Scene 1

(EVAN and OLIVIA’s bedroom. Olivia undresses and gets ready for bed, rehearsing a song as she does so. Evan steps in and watches her. This is the last night he will spend with her while she is alive, but he has no idea. There were no signs.)

OLIVIA:

[MUSIC]

EVAN:

New tune?

OLIVIA:

Old tune. The lament of Ariana. It’s the only long one remaining from Monteverdi’s second. *Lasciatemi morir.*

EVAN:

Sounds like a riot. Hey, did you send out the invitations today?

OLIVIA:

Mmhmm. Post office didn’t have any roses or ring stamps, so we got Snoopy instead. It was that or Abraham Lincoln.

EVAN:

You chose a cartoon dog rather than a former president representative of honesty and equality as the image that will forever brand our envelopes?

OLIVIA:

Lincoln — victim of assassination. Snoopy — proprietor of the happy dance. It seemed a little more celebratory.

EVAN:

Good point. What’s Lincoln doing on a stamp anyway? Snoopy it is.

So, invitations are sent. The world is alerted. No backing out now.

OLIVIA:

Cancel that one-way ticket to Peru.

EVAN:

Throw out that Carmen San Diego disguise.

OLIVIA:

Two more months.

EVAN:

Two more months.

(They get into bed.)

EVAN:

When we’re married, do you think we should get our initials carved into some kind of rubber stamp? We could get some fabric paint and glassware paint. That seems like the easiest way to monogram all our dishtowels and wine glasses, right? We should have our own seal, you know. All the properly married people do.

OLIVIA:

(Distracted.)

Uh-huh.

EVAN:

How were rehearsals?

OLIVIA:

They were good.

EVAN:

After the show is done, maybe we can take a trip somewhere.

OLIVIA:

We’re going to Paris in two months.

EVAN:

Just a small trip. A day trip. It’d be nice to spend a day with you.

OLIVIA:

Yeah. I guess that would be nice.

EVAN:

We could go back to that inn, in Port Townsend.

OLIVIA:

You hated Port Townsend.

EVAN:

And you found dusty flea markets and lopsided pottery unequivocally charming. I’ll never know why.

OLIVIA:

Thank you.

EVAN:

How was the rest of your day?

OLIVIA:

Good. I walked around town a lot. I smelled hot dogs everywhere. Coming out of doughnut shops and up the sewer grates. You wouldn’t believe how much I wanted a hot dog. I salivated for hot dog.

EVAN:

Was today the day you gave up being vegetarian?

OLIVIA:

I had a lettuce tofu wrap instead.

EVAN:

Ahh, so you’ve only increased in your martyr status. Another pig has lived to see tomorrow. All because of you.

OLIVIA:

How was your day?

EVAN:

Uneventful. As per usual. Adulthood’s exciting the first five years. Then the tedium sets in. At least there’s Free Bagel Fridays.

OLIVIA:

Sounds pretty bleak.

EVAN:

It’ll be different for you. You’ll be famous. You steal the show every night.

OLIVIA:

I don’t care about being famous. I just want to sing. And I want them to listen.

EVAN:

And that’s why you’ll be famous. (Kisses her.) When you’re famous, I’ll be all like, hey, my towels are monogrammed with her towels. We share monogrammed towels.

OLIVIA:

Does the tedium never end?

EVAN:

No, but sometimes the sunlight breaks through. And I get to marry you. Have children with you. Watch you sing and see you own the crowd. I get to do all of that, so I am pretty damn lucky.

(Stage direction for sexual kill.)

OLIVIA:

Not tonight, please. I’m tired. It was a long day.

EVAN:

Okay.

OLIVIA:

I’m sorry. I love you.

EVAN:

I adore you.

OLIVIA:

I’ll see you in the morning.

EVAN:

Sleep well.

OLIVIA:

You, too. (Pause.) Can I tell you something? I did eat a hot dog today. In fact, I ate three.

EVAN:

How was it?

OLIVIA:

They tasted so good. I didn’t know a hot dog could taste so good.

EVAN:

Did you get toppings? You got toppings, right?

