

RAW PROVOCATIVE HUMANE PLAYS

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Just Julian
by
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Library copy - 5/4/09 Reading Script

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JUST JULIAN

Lights rise on the bedroom of a teenage girl. Moonlight through an open window. MADISON, 17, athletic and beautiful, the unattainable dream girl from a John Hughes movie, lies facedown on the bed in a rumpled prom type dress. A small rock arcs through the window and hits her in the ass.

Madison sits bolt upright and sees the rock.

Lights up on JULIAN, 18, sweet and awkward, wearing a fedora, the nice guy who finishes last, except in the last scene of a John Hughes movie, somewhat damp, in the bushes below the window.

JULIAN

Shit.

Madison crawls over to the window and slides up next to it, flattened to the wall. She peeks out.

JULIAN

Madison! It's me.

MADISON

What the hell are you doing?

JULIAN

Did I hit you?

MADISON

Yes.

JULIAN

Shit. I'm so sorry.

MADISON

What are you doing here?

JULIAN

Well, see, I had this whole plan, but there wasn't so much any part of it that worked. So I've been improvising.

MADISON

A plan to throw rocks at me?

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JULIAN

No. That's the made up new part. I saw you leave in that cab and I tried to catch you...

MADISON

I didn't see you.

JULIAN

Yeah, I probably would have caught you, if I hadn't had to stop in the middle of the stairs. It caused this human traffic jam, and I was trying to keep this girl from falling in the puddle, 'cause of her dress. And when I looked up you were getting in the cab and I slipped on some ice.

MADISON

Are you hurt?

JULIAN

Minor, major bruising. Possibly a small concussion. You're beautiful.

MADISON

Don't be deficient. Well, are you happy now? You were right. He was a prick.

JULIAN

I know.

MADISON

So, what do you want? Did you come to gloat?

JULIAN

No. Madison. Here.

He pulls a rumpled red envelope from his back pocket, and holds it up.

MADISON

Throw it.

JULIAN

Get back.

Julian folds the envelope into an airplane and whips it up at the window. The envelope flies into the window past Madison. She picks it up and opens it.

JULIAN

I had this whole plan. I've been trying to get it to you since yesterday morning. You wouldn't believe some of the stuff that happened to me.

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MADISON pulls a photo out of the envelope, turns it over to read the back, fighting tears.

JULIAN

Madison?

Madison goes to the window.

JULIAN

Are you alright? Don't cry.

MADISON

Oh, Justin.

JULIAN

Actually, it's Julian.

MADISON

What? I've been calling you Justin for the last six months. Why did you let me do that?

JULIAN

I knew you meant me.

MADISON

Ever since you passed out at the blood drive, you've been so... I'm so sorry. I didn't even get your name right.

JULIAN

Anything you wanted to--

MADISON

Julian?

JULIAN

Yeah.

MADISON

So what's the plan now?

JULIAN

I thought I might just stay down here for a bit.

MADISON

I don't think that'll work.

JULIAN

Oh. OK.

Julian turns to go.

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MADISON

No. Julian, because I need you to be up here.

He turns again.

MADISON

Wait. Where are you going?

He turns back.

JULIAN

I got a ladder.

MADISON

(laughing)

Where?

JULIAN

Just don't go anywhere.

MADISON

I won't move. Not this time.

Julian backs away, then runs off.
Lights down on the bushes. Madison
applies lipgloss, then positions
herself in front of the window,
expectantly, full of the happy ever
after promise of the end of the movie.

A hand appears in the window.

NADINE, 17, wearing cargos and a baggy
sweatshirt, vaults through with an
unholy clatter.

MADISON

What the hell? Nadine?

NADINE

Hi.

MADISON

Hello? What are you doing?

NADINE

I'm his wingman.

MADISON

Julian?

NADINE

Oh, so you finally got his name right?

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MADISON

Why did you come up here?

NADINE

Just want to make sure no one gets their heart broken.

MADISON

Sweet. I get it. I break his heart, you break my face. He's a big boy. He can take care of himself.

NADINE

I guess he doesn't need *you*, then?

MADISON

I don't know. Maybe we need each other.

NADINE

What do you need Jules for? To get back at your boyfriend?

Nadine plucks a photo of Madison and a jockish boy from the vanity's mirror. Madison snatches it back.

MADISON

Ex-boyfriend.

Madison takes the rest of the photos down, stashing them in a drawer.

NADINE

Right. Rough night for you.

MADISON

So far.

NADINE

You really don't like to be alone, do you? Can't get to class without someone holding your hand?

Madison follows Nadine around the room, hiding various items.

MADISON

Look, he's gonna be back here in a few minutes, and I would really prefer that you weren't here when he got back.

NADINE

Why's that?

MADISON

Kind of a mood spoiler.

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NADINE

Yeah. I don't think so.

MADISON

Excuse me?

NADINE

I don't think I'm leaving just yet.

MADISON

This is my house. You can leave now.

NADINE

(loudly, sits on the beanbag)

Make me.

MADISON

Shhh. So you're gonna what? Sit in my room til he gets back?

NADINE

This is a bad idea.

MADISON

Yes. So go.

NADINE

Not this. You and him. You barely even know each other.

MADISON

When he gets back, we'll get to know each other better.

NADINE

You call him Justin!

MADISON

That's what I thought it said!

NADINE

What?

MADISON

On the back of the photos. It says Justin. Look!

Madison plucks the photo from the red envelope and shows her the back.

MADISON

Justin.

NADINE

Whatever. You called him Justin, and that's not his name.

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MADISON

He should have said something.

Madison rummages through a drawer, pulling out a stack of photos. Madison places the photos around the mirror.

NADINE

He did. Once. After you nearly ran him over at the car wash. You were, like, "Sure."

MADISON

We had a subtle relationship.

