

H E A R M E

Book & Lyrics
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CAST

WILL. Age 45ish. Hearing. Caucasian. Becomes ASL proficient. Graphic novelist of a wildly successful series for middle grade readers. Clever, but self-protective and emotionally shut down, WILL is so out of touch with his own feelings, he doesn't recognize them until he sees them represented in the images he draws.

BEAST. Ageless. Hearing. Race, N/A. ASL N/A. The gender-fluid, shape-shifting pal and smart-mouth tormentor who lives inside Will's head, and is visible to Will alone.

CLAIRE. Age 40ish. Deaf. Caucasian. ASL fluent. A self-possessed, single mother. A former dancer, currently an art teacher at a school for the Deaf, recovering alcoholic/addict. Fiercely independent, she has built a life with her daughter Tessa, and a supportive extended family that includes her brother Casey, and his husband Neil. NB: CLAIRE's ASL name sign is the sign for "dance" using the letter C hand-shape.

TESSA. Age 11-13. Hearing. BIPOC. ASL fluent. Claire's hearing daughter. Secure within her family and wise beyond her years. Tessa's ASL name sign "heart-bloom" with the letter T hand-shape.

JUDE. Age 45ish. Hearing. Race, N/A. ASL competent. Will's sassy book agent, former lover, his truth-teller, dear friend.

CASEY. Age 40ish. Deaf. Caucasian. ASL fluent. Claire's brother, husband of Neil. Funny, athletic, somewhat hot-headed, storyteller and mime. Fiercely protective of his family. Casey's name sign is the letter C hand-shape drawn across the jaw.

NEIL. Age N/A. Hearing. BIPOC preferred. ASL proficient. Casey's husband and business partner. Elegant, charming, loving, level-headed. ASL fluent. Neil's name sign in the letter N hand-shape touched to the right temple.

Musicians: Violinist/singer. Cellist/singer. Keyboardist/singer. Woodwind player. Percussionist/singer.

Ensemble (OPTIONAL): 2 female and 2 male actor/singers. BIPOC preferred. (Willing to become) ASL competent.

HEAR ME

2.

TIME

Present day. 21 month period from early-spring to late fall 2024.

SETTINGS

Sign In Café & Bookshop, a trendy neighborhood spot.

Will's loft.

Claire's living room.

A farmer's market in the neighborhood.

Rainy cemetery.

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Page

Prelude

- 7. Enter Beast - BEAST
- 8. Claire's Theme - BEAST and CLAIRE

ACT ONE

Scene 1

- 9. Something There, Part 1 - WILL
- 10. Sign-In Café (instrumental)
- 25. Two Birds, One Mission - ALL
- 27. Something There, Part 2 - WILL

Scene 2

- 30. Everybody Has a Beast - BEAST

Scene 3

- 33. The River (instrumental)

Scene 4

- 36. One Run Down - WILL, CASEY, and ALL

Scene 5

- 40. I Dance (instrumental) - WILL and CLAIRE
- 48. Will You Show Me? (instrumental) - WILL and CLAIRE

Scene 6

- 51. Consider This, Part 1 - CASEY and NEIL
- 55. Consider This, Part 2 - CASEY and NEIL

Scene 7

- 59. Claire's Theme Variation - WILL, CLAIRE, and ALL

Scene 8

- 61. The River - CLAIRE and TESSA
- 62. Change (instrumental) - CLAIRE and TESSA
- 67. Butterfly (instrumental) - CLAIRE and TESSA

Scene 9

- 68. Brindlebeast (instrumental) - WILL and JUDE
- 70. I Know You - WILL and JUDE
- 72. I Know You Pt. 2 - WILL and JUDE
- 73. Beast Tango - WILL and BEAST

ACT TWO

Scene 1

- 76. Jack O' Lantern (instrumental) - ALL
- 81. LUCKY - WILL and ALL.

Scene 2

- 84. Slideshow (instrumental
- 87. Do You? - WILL and TESSA

Scene 3

- 93. Princess Grim - JUDE, CASEY, and NEIL
- 99. Thank You - Will and CLAIRE

Scene 4

- 100. Tessa Exits (instrumental) - WILL, CLAIRE, TESSA
- 102. Two on Friday (instrumental) - WILL

Scene 5

- 105. The Passage (instrumental)- WILL, CLAIRE, and ALL

Scene 6

- 109. Claire's Theme Variation 2 (instrumental) - WILL, TESSA, JUDE

Scene 7

- 112. Dad n' Daughter - WILL and TESSA
- 115. I Know You Reprise - WILL, BEAST and JUDE

Scene 8

- 121. Soliloquy: The Choice - WILL and BEAST

Scene 9

- 128. Beware The Brindlebeast (instrumental) - ALL
- 133. Make Peace with the Beast - ALL

CHARACTERS VOCAL RANGE

WILL Bari-tenor.

BEAST Tenor.

CLAIRE N/A. Deaf, HoH, or CODA preferred.

TESSA Belt. CODA preferred.

JUDE Soprano.

CASEY N/A. Deaf, HoH, or CODA preferred.

NEIL Baritone.

(5) On-stage musicians, including music director:
piano, violin, cello, woodwinds, percussion.

NOTATIONS

*Italics: ASL & Simultaneous Communication (SIM-COM)
Speaking & Signing*

ITALIC CAPS- ASL LYRICS

ALL CAPS - LYRICS

Boldface # + cue - music cues

Boldface #-#-# [act#-scene#-cue#] - caption OR projection

****ILY* hand shape, meaning *I love you*, is used as indicated.
Only WILL signs each individual word: *I. Love. You.****

WRITER/PRODUCER'S NOTES

DEAFNESS & AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (ASL)

HEAR ME is an original, cross-cultural, bi-lingual musical in ASL and English.

The deafness of characters CLAIRE and CASEY is portrayed as an *attribute* rather than as a disability.

The use of ASL is intrinsic to the plot, and cannot be interchanged with, nor replaced by any spoken language.

Projected text messages, captions, graphics, gestures, and visual vernacular (VV) ensure that the entire show is accessible to both hearing and Deaf patrons, simultaneously, and at all performances.

ASL video tutorials for each line of dialogue for every hearing character will accompany the script, score, and *gloss*, the ASL translation of the script. These tutorials eliminate the necessity of costly ASL translation and tutoring. Only three ASL interpreters are needed.

ORIGINAL PICTURE BOOK

Beware the Brindlebeast, retold and illustrated by Anita Riggio, is an award-winning picture book, based on "The Hedley Kew," an old English folktale by Joseph Jacobs (1904), and published by Boyds Mills Press in 1994.

Anita Riggio currently owns all rights to Beware the Brindlebeast. The original drawings and illustrations from Beware the Brindlebeast are used in the production of HEAR ME, and may not be modified nor replaced without written permission from Anita Riggio.

The National Theatre of the Deaf (NTD) commissioned a stage adaptation of Beware the Brindlebeast in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the theatre. The play had 80 performances across the United States.

Riggio's Coveside Studio issued a special edition paperback of Beware the Brindlebeast for the anniversary in 2007.

PRELUDE

CURRENT TIME.

CUE MUSIC:

1. ENTER BEAST

Behind the scrim, BEAST is dancing an indulgent, self-satisfied dance. As the dance ends, BEAST comes to stand directly behind Will.

WILL is in a good mood, shuffling through sketches.

END MUSIC

2. ENTER BEAST

LIGHTS FADE ON
BEAST

(WILL sits down at his drawing board. His cell phone rings.)

**P-1. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

WILL

(brightly)

Good morning, Jude! No, they both just left. What's up?

(listening.)

Sure. That sounds good. I should be able to finish the panels today. What time does Shelly want to meet?

(listening.)

Okay. Two on Friday.

**3. TWO ON FRIDAY
ENTER BEAST 2**

Yup. I've made all the changes we discussed. Shelly should be very happy. Gracie and the birds--Hey, can you hold on for a minute? I just heard--hold on--

(WILL goes to the window.)

**P-3. END
CAPTIONS**

HEAR ME

8.

LIGHTS OUT ON
WILL

**4. CLAIRE'S
THEME**

LIGHTS UP ON
CLAIRE BEHIND
SCRIM

CLAIRE moves slowly, hesitantly.
BEAST circles her with curiosity,
and without malevolence.

CLAIRE understands that Beast is a
source for good and ill.

THEY dance in opposition to each
other until

CLAIRE finally strikes a pose,
protective of Will.

END MUSIC

**5. CLAIRE'S
THEME**

LIGHTS OUT

ACT ONE/SCENE 1

**1-1-1. CAPTION:
TWENTY-ONE
MONTHS EARLIER**

LIGHTS COME
UP SLOWLY ON
WILL IN HIS
APARTMENT

**6. SOMETHING
THERE/PART 1**

**1-1-2. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

WILL
(sings "Something
There - Part 1")

NOW AND THEN, I GET THIS FEELING...
A TAP ON MY SHOULDER,
A BRUSH PAST MY CHAIR,
A BREEZE THROUGH AN OPEN WINDOW.
IS THERE SOMETHING THERE?

1-1-3.

NOW AND THEN, I GET AN IMPRESSION...
A TASTE, SCENT, A PUZZLE,
A GAME OF TRUTH OR DARE,
A CREAK ON THE STAIR,
SMOKE IN THE AIR,
A WHISPER ON THE WIND.
IS THERE SOMETHING THERE?

1-1-4.

NOW AND THEN, I GET A SENSATION...
A CHILL DOWN MY SPINE,
A STRANGER'S STARE,
A BREATH AT THE BACK OF MY NECK.
IS THERE SOMETHING THERE?

1-1-5.

FROM TIME TO TIME, I GET THIS YEARNING,
UNASKED QUESTION, UNMATCHED RHYME,
SHADOW PLAYING AT MY DOORSTEP,
A MESSENGER...IS IT A SIGN?
I TURN MY HEAD AND CATCH A GLIMMER,
WHAT DOES IT MEAN THIS TIME?

LIGHTS UP ON
THE SIGN IN
CAFÉ & BOOKSHOP
A TRENDY
NEIGHBORHOOD
SPOT.

MUSIC SEGS:
7. SIGN-IN CAFE

A PROMINENT
SANDWICH SIGN
ADVERTISES A
BOOK SIGNING BY
WILL CHAMPION
OF "TWO BIRDS,
ONE MISSION

(PATRONS, sit, stand, mingle.)

JUDE
(directing CASEY and
BEAST/BARISTA.
NEIL interprets)

Right! So let's move the signing table down here. And the stack of books will go there.