OLIVIA:

Everything I could.

EVAN:

Good. That’s good. I’m happy for you.

OLIVIA:

I’m going to dream of hot dogs tonight.

EVAN:

You could dream of worse.

OLIVIA:

I’ll dream of you and I, eating hot dogs by the Arc de Triomphe.

EVAN:

Like Lady and the Tramp? With Django Reinhardt playing guitar in the background?

OLIVIA:

Precisely.

EVAN:

Leave the onions off mine, please.

OLIVIA:

Will do.

EVAN:

Hey. Tomorrow’s Third Wednesday. Can you run to the bank?

OLIVIA:

Sure. No problem.

EVAN:

Okay. Thanks, love. Good night.

OLIVIA:

Night.

(Lights off until the middle of the night. Lights up on Olivia as she sits up in bed and ponders Evan’s sleeping form.)

OLIVIA: I love you so much, baby. Will you please please remember that?

(She kisses him.)

(Olivia gets up and walks around the stage. She takes a gun out of a drawer and then curls up in a fetal position on the floor. It takes a while for her to press the trigger, but she does it, she puts that fucking bullet inside her brain. The sound of it jolts Evan awake.)

End of Scene 1.

Scene 2

(This occurs right after the gunshot. We are in Evan’s apartment, in some happy-sad, past-present mishmash. The lighting is a little bit off. Evan and Olivia are seated close together, and have a laptop and a smart phone with them. Beth sits a little bit off to the side, a little bit separated from their happiness.)

EVAN:

Okay, so, the dance floor is here, tables are back there, and the cake can go … here?

BETH:

Thanks so much for letting me make the cake. I’m so excited. I’ve been testing a whole bunch of recipes. I think I’ve got some good ones.

OLIVIA:

Do we have to meet with the caterers on Monday? I have rehearsals all afternoon. And two private lessons in the morning. I can’t wait till this is all over.

EVAN:

Come on, Liv. You get to choose the ice sculpture.

BETH:

(Excited.) You’re getting an ice sculpture?

OLIVIA:

Of course not. What would we get an ice sculpture of? A castle?

EVAN:

I was thinking we should get one of my penis.

BETH:

(Laughter, then the fear that she has laughed too loud.)

OLIVIA:

It would just keep shrinking all night.

(She and Evan make a face. Then she gets up to check on something else.)

BETH:

So, did you guys go look at those houses downtown?

EVAN:

No. Things are just too busy right now. Looks like we’re going to hold off the homeowner thing another year.

BETH:

Oh! Good! I mean, maybe not *good*, but I’m happy. I like having you guys across the hall.

EVAN:

Well, even if we did move, you’d still be the Protector of our Spare Key.

OLIVIA:

(*Comes walking by with a stack of envelopes in her arms.*)

We’ve got a fun stack of envelopes to address.

EVAN:

Olivia doesn’t want to move anyway. She’s far too attached to her precious bathroom.

OLIVIA:

It’s got great acoustics! (*Her phone beeps.*) Ugh. My agent wants me to audition for these plays and little musicals. I keep telling him I just want to sing. I mean, like, really sing. Hey, Beth, are you still looking for auditions? I could send him your headshot.

BETH:

Oh, no. Please don’t. I’m not — I’m not really trying to do the acting thing anymore. I — I like baking.

EVAN:

You could do both! Why not? You totally should.

OLIVIA:

(*Gets another message. Laughs but is also exasperated.*)

EVAN:

What’s that about?

OLIVIA:

Just a student of mine. He’s ridiculous. I need to turn this thing off. Oh nothing. It’s just ridiculous. I need to turn this thing off.

EVAN:

Wait a minute. (*Checks his computer.*) You said Monday was out? What about … Wednesday evening?

OLIVIA:

I can’t. I have a thing.

EVAN:

Really? I thought Wednesdays were off days.

OLIVIA:

Oh. Something came up. Let’s do Thursday! Can we do that?

EVAN:

Ooookay. I’ll let them know tomorrow.

BETH:

Do you guys need any help? I can write envelopes.