NADINE

And now you're inviting him up into your room. Awesome.

MADISON

You know, he wants to be with me. He's been trying to be with me for a while now, and I don't really know what "wingman" is supposed to cover, but it doesn't seem like you're being a very good friend.

NADINE

Don't lecture me--

MADISON

Look, Julian wants to be with me, Naddy, so deal.

NADINE

That's not my name.

MADISON

Sure. Why shouldn't we be together?

NADINE

You're not right for him.

MADISON

You got someone better than me picked out for him? Not likely.

NADINE

You're so conceited.

MADISON

That's it, isn't it? You've got some geeky fixer upper who'll be Cinderella by prom. Who is she?

NADINE

Fuck you.

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MADISON

Who's my competition? Is it Laney?

NADINE

No. It's someone who loves him more than you will ever--

MADISON

Does he know about this mystery girl?

NADINE

No.

MADISON

But you're gonna tell him tonight, so that he won't want to be with me?

(beat)

Well, good luck to her. I'm not worried.

NADINE

Fuck you.

MADISON

Nice mouth. I guess they were right about you-- Oh my god. Is it you? Are you in love with him? I thought--

NADINE

Yeah, right. Shut up.

MADISON

You're in love with him and he doesn't know, and that's why you're here. You want him for yourself.

NADINE

It isn't me.

MADISON

Then who is it?

NADINE

Alice.

MADISON

You're a terrible liar.

NADINE

Why would you even want to be with him? He's a dork.

MADISON

Adorkable.

NADINE

You're unreal. *Why? Why Jules?*--

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MADISON

'Cuz I like him. 'Cuz he's the most romantic guy I've ever--

NADINE

That's it? Romantic?

MADISON

Yeah. There are plenty of cuter or more charming guys, but they're not as romantic as him. Did you know he sent me a different rose every day from February 1st to Valentine's? Not just different kinds of actual roses, but also an origami rose and a sketch and this one made out of candle wax?

NADINE

I did. And the chocolate milks on your locker--

MADISON

That was him? I thought it was--

NADINE

And the CD.

MADISON

Oh yeah. But did you know about these? (indicates the photos)

NADINE

Why did you keep them?

MADISON

They're beautiful. You know what he did? He sent them in the mail like postcards, with little candy heart love stamps, with these notes on the back, that make my throat ache.

NADINE

You know what, I know plenty about that shit, and you know what? I agree with you.

MADISON

About what?

NADINE

Jules. He's romantic. But his kind of romance doesn't get attention from a girl like you. A girl who guys beat the crap out of each other for.

MADISON

He got my attention.

NADINE

Not 'til just now. Not 'til you got dumped in formalwear. And suddenly he's boyfriend material.

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MADISON

He came to my window...

NADINE

He's not romantic.

MADISON

You just said--

NADINE

He isn't *romantic*. He is a romantic. Not the sentimental crap... he believes in things. He doesn't leave you alone.

MADISON

He's definitely persistent--

NADINE

No, he won't let you be alone.

(beat)

He said... He says that he was the one who stole the fuses from the home ec room, so you don't have to be alone in detention. He teaches you the right way to throw a ball. When you have pinkeye, he wipes out the gunk in your eye and rubs it in his eyes, so you can be in a pinkeye gang. When you forget your lunch, he pretends he forgot his, too. He pretends to be your boyfriend when you don't want to be bothered with assholes, and tells them he *wishes* he was, when you want to stick up for yourself. He won't leave you alone.

MADISON

OK. Maybe he does all those for you, but he also does the stuff I said. Listen.

Madison pulls another photo from the vanity and flips it over.

MADISON

"Your hair glowed in the sunlight through the window, a crackly halo, lighting your face. And then you smiled." And... "The freckles on your shoulder are like reverse constellations against your creamy skin." And, and... "Your grey eyes are like a North Atlantic sea, I could--"

NADINE

(overlapping)

"--sea, I could lose myself for hours in their stormy depths. Your sorrow crashes in waves over me where I sit, and I ache to reach out and save you from drowning."

Madison stares at Nadine.

MADISON

He showed them to you?

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NADINE

He didn't show them to me. I wrote them.

MADISON

You did not. Why would you say that?

NADINE

Because it's true. He's not--

MADISON

I don't believe you. He could have showed them to you. When he gets back, I'm gonna ask *him*.

NADINE

Go ahead.

MADISON

What's taking him so long?

NADINE

I moved the car.

MADISON

So he's just wandering around trying to find you? How did you get to be such a bitch?

NADINE

Me? Ever since you moved back here you've been the queen bitch.

MADISON

Only because you've--

A loud clack from outside the window. The rungs of a ladder slide into view. Madison goes to the window, and reaches out to steady the ladder. A fedora appears through the rungs, followed quickly by the head of Julian. He climbs slightly above the window, then reaches out with his foot to the sill.

MADISON

Hold it. Grab this. Right.

Julian grabs the sill and pulls himself carefully over to awkwardly straddle the frame. Madison lets go of the ladder to pull him through and sits down hard with him piled on top of her. He scrambles to his feet and nearly drags her up with him.

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JULIAN

So much for the suave entrance.

He tries to fix her dress. She stops him.

JULIAN

Hey.

MADISON

Hey.

JULIAN

Sorry it took me so long. I couldn't find the car. My friend is missing.

Julian sees Nadine. She scrambles out of the bean bag.

JULIAN

Dean? What are you doing here?

NADINE

I was just--

Julian rushes over and hugs her.

JULIAN

I thought you were kidnapped. Have you been here the whole time?

NADINE

Well, mostly.

JULIAN

What are you doing up here? This wasn't the plan.

NADINE

I came to get you. We have to go.

JULIAN

Why?

NADINE

I'll explain later.

Nadine tries to haul Julian toward the window.

MADISON

Where do you think you're going?