Casey and Neil! Thanks so much for hosting this event. Will and I were a thing back in college until he broke my heart, damn him.

(SIM-COM)

He's still one of my favorite humans--and my favorite client--But don't tell my other authors!

(CLAIRE is reading/signing Two Birds: On the Town, an earlier book by Pete & Will Champion, to a small group of PATRONS.
JUDE catches Claire's eye and waves.
WILL walks into the scene toward Jude.)

(SIM-COM)

Speak of the devil...Hey, Will!

**1-1-6.BEGIN
CAPTIONS.**

WILL
Hey, yourself. Pete should be here.

HEAR ME

11.

JUDE

Yeah, well, he answered the call. Be happy for him. You're the franchise now, pal.

WILL

Except for one small problem. I'm not a writer.

JUDE

Details. Listen, you're a pro. Sit. Do your Will-thing.

LIGHTS UP ON
CLAIRE IN THE
READING NOOK

(WILL takes a seat. HE observes
Claire finishing her reading of
Two Birds: On the Town.)

(WILL prepares to do his "Will-
thing," a boyish, irresistibly
charming, persona of the successful
male illustrator.)

1-1-7.

WILL

(indicating CLAIRE)

Hey, she's reading my book in sign language?

JUDE

Why, yes. Yes she is--and you're welcome. Cool, huh? That's Claire.

(CLAIRE finishes reading.
Patrons disburse.
CLAIRE glances over.
WILL gives a little wave.)

1-1-8. END
CAPTIONS

JUDE

(ASL only to CLAIRE)

Thank you!

(CLAIRE nods and smiles in
response.)

END MUSIC
8. THANK YOU!
SIGN-IN CAFE

(BEAST/BARISTA sets down a stack of pre-ordered copies of Two Birds: One Mission in front of WILL.)

1-1-9.BEGIN
CAPTIONS

BEAST/BARISTA
I see whatever you do.

WILL
Sorry?

BEAST/BARISTA
(SIM-COM)
I said, these are for you.

WILL
Oh, yeah. Thanks.

1-1-10.END
CAPTIONS

LIGHTS OFF ON
BEAST

(TESSA enters the Cafe. SHE is wearing #9, a soiled baseball uniform with Sign In Cafe´ & Bookshop logo.)

JUDE
(SIM-COM)
Tessa! How'd it go?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Wrecked 'em. 12-2.

JUDE
(SIM-COM)
Yay, you!

(TESSA high-fives Jude. TESSA makes a bee-line to Claire. CASEY and NEIL approach them.)

(ASL only: TESSA recounts that her team won. THEY congratulate her. TESSA tells them SHE is excited to meet Will.)

(CLAIRE encourages Tessa to talk to Will.
CLAIRE exits to the back room of the cafe.)

WILL
(To JUDE, under his breath.)

You sign now?

JUDE
(To WILL, SIM-COM)
When in Rome, hon. *I rep other authors, too, ya know.*

(TESSA approaches Will.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Hi, um, Mr. Champion?

WILL
--Will.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Will. Cool. Um, could I get you to sign two books, please?

WILL
Absolutely.

(JUDE opens one book and passes it to Will.
WILL autographs it.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
The first one's for me--Tessa. T-E-S-S-A. And the second is for my friend Julie.

(JUDE opens the second book.
WILL inscribes the book.
CASEY and NEIL look on as
WILL gives both books to Tessa.
TESSA passes them to Casey.
CASEY gives them to Beast/Barista to check out.)

WILL
(NEIL interprets.)
So you like books and softball?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Books and baseball.

WILL
Ah. Baseball.

CASEY
(NEIL voices.)
Tessa was the only girl on her Little League All-Star team last season. Great arm, plus she bats left. I taught her.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
The bratty bunch teases me sometimes...but I don't care.

JUDE
(To TESSA)
Hmm. That idea sounds like a potential Cosmo and Sid plot.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Really? You mean a story about me and baseball?

JUDE
(SIM-COM)
Well, you, baseball, and the 'B-r-a-t-t-y Bunch.' Got to have a conflict. What do you think, Will?

WILL
(NEIL interprets.)
Sure. Maybe.

(JUDE encourages the conversation.)

JUDE
(NEIL interprets.)
Will, guess what position Tessa plays.

WILL
(NEIL interprets)
Umm...ahh..shortstop?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Yeah! How'd you know?

WILL
(NEIL interprets.)
Lucky guess.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

Ha. *D'you play?*

WILL
(NEIL interprets.)

Oh, I used to. In college.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

What position?

(WILL relaxes into the "Will-thing," obviously enjoying the conversation with Tessa.)

WILL
(NEIL interprets.)

Short.

(WILL and TESSA high-five.
TESSA teaches Will an intricate handshake.
THEY clearly like each other.)

(*Inside Deaf joke:* NEIL signs "short" as "height" and "stop" as the verb "stop."
CASEY corrects Neil with the proper sign for "shortstop." A brief disagreement follows.
NEIL accepts the ASL correction, eyes rolling.
TESSA and JUDE giggle.
WILL doesn't understand, but becomes intrigued by ASL.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

Hey! You should play for us--for the Café, I mean. My uncle Casey has a wicked bat.

(WILL looks to Casey with interest.)

WILL

Oh, yeah?

CASEY
(NEIL voices.)

Sure. We could use a good arm.

JUDE

(To WILL.)

And God knows you *need a team*.

WILL

(To CASEY.)

Okay!

(TESSA demonstrates O-K.
WILL copies O-K.)

CASEY

(NEIL voices.)

Practices are Thursday nights at 6:30. We'll talk more.

(CASEY and NEIL walk away.
WILL and TESSA repeat their
elaborate handshake.)

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

So, do you really think you could write a story about me?

WILL

Write? Well, the thing is, I don't write. I draw. My brother wrote all the stories--

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

--What could my character's name be?

JUDE

Yes, Will. *What* could her character's *name* be?

WILL

(mimicking JUDE)

What could her character's name be? Uhh...I don't know... Louise?

(TESSA fingerspells L-O-U-I-S-E.
She shakes her head.)

WILL

Ya know, I've never written a story and I don't want you to be disappointed.

JUDE

I know--*H-a-r-r-i-e-t!*

TESSA

Nah...not feelin' it.

JUDE
Umm...How about *G-r-a-c-i-e*?

1-1-4. BEGIN
CAPTIONS

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
G-r-a-c-e is my middle name!

JUDE
Gracie, then! Will? How about it?

WILL
Gracie. Yeah, sure. Gracie would be just groovy, Jude.

TESSA
Yes!

JUDE
Great! Now you just have to come up with the plot.

WILL
Now I just have to come up with the plot.

1-1-5. END
CAPTIONS

(WILL notices Claire re-emerge from
the back room with a canvas bag.)

(CLAIRE pulls a new Cafe T-Shirt
from the bag. SHE holds it up
against Casey.)

(NEIL takes the T-shirt for
himself. HE flashes ILY to Casey.)

(CLAIRE, laughing, swats Neil.)

(TESSA follows Will's gaze.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Oh, that's my mom.

WILL
Your mom? Really?

JUDE
(under her breath)
Annnd we're off...

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Yeah. My Uncle Casey is her older brother. Want me to introduce you?

(CASEY and NEIL return to cafe duties.)

(CLAIRE pulls out the stack of new T-Shirts, and begins to arrange them on a shelf.)

(BEAST/BARISTA helps Claire.)

(TESSA waves to get Claire's attention.)

(JUDE watches the scene unfold, knowingly.)

WILL

Well, yeah, but I don't know how to...

(WILL makes gestures to indicate ASL.)

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

No worries. I got you.

JUDE

(singing to herself)

BACK IN THE SADDLE AGAIN...

(CLAIRE moves toward the signing table. SHE greets Jude in ASL.)

(WILL is in full charming-illustrator-mode, a ramped version of his Will-thing.)

JUDE

(SIM-COM)

Claire! Good to see you. Did the kids like the books I sent?

CLAIRE

(kiss-fist)

Loved them. Thank you!

(CLAIRE signs ILY.
JUDE responds ILY.)

JUDE
(SIM-COM)

I'm glad.

(JUDE picks up a bunch of signed books. SHE takes them to the register.
TESSA grabs Claire's hand.
SHE brings Claire to meet Will.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

Mom, this is W-i-l-l C-h-a-m-p-i-o-n. Will, this is my mom, Claire H-a-r-p-e-r.

(Will and CLAIRE shake hands.)

CLAIRE

Nice to meet you, Will.

WILL

Um...

(WILL looks to Tessa.
TESSA coaches Will through each word.)

(SIM-COM)

Nice. To Meet. You. Too. Claire.

(Gestures awkwardly.)

I saw you reading one of my books earlier.

CLAIRE

Yes! I know it by heart. It was one of Tessa's favorites when she was younger. Right, Tessa?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

Yup. Mom read it to me every night.

(CLAIRE is cordial, but not overly impressed.
CASEY gets Claire's attention.)

CLAIRE

Excuse me.

The following **two** conversations in ASL and spoken English occur simultaneously.

(CLAIRE and CASEY have a brief conversation in ASL while TESSA grills WILL.)

Coffee want? CASEY

Yes. Thanks. CLAIRE

Regular? CASEY

No, no. Latte. Oat milk, medium. Can? CLAIRE

Oat, gone. Almond? CASEY

That. Fine, fine. Thanks. CLAIRE

Latte. Almond, medium. Fast. CASEY

1-1-6. BEGIN CAPTIONS.

Are you married? TESSA
(Voice only to Will)

Ah, no. WILL

(TESSA signs "no" to herself.
WILL copies the sign "no.")

So, do you have a girlfriend? TESSA

No. WILL
(SIM-COM)

Boyfriend, then? TESSA

No. WILL

(WILL signs "no" like a quacking duck.)

Good info.

TESSA

**1-1-7. END
CAPTIONS**

(CLAIRE returns to Tessa.
TESSA flashes a grin to Claire.
BEAST/BARISTA hands the autographed
books to Tessa.
CASEY and NEIL rejoin them at the
signing table.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

*Guys! Check this out. Cosmo is the cardinal, and Placido--
"Sid" for short--is the flamingo.*

(CLAIRE looks at the book with
Tessa.
BEAST/BARISTA deposits another
stack of books on the signing
table.)

LIGHTS UP ON
BEAST/BARISTA.

**1-1-8. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

BEAST/BARISTA
Will, you're unlovable.