OLIVIA:

Oh. Don’t worry about it. I’ve got it.

(*She picks up a pen and scrolls through her address book. She puts the pen to paper but she doesn’t write.*)

EVAN:

So, let’s hear more about the cake. What’s going on with the cake?

BETH:

Okay, so I made three different kinds last night.

EVAN:

Three different cakes? Beth, you’re a baking machine! We aren’t even paying you. Seriously, you can make it with a box mix.

BETH:

Oh, it didn’t take very long. This is my first wedding cake. And it’s for you! I just want to make sure it’s good.

EVAN:

It’s gonna be great.

BETH:

I was thinking three layers, with another small bride and groom cake on top, and every layer will be a different flavor. Yesterday, I made a coconut cream, a red velvet, and a double chocolate raspberry.

EVAN:

Double chocolate raspberry? What do you think of that, Liv?

OLIVIA:

(*Startled, looks up.)* Sounds great.

BETH:

It’s got double chocolate stout in it. I froze them all. And I think after I try a few other flavors, and experiment with the frosting, we should do a cake-tasting.

EVAN:

Hell. Yes. Cake-tasting! When should we schedule that, Liv?

(*Olivia gets up and starts walking away.*)

EVAN:

Olivia? Where are you going? … Come back here.

(*Bright lights darken and as Evan looks into Olivia’s direction, mourners bring food and flowers and candles and set them around the stage.)*

EVAN:

(*Choking voice.)* Come….back. (*Looks back down at his hands.*)

BETH:

That was the last time I saw her. … I have all this … cake, but she’s never coming back.

EVAN:

(*Scoffs and drops a photograph of her, transitioning into the bitter, angry Evan. He pulls his robe on. The rest of the apartment is revealed in its messy and abandoned state.)*

BETH:

I’m so sorry, Evan. That’s … all I can say.

EVAN:

Uh huh.

(*Takes a sugar cube out of the box and puts one in his tea. Considers another one.*)

BETH:

I called the church and the caterers, and I picked up your mail. Your work sent an orchid. There’s a card. Do you want to look at it?

EVAN:

Nope.

BETH:

(Opens the card anyway.)

It says, “Dear Evan, We’re so sorry for your loss. We hope you’re recovering from this unfortunate incident and we know we’ll see you back in the game soon. Please let Sally know how soon exactly. The sofa company is really pushing right now. It's catalogue season. All our condolences.”

EVAN:

Yep. Bastards.

BETH:

Oh I almost forgot. I brought a beef stroganoff, too. (*Bends down and takes the plate out of her bag.*) I thought you’ve probably had enough eggs and baked goods now.

EVAN:

Nonsense. Eggs are great. Want an egg, Beth? This one’s got celery and dill. Here we’ve got original, with a dash of chili pepper. And THESE. These sick looking things have crab meat! They look green, but don’t be alarmed. It’s just the avocado. Avocado deviled eggs! Can you believe it?

BETH:

That's a new twist.

EVAN:

You’re not kiddin’, sister. The world's just full of twists. One day you’re planning a honeymoon to Paris. The next you’re mopping up the pieces of your dead girlfriend’s brain. Never stop twisting, world.

BETH:

I have to tell you something, Evan.

EVAN:

What’s that?

(*He tries piecing two sugar cubes together.*)

BETH:

Olivia’s dad and step-mom stayed in town. They want to know what happened.

EVAN:

Don’t we all.

BETH:

They hired someone. He came by my place this morning and asked me questions. About you.

EVAN:

Did you tell him all about my wit and my charm?

BETH:

I told him you would never hurt anybody. But then he asked me why you owned a gun.

EVAN:

(Leans his head back and squeezes his eyes shut for a long time.)

How does the sugar stay in such a perfect cube, do you think? Look at this thing. Just look at it. This is geometry.

BETH:

Did you know she was depressed? Did she ever…say anything?

EVAN:

Olivia wasn’t depressed, Beth. She was just a rotten bitch.

BETH:

Don't say that.

EVAN:

Can I get you some tea? Coffee? Are you sure you don’t want an egg?