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JULIAN

Look, Dean, I'm glad you're OK, but I just spent fifteen minutes freezing my ass off looking for you. Y'know, you're gonna fuck everything up. Go home. I'll come by later.

NADINE

No. It has to be right now.

JULIAN

(to Madison)

Excuse me.

Julian pulls Nadine by the arm into the corner.

NADINE

Do you want to die?

JULIAN

What?

NADINE

Then let go of my arm.

Julian releases her arm.

JULIAN

Why do I need to go with you exactly right now?

NADINE

She's not right for you.

JULIAN

She's perfect.

NADINE

But not for you.

JULIAN

I know you weren't here, Dean, but things have taken a significant turn in my favor.

NADINE

But you can't be with her.

JULIAN

Why not?

MADISON

Because she's got someone else in mind for you.

JULIAN

What?

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NADINE
Shut up.

JULIAN
Dean!
Who? (beat)

NADINE
No one. Jules. You are my best friend in the whole world. You know I care about you. You know what I've done for you, to help you to this moment, but if you do this, if I let you do this, it's gonna be the end of us.

JULIAN
Please. I don't get this. I don't see why it would be the end-

MADISON
She's in love with you.

JULIAN
What?

MADISON
She's been making up all these lies to try to make me not like you. Trying to sabotage us.

Julian stares at Nadine.

JULIAN
Is that true? Are you...in love with...?

NADINE
I didn't say that.

MADISON
And you know what else she said?

JULIAN
No. What have you been doing to me?

MADISON
Did you show her any of the cards you sent to me?

JULIAN
I guess.

MADISON
I knew it! She said she wrote one. I knew she didn't.

Julian stares at Nadine.

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JULIAN

Why did you tell her?

NADINE

It's not you she cares about. It's the photos--

MADISON

(to Julian)

But-- You did write that, right?

NADINE

I wrote all of them.

MADISON

(to Nadine)

You wrote all of these?

NADINE

Yeah.

MADISON

(to Julian)

You didn't write these?

JULIAN

Well, no. But I meant everything that's in them. I tried to write, but I couldn't, so Dean was helping and then she was just so much better. She listened to me and then sort of translated...

MADISON

What about the pictures? Did you take them?

JULIAN

No. She did. She thought you would like them.

MADISON

But you had the camera that day, at the auction. And the next one I got was of me holding the paddles.

JULIAN

It's hers. I was just holding it.

Madison flops onto the bed.

JULIAN

(to Nadine)

How could you? Fuck.

(beat)

I did take the polaroid with the rainbow behind the field house.

MADISON

No one ever did anything like that for me.

NADINE

C'mon, Jules, she probably wants to be alone.

JULIAN

I don't need any more advice from you.

Madison sits up suddenly.

MADISON

You wrote the notes on the back. But are they *from* you?

NADINE

I don't understand.

MADISON

Are you like, you know, Steve Martin in Roxanne?

NADINE

What?

JULIAN

She thinks you're my Cyrano.

NADINE

No. No! How fucking vain are you? I just was trying to help Jules. He wasn't getting anywhere. He didn't get you.

MADISON

Like you do?

JULIAN

But I do. I do get you.

MADISON

You both should go.

JULIAN

Dean, why did you have to... You know how I feel about Madison.

NADINE

I know what you've said you feel about *Madison*, but she doesn't really know you.

JULIAN

But I'm in love with her.

MADISON

In love?

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JULIAN

I'm in love with you. I love you.

Julian approaches Madison.

JULIAN

Madison, I... I'm sorry. I care about you. And I'm sorry that it wasn't me who wrote the actual notes on the pictures, which I'm sorry I let you think I took them. But please believe that everything in them is true for me, true for me about you. I just thought if I wrote it you wouldn't listen, because the way I said it never matched what I really wanted to say.

MADISON

Well, here's your chance. Tell me.

JULIAN

Now?

Madison nods.

JULIAN

You're, you're a broken Coke bottle. On the beach. A piece of glass, y'know? Only you're in with all the shells and sand and no one sees you, you're just part of the beach. But I can see you, and I know if someone picks you up and rinses off the sand, they'll see you, too. Sorta pale green and frosty and sparkly. And they'll see that you don't belong there, but you should be in a bowl with other glass, or hanging on a thread in a window. That even though the beach kinda made you and you blend in now, that there's more to you than that.

MADISON

I'm beach glass.

Madison touches her throat.

JULIAN

Yeah. Fuck. That was so fucking lame.

She leans in and kisses him gently.

MADISON

Thank you.

She leans in to kiss him again.

JULIAN

(re: Nadine)

She's right there.

MADISON

I don't care. Do you?

Julian kisses Madison.

NADINE

Jules? Stop. Please. I need him. You don't need him.

Nadine stomps over to a net shelf of stuffed animals, picks one out and throws it at them. Madison pulls away from Julian.

JULIAN

Dean, I--

NADINE

I love you. I love him. I can't just let you go with her.

JULIAN

You say this *now*.

Madison reaches for Julian. Nadine grabs Julian and pulls them apart.

NADINE

I know you think she's so perfect, but you have to believe me, that you deserve better.

MADISON

And that's you?

NADINE

Will you just shut up?

JULIAN

Dean. C'mere--

Julian hauls Nadine to the corner, but she breaks free and punches his arm.

JULIAN

Ow. Can you dispense with the ninjitsu for five minutes? We need to talk *pri-vate-ly*.

NADINE

She heard everything we said over there the first time.

Julian tries to motion her over with his head. Nadine looks to Madison for confirmation.

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MADISON

(nodding)

It's not that big a room.

JULIAN

The hall, then. Excuse us.

Julian steps for the door, but Madison rushes to press herself up against it.

MADISON

No! My dad.

NADINE

I don't care what she hears. She knows anyway. You got anything private you need to get off your chest, I guess we'll have to take it outside.