WILL
Sorry. What?

BEAST/BARISTA
I said, Will, nice book-- unbelievable.

**1-1-9. END
CAPTIONS.**

(JUDE rejoins Will at the table.
NEIL peruses a book with Casey.)

NEIL
(SIM-COM)
*A very bold pair, these birds. Great fashion sense.
But what do they do?*

CUE MUSIC:
9. BUT WHAT DO
THEY DO?

WILL / TESSA
(SIM-COM)

They do good.

1-1-10. BEGIN
CAPTIONS

ALL
(sing "Two Birds, One
Mission")

*TWO BIRDS, ONE MISSION
DO GOOD.
TWO BIRDS, ONE MISSION
DO GOOD.*

JUDE
LIKE SQUIRREL AND MOOSE MID-CENTURY,
THE BIRDS ALWAYS SAVE THE DAY.
NO BULLY, CON, OR TREACHERY
OUT-SILLIES THEIR STATE OF PLAY.

NEIL
(SIM-COM)
Ahhh...Placido Flamingo.

1-1-11. END
CAPTIONS

Clever. So, he sings opera?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
*No. Country western. Loud and bad. But look. They wear
trench coats and little hats.*

NEIL
(SIM-COM)
And who doesn't love a fedora?

CLAIRE
(NEIL interprets.)
Mustaches?

WILL & TESSA
(Tessa uses SIM-COM)
*No. Birds don't have facial hair.
(TESSA signs "think
alike.")*
Jinx!

(WILL and TESSA lock pinkies.
BEAST/PATRON enters.)

1-1-12. BEGIN
CAPTIONS

ALL
(sing "Two Birds, One
Mission")

*TWO BIRDS, ONE MISSION:
DO GOOD.
TWO BIRDS, ONE MISSION:
DO GOOD.*

(BEAST/PATRON pages through a
book.)

BEAST/PATRON

A CARDINAL AND FLAMINGO
MAKE A MOST UNLIKELY PAIR

JUDE & BEAST/PATRON

SO RED AND PINK AND FLASHY--
YOUR BIRDS ARE KINDA TACKY...
SO RED AND PINK AND FLASHY--
YOUR BIRDS ARE KINDA TACKY...

1-1-13. END
CAPTIONS

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

But they make kids so happy!

(BEAST/PATRON pays Casey for the
book.
WILL autographs the book.)

CLAIRE
(JUDE voices)

*A CARDINAL AND A FLAMINGO
SEEM LIKE totems TO ME.*

WILL

TOTEMS--?

ALL

TOTEMS--?

CLAIRE

(JUDE voices.)

*Yes! Spirit guides, y'see--
Cardinal means fidelity
And ever lasting love...*

WILL

Woah...

**1-1-14. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

ALL

CARDINAL MEANS FIDELITY,
EVER-LASTING LOVE...
CARDINAL MEANS FIDELITY,
EVER-LASTING LOVE...

BEAST

I don't do deep diving.

WILL

(NEIL interprets)
I don't--I don't do deep diving.

ALL

CARDINAL MEANS FIDELITY,
EVER-LASTING LOVE...
CARDINAL MEANS FIDELITY,
EVER-LASTING LOVE...

BEAST

I'm a wade-in-the-shallows guy--

WILL

(NEIL interprets)
I'm a wade-in-the-shallows kinda guy--

ALL

CARDINAL MEANS FIDELITY,
EVER-LASTING LOVE...
CARDINAL MEANS FIDELITY,
EVER-LASTING LOVE...

CLAIRE

(JUDE voices)

--But a flamingo indicates crushing emotional repression.

BEAST & JUDE

(JUDE uses SIM-COM)

Imagine that.

(WILL laughs off the comment.)

WILL

(NEIL interprets)

Look, I just think about line and shape and color...

CLAIRE

(JUDE voices)

Ah. Then cardinal and flamingo must have chosen you.

**1-1-15.END
CAPTIONS.**

ALL

Oooo!

*TWO BIRDS, ONE MISSION:
DO GOOD!*

*TWO BIRDS, ONE MISSION:
DO GOOD!*

*TWO BIRDS, ONE MISSION:
TWO BIRDS, ONE MISSION:
TWO BIRDS, ONE MISSION:
TWO BIRDS, ONE MISSION:
DO GOOD!*

END MUSIC:
**10.TWO BIRDS,
ONE MISSION**

(CASEY delivers the latte to
Claire.)

CLAIRE

Love it.(sign: kiss fist) Love you!(sign:ILY)

(WILL is undone--and intrigued.
WILL watches CLAIRE intently.)

**1-1-16.BEGIN
CAPTIONS.**

JUDE

You look a bit ragged, Will. You been seeing that assistant
to the Assistant Art Director?

WILL

No.

JUDE

No?

WILL

She is the Assistant Art Director.

JUDE

Ah! Then she's old enough not to need her roommate's fake ID!

WILL

--Hey?

(WILL puts his fist to his lips.)

What does this mean?

JUDE

(*kiss fist*)

Oh. That means I love this or I love that.

WILL

Cool...Jude, I love you!

(WILL gives his own fist a big smooch.)

JUDE

Well, I appreciate that, hon. But you need to use a different sign. It's like this. *ILY*. Here. Gimme your hand.

(WILL holds up his hand.
JUDE moves Will's fingers to form the hand-shape.)

JUDE

Look...I...for I. L...for love. Y...for you. See? *ILY*. I love you.

(WILL watches Claire, while JUDE fusses over his hand shape. NEIL passes behind Will and Jude. NEIL notices Will watching Claire.)

WILL

(Still holding *ILY*.
To himself.)

Her hands are like butterflies...

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

Oh, honey...Did you just say, "her hands are like butterflies"?

(ALL turn their heads to Will.)

WILL
(NEIL interprets.)
Oh. Did I say that out loud?

BEAST & JUDE & NEIL
(JUDE & NEIL use SIM-COM)
Ya did.

CASEY
(NEIL voices.)
Ah, the butterfly...emerging wet from its cocoon with its new found wings, flitting from blossom to blossom until--whap--it's netted and pinned under glass.

NEIL
(SIM-COM)
Pay no attention to these humanoids, Will. Listen to your Uncle Neil. I think your butterflies are endearing.

ALL FREEZE

LIGHTS FADE

CUE MUSIC:
**11.BUTTERFLIES
ARE ENDEARING**

SPOTLIGHT ON
WILL

**1-1-17.BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

WILL
(sings "Something
There-Part 2")
*NOW AND THEN, I GET THIS NOTION...
DANDELION FLUFF FLOATING ON AIR.
I REACH OUT TO CATCH--
IT FLIES OUT OF REACH--
ALMOST IGNORED LIKE AN UNSPOKEN PRAYER.
IS THERE SOMETHING?
IS THERE SOMEONE?
IS THERE SOMETHING THERE?*

END MUSIC
**1-1-18.
SOMETHING
THERE/PART 2**

ACT ONE / SCENE 2

LIGHTS UP ON
WILL WHO IS
STUDYING A SIGN
LANGUAGE BOOK
AND PRACTICING
THE MANUAL
ALPHABET.

LIGHTS UP ON
BEAST, TOWERING
OVER WILL.

**1-2-1. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

BEAST

You know, that butterfly thing? That was adorable...

WILL

Ha. Ha. Do you mind? I'm doing something here.

BEAST

Which brings me to... What exactly are you doing?

WILL

I'm trying to learn the alphabet, so could you just--?

BEAST

Oh, sure, sure. But you're learning this alphabet because...?

WILL

Because I like Claire, and I'd like to talk with her.

BEAST

Listen. Like her like you like all the other ones. In which case, there's not a lot of talking involved...

WILL

She's different...she makes me think--different. She's--I don't know...just different.

(WILL continues to practice the manual alphabet while Beast talks.)

BEAST

You've got a way with words.

(WILL stops practicing the alphabet suddenly. HE seems bothered.)

WILL

A flamingo? That was kinda harsh. A flamingo? Really?

BEAST

Nah...A weasel, maybe.

WILL

I mean..."crushing emotional repression"?

BEAST

Quit the self-reflection, will ya, please, I'm getting bored. And it's unproductive.

WILL

How come?

BEAST

Because that kinda stuff interferes with your being, your brand, baby! Cardinals, flamingos, spirit guides--all that airy-fairy crap. It's just not *fun*. And what's the point of anything if it's not fun?

WILL

Fun. Yeah...

(WILL returns to practicing.)

BEAST imitates Will's ASL alphabet hand shapes mockingly. HE makes the hard rock shape [index and pinky fingers up, ring, middle finger on thumb])

BEAST

Oooooo...

WILL

You're doing it wrong.

(WILL demonstrates *ILY*.)

This is the sign for that.

BEAST

For what?

WILL

For I.L.Y. I. Love. You. Like this.

(WILL demonstrates *ILY*.)

BEAST

Wait. There's an actual sign for *I love you*? Ohhh, this is good...This is waaaay too precious. Oh, yes. Oh, yeah, baby, we'll be using this thing, you betcha...*I love you*...

(BEAST shoves *ILY* in Will's face.)

WILL

(good-naturedly)

Cut it out.

BEAST

No. You cut it out. Whaddya think you're doing here? Come on...a coupla drinks, a coupla laughs--bing, bang, boom--and bye-bye!

(WILL ignores Beast.
HE concentrates on his finger-spelling...G-H-I-J-K-L-M-N-...)

Hey, I can see you like her. Liking is fine. Liking is good. You should feel good! Crank up those endorphins, baby! But, just don't get carried away, okay? Let's not forget what we've got going here by our own selves. You've got the Will-thing--and I've got you!

(BEAST taunts Will with *ILY*.)

CUE MUSIC:
**10. AND I'VE
GOT YOU!**

You don't want to hear it. Who deals? I do.
You don't want to see it. Who deals? I do.
You don't want to know nothin' about nothin'. Who deals? Oh!
That's my job, too!

WILL

Okay, I get it. Thank you. Now would you please--?

(WILL continues practicing finger-spelling. O-P-Q-R-S-T-U...)

**1-2-2. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

BEAST

(sings "Everybody Has
a Beast")

Listen, lover,
EVERYBODY HAS A BEAST.
A DEMON, NIGHTMARE, HEARTBREAK.
HOW YOU FACE THE BEAST, OR HOW YOU DON'T,

DEFINES THE LIFE THAT YOU MAKE.