BETH:

Evan, have you…thought about seeing someone?

EVAN:

What do you mean?

BETH:

My aunt died a few years ago. She was really young. But she had problems with drugs. My mom took it really hard. She was really angry at my aunt. She ended up going to this grieving group. It really helped her a lot.

EVAN:

I don’t need to go to a group, Beth. I’m fine. I’m great. And I’ve got you.

BETH:

(*Pleased but uncertain.*) I’d do anything to help you…. Evan, I’m really worried about this detective. Do you think Olivia wrote anything down, said anything ever? She must have left something behind.

EVAN:

She left a lot of things behind. Look at all this crap she left behind. We should have a garage sale.

BETH:

They set up a memorial fund in her name, you know. Her dad did. Donations are being made to the music school downtown. They do musical therapy there, and they give free lessons.

EVAN:

Great!

BETH:

I thought that would make you feel better.

EVAN:

I couldn’t be happier.

BETH:

Evan, I have to get to work. Will you make sure you eat something? Eat the beef stroganoff, okay?

EVAN:

Of course. Of course.

BETH:

I’ll come by again tomorrow. Or, tonight, if you want? (*Evan doesn't respond.*) If you need anything, you can just knock. I’m right next door. So, if you need anything at all.

EVAN:

(Building onto his sugar cube castle.) Beth. You are the best. I will build you a turret.

BETH:

(Smiles a little.) You’ll build me turret?

EVAN:

I’ll build a castle. It’ll have turrets. And a dungeon.

BETH:

Okay. I’ll see you later. Have a … a goodish day.

EVAN:

And a good day to you, Madame!

(Beth exits. After placing a few more sugar cubes onto his castle, Evan loses interest. He picks up a robe of Olivia’s and smells it. He lies down with the robe crumpled over his face, breathing it in like a drowning man just handed an oxygen mask. Then he sits up and flings the robe across the room onto the area where Olivia died. He flips open his computer and looks through pictures of her, of the two of them together. He goes to her web site, where fans have left messages and posted videos. He finds her tour dates, and a video message that she posted to her fans.)

Scene 4

(Beth and Evan hang out in Evan's apartment. Perhaps Evan has some opened envelopes and letters out. Evan is in an increasingly confused place. Beth tries to clean Evan's apartment. Beth should also be concerned about the amount of time Evan is spending on Olivia’s computer.)

EVAN:

Beth, I will not allow you to clean my dishes. Please don't clean my dishes.

BETH:

I'm beginning to think that there are things living in your sink. A mini kraken. Borne out of food bacteria.

EVAN:

I'll battle it down tomorrow.

BETH:

Should we throw out some of these eggs? I think they're the main cause of the smell.

EVAN:

(Sniffs himself and smiles deprecatingly.) That's kind of you, Beth.

BETH:

(Goes to throw a few things out and picks up Olivia's robe from the ground. She takes it and uncovers the blood stain. It unnerves her for a while.) We should clean…

EVAN:

(Looking through Olivia’s computer.)

BETH:

(Keeping her voice cheerful.) Evan, should I call a carpet cleaner, do you think?

EVAN:

Olivia wanted to clean the carpet once. She thought she was allergic to it. Like it was making her throat itchy.

BETH:

Oh. (She sets the robe aside and goes to sit down by Evan, again forcing cheerfulness into her voice.) So what are you looking at?

EVAN:

Oh, I’m just…going through fan mail. They keep coming in.

BETH:

Yeah? What do they say?

EVAN:

Here’s one from the cat guy. He used to send these postcards, with pictures of his cat. There was one with the cat sitting on top of the piano, with this caption, "Meow! I love your mew-mew-mew-sic.” Olivia and I would say, hey, let’s change the mew-mew-mew-sic for weeks. This one — this one’s just the cat, looking super sad. I didn’t know cats could look sad.

BETH:

I never thought about that part of her life. The fans. It must have been hard sometimes.

I never thought about what it’d be like to be her. I was just jealous of her.

EVAN:

You were jealous?