JULIAN

Dean, this is happening for me. I can't just take off right now. Let's meet later. I'll take you to Scoops if you want. We can order a Frozen Mountain.

NADINE

Nu-uh. If I leave you here alone with her, then you'll end up...

JULIAN

Then maybe you should do that. For me. Wasn't that the whole idea?

Nadine moves away from the door and flops onto the bed.

MADISON

Can you keep your feet off the bedspread?

Nadine shifts her feet to the floor.
Julian sits on the bed next to Nadine.
Madison flops into a butterfly chair.

JULIAN

Dean? What's going on with you? When--? You know, you've got really excellent timing. I mean, is this like a crush?

NADINE

You're lucky I like you so much, you ass. I just told you I love you. This isn't some stupid crush.

JULIAN

I care about you. I do. You're my partner in crime, my best friend, and I wouldn't want to wreck anything with a relationship. What if we broke up--?

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NADINE

So don't even start, right? Fuck that. Fuck that friendship bullshit. This is a relationship. Right now. We're never apart. We spend the night at each other's house. You know things about me...And ditto for you. We're practically a couple already.

JULIAN

No, we are not. No. We are *not*. We aren't.

NADINE

All that's missing is the sex.

JULIAN

What? Hold on. What are you--?

MADISON

Is there something else going on here? Are you guys--?

NADINE

And I just want you to know that I'm ready for that. With you.

JULIAN

Dean--

NADINE

I want you to be, you know, the one.

Madison snorts in disbelief. Nadine flips her off.

JULIAN

Nadine, I'm sorry. I do not want to have sex with you. Madison, I never-- Dean, what made you think... I mean, I've never even--

NADINE

What do you mean, you don't want to have sex with me?

JULIAN

See that girl right there? I'm in love with her. She's the one I want to be with.

MADISON

You want to have sex with me?

JULIAN

No! I mean, yes, of course I *would*, I mean, not right now. Not yet. Shit. You know what I mean, right--?

NADINE

You don't want to have sex with me?

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JULIAN

Madison, this isn't how this was supposed to--

NADINE

You've never even thought about it? Why?

MADISON

Look, maybe you guys should go work this out. If you guys are--
-

JULIAN

No. She *is* my friend, but I do not want to have sex with her. I've never even thought about it, I swear. She's just like, one of the guys. If she didn't use a separate bathroom, I'd barely know she was even a girl.

NADINE

What?!

MADISON

Shh!

JULIAN

You're it for me.

Nadine stands, swiping off her sweatshirt, revealing a lacy and racy bra.

NADINE

You better believe, I am all woman.

MADISON

What the hell are you doing? Put that back on.

JULIAN

Dean is just like a--

Julian turns and sees Nadine, who tosses her sweatshirt in a corner, then stands with her hands on her hips. Julian stares.

NADINE

What am I just like?

JULIAN

(staring)

You're like a...like a...

MADISON

Julian?

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JULIAN

(tearing his eyes away)

She's like a, a guy. Like, one of the guys.

MADISON

You said that.

NADINE

Yeah, you said that already.

JULIAN

Yeah, well, she's like a...brother.

NADINE

That's not what you were going to say, Jules. You have a brother, and Dougie doesn't have these.

Nadine grabs her breasts. Julian turns to look, then tries to whip his head away, but is only half successful.

MADISON

Will you put your shirt back on? I think you made your point. So you have boobs.

NADINE

Tits, they're called tits. And I'm feeling pretty good about not wearing a shirt. It's positively liberating.

Nadine saunters around the room to put herself in Julian's eyeline. He tries to look anywhere but at her chest.

MADISON

I didn't know you even owned a bra.

NADINE

Yeah, I got this one from (breathily) Victoria's Secret.

MADISON

Cute.

(beat)

They're cute.

NADINE

(eyeing Madison's chest)

They may be little, but at least they'll stand the test of time. So, Jules, what was that you were saying about never thinking of having sex with me?

JULIAN

I, I haven't. Will you get dressed, please?

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Never?

MADISON

Never, I swear.

JULIAN

Bullshit.

MADISON & NADINE

What?

NADINE & JULIAN

MADISON

There is no guy who has never thought about having sex with every girl he knows. They can say they just want to be friends, and no strings, and totally platonic blah blah blah. But all they are thinking about is how long they have to wait before they can "accidentally" feel you up. And they don't usually have to wait that long, because chicks get all hot for all that sensitive guy friend crap.

NADINE

Wow. I think she's talking about you.

MADISON

I am not. Because Julian is different than...he's different. He is not saying that he wants to just be my friend. He wants more than friendship from *me*. Right?

JULIAN

That's right.

MADISON

So you be the friend and the two of *us* will figure out what we want.

Madison fixes Julian's collar, then pulls Julian closer by the shirt.

JULIAN

I'll see you later.

Madison wraps Julian's hands around her waist, then kisses him.

Nadine picks up her sweatshirt. She wings it at Julian, hitting him in the head.

MADISON

You really don't know when to quit!

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NADINE

Oh, I'm sorry, did I interrupt your doing it for the second time in 24 hours?

JULIAN

What? What are you talking about?

NADINE

Her and Chet. Tonight.

MADISON

Naddy, I swear--

JULIAN

They didn't go to the hotel, Dean.

MADISON

We didn't.

JULIAN

See, she hasn't. She left. They broke up before the hotel.

NADINE

Not after. During.

JULIAN

During what?

NADINE

The dance. After the announcement, and the snowball fight. I saw them in the media room.

JULIAN

Saw them what?

NADINE

I prefer not to relive it by repeating it.

JULIAN

Then why didn't you say anything before?

NADINE

When? When we were running from Schroeder? Or when you left me alone at the Red Rooster?