YOU LET ME SWAY YOU THIS WAY AND THAT.
WE'VE BEEN PARTNERS FROM THE START.
I'M IN YOUR LIFE FOR NOW AND ALL.
I FEED YOUR HUNGER, THAT'S MY PART.

Be careful. You can live without love.
But you can't live without me.

(BEAST signs *ILY.*)

**1-2-3. END
CAPTIONS**

END MUSIC:
**11.YOU CAN'T
LIVE WITHOUT ME**

LIGHTS OUT

ACT ONE, SCENE 3

MAY, EARLY
EVENING.
CLAIRE'S
APARTMENT

(CLAIRE is reading in a comfy overstuffed chair.
TESSA is sitting on the floor nearby with a notebook in her lap.
SHE stares intently at Claire.
CLAIRE looks up.)

ASL ONLY

**1-3-1. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

CLAIRE

Something wrong?

TESSA

I'm studying you.

CLAIRE

You're studying me? For--?

TESSA

For school. For Mother's Day. I have to write an essay about my mom. And that's you.

CLAIRE

Yup. That's me. May I read it?

1-3-2.

TESSA

Sure. When I'm done. I'm just writing the outline now. Five paragraphs. First paragraph: introduction. Like what you do, what you look like, blah, blah, blah. Then three paragraphs about all the special things you do for me because you're my mom. Fifth paragraph--conclusion. Why or why not motherhood figures into my personal future plans.

CLAIRE

Okay!

1-3-3.

TESSA

I'm just glad we get out of school before Father's Day this year.

(TESSA returns to her outline.
CLAIRE gets Tessa's attention.)

1-3-4.

CLAIRE

Why?

CUE MUSIC:
12. WHY? RIVER
INSTRUMENTAL

TESSA

*Because I never know how to write about a father--
since I don't have one.*

1-3-5.

CLAIRE

You have wonderful uncles who adore you.

TESSA

*And I adore them. But Julie's mother says "the father/
daughter relationship informs a daughter's future
relationships with men."*

CLAIRE

Does she?

1-3-6.

TESSA

Yeah...What was your relationship like with your dad?

CLAIRE

Distant.

TESSA

Oh.

1-3-7.

(TESSA returns to her outline.
SHE looks up after a few moments.)

Julie's mom says it's important to know who your people are.

CLAIRE

You know who your people are.

1-3-8.

TESSA

Well, you and Uncle Casey and Uncle Neil... But sometimes I wonder about the guy. You know...my birth father. I mean, obviously, I look kinda like him--my skin and hair and eyes. And--really--it's annoying the way some people look surprised, and then they look embarrassed that they looked surprised when they find out I'm your kid.

CLAIRE

I've noticed that, too.

1-3-9.

TESSA

Julie says her mom researched their family tree, and found the town in Sicily where her great-great-grandparents were born, plus, she found their names on a list from a ship they took to Ellis Island. How cool is that?

CLAIRE

Very cool...

TESSA

Yeah...I kinda wish we could do that...

TESSA RETURNS
TO HER OUTLINE.

MUSIC ENDS: 13.
**WE COULD DO
THAT.)**

(CLAIRE studies Tessa for a long
moment.)

1-3-10.

CLAIRE

Hey. I don't know about family trees, but I do know I'm grateful to your birth father and all his people.

TESSA

How come?

CLAIRE

Because I can't imagine my life without you in it. ILY.

1-3-11. END
CAPTIONS.

ACT ONE, SCENE 4

JUNE, EARLY
EVENING.
SIGN IN CAFÉ &
BOOKSHOP IS
DECKED IN SIGN
IN BASEBALL
TEAM
PARAPHERNALIA

ALL are in high spirits. Lots of
hand-waving & high five-ing.
TESSA and JUDE enter wearing Sign
In T-shirts.
CASEY blows in behind them wearing
soiled Sign In Café uniform.
NEIL is near the counter.
WILL enters last in soiled uniform.
CLAIRE enters with Will.
MUSICIANS sit, stand, mill about.
BEAST watches Will's every move.
WILL tries to ignore Beast.

TESSA & JUDE
(ASL & SIM-COM)

We won!

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

*Uncle Casey and Will broke the tie! They pulled off a
suicide squeeze!*

(TESSA and CASEY execute a fancy
handshake.
CLAIRE looks on appreciatively.)

NEIL
(SIM-COM to WILL)

Oh, Will! How manly of you!

(SIM-COM TO CASEY)
What's a suicide squeeze?

CUE MUSIC:
**14.WHAT'S A
SUICIDE
SQUEEZE?**

(CASEY enlists Will to tell the
story.)

WILL & CASEY
 (WILL sings/CASEY
 signs "One Run Down")

*Okay, here we go. We're tied at the top of the tenth.
 And--WE'RE ONE RUN DOWN.*

ALL
 (SIM-COM)

ONE RUN DOWN.

WILL & CASEY
SON-OF-A-GUN, WE SHOULD'VE WON.

ALL
 (SIM-COM)

ONE RUN DOWN.

WILL & CASEY
*I'M ON FIRST, AND
 OUR GUYS FEAR THE WORST.
 I LEAD OFF THE BASE BY TWO STRIDES
 JUST IN CASE.*

BEAST & JUDE
LADIES, GUARD YOUR SCORE CARDS.

WILL & CASEY
WE'RE ONE RUN DOWN.

BEAST & JUDE
THIS GUY TAKES THE CROWN.

ALL
ONE RUN DOWN.

TESSA
 (SIM-COM)

*NEXT BATTER UP.
 THE GRANDSTAND ERUPTS WHEN
 BATTER SNEAKS ONE THROUGH THE HOLE
 BUT WILL STAYS IN CONTROL.*

BEAST
 (SIM-COM)
*HE'S IN CONTROL FOR SURE.
 SECOND BASE, THE PARTY'S STARTING.*

TESSA
 (SIM-COM)
Will's safe at third!

WILL & CASEY
STILL, WE'RE ONE RUN DOWN.

ALL
(SIM-COM)

ONE RUN DOWN.

WILL & CASEY

NOW CASEY'S UP,
HE TAKES HIS STANCE.
WIND UP! I SEE MY CHANCE.
CASEY STEPS 'ROUND FRONT,
AND LAYS DOWN A BUNT.
I dive for home plate, and I'm safe-- no debate!

(NEIL raises his arms in the
football signal.)

NEIL

Touchdown!

ALL
(ALL sign "slide")

No! Suicide!

BEAST & JUDE

HOME RUN! OF COURSE HE SCORES.
HE'S SCORED WITH SCORES OF WOMEN!

WILL & CASEY

WE'RE ONE RUN DOWN!

ALL

ONE RUN DOWN!

WILL & CASEY

THE NEXT RUNNER SCORES
AND OUR GUYS TAKE THE CROWN.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

THANKS TO THE CHAMPS.

BEAST & JUDE

YEAH, THE CHAMP!

ALL
(SIM-COM)

WHO SCORED
WHEN WE WERE ONE RUN,
ONE RUN, ONE RUN,
WHEN WE WERE ONE RUN,
ONE RUN, ONE RUN,
WHEN WE WERE ONE RUN
ONE RUN, ONE RUN DOWN!

END MUSIC:
15.OONE RUN DOWN

(TESSA, JUDE, CASEY, and NEIL
gather their things.
THEY prepare to leave.)

NEIL
(SIM-COM)
Claire, are you sure you don't mind closing up?

CLAIRE
No, no. I'm fine. Go.
(to TESSA and CASEY)
*But no staying up all night watching Harry Potter. Be
sensible, please.*

TESSA & CASEY
We're sensible!

TESSA and CASEY lock pinkies with
one hand and high five with the
other.
CLAIRE kisses Tessa, Casey, and
Neil.
SHE waves goodnight to them.
THEY exit.
WILL is a little nervous.

LIGHTS FADE ON
SATISFIED
BEAST.

ACT ONE/SCENE 5

MOMENTS LATER.

WILL walks to Claire.
HE touches her arm.

WILL
(SIM-COM)

Want some *help*?

CLAIRE

Sure. Thanks.

(CLAIRE stashes a few empty mugs
behind the counter. SHE wipes the
counter with a cloth.
WILL turns over a few chairs onto a
table.)

WILL
(awkward SIM-COM)

Uh. This neighborhood is *g-r-e-a-t*. I live in a *big l-o-f-t*.
Just a few blocks down.

CLAIRE

How nice for you.

WILL
(to himself)

Yeah, big shot.

(Awkward SIM-COM)

It's *t-o-o big*, really. Big enough for a *pool table* or a
piano. But I don't *play*. Do you?

CLAIRE

Pool, yes. Piano, no.

WILL
(signing NO toward his face.)

Right. *NO* on the piano.

CLAIRE

Some deaf people play the piano. For example, B-e-e-t-h-o-v-e-n.

WILL
(reading CLAIRE's
slow finger-spelling)

B-e-e-t-h-o-v-e-n. Right. That guy...

CLAIRE

I dance.

CUE MUSIC:
16.I DANCE.

WILL
You--what's that? Dance?

CLAIRE
Yes. I studied modern dance for fourteen years.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Wow. Really?

(CLAIRE pulls a phone from her
pocket.)

1-5-1. BEGIN
CAPTIONS.

CLAIRE
(Texting/AI Voices)
'Wow,' I love modern dance? Or 'wow,' I didn't know Deaf
people could dance?

WILL
(sheepishly)
Busted.

1-5-2-.END
CAPTIONS

(SIM-COM
To CLAIRE)
Sorry. I'm a *j-e-r-k*. Show me the *sign* for *d-a-n-c-e*?

(CLAIRE pockets her phone.
SHE demonstrates "dance."
WILL carefully copies the sign.)

WILL
(to himself)
Duh. She just did that. *Dance*.
(SIM-COM)
Hey--that's sorta *like your name sign*, isn't it?

CLAIRE
Nice catch.

(CLAIRE begins to sweep in front of
the coffee bar.
WILL takes the broom from her.)

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Claire. It f-i-t-s you.

CLAIRE
Thank you.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
You're welcome. How do you sign: You're w-e-l-c-o-m-e.

(CLAIRE demonstrates.
WILL copies.)

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Thank you for teaching me you're welcome.

CLAIRE
Thank you for wanting to learn.

(WILL sweeps while
CLAIRE tidies up in a more
comfortable silence.
WILL waves to get HER attention.)

WILL
Hey--What name sign would you give me?

CLAIRE
Well, maybe the sign for your last name, Champion.

(CLAIRE demonstrates.
WILL copies the sign.)