BETH:

(Nervously) Um. A little bit. Because she was so successful. And (Unsaid: She had you.)... yeah. I was jealous.

EVAN:  
You didn’t have reason to be. (*Beth looks up at him.*) I mean, you’re just as good as she was. She just got lucky.

BETH:

Thanks.

EVAN:

Look. She took these pictures for her CD jacket. She wanted me on there too.

(He submits Beth to pictures of him with Olivia.)

EVAN:

Was I a good man to her?

BETH:

(Startled.) What do you mean?

EVAN:

Was I good?

BETH:

You were wonderful.

EVAN:

But. Not good enough.

BETH:

You were wonderful.

EVAN:

How did I not know then?

BETH:

None of us knew. No one in their wildest dreams would ever have imagined it. Look at how shocked everyone is. Her parents hired a detective!

EVAN:

What did I do wrong?

BETH:

You didn't do anything wrong. You didn't.

(She raises a hand to touch him, but then changes her mind. It is not her place to touch him.)

BETH:

It's not your fault, Evan. I swear to you. None of it is your fault. ~~Olivia was troubled. There were things, in her life. She had her own demons.~~

EVAN:

She never told me. She never told any of it to me.

BETH:

Maybe she just couldn't.

EVAN:

Maybe I didn't listen. That was all she ever wanted. For people to listen.

BETH:

Don't be so hard on yourself, okay? It's not your fault.

(Evan starts to cry. Beth is uncertain how she fits into this particular moment. She squeezes his hand, but there is like a force field preventing any further intimacy.)

BETH:

I should go. I'll come back tomorrow, okay?

EVAN:

Wait. Please don't go. I'm sorry. Please? Stay?

BETH:

("Do I get myself into this?") Okay. I'll stay.

EVAN:

Thank you.

(She sits down next to him again. Neither knows how to proceed.)

EVAN:

Do you want to play cards?

BETH:

(At the same time.) Let me clean up a little.

(Beth gets up and engages herself in sweeping or some other cleaning activity. Evan watches her, then watches his hands. Beth eventually finds herself standing in front of The Stain. She doesn't know what to do about it.)

BETH:

Do you think...? Should I call a carpet cleaner for you?

EVAN:

Olivia wanted to clean the carpet once. She thought she was allergic, like it was making her throat itch. I told her she was being neurotic. We'd buy a house soon. But she never even wanted to move. She said she'd never found a bathroom with such great acoustics.

(He picks up a sugar cube with shaky fingers.)

BETH:

("Okay. Touchy subject.") Okay, forget that. I'll just ... pretend it's not there.

EVAN:

Sometimes I hear her, you know? Singing in the bathroom. She's all over the place.

BETH:

Maybe you *should* have that garage sale. Or, you know, start to get rid of some of her things.

EVAN:

I know. I'm just, so tired.

BETH:

Go to sleep, then. I'll be here.

EVAN:

You will?

BETH:

Yeah. I won't leave you.

EVAN:

Thank you, Beth.

…….

EVAN:

Answer the question.

BETH:

Evan?

(Evan turns around and finds Beth peering in.)

BETH:

Is everything okay? I heard you ... shouting.

EVAN:

I ... (He looks back at Olivia.) I'm just losing my mind.

BETH:

It's okay, Evan. I know this must be so hard for you. You can — Whatever you need, you should just do it.

OLIVIA:

You're in the audience, too. You’ve got box seats. You’re in the middle of everyone. You’re sitting next to her.

EVAN:

None of this makes any sense.

OLIVIA:

You talk to her so loudly I can overhear what you say. "What a waste," you say. "Did you know she's been waiting for this her whole life?" And then you laugh. And you say, "I just can't stop laughing. I'm crying!"

BETH:

Maybe it will never make sense.

OLIVIA:

No, it doesn’t make sense, does it? But isn’t it nice? Isn’t it nice to be able to *talk* like this?

EVAN:

(Laughs.)

BETH:

Evan?

EVAN:

I just can't stop laughing. I'm crying.