JULIAN

You could have told me when we were locked in the bathroom at the bus depot.

NADINE

Alright. Maybe I was trying to spare your feelings. But I just realized now that you didn't even think she's had sex ever.

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JULIAN

I don't believe you.

NADINE

You think it's possible in the 21st century, for a senior in high school to not have had sex with her boyfriend of five months? 'Cuz my mom made me watch this Nightline special, and I don't think it's likely. Unless you're one of those "Jesus has a plan for the special gift of my virginity" girls. And that just doesn't seem like you, y'know?

MADISON

Shut up.

JULIAN

Dean, stop. You're making shit up now. It's not gonna work. She said they didn't have sex, and that's all I need to hear.

NADINE

Actually she didn't say that exactly. You think they've been going out this whole time and waited to do it 'til tonight?

MADISON

We did.

JULIAN

See?

NADINE

I was there. I could act it out for ya. Right up to where she got dumped.

JULIAN

She's better than that.

NADINE

Did you hear that Maddy? He thinks people who don't have sex are better than people who do. Or is it just girls, Jules?

JULIAN

You know that's not what I meant.

NADINE

How would I know that? What else could that mean?

MADISON

I did not get dumped. I broke up with him. And we did wait 'til tonight. But then we just couldn't wait for the hotel. And then he couldn't wait to tell his friends, so I broke up with him. Who cares what we did before that?

JULIAN

I thought you guys didn't do it.

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MADISON

Does that matter to you?

JULIAN

So it *was* too late?

MADISON

Too late for what? Chet was my boyfriend and I thought I loved him and that he loved me and I planned to sleep with him tonight. What does it matter if we did it earlier? It's not like we hadn't done plenty of other stuff before.

JULIAN

Other... But I thought that's why you broke up with him, because he wanted to and you didn't and...

MADISON

Where would you get that idea?

JULIAN

I heard you say that you were, y'know, *waiting*. For the right guy. The perfect guy.

MADISON

(sputtering)

For a cheerleading partner. So I don't get my head cracked.

JULIAN

It sounded sexual.

NADINE

I guess you missed the context.

MADISON

It was a joke. An *intendre*.

JULIAN

So then why did you break up with Chet, if he wasn't pressuring you?

MADISON

We broke up because he was an asshole. Which became completely obvious after we did it.

JULIAN

In the media room?

MADISON

But before the hotel. And then I *broke up with him*. You believe me, right?

Madison takes Julian's hand and holds it.

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She leans in for a kiss, but stops when Nadine pulls another stuffed animal from the net shelf in the corner.

MADISON

What are you just gonna keep pelting us? Is it duel by pillow fight?

Nadine opens the back of the stuffed animal and removes some mini-Snickers. She unwraps one and pops it in her mouth.

MADISON

What are you doing?

NADINE

My sugar's low, I've been up all night and I didn't have supper. Are you gonna begrudge me that too?

Nadine unwraps another and pops it in her mouth. She throws one at Julian. He catches it. He stares at it. Nadine slides to the floor.

NADINE

(to Madison)

You want one?

MADISON

It's fattening.

NADINE

Yet you have a giant stash in here. Like a fuckin' piñata.

JULIAN

How did you know that was in there?

NADINE

I guess you really should be careful. Do you want to do a lap around the block first? I'll save one for ya.

MADISON

Not all of us can have a diabetic metabolism.

JULIAN

Dean?

NADINE

What? She's giving me shit about a few lousy--

JULIAN

How did you know there was candy in there?

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MADISON
You didn't tell him?

JULIAN
Tell me what?

NADINE
Nothin'. Just we used to hang out here. When we were little.

JULIAN
Why?

MADISON
Oh, just 'cuz we were best friends, that's all. Right, Naddy?

Julian looks at Nadine.

NADINE
I thought you knew.

Nadine rips open a little bag of M&M's
and pours them directly into her mouth.

JULIAN
How would I have known that? Don't you think I would have
wanted to know that?

NADINE
Maybe I already had to deal with enough of your obsession
with her without all the additional inquisition, hmm?

MADISON
Or maybe she just didn't want to tell you what happened.

JULIAN
What's that?

NADINE
Only because it was obvious he was crushing on you.

MADISON
It's not a crush. He loves me. And not you.

NADINE
Shut up!

MADISON
And I love him.

NADINE
You do not!

Nadine throws a gumball at Madison who ducks. The gumball hits the door with a sharp crack.

JULIAN

You do?

There is a loud clump from downstairs. They freeze.

MADISON

Shit!

JULIAN

(hissing)

You woke up her parents!

Madison and Nadine give him a queer look.

NADINE

(to Julian)

Get in the closet.

MADISON

The ladder! We have to get rid of it.

JULIAN

I'll take it.

MADISON

It's freezing.

NADINE

(tosses him the keys)

Wait in the car.

MADISON

I'll call you.

JULIAN

My battery is dying.

Nadine dives into the closet. Madison kicks clothes in on her.

MADISON

I'll leave a message. Turn it on to check your messages every five minutes.

Madison latches the closet shut, and opens the window. Julian hurries over.

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Madison--?

JULIAN

Footsteps in the hallway.

Hurry.

MADISON

Julian backs out the window and onto the ladder. Madison grabs the remote and clicks on the TV, turning up the volume, as she kicks up Nadine's sweatshirt and throws it out the window.

I'll bring the car out front. I'll be right there, waiting.

I know.

MADISON

Madison kisses him. He shimmies down the ladder. Madison closes the window and watches. A muffled crack from below. Knocking at the bedroom door.

Maddy?

DAD (O.S.)

Privacy.

MADISON

Madison grabs her robe and puts it on over her dress. The ladder disappears from the window.

Everything OK in there?

DAD (O.S.)

Yeah.

MADISON

Madison unlocks the door and opens it a crack, sticking her head out.

What's up?