WILL
That's kinda cool...

CLAIRE
Or maybe Champion, like this.

(CLAIRE poses like a big,
muscle-bound guy.)

WILL
Oh.

CLAIRE
I don't know. I'd have to get to know you.

WILL
(Awkward SIM-COM)
Well, that can be a-r-r-a-n-g-e-d...

(CLAIRE steps away from WILL.)

Or not.

END MUSIC:
17.OR NOT.

(WILL touches CLAIRE's arm.)

So, what *h-a-p-p-e-n-e-d*? With *dance, Claire*?

CLAIRE

Happened...I had big dreams. I was in line to become a principal dancer--but--car accident. I shattered both legs and a hip. End of a dream...beginning of a nightmare.

(WILL copies Claire's sign: *bad dream.*)

WILL

Nightmare?

CLAIRE

I became addicted to o-x-y.

WILL

Wait. Oxy?

CLAIRE

Yes. O-x-y. And I'd wash it down with v-o-d-k-a.

WILL

Oxy. And vodka. Ooof.

CLAIRE

Too much?

WILL

Well, that's a lot.

CLAIRE

Too much for you to deal with, I mean.

WILL

(Awkward SIM-COM)

Too much for me? No. It's not. That's you. That's your--

CLAIRE

I've been in recovery for twelve years.

WILL

What's that--?

CLAIRE

Me. R-e-c-o-v-e-r-y. Twelve. Y-e-a-r-s.

WILL

You. Recovery. Twelve. Years.

CLAIRE

And I make peace with my beast one day at a time.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Slower, please.

CLAIRE

I...make...p-e-a-c-e...

WILL

I...make...peace...

CLAIRE

with my b-e-a-s-t...

WILL

with...my...beast...

CLAIRE

...one day...at a time.

WILL

One day...at a time. You're really b-r-a-v-e...

LIGHTS UP ON
BEAST

BEAST

Pivot.

1-5-3.PIVOT
CAPTION
FLASHES, THEN
DISSOLVES

LIGHTS FADE ON
BEAST

WILL

(Gesture and awkward
SIM-COM)

*Hey, you've got a great k-i-d. Kids are so h-o-n-e-s-t,
aren't they? And Tessa. She's so smart. And funny. I like
her confidence.*

So Tessa's f-a-t-h-e-r...?

(CLAIRE shows WILL the sign for
"Father."
WILL copies her.)

CLAIRE PULLS
OUT HER PHONE.
USES TEXT TO AI
VOICE APP

**1-5-4.BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

CLAIRE
(Texting/AI voice)
Not around. Never was.

Short story: After the accident, I was feeling pretty low,
so my friends dragged me to a party...I started dancing...
Feeling light...happy...sassy...sexy...There was a bedroom
and a boy...I was black-out drunk. I don't even know his
name.

WILL
Wow...
(Speaking into
Claire's phone app)

You really are brave.

1-5-5.

CLAIRE
(Texting/AI voice)
--Or crazy!
But I stopped booze and pills when I found out I was
pregnant. I had no idea how to be a mom, but that baby saved
my life. Tessa's name sign means a blooming heart. Because
that's what she did for me. That's who she is to me.

(THEY stand facing each other
silently.)

WILL
(speaking into
Claire's phone)
Must be nice to have a kid. Somebody who's yours to love.
You're really amazing. All that *stuff*--and still, you seem
so together...

**1-5-6.END
CAPTIONS**

(CLAIRE gives WILL a long,
appraising look.)

CLAIRE
(texting/ AI voice)
We all make choices, Will.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
How do you sign that?

CLAIRE
Choice.

(WILL copies her sign.)

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Choice.

LIGHTS UP ON
BEAST

**1-5-7. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

BEAST
Pivot.

WILL
(Speaking into
CLAIRE's phone)
*Low grade misery seems more reliable to me...Everybody says:
"Carpe diem!" But why seize and squeeze and stockpile all
those good ju-jus, when you know they'll just evaporate?*

1-5-8.

CLAIRE
(Texting/AI voices)
*Of course they'll evaporate. Things change. That's just
fact.*

(Speaking into CLAIRE'S phone.)

WILL
*Then we agree: Happiness is a sneaky beast. Misery is a
better bet.*

(CLAIRE shakes her head.)

WILL
(SIM-COM)

No? Why no?

CLAIRE
(Texting/AI voices)

Because misery doesn't last either, Will. And that's why we should grab hold of happiness when it shows up.

1-5-9

(WILL resumes sweeping.
CLAIRE straightens the books on a nearby shelf.
She watches WILL from the corner of her eye.)

1-5-10

CLAIRE
(Texting/AI voice)

I'm curious...Why do you draw? In dance, there's freedom in the structure. When you're in it, it feels like flying. So, why do you draw?

WILL

Why? I don't know. Nobody has ever asked *why*. Maybe because I can? Because I'm pretty good at it?

CLAIRE
(Texting/ AI voice)

Maybe because it's is a way to understand the world. And maybe because a drawing is proof: *Will was here*.

WILL
(Awkward SIM-COM)

Oh, wow...Maybe...

(CLAIRE turns back to the book shelf.
WILL watches her, leaning on the broom. HE sets the broom aside. HE steps up behind her, touches her arm.)

1-5-11. END
CAPTIONS

Look, I'm **bad** with words. My *b-r-o-t-h-e-r--*

(CLAIRE teaches WILL the sign for "brother."
WILL copies it.)

WILL (cont'd)

My brother P-e-t-e. He was the w-o-r-d guy.

(CLAIRE teaches WILL the sign for "word." WILL copies it.)

CLAIRE

But not now? Where is your brother now?

WILL

(Awkward SIM_COM)

He got his dream j-o-b. He writes for The L-a-t-e S-h-o-w now. I'm just the p-i-c-t-u-r-e guy.

(CLAIRE demonstrates "picture."
WILL copies.)

WILL

(Awkward SIM-COM)

I guess that's why I like watching you sign. It's like you paint pictures in the air...Claire. See, the thing is, I really dig you.

(WILL signs "dig" as if digging
with a shovel.
CLAIRE smiles at his earnestness.)

CLAIRE

I d-i-g you, too, Will.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

And I think you're beautiful.

(WILL actually signs: *I think
you're hideous.*
CLAIRE is momentarily shocked,
insulted, hurt.)

WILL

Oh! I thought--

(CLAIRE bursts into laughter.
WILL is embarrassed and confused.)

WILL

Look, never mind. I should go. I've got a drawing to do--

CLAIRE

No, wait. I'm sorry for laughing.

(CLAIRE pulls out her phone.)

1-5-12. BEGIN
CAPTIONS

(Texting/AI voice)
Did my brother teach you that sign?

WILL
Yes.

CLAIRE
(Texting/AI voice)
Because you just signed: I think you're hideous.

1-5-13. END
CAPTIONS

WILL
(Awkward SIM-COM)
Great! *O-k*. Well, *good night*. I have to go find your *brother*
and *break* his arm.

(WILL feigns an exit,
CLAIRE grabs his hand.)

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Hey--will you *show* me?

CUE MUSIC:
18. SHOW ME?

CLAIRE
You.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
You.

CLAIRE
Are beautiful.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Are beautiful.

(WILL holds CLAIRE's hand in his.
HE signs "Claire" in HER palm.)
You are beautiful, Claire.

(THEY kiss.)

LIGHTS FADE.END
MUSIC:
19. CLAIRE

ACT ONE, SCENE 6

THE NEXT
MORNING AT THE
CAFE.

CASEY is at a table, staring into his coffee mug as NEIL busies himself with the morning cafe-opening routine. NEIL notices CASEY's mood. NEIL brings his own mug to the table and sits.

NEIL

Why so pensive, you?

CASEY

I'm not pensive.

NEIL

You are pensive. And you're testy, too.

CASEY

I'm not testy!

(NEIL levels him a glance.)

Okay, fine! I'm thinking about Tessa.

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

You're thinking about Tessa. And--?

CASEY

And Claire.

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

And Claire. And--?

CASEY

And W-I-L-L!

(CASEY spells W-I-L-L, flicking the L under his chin, in F-U gesture.)

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

Ah. W-I-L-L. But you two are baseball buddies.

CASEY

Fine. But that doesn't mean he's allowed to sniff around my sister.

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

Well, girlfriend has needs--

CASEY

"Girlfriend has needs." Shut up.

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

She seems happy!

CASEY

If he dumps her--what happens?

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

If he dumps her, she'll deal.

**1.6.1.BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

CASEY

Easy for you to say! You weren't around when she hit rock bottom. You didn't have to clean her up when she puked all over herself. You didn't have to carry her to bed night after night. You didn't have to worry day after day if it would be the day she'd die.

**1.6.2 END
CAPTIONS**

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

No, but I was there when Tessa was born. And I remember Claire remaking herself into a mother, day after endless day, night after sleepless night...I remember, honey. And I understand why you're so protective. I'm just saying Claire has been healthy and well for as long as I've know her, and that's a long time now. Look, she's smart and sassy--and she deserves a little more fun in her life. I think a romance would be good for her.

**CUE MUSIC:
20. WOULD BE
GOOD FOR HER**

CASEY

A romance with W-I-L-L. Really? He can hardly sign!

NEIL
Neither could I.

CASEY
He's a player.

NEIL
So was I!

CASEY
You're on his side?

NEIL
(SIM-COM. Sings/signs
"Consider This, Part
1")
I'm not taking sides at all.

*CONSIDER THIS: WHEN WE FIRST MET,
YOUR FRIENDS WOULD NOT
LET YOU FORGET
MY REPUTATION.*

*BUT HERE WE ARE, TOGETHER YET,
AND I'M AMUSED
THAT YOU FORGET
WE'VE DEALT WITH STRUGGLES.*

*WHEN WORLDS APART WE SEEMED TO BE,
TO MY DELIGHT, YOU LED THE FIGHT
FOR "YOU" AND "ME" TO BE A "WE"--
YOU KNOW, MY DEAR, IT'S MADE US STRONG.*

*CONSIDER THIS: OUR CLAIRE'S ALONE
AND YOUR PROTECTIVENESS
IS OVERBLOWN--
SHE NEEDS A LOVE LIFE.*

*NO ONE CAN TELL
WHERE THIS WILL LEAD.
YOU MUST CONCEDE, MY DARLING,
THAT SHE SEEMS HAPPY.*

*TO TAKE A CHANCE ON NEW ROMANCE,
A THRILLING RUSH, AN EPIC CRUSH
COULD LEAD TO LUST,
THEN LOVE'S FIRST BLUSH.*

*OH, COME ON, HON,
WHAT COULD BE WRONG?*

*THERE'S SOMETHING MORE
THAT'S ON YOUR MIND:
YOU'RE WORRIED
YOU'LL BE LEFT BEHIND.
Am I right?*

CASEY

No!