OLIVIA:

In my dream, you shout up to me, "Is this what you've worked for?" "Is this what your life is about?" And then you turn to her again. "What a waste," you say. "Did you know she's been –"

BETH:

Come on, Evan. Get up from there.

OLIVIA:

"Did you know she's been waiting for this her whole life?"

BETH:

Get up. Let's get you back to bed. (She touches his shoulder, and he grabs onto her hand like it's the rope on his lifeline.) It's okay. It's going to be okay.

EVAN:

How will it be okay?

BETH:

You just...you just have to stop looking behind you. And slowly it'll become part of the past.

OLIVIA:

We don't have a future, Evan. One little bullet blew it all up. All we have is history. But didn't we have a beautiful history?

BETH:

Come on. Stop reliving it. Stop looking back. It wasn't your fault. And you couldn't have done a thing to change it.

OLIVIA:

Remember Cremona? Remember the vineyard? Remember busking? Remember Chopin? Remember Pioneer Square in the rain?

BETH:

~~Bury her.~~ She wanted to leave. So let her go.

OLIVIA:

Remember Christmas?...Remember sunrise on the beach?... Remember...?

(Beth leads Evan back outside. They walk past the stain on the carpet.)

BETH:

Let's clean this up.

(Together Beth and Evan make a mound of dirt over the blood stain. They plant the various flowers strewn around the house into the dirt.)

BETH:

I hope she rests in peace.

(From the bathroom, Olivia looks out at them.)

Scene XXX

(Evan has just called Beth over after her session with the Detective, in which she poses as Olivia to converse with a mysterious stalker.)

BETH:

Evan? What is it? Is everything okay?

EVAN:

Look! (Proudly gestures at the clean apartment and the pile of Olivia’s clothing, shoes, jewelry, photographs, sheet music, and bathrobe next to her garden grave.) I cleaned up!

BETH:

Oh.

EVAN:

Isn’t it great? My clothes — they actually fit in the closet now. And I rearranged the furniture a little.

BETH:

That’s … nice.

EVAN:

I’m no interior designer, but I’d say this is catalogue-worthy.

BETH:

Did you call me over just to show me this?

EVAN:

I’m sorry. Were you in the middle of something?

BETH:

(Shakes her head.) Of course not.

EVAN:

I also wanted to thank you. I made you dinner.

BETH:

You cooked for me?

EVAN:

Well, cook is a strong word. But yes, I cooked. Loosely. We’ve got salad, quiche lorraine, and beef stroganoff.

BETH:

Oh.

EVAN:

Some of it are, uh, leftovers. But I didn’t think you’d mind.

BETH:

It’s the thought that counts.

EVAN:

The detective called. He said that the investigation is off. And that I should take it easy and put the past behind me. Let things fall where they fall. So … cheers to that.

BETH:

(Smiles weakly.) Cheers. Did he, um, say anything else?

EVAN:

Yeah, I think he mentioned something about Sisyphus and the Rock and nobody being strangers or something or other. Funny guy, that one. Hey! I got the reels of this Japanese game show. Nothing more hilarious, right?

BETH:

The ones Olivia didn’t want to watch?

EVAN:

Well, she didn’t have a great sense of humor. Took things too seriously, most of the time. But you and I, we should dig into this.

BETH:

Okay. Sure.

EVAN:

Great. Just let me grab our food.

(Evan runs off stage to retrieve the plates of food. Beth wanders over to the pile. She picks up a necklace of Olivia’s, studies it, and then pockets it.)

EVAN:

What are you doing?

BETH:

Nothing! I, um —

EVAN:

Sit down. Sit down. Look at how impeccable this couch is.

(They seat themselves and he starts the video. Muffled Japanese comes out of the screen. Evan smiles broadly at the screen, but Beth has a hard time focusing.)

BETH:

Evan. What do you think…?

EVAN:

What do I think of what?

BETH:

Nothing. This food is delicious.

EVAN:

Well, I can’t really take credit, but thank you.

BETH:

I just…Sometimes I just wonder what she was thinking.

EVAN:

We buried her, remember? No more talking about her.

BETH:  
You’re right.

EVAN:

To letting things lie.