MADISON

Can I come in?

DAD (O.S.)

Madison opens the door wider. Dad enters, scans the room and slumps to sit on the end of Madison's bed. She closes the door.

DAD
I heard voices, and a loud bang.

MADISON
HBO.

He nods.

DAD
It's pretty late.

MADISON
Sorry. I'll turn it down.

She does, then sits in the butterfly chair, looking at the TV.

DAD
You're not tired?

MADISON
(shaking her head)
I just want to see the end.

DAD
Can't sleep?

MADISON
I said I'm not tired yet.

DAD
Madison.

MADISON
(shortly)
What? I'm not.

DAD
(beat)
I know things were rough last night, sweetie, but you should get some sleep.

MADISON
Soon.

DAD
Do you wanna...?

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Madison shakes her head, looking at the TV.

DAD

(beat)

This is the part I was afraid I'd be really bad at.

Madison mutes the TV.

MADISON

You're fine. Tomorrow.

DAD

Somehow I feel I'll have nothing substantive to contribute.

MADISON

Dad.

DAD

He's a jerk. Right? Is that right? I know that part.

MADISON

He was.

DAD

What did he do?

MADISON

He was just a regular jerk, Dad.

Madison turns the volume up.

DAD

(beat)

What would she say?

MADISON

(beat)

I don't know.

They sit for a moment, watching TV.

MADISON

Probably she'd remind me to wash off my makeup before sleeping.

DAD

Yeah?

MADISON

"Healthy skin is your best makeup."

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Huh.

DAD

Dad looks at the alarm clock.

DAD

How much is left?

MADISON

I don't know. Twenty?

DAD

Will I see you at ten still?

MADISON

It's a date.

Dad gets up and goes to her, then kisses the top of her head.

DAD

Love you Maddy.

MADISON

Love you Daddy. 'Night.

Dad tucks her hair behind her ears, then crosses to the door. He stops, turning back. He gestures at his face.

DAD

You should. Wash. Her skin-- In the morning, she looked beautiful with no makeup.

Madison nods.

DAD

'Night.

Dad exits, closing the door. Madison sits a few moments, then crosses to the door and locks it. She takes off the robe and hangs it back up. Madison opens the closet. Nadine sits under her clothes.

MADISON

He's gone.

NADINE

I didn't mean to wake him.
(beat)

What did he say?

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MADISON

Nothin'.

(beat)

Why didn't you tell him?

NADINE

Jules? What would I tell him?

MADISON

That we used to be friends and why we're not anymore.

NADINE

You want me to tell him what you did? That might help.

MADISON

What *I* did? It wasn't *my* fault.

NADINE

You told everyone I did it with Baxter!

MADISON

(hissing)

You did do it with Baxter!

NADINE

(hissing)

I did not! I was twelve! I'd barely started kissing--

MADISON

(hissing)

You just wanted to hurt me because I went with him first!

NADINE

What?! You're such a selfish bitch! You ruined my life for three years!

MADISON

(hissing)

Shut up. He's gonna hear you.

Nadine clamps shut.

MADISON

(quietly)

What three years did I ruin?

NADINE

(quietly)

Are you serious?

(beat)

You told the whole school that I slept with Baxter.

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MADISON
I only told Kimmy. She told everyone else.

NADINE
You knew she would.

MADISON
So? It was true.

NADINE
It wasn't.

MADISON
Baxter said--

NADINE
You believed him? Over me? I was your best friend.

MADISON
Were, right.
(beat)
You really didn't?

NADINE
Twelve!

MADISON
Why would he tell me that?

NADINE
He's a boy?

MADISON
You guys went off behind the quarantine cabin.

NADINE
And that equals sex?

MADISON
So nothing happened?

NADINE
No. Well, I mean, we were gonna... It was sort of advanced
"Show me yours," but then he wanted me to touch it and I said
no, but he dared me.

MADISON
So you gave him a hand job?

NADINE
No, I was just gonna poke it, but he was, um, overeager. I
barely even touched it.

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Really?
MADISON

NADINE
I was pretty grossed out and I thought he was embarrassed.
Dickhead.

MADISON
So. Baxter. Was precocious.

NADINE
All over my swimsuit.

MADISON
Ew.

NADINE
And then the prick told you that we did it, and you fucking
believed him and not me.

Nadine checks her watch.

NADINE
Should you call him?

MADISON
Not yet.
(beat)
He doesn't know about my mom?

NADINE
No.

Madison goes to her dresser and takes
out a tank top and pajama pants.

NADINE
Why didn't you believe me?

MADISON
You didn't invite me with you when you went to the lake.

Madison begins to change into the tank
and pajama bottoms without removing her
dress.

NADINE
It was couples only.

MADISON
You left me out.

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Madison has put on her pants but is stuck with her tank on over the strapless dress, trying to pull the tank underneath the dress without undoing the zipper.

NADINE

Do you need some help?

Madison struggles. Nadine crawls out of the closet.

NADINE

Let me just get the zipper for you.

MADISON

I've got it.

NADINE

It's nothing I haven't seen before. Christ, my boobs are out.

MADISON

I said I got it.

(beat)

I really thought it was true.

NADINE

You wanted to. And then you tripped out of here, with never a backward glance at the havoc you tipped off, and left me to three years of hell.

MADISON

They didn't give me a choice! And I wasn't even here, how could I ruin your life from three states away?

Madison continues to wrastle her clothes.

NADINE

You fucking left, so it was your word and Baxter's word against mine, two to one. You left and made me into this giant slut. That was seventh grade. Naddy the Nympho. Then there was eighth grade, where I had the idea to tell everyone that Baxter had turned me lesbian. That was a winner. And then there was the first year of high school, where no one would talk to me, because I was either a slut, a dyke or a pathological liar, but any way I was a freak.

Madison stops wrastling.