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

*Of course, I'm right.
YOU KNOW I AM.*

(CLAIRE enters the cafe. She is
radiant.)

CLAIRE

Good morning!

CASEY

Morning.

CLAIRE

What's wrong with you?

(CASEY doesn't reply.)

**1.6.3 BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

(To NEIL)

What's wrong with him?

NEIL

We were discussing our family.

(CASEY glares at him.)

And W-I-L-L.

CASEY

W-I-L-L. Who is not part of our family.

(CASEY fingerspells W-I-L-L at his
armpit.)

CLAIRE

(Pointedly, calmly)

W-I-L-L. What about him?

(NEIL signs "take it easy" to
CASEY.)

1.6.4

CASEY

I don't think he's good for you.

CLAIRE

(Pleasantly)

Excuse me. Did someone ask for your opinion?

CASEY

No. Nobody asked for me opinion. But you're my little sister and I love you, and I want what's best for you.

CLAIRE

I know that.

CASEY

So even though you didn't ask, I'm expressing my opinion.

(NEIL gives CASEY a thumbs up.)

1.6.5

CLAIRE

Okay, fine. Why don't you like Will?

CASEY

I like Will. He's cool. He's fun. He's talented. He makes money--

NEIL

--He's also very good looking--

CASEY

He's just not for you and Tessa.

CLAIRE

Why not?

NEIL

Yeah. Why not?

1.6.6

CASEY

I don't think he knows himself. And if he knows himself, he doesn't like himself. And when a person doesn't like himself, he can't love somebody else.

(NEIL is impressed.)

1.6.7

CLAIRE
(to NEIL)
Wow. What have you done to my brother?

NEIL
We've been doing some work...

1.6.8

CASEY
You just met.

CLAIRE
We met last spring.

CASEY
You need to slow down.

CLAIRE
I'm the judge of what I need.

CASEY
Hold on! Don't tell me you're making plans with this guy!

(TESSA enters unnoticed by
CLAIRE and CASEY.)

CLAIRE
I'm not making any plans!

CASEY
You have Tessa to consider!

CLAIRE
I always consider Tessa!

**1-6-9. END
CAPTIONS.**

**END MUSIC: 21.
I ALWAYS
CONSIDER TESSA**

NEIL
(SIM-COM to himself)
And it was going so well...

TESSA
(To NEIL)
Are they fighting about me?

(NEIL sighs.
TESSA stomps the floor to get
CLAIRE's and CASEY's attention.)

Are you fighting about me?

CLAIRE
*No. We're not fighting. Come on. You'll be late for
practice.*

(TESSA eyes CLAIRE and CASEY.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM. USES ILY)
Thanks for the Harry Potter marathon. I love you guys.

CASEY AND NEIL
(USING ILY)
Love you.

(TESSA and CLAIRE exit.
NEIL approaches CASEY.)

CUE MUSIC:
22. WELL...

NEIL
Well...?

CASEY
What if he--?

NEIL
(SIM-COM. Sings/signs
"Consider This Part
2)
WELL, WHAT IF HE?

CASEY
And what if she--?

NEIL
(SIM-COM)
*AND WHAT IF SHE?
IF HE AND SHE BECOME A THING,
DOTING UNCLES BECOME JUST BLING.*

CASEY
(NEIL voices)
I'm still the head of this family!

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

Yes, you are...and you're still adorable.

*I UNDERSTAND, DON'T FLY APART.
BEING FAMILY IS AN ART,
AND WE'RE ARTISTS, EACH OF US,
DON'T YOU AGREE?
SO COME ON, DEAR,
LET'S WAIT AND SEE.
JUST WAIT AND SEE.
WE'LL WAIT AND SEE.
JUST WAIT AND SEE.
WE'LL WAIT AND SEE.
JUST WAIT AND SEE.
WE'LL WAIT AND SEE.
JUST WAIT AND SEE.
WE'LL WAIT AND SEE.*

(CASEY and NEIL embrace.)

END MUSIC:
**23. WAIT AND
SEE**

LIGHTS FADE

ACT ONE, SCENE 7

SIGN IN CAFE &
BOOKSHOP

SIGNAGE: ASL
SLAM TONIGHT!
HOSTED BY CASEY
HARPER

ALL pack the Cafe.
CASEY is just finishing a
performance.
ALL wave hands in the air in
applause.
CASEY announces an INTERMISSION.
CLAIRE chats with others, clearly
enjoying herself.
WILL looks increasingly
uncomfortable.
NEIL approaches WILL.

**1-7-1. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

NEIL
(SIM-COM)

Enjoying the show?

WILL
I'd enjoy it more if I could follow it.

NEIL
(SIM-COM)

Oh. Yeah. I remember that feeling.

WILL
How did you manage it? Dealing with all this, I mean.

NEIL
(SIM-COM)

Simple. I fell in love.

WILL
It doesn't feel simple to me. I'm not that lucky.

1-7-2.

NEIL
(SIM-COM)

*Look, I was just like you. I was an outsider. I didn't know
the language, didn't know the culture. And there were times
it all felt like too much to take in. I mean--a new
(MORE)*

NEIL (cont'd)
*relationship, a new culture, new language. But I never felt that I was giving up too much. It felt like addition, rather than subtraction, you know?
But it takes a while. Be patient.*

1-7-3.

WILL
"Be patient." Jude tells me to be patient. You tell me to be patient. A guy has only so much patience, Neil.

NEIL
(SIM-COM)
Ah. Then I guess you have to spend some of that patience on developing more patience... Peace, Brother.

(NEIL walks away.
BEAST nods at WILL from the corner.
WILL turns to CLAIRE.)

1-7-4.

CLAIRE
Having fun?

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Not really. This isn't exactly my scene.

CLAIRE
Oh, I'm sorry...I am loving it!

1-7-5.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
I know. And it's been fun. But I've had enough. Could we get out of here--go check out that new bistro around corner?

CLAIRE
(patiently)
No. I'd really rather stay here. I want to see my brother's next performance.

(WILL begins to balk.)

1-7-6.

Will. I want to stay. These are my people. This is my culture. This is my language.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

C'mon, please? I can't understand half of what they're saying.

1-7-7.

CLAIRE

No? Well, Now you know how I feel most of the time...

(becoming angry)

I'm always on the outside of your world! I'm always trying to understand, trying to catch up!

(WILL is surprised by Claire's refusal.)

Will. If you want to be with me, you have to be with me here in my world, just like I'm with you there in yours.

1-7-8.

(WILL turns away.
CLAIRE gets in his face.)

This scares you, doesn't it?

WILL

What? No.

1-7-9.

CLAIRE

Yes, it does. I can see it! It scares you because you're not controlling it. Because you're vulnerable. It scares you because you have to be open. I've been there, Will. I live there. It's called the constant state of change.

CUE MUSIC:

**24. THE STATE
OF CHANGE**

CLAIRE'S THEME
VARIATION

(THEY look at each other for a long moment of silence.
CLAIRE turns away.)

1-7-10.

WILL

(Voice only. Sings
"Claire's Theme")

HELP ME, CLAIRE,

(MORE)

WILL (cont'd)

SAY WHAT I WANT
TO TELL YOU...

THREE LITTLE WORDS...
ISN'T IT ABSURD
THAT I VOICE BUT CAN'T SAY--

THAT I WANT YOU,
I NEED YOU,
I LOVE YOU...

HEAR ME.
HEAR ME.
HELP ME TELL YOU NOW...

(WILL approaches CLAIRE slowly.
HE lays a hand on her shoulder.
CLAIRE turns to face him.)

1-7-11.

WILL

Hey..are we fighting?

CLAIRE

*No...I just want to know you. I want to know all of you. And
I want you to know all of me.*

WILL

And I don't want to hide anymore.

1-7-12. END
CAPTIONS

(WILL gestures as if opening a door
on his chest.
HE offers his heart to CLAIRE.
THEY kiss.)

(CASEY climbs back on stage.)

Let's watch your brother.

(WILL and CLAIRE rejoin others.
CASEY introduces his next
performance.)

LIGHTS FADE.

25.END MUSIC:
LET'S WATCH
YOUR BROTHER

ACT ONE, SCENE 8

CLAIRE'S
APARTMENT

TWO WEEKS
LATER, A BALMY
NIGHT

LIGHTS UP ON
CLAIRE IN A
COMFY CHAIR

CLAIRE, wearing a robe, is playing
with a paper fortune-teller.
TESSA enters.
CLAIRE looks up.

**1-8-1. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

CLAIRE
I guess we're both restless tonight.

TESSA
Yeah. I heard you in the kitchen.

CLAIRE
Sorry. I was making tea. A strange dream woke me.

CUE MUSIC:
**26. A STRANGE
DREAM WOKE ME.**

(CLAIRE makes room on the chair.
TESSA snuggles beside her.)

TESSA
Strange dream?

**1-8-2. END
CAPTIONS**

CLAIRE (signs) TESSA (Sings "River")
*THERE'S A RIVER,
A WIDE RIVER
WITH A SOUND THAT FILLS MY CHEST,
AND A SMELL THAT'S SHARP AND GREEN.*

*I RUN ALONG
THE WATER'S EDGE
LOOKING FOR--*

I DON'T KNOW WHAT--
I'M TOO QUICK,
YOU FALL BEHIND.
THE RIVER SCARES ME--
THE SOUND, THE SMELL--
IT MOVES TOO FAST
FOR ME TO TELL
WHAT'S UNDERNEATH
OR WHERE THE CURRENT LEADS.

THERE'S A RIVER,
A WIDE RIVER--
YOU CALL OUT--WAIT FOR ME!

I SMILE OVER MY SHOULDER
AND WADE INTO THE WATER,
THEN IT CARRIES ME AWAY.

MUSIC SEGS:
27.CHANGE

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

That's scary.

CLAIRE
Not necessarily. Water usually means change. Change can be good.

(TESSA still seems uneasy.)

Let's consult your fortune teller. You pick.

(CLAIRE manipulates the paper fortune-teller.
TESSA selects one.
CLAIRE unfolds it.
TESSA reads.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
*"Big changes are coming your way."
I don't like change.*

CLAIRE
But everything changes.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Change scares me.