(Beth smiles and sips. A lot.)

EVAN:

God. Look at these guys. Do they know everyone is watching?

BETH:

I don’t know. Maybe it’s hidden camera or something.

(The two of them laugh. Evan pours out more wine.)

EVAN:

Oh, man. Check out that girl.

(Perhaps they could stare out at the audience with a screen glow on their faces and comment on things they did?)

BETH:

Must be weird. Knowing that everyone’s going to see what you do.

EVAN:

Like being an ant.

BETH:

Do you think that’s how she felt? Being on stage and posting those videos and things online?

EVAN:

Beth.

BETH:

Right. Sorry. I was just thinking about her today. I’m glad we’re doing this, Evan. What was her favorite color?

EVAN:

(Not looking away from the screen.) Thanks, me too.

(They laugh once more. Evan tries to pour more wine, but it is empty.)

EVAN:

Be right back. No need to pause it.

BETH:

Oh, God. This guy. He just cracks me up.

EVAN:

I know! Isn’t it great? (He grabs another bottle, and still chuckling, stops in front of the grave. He crouches down and brushes some dirt away, revealing Olivia’s resting face. Smiling, he looks down at it.) It’s just wonderful.

End of Scene XXX

Scene 999

(Logan and Beth have been creating a new Olivia who is both more docile and vindictive. While walking past his patch of earth, Evan discovers a porcelain doll’s face in place of Olivia’s. \*Olivia is off-screen for this entire scene.)

EVAN:

(On the phone.) Okay. Sounds great, Beth. You’re right. I think a nice afternoon would be good for me, too… Yeah, absolutely. I — (Sees the doll.) Sorry. What did you say? Uh huh. — Hey. I have to call you back, okay?

(He crouches down and claws the dirt away, revealing a porcelain doll in a white dress, or in Olivia’s robe. He takes it out and studies it a moment, then throws it aside and goes to look for her in the bathroom.)

EVAN:

Where did you go? Are you playing games with me?

OLIVIA:

(Off-stage) Don’t accuse me of playing games. You’re the one playing games.

EVAN:

Hide and seek. Is that your game?

OLIVIA:

(Off-stage) If you’re doing both the hiding and the seeking.

EVAN:

(Crouches down by the grave again.) What was wrong with this? It was nice like this. You had flowers. You had worms. You had all the quiet you needed.

OLIVIA:

(Off-stage) You know I was never there. You couldn’t keep me there.

EVAN:

You go wherever you want to go. You're free now.

(A music swells from below the grave.)

OLIVIA:

I chose to go away from you. For that, I am sorry.

EVAN:

Are you?

OLIVIA:

If I could do it over…

EVAN:

It’s not too late.

OLIVIA:

Oh, yes it is. You buried me. Bury me again.

EVAN:

We — We can’t have it all, but we can have something.

OLIVIA:

Don’t listen to that sweet make-believe.

EVAN:

(Covers his head up in his arms.)

OLIVIA:

You’re doing well, baby. Go outside in the sun. Put that faceless doll back inside the dirt and cover up the hole. Don’t mind me. You’ve still got tomorrow to get to.

EVAN:

Beth. I need to call Beth.

(He dials her number, and we hear the phone ring, and ring, and ring, but no one picks up.)

(Lights up on Beth, who is sitting mesmerized in front of her computer, trying and failing to type. Finally she types, and the ringing stops.)

BETH:

Hi. It’s me. Olivia. Are you still there?

(Lights up on Logan on the other side of the stage.)

LOGAN:

I’m here. I don’t get out very much.

(They do their thing and Olivia is created in the space between Logan and Beth. She stumbles forward in a white dress that is slowly decomposing along with her body. Her first movements are stiff. Her hair is matted with dirt and sticks and her wound seems to have grown bigger, or more rotten. She pulls a worm out of her nostril. Later, she begins to sing to Logan. Her song floats over to Evan. Evan talks to her voice while she continues to hover on stage behind or near him, singing.)

EVAN:

I hear you. You sing to them online. You leave them notes. Why won’t you … why won’t you leave something for me?

OLIVIA:

You have to let go, baby. I know it’s hard.

EVAN:

I hear you but I don’t know where you are.

OLIVIA:

I’m nowhere. I’m everywhere. But that’s okay. I’ve gotten used to it.

EVAN:

How can I be with you?

OLIVIA:

Stop looking for me. I don’t want you with me. I just want you to remember me. Like this.

EVAN:

Are you in pain? Does it hurt? Are you cold? You hate being cold.

OLIVIA:

I’m not cold. I’m okay. It’s not so bad.

EVAN:

(Begins digging in the dirt again.) I just want to see your face again. Just one more look, okay? One glimpse. Then I’ll cover you up.

OLIVIA:

Don’t. No. Don’t come looking for me.

EVAN:

Shh. It’ll be okay. One look. That’s all. I won’t disturb you.

OLIVIA:

No. No, no no.

EVAN:

It won’t take long at all.

(He keeps digging, into an endless hole.)

(Logan and Beth and Olivia continue to talk. Perhaps Logan masturbates or has sex with Olivia? But with Evan’s arrival, Olivia breaks free of them, until they have no more control over her.)

OLIVIA:

(Looks up and seeing Evan.) You came.

EVAN:

Did you ever doubt that I would?

OLIVIA:

I told you not to.

EVAN:

Like I could stay away.

EVAN:

What is this place?

OLIVIA:

(Looking around.) Some kind of heaven.

(Beth and Logan talk in the background.)

EVAN:

There are voices.

OLIVIA:

It’s a very crowded heaven. Sometimes you can’t help but overhear things.

…

Evan and Olivia talk about what they could have had together. As they talk, things appear. It’s all very beautiful. Logan perhaps watches from behind a pillar. Olivia tells Evan it’s time for him to go, but he doesn’t want to. Overhead, we can hear Beth talking to Evan. Evan ignores her, and stays with Olivia. They embrace. Stage is super vivid and alive, but then it fades away. Evan is lying over the patch of earth on Olivia’s grave. Flowers have bloomed around him. Beth kneels nearby and sobs.

End of Play.

Progression:

Happy relationship with something slightly wrong 🡪 Death

A flashback of their relationship

Drunken, bitter, depressed state.

Driven by a need to find out what’s wrong. Finds weird things. Needs to keep digging into her computer.

Beth takes/steals the computer – now all he has is his memories. Finally, after he can’t figure it out anymore, so he needs to rely on his memories to sift through it.

Finally, he snaps a little, and she appears to him in the shower scene.

Now he can ask her what’s wrong. At first she speaks in riddles. But then she convinces it is not his problem. This gets him to be happy. So he can finally hang out with Beth and Olivia. But Beth sees that something is fucked up now. Something is broken and twisted now.

Beth goes to save him and pull him out of this. Maybe she is the one who goes to the detective.

The only way Evan could save himself is if he sees the extent of Logan’s condition, and how crazy and disconnected he is.

Evan’s hero journey into the underworld is to reclaim her because Logan has stolen her, or Beth has stolen her. So he goes to find her.

Does Olivia need to reclaim her identity?

In this case, there should be something in the wedding scenes of Evan speaking for her.

Michaela: I feel like she doesn’t like the fact that he calls her Liv.

For her to have agency, she needs to cut herself loose and be free to have her own identity finally.

Gets down to save her, but what she says is, “I need you to let you go.”

A lot of scenes on the Internet. Maybe there should be a scene of Evan out in the world. Like, back at his job, out in the real world again?

The Internet Olivia is Evan’s pornography.

Why is the Internet crucial to the story? It is an escape valve.

Rather than having a frenetic, unplugged Evan scene, it is the opposite — it is dulled and zen and too calm.

More needs to be done to show Evan pulling her out of the digital world.

More done with Olivia posting on things??

Make sure at the beginning that he is developing this connection with her through the Internet. He needs to somehow learn the language of being with her. He needs to pull her out of the computer so that she can be with him for the rest of the play.

A contact that he creates? He needs to reach out to her in the digital world.