to leave. But I realized, this is who I am. And that even after everything I've done, I still love you. I want to date you. I want us to be together.

KAELI: Abby...

ABBY: I know I've ruined my chances.

KAELI: You haven't.

ABBY: What?

KAELI: Ruined your chances.

ABBY: Can I..?

KAELI: Yes.

ABBY and KAELI reach out for each other, and embrace in a kiss.

ABBY: Somehow this feels better than that night.

KAELI: It does.

ABBY: I feel like it's real.

The two of them giggle and kiss again.

ABBY: Kaeli?

KAELI: Yeah?

ABBY: Thank you, for giving me a chance.

KAELI: Of course.

The two of them hold each other's hands and embrace in a hug.

In the background, a screen lights up. On the screen there is a black porthole window.

The porthole slowly becomes larger, zooming in, until you can see through the window. Inside the porthole window, rows of crosses stick up out of the ground, made of gravel and concrete.

MARGARET stands next to one of the crosses.

Blackout.

END.