CLAIRE

Me, too, sometimes. I have an idea. Let's draw pictures of it.

(CLAIRE lifts a pad and colored marker from a small table beside the chair.
SHE offers them to TESSA.)

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Draw a picture of Change? How?

CLAIRE

Think about it. What color is it? What shape? Now put it on the page.

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Put it on the page.

(TESSA draws pictures of Change.)

CLAIRE

Fold it up.

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Fold it up.

(TESSA folds her drawing.
CLAIRE opens a small decorative box that is on the table beside the chair.)

CLAIRE

Put it in the box.

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Put it in the box.

(TESSA puts the drawing in the box.
CLAIRE sets the lid on the box.)

And--?

CLAIRE

TESSA (VOICES)

We'll deal when we're ready.

**MUSIC ENDS:
28.WHEN WE'RE
READY.**

(CLAIRE and TESSA embrace.
TESSA snuggles closer.)

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Ya know, Mom...you seem really happy lately. Like extra happy.

CLAIRE

Do I?

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Yes, you do. So, can I ask you a question?

CLAIRE

Always.

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Are you in love?

CLAIRE

What?

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Julie thinks you're in love. Her mother thinks you're in love, too.

CLAIRE

Wait. What?

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Julie's mom said you look raaaaadiant.

CLAIRE

(pleased and
blushing.)

She did?

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Yes, she did--and you're blushing--so, are you in love with Will?

CLAIRE

I...I don't know...Maybe...

TESSA
(signs: *true biz?*)

Really?

CLAIRE
*Possibly...probably...Probably more than probably...
But...what do you think about that--if I--if we were--I
mean--if we were to...fall in love?*

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
That would be cool. Would you get married?

CLAIRE
Whoa! That's a very different and very complicated question.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
*Why is it complicated? You just said you're probably in
love. "Probably more than probably."*

CLAIRE
*Love and marriage are two different things. People do not
ride off into the sunset and live happily ever after like in
fairytales. Marriage requires more than love. It's requires
commitment. It requires work. Plus there are other
considerations.*

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Considerations like what. Like me?

(TESSA scowls. SHE turns away,
mumbling to herself.)

TESSA
That's so lame.

CLAIRE
What did you say?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
I said, that's lame, Mom.

CLAIRE
Lame? You are my responsibility. How is that lame?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
*You tell me to be brave. You tell me to trust myself,
to follow my heart. Same goes for you.*

CLAIRE

Tessa, you can't always follow your heart just because you want to.

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

That's not what you've said before. You always say, "Be brave! Take risks!" I mean, you took a big risk having me, right?

(CLAIRE peers incredulously at TESSA.)

CLAIRE

Who taught you to argue like this?

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Who taught me to argue like this? Well, Julie's mom says there are apples and there are trees. Apparently...I'm an apple.

CLAIRE

Okay, fine. How would you feel if...if Will and I--?

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

--If you and Will get married?

CLAIRE

Eventually...what if--that?

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

I don't know...It's always been just us and the uncles. I suppose I'd get used to it. I mean Julie likes having a dad...If I had a dad, I'd have someone to write about for a dumb Father's Day essay...Plus I wouldn't have to ignore people who get embarrassed when I say I don't have a dad.

(CLAIRE nods slowly.)

But the thing is, Mom, you seem really, really happy. And Will does, too.

CLAIRE

Does he?

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Uh. Ye-ah. And it's kind of embarrassing the way you two go all Gumby around each other!

(CLAIRE and TESSA embrace.)

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Mom...? Can I ask you another question?

CLAIRE

Anything...

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

What does it feel like to fall in love?

**29. TO FALL IN
LOVE?**

INSTRUMENTAL:
BUTTERFLY
(FORMERLY, THE
SWAN)

CLAIRE

It's hard to explain...It feels...it feels...I'll show you..

ASL & VV, &
CHOREOGRAPHY
ONLY.

**1-8-3. LIGHTING
DESIGN AND SOFT
FOCUS ANIMATION
SUPPORTS THE
ASL STORY**

A tiny caterpillar emerges from her egg. She moves cautiously through her world, surrendering to Change. She emerges, spreading her new wet wings awkwardly at first. She feels the the air under her wings lifts off, takes flight. She is essentially herself, yet brighter, bolder, radiant.

**30. END MUSIC:
BUTTERFLY**

**1-8-4. END
ANIMATION**

LIGHTS OUT

ACT ONE, SCENE 9

WILL'S
APARTMENT.
EARLY
SEPTEMBER, A
WEEKDAY
AFTERNOON.

JUDE is looking over WILL's
storyboards for Cosmo & Sid: Throw
Like a Girl!

**1-9-1. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

JUDE

Okay. So I get that Gracie is being bullied by these two girls, but the birds can't just swoop in and solve her problem for her--you know that. Gracie has to solve the problem herself. Plot, Will. Your favorite four letter word.

WILL

Ach.

JUDE

Look, we still have time before Shelly starts nudging, so don't despair. Just revise.

**1-9-2. END
CAPTIONS.**

31. JUST REVISE

MUSIC:
BRINDLEBEAST

(JUDE notices a series of pencil
sketches on the wall.)

JUDE

What's all this?

PROJECTIONS:

**1-9-3. WHAT'S
ALL THIS?**
FIG. 1: AN OLD
WOMAN FINDS A
KETTLE IN THE
MIDDLE OF THE
ROAD

WILL
Just an idea I'm playing with...

JUDE
Well, give me the gist.

WILL
Okay, so this old woman is being tormented by a form-changer.

JUDE
A form-changer?

WILL
Yeah, you know, a shape-shifter.

JUDE
Right.

WILL
So first she finds a pot of gold,

1-9-4. POT OF GOLD
FIG. 2: THE WOMAN DISCOVERS THE KETTLE IS FILLED WITH GOLD COINS.

And she's like--Woah, this is cool--so she uses her shawl like a rope to drag it home.

JUDE
Okay. Go on.

WILL
So she goes along...crosses a little foot bridge...

1-9-5. A LITTLE FOOT BRIDGE
FIG. 3: THE WOMAN CROSSES A BRIDGE AT DUSK, DRAGGING THE KETTLE BEHIND HER.

JUDE
And it's getting dark to heighten the tension, of course.

WILL

Of course. And when she turns back to check on the knot or something--whaddya know--the kettle has turned into a barrel of apples.

**1-9-6. BARREL
OF APPLES**

FIG. 4: THE
WOMAN IS
ASTONISHED TO
FIND THE KETTLE
HAS TURNED INTO
A BARREL OF
APPLES.

JUDE

Whaddya know. So then what happens?

WILL

I don't know. A woman and a shape-shifter. That's all I got.

**32. END MUSIC:
BRINDLEBEAST**

JUDE

I like it. I've never seen anything like this from you. This is a real departure, Will. What's going on?

**1-9-7. WHAT'S
GOING ON?
PROJECTION
FADES**

WILL

With me? Nothing!

**CUE MUSIC:
33. WITH ME?
NOTHING!**

**1-9-8. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

JUDE

(sings "I Know You")

Uh-huh.

I KNOW YOU.

RECALL OUR COLLEGE FLING,
THAT THREE YEAR THING THAT DIDN'T
WORK OUT LONG AGO.

HEAR ME

71.

1-9-9.

I KNOW YOU.
KNOW HOW YOU DUCK AND WEAVE
WHEN YOU PERCEIVE
SOMEONE GETTING TOO CLOSE.

1-9-10.

I KNOW YOU.
CONCERN IS APROPOS.
YOU'VE BROKEN HEARTS,
NOT ONLY MINE, OH NO.
HOW DO YOU SLEEP AT NIGHT?

I KNOW YOU.

1-9-11.

I KNOW YOU.
KNOW HOW YOU DEALT THE SAME
TO WHAT'S-HER-NAME
WHO FELL APART WHEN YOU WALKED OUT.

1-9-12.

I KNOW YOU.
THE COMICS SUIT YOU WELL.
NO NEED TO DWELL
ON PESKY PATHOS AND SUCH.

1-9-13.

I KNOW YOU.
IT'S NOT THAT YOU DON'T CARE.
I FIGURE THAT
YOU'RE UNAWARE OF FEELINGS
LOCKED INSIDE YOUR HEART.

1-9-14.

Come on, spill. What's with the shape-shifter and this,
this--? Oh my God, Will. Are you in love? Are you in love
with Claire?

1-9-15.

WILL

--I don't know! She's got this crazy nuclear inner glowy-
thing--

JUDE

--*Nuclear inner glowy-thing?* You're scaring me, pal.
My life style depends on your ability to express yourself--

1-9-16.

WILL

--It radiates from her. Like light. Like warmth. I can feel it when I'm with her. I can feel it when I just think of her...

BEGIN MUSIC:

34. I KNOW YOU-
PART 2

1-9-17.

JUDE

I KNOW YOU.
EXPERT AT COOL DEMEANOR,
BUT UNDERNEATH,
THERE'S A TIMID DREAMER
WITH A FRAGILE HEART.

I KNOW YOU.
And well, IF SHE'S THE ONE,
You better go for it, hon.

SHE MUST HAVE SOMETHING SPECIAL,
MUST BE SOMEONE VERY SPECIAL
'CAUSE I KNOW YOU.
I KNOW YOU.
I KNOW YOU.

END MUSIC:

35. I KNOW YOU

(JUDE gathers her things and heads
for the door.)

1-9-18.

Right. So rework that storyboard and let me know when you're done.

WILL

Jude--?

JUDE

I'm happy for you, Will. I really am. And you know what?
It's about damn time. I'll see ya.

(JUDE exits.)

LIGHTS UP ON
BEAST

(BEAST is examining the same sketches on the wall.)

1-9-19.

BEAST
Love the apples. Apples are juicy.

CUE MUSIC:
**36. APPLES ARE
JUICY.**
BEAST (TANGO)

(WILL ignores BEAST.
WILL sits at his drawing board and begins to draw a pumpkin.)

1-9-20.

BEAST
Don't think I'm missing the metaphor here, lover. I recognize a portrait when I see one. That shape-shifter... that's me, isn't it?

WILL
No.

BEAST
No?

(BEAST pulls WILL from his chair.)

1-9-21.

BEAST
EVERYBODY HAS A BEAST.
A DEMON, NIGHTMARE, HEARTBREAK.
HOW YOU FACE THE BEAST, OR HOW YOU DON'T,
DEFINES THE LIFE THAT YOU MAKE.