MADISON

(beat)
I'm sorry, Naddy.

NADINE

Don't call me that.

MADISON

OK. I didn't know. I'm sorry that happened to you, and maybe I started it, but I didn't want that to happen to you. You were my best friend, and then I had to move. The one unqualified good that came from moving back here, was that I would see you again. And then...you were different.

NADINE

I changed. And you plugged right in with everyone who would rather lick batteries than have anything to do with a freak like me. Right where you left off.

Madison listens at the door.

MADISON

I think it's OK.

Madison gets her phone from her charger.

MADISON

Do you have his number?

Nadine pulls a phone out of her pocket and dials. Madison stands there holding the phone.

NADINE

...Hey...You picked up...She says you can come back...Yeah...
OK... No. Just leave it... That's fine.

Nadine hangs up. Madison puts her phone back.

MADISON

He's coming back?

NADINE

After this song.

MADISON

He's a good friend?

NADINE

That really doesn't cover it.

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MADISON

If you hate me, why did you help him with all that stuff?

NADINE

I didn't expect you to get it. I never figured you would invite him up. I mean, he got me to steal that ladder. If I thought he was coming up here, I would've told him how to climb the trellis.

MADISON

(beat)

He's staying to hear a song?

NADINE

Yeah. It's his thing. It's his song. Hey Jude.

MADISON

Why?

NADINE

His parents named him after Julian Lennon.

MADISON

How much longer?

NADINE

Don't worry, they're up to the Na Na Na part.

MADISON

He's into music?

NADINE

You don't know the first thing about him.

MADISON

I want to. Is he a musician?

NADINE

He doesn't play anything. He can't sing. And he wouldn't be so good with lyrics. But he knows everything about...every band, every song. That CD he gave you? That was the real love letter. He spent weeks making it perfect. Did you even listen to it?

MADISON

Yeah. There's some good stuff on it.

NADINE

Did you read the liner notes?

MADISON

I put it on my iPod.

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There is a thud outside the window.

MADISON

You can let him in. I'll be right back.

Madison goes to the door and slips on her robe again.

MADISON

He sounds like an amazing person.

NADINE

He was my new you.

Madison slips out the door. Nadine opens the window and looks down.

NADINE

Put your foot on the ivy thing.

JULIAN (O.S.)

How?

NADINE

Just swing it over.

Julian's fingers appear on the sill.

JULIAN (O.S.)

A little help here.

Nadine leans out and grabs his arms. She pulls him up onto the sill. He looks around then at Nadine.

NADINE

I didn't kill her. She went to check on the rest of the house.

Nadine leans out past him. She puts her arms around his torso and braces herself.

NADINE

One. Two--

She kisses him, then pulls back without looking at him.

NADINE

Three.

She hauls him into the room. He lands on top of her. They freeze, then he immediately scrambles off. They sit against the wall under the window.

JULIAN

I got your sweatshirt.

NADINE

It's probably soaked.

JULIAN

No.

Julian peels off his coat. He is wearing Nadine's sweatshirt. He pulls it off and hands it to her. Nadine pulls on the sweatshirt so just her eyes are peeking over the neckband.

NADINE

Is it because she's prettier than me?

JULIAN

She isn't. She's just different than you.

NADINE

And that's what you want.

JULIAN

I don't get you, Dean. I've been trying to figure it out. All that stuff I asked you to do. I don't get how you could do that if it's really love. And the only thing I can figure is you didn't think it would work. You didn't think she'd go for a guy like me.

NADINE

I'm sorry.

(beat)

I thought that after, you might see what was right in front of you.

JULIAN

What makes you think I didn't already?

NADINE

If I didn't use a different bathroom--

JULIAN

I had to think of you that way. You were the one who didn't see what was right in front of you. It was you, before, and you were so uninterested.

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NADINE

When was it me?

JULIAN

I don't know, almost since I met you? You were unavailable. But you wanted a friend, so I got over it. I can't open that up again.

NADINE

You never even said anything.

JULIAN

I'm kinda subtle.

NADINE

But I wasn't unavailable.

JULIAN

Well I thought you were.

NADINE

But why? There was no one-- Who did you think?

JULIAN

No. Nobody.

NADINE

Well then what are you talking about? Please.

JULIAN

(sighs)

Fitz told me you were gay.

NADINE

I'm not gay. You know I'm not gay!

JULIAN

Well, yeah, now I do. But...

NADINE

But what?

JULIAN

I dunno. I thought maybe bi.

NADINE

That still wouldn't put me out of the running. And guys love that shit!

JULIAN

By the time I figured that out, you were my best friend. I never had a girl who was a friend like you. And I thought you needed a friend more than a boyfriend anyway.

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I need you now. NADINE

She needs me too. JULIAN

Can we go please? NADINE

I have to stay with her. JULIAN

Madison opens the door and slips in.
Her face is clean. Julian goes to her.

All clear. MADISON

You alright? JULIAN

Yeah. How was the song? MADISON

Julian looks at Nadine.

Good. JULIAN

I didn't have your number. MADISON

I'll give it to you. JULIAN

Madison takes off the robe and hangs it
back up. Julian stares.

I had to change. Sorry for the downgrade. MADISON
(beat)
What?

He kisses her.

Hello? Madison! Jules, don't do this to me. She was with Chet
less than three hours ago! NADINE

He pulls back. Madison, surprised,
searches his face a moment, then takes
it in her hands.

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MADISON

Look, Just-- Julian, it's over now. It was clearly a huge mistake. That I didn't see coming. It shouldn't matter to you.

JULIAN

It doesn't. I don't give two shits about Chet. Good night, Dean.

NADINE

You just called him Justin.

MADISON

I did not.

NADINE

"Just--Julian".

MADISON

Well, I got the rest of it wrong, too. But you were both wrong about me, too.

Julian takes Madison's hand.

JULIAN

I'm sorry.

He leans in to kiss her.

NADINE

Yeah, "Sorry I confused you with a virgin."

JULIAN

Dean, that shit doesn't matter to me. I know this hurts. That's how it feels when--

NADINE

So you're just trying to get back at me now? To make me feel like you did?

JULIAN

No. That's not it.

MADISON

What are you talking about?

NADINE

He said he used to love me, Madison, but now he's over it.

JULIAN

That's between us, Dean.

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MADISON

It's true? You love her?

JULIAN

Well, yes. But I'm in love with you.

MADISON

I thought you were just friends.

NADINE

(overlapping)

You don't even know her.

JULIAN

Stop saying that. I do know her.

NADINE

She didn't know you.

MADISON

Maybe I didn't really, but the more you talk, the more I'd like to.

NADINE

I can't believe you're gonna pick her.

JULIAN

This is not about choosing. This is how I feel. I do love you, Dean. But she's--

NADINE

I can't be around you if you... I don't know how I could be just your friend now. You'll be leaving me for her.

JULIAN

You can't stick around for me? I really thought you'd be happy that things were working out for me. For once. Things like this don't happen to guys like me. Girls like her don't happen to guys like me.

NADINE

But girls like me do.

JULIAN

This is my time. This is my chance.

MADISON

Is that it, Julian? Is that how you see me? Like winning a lottery? Some prize?

JULIAN

No. I'm saying things all wrong. I can't say it right. I just know that I want to spend any minute I can with you. Don't ask me to leave--

MADISON

I don't think I want you to leave.

JULIAN

I won't.

MADISON

And I would like to spend some minutes with you.

JULIAN

You would?

(beat)

Just some?

MADISON

I think maybe that you and I should go out. On a date.

JULIAN

A what? A date?

MADISON

You know. Go someplace. Do things. Get to know each other. A date.

JULIAN

But not go out, like an exclusive thing?

MADISON

Right. You could even maybe go out with Nadine, too.

JULIAN

But you would still go out with other people, too?

MADISON

Maybe. I don't know.

NADINE

I don't want to date him.

JULIAN

That's not what I want. I thought we had something more than that. I mean, there's something *there*, between us. Don't you feel that? And this is what you want?

MADISON

I'm not sure what I want. I don't want to let you go. But I can't promise anything. You can call me.

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NADINE

You want him to date both of us? Are you high?

MADISON

Look, we're graduating in like three weeks, and we're out of here in three months. What then? No matter which of us gets him. Are you going to the same school?

JULIAN

I'm right here, you know.

NADINE

So what would happen now?

MADISON

I don't know, you go home. You talk. You guys have stuff to work out. If he still wants to see me, then he can call me. We can date. And there's room for you too.

NADINE

And if Jules and I end up together? After we talk?

MADISON

Then you do. And if, you know, me and Julian... it'll be because we worked up to that. Did it right. We'll just have to see.

NADINE

No.

JULIAN

Don't I get a say in this?

MADISON

(to Nadine)

Do you have a better idea? You want to flip a coin? Do you want those odds? Or do you think things might work better for you my way?

NADINE

(beat)

Alright.

Madison gets her phone from the charger and hands it to Julian. She reaches into his pocket to pull out his phone. She punches in numbers.

JULIAN

What are you doing?

MADISON

I'm putting my cell number in your phone. Put yours in mine.

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He punches in numbers. She puts his phone back in his pocket. He hands her back the phone. She punches a few more keys.

MADISON

I'm free tomorrow night. Sunday.

JULIAN

That's it?

MADISON

For right now. It's not enough?

JULIAN

Madison--

NADINE

Jules, let's just--

JULIAN

Nadine, just let me talk. You've said enough. You've done enough.

NADINE

You're an ass. You get what you want. You still get to go out with her.

JULIAN

I'm not a burrito for splitting. You guys don't just get to decide for me. You might as well have flipped a coin.

MADISON

Don't be deficient. You say you're in love with me and that is amazing to me. But you also love her and she loves you, and there's no way to *fix* that. I'm not trying to hurt you. (to Nadine) Or you. This is what will hurt the least. You guys should go now and say what you have to say to each other, and I have to risk that it's not really me you want to be with.

NADINE

She's right. We should go. Julian looks at both of them a moment. Then he goes to the window, opens it and steps through it, straddling the sill.

MADISON

Julian?

He stops and turns back to look at them.

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JULIAN

Good night, Madison.

He backs out the window and slips down and out of sight. Nadine and Madison go to the window and look down.

Lights up on the bushes as Julian lands, turns away from the house and walks away, as those lights fade out.

MADISON

What are you gonna do? How will you get home?

NADINE

It's alright. He wouldn't strand me.

MADISON

You should hurry after him, though.

NADINE

Yeah.

Nadine steps through the window. She stops with one leg over the sill and turns back.

NADINE

(beat)

I'm sorry about your mom.

MADISON

(beat)

My dad is making Mickey pancakes for me in about three hours.

NADINE

With blueberries or chocolate chips?

MADISON

Both.

NADINE

He's a pretty great dad.

MADISON

(inviting)

He always makes too many.

(beat)

I mean, he does too much.

NADINE

(beat)

I don't know what's going to happen now.

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Madison nods. Nadine swings her other leg out the window.

MADISON

Nadine? If he isn't going to call, will you?

NADINE

Sure.

MADISON

Do you need my number?

NADINE

Jules has it.

Nadine slips down and out of sight.

Lights up on the bushes as Nadine lands, and turns back to the house and waves.

Madison waves back.

Nadine turns and walks away from the house.

Madison turns back into her room. She goes to her vanity and takes down the photos and puts all but one away. This one she props up against the bedside lamp. She lays on the bed and turns off the TV. Blackout.

END OF PLAY