1-9-22.

EVERYBODY HAS A BEAST.

YOU LET ME SWAY YOU THIS WAY AND THAT.
WE'VE BEEN PARTNERS FROM THE START.
I'M IN YOUR LIFE FOR NOW AND ALL.
I FEED YOUR HUNGER, THAT'S MY PART.

1-9-23.

OH, HONEY,
YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT ME.

WILL

No.
YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT ME.

1-9-24.

WILL / BEAST

YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT--
YOU COULD NEVER MAKE IT WITHOUT--
YOU CAN'T, YOU WON'T--
YOU ARE NOTHING WITHOUT ME.

1-9-25.

BEAST

WE'VE SEEN IT TIME AND TIME AGAIN:
DITCH THE GIRL, TRY SOMEONE NEW.
SOON YOU'RE WATCHING EXPECTATIONS
RISE LIKE STEAM FROM A TOXIC BREW.

1-9-26.

WILL

No.
YOU SWEAT THE DAY I SHOUT--
DREAD THE DAY I FINALLY FACE YOU.
THAT DAY I TOSS OUT FEAR AND DOUBT-

1-9-27.

BEAST

OH, NO, HONEY, YOU COULD NEVER OUTFACE ME.

WILL

YOU COULD NEVER MAKE IT WITHOUT ME.

BEAST

NO, YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT ME.

WILL

YOU WILL NEVER MAKE IT WITHOUT ME.

1-9-28.

WILL/BEAST

YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT--
YOU CAN NEVER MAKE IT WITHOUT--
YOU CAN'T. YOU WON'T.
YOU ARE NOTHING WITHOUT ME.

(BEAST flings WILL into his chair.
BEAST looks at sketch on drawing
board.)

HEAR ME

75.

WILL/BEAST (cont'd)

1-9-29.

BEAST

Oh, would you look at that! The apples turn into a pumpkin!

(BEAST snatches up a thick marker, grabs the drawing, and in a few quick strokes, transforms the pumpkin into a menacing jack-o-lantern.)

1-9-30.

Are you sure this isn't about me?

END CAPTIONS

END MUSIC:
37. ISN'T ABOUT
ME? BEAST TANGO

LIGHTS OUT

END ACT ONE

*

ACT TWO, SCENE 1**38. JACK-O'-
LANTERN**

AN OUTDOOR
FARMER'S MARKET
ON A SPARKLING
AFTERNOON IN
LATE SEPTEMBER

CASEY, NEIL, and JUDE meander
through stalls.
WILL, CLAIRE and TESSA enter
behind them.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
So then the *old woman* carves the *pumpkin* into--
(to TESSA)
What's the sign for jack-o'-lantern?

(TESSA demonstrates.
WILL copies her: *jack-o'-lantern*.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Cool. So what happens to the lady?

END MUSIC:
**39. WHAT HAPPENS
TO THE LADY?**

(BEAST appears beside WILL.
WILL is caught off guard.)

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Sorry. What?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Will. What happens next?

WILL
(SIM-COM)
*I don't know. I don't know what happens next. I'm not
sure...*

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
You'll figure it out. I know you will.

(TESSA hugs WILL.
WILL takes a beat to return the
hug.)

LIGHTS FADE ON
BEAST

NEIL

Tessa! Come help us pick out a pumpkin!

(TESSA runs off to join CASEY,
NEIL, and JUDE.
WILL watches TESSA.
CLAIRE selects a bouquet at a
flower stand. SHE kisses WILL.
CLAIRE wanders off.
WILL watches CLAIRE intently.
WILL prepares to pay the VENDOR.)

LIGHTS UP ON
BEAST/VENDOR

**2-1-1. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

BEAST/VENDOR

Don't screw this up for us.

WILL

Sorry?

BEAST/VENDOR

Pivot.

(WILL hands over the cash roughly.)

**2-1-2. END
CAPTIONS**

(WILL approaches CLAIRE urgently.)

LIGHTS FADE ON
BEAST

WILL

(SIM-COM. Uses signs
for the words:
I love you.)

*Claire, I love you. There. I said it. I love you! You know
that, right?*

CLAIRE

Yes. And ILY, too, Will.

(WILL gently folds her ILY
in his hand for a beat.)

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Look, I'm bad with words.

CLAIRE

You're a picture guy.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

*Right. I'm a picture guy. And I'm seeing this picture of us.
You and me and Tessa. The three of us, together. I'm not
nuts, am I?*

CLAIRE

(Laughing)

I don't know...Are you?

(WILL removes the wire tie from
CLAIRE's bouquet.
HE winds it around his finger.)

WILL

(SIM-COM)

*No, I'm not nuts. I'm just crazy in love with you. I love
you, Claire. I think we should go for it. Claire. Marry me.*

(CLAIRE hesitates.)

*Carpe diem, right? You say--grab hold of happiness when it
shows up, right?*

(Long moment...)

Claire--this is everything. Us. Now. Right here.

CLAIRE

(Slowly, as if
talking to herself)

Everything...

WILL

Us.

CLAIRE

Us...

Right now.

WILL
(SIM-COM)

Now...

CLAIRE
(feeling the impact
of the moment)

Right here.

WILL
(SIM-COM)

Here.

CLAIRE

(THEY look at each other for a long
moment.)

Yes?

WILL
(SIM-COM. Quietly,
hesitantly.)

Yes!

CLAIRE

(WILL slips the wire ring on
CLAIRE's finger.
HE twirls HER around.
THEY kiss.)

Tessa!

WILL
(SIM-COM)

(TESSA comes running back.)

What? What's happening?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

We're getting married!

WILL/CLAIRE
(SIM-COM)

We are?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

Yes!

WILL/CLAIRE

(WILL, CLAIRE, TESSA embrace.)

TESSA

Uncle Neil! Uncle Casey! Jude! We're getting married!

NEIL

(SIM-COM. Throws his
arms around CASEY)

I knew it! I knew it! I knew it!

JUDE

(SIM-COM)

Will! Aww...good for you! Good for you both!

(JUDE hugs WILL and CLAIRE.
NEIL congratulates WILL.
TESSA hugs JUDE.
CLAIRE addresses a stunned CASEY.)

CLAIRE

(To CASEY)

Be happy for me.

CASEY

(To WILL. NEIL
voices.)

This my family, you understand. They are precious to me. You cherish them.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

I will. I promise.

CASEY

(NEIL voices.)

Then, congratulations, W-i-l-l! Welcome to the family, brother.

CUE MUSIC:

**40. WELCOME TO
THE FAMILY,
BROTHER.**

CHOREOGRAPHY

Scene transforms to an outdoor wedding with lots of movement and fun. NB: CLAIRE wears a flow-y, palest pink dress. *Not white.*

(JUDE pins flower in CLAIRE's hair.
JUDE pins flower in TESSA's hair.
BEAST/GUEST helps NEIL.

NEIL helps CASEY.
THEY help WILL into a sports
jacket.
MUSICIANS join.)

WILL
(SIM-COM. Sings/signs
"Lucky")

*HEY, RED BIRD, SITTING IN A TREE,
I NEVER DARED DREAM OF A FAMILY.
THAT DREAM WAS ONE FOR OTHER GUYS
LUCKIER THAN ME.
BUT HERE I AM, RED BIRD.
DO YOU HAVE A GOOD WORD FOR ME?*

*I DON'T NEED A WISHING STAR.
I'M HAPPY ANYWHERE MY GIRLS ARE.
SCATTER LUCK, RED BIRD, TOSS IT FAR.
I'VE GOT IT TO SPARE.
I'M LUCKY, IN LOVE, AND
I HAVE ALL THE JOY I CAN BEAR.*

ALL
(SIM-COM)
*LUCKY RED BIRD. LUCKY BLUE SKY.
OH, I'VE NEVER KNOWN SUCH A LUCKY GUY.
LUCKY. CAN HE BE SO LUCKY?*

WILL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY NEW LIFE.

ALL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY RED BIRD.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY NEW ME.

ALL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY BLUE SKY.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
I'M THE LUCKIEST MAN IN HISTORY.

ALL
(SIM-COM)
OH, I'VE NEVER KNOWN SUCH A LUCKY GUY.

WILL / ALL
(SIM-COM)

LUCKY.

WILL / ALL
(SIM-COM)

CAN I BE SO LUCKY?
CAN HE BE SO LUCKY?

WILL
(SIM-COM to CLAIRE)

YOUR EYES ARE THE MIRROR
THAT REFLECTS THE MAN,
THE MAN I'VE BEEN LONGING TO BE--
NOT A FIST, AN OPEN HAND.

YOU'RE EVERYTHING THAT'S GRACE.
YOU'RE EVERYTHING THAT'S PROMISE.
YOU'RE EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING
THAT IS LOVE TO ME.

(TESSA and CASEY are witnesses at
the wedding ceremony.)

NEIL
(SIM-COM)

*In the presence of family, friends, and a loving universal
power, do you, Will Champion, take this woman, Claire
Harper, to be your wife, in joy, in sorrow, and through all
life's travails, until death parts you?*

WILL
(SIM-COM)

I do.

NEIL
(SIM-COM)

*In the presence of family, friends, and a loving universal
power, do you, Claire Harper, take this man, Will Champion,
to be your husband, in joy, in sorrow, and through all
life's travails, until death parts you?*

CLAIRE

I do.

NEIL
(SIM-COM)

*Then by the power vested in me by the great state of New
York, and with all the love and light I can muster, I now
pronounce you husband and wife.*

(WILL and CLAIRE kiss.
ALL applaud.)

ALL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY RED BIRD.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY NEW LIFE.

ALL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY BLUE SKY.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY NEW ME.

ALL
(SIM-COM)
OH, I'VE NEVER KNOWN SUCH A LUCKY GUY.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
OH, I FEEL SO LUCKY.

ALL
(SIM-COM)
CAN HE BE SO LUCKY?
LUCKY RED BIRD.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY NEW LIFE.

ALL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY BLUE SKY.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY NEW ME.

ALL
(SIM-COM)
OH, I'VE NEVER KNOWN SUCH A LUCKY GUY.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
OH, I FEEL SO LUCKY.

ALL
(SIM-COM)
CAN HE BE SO LUCKY?

WILL
(SIM-COM)
CAN I BE SO LUCKY?

ALL
(SIM-COM)
CAN HE BE SO LUCKY?

WILL
(SIM-COM)
CAN I BE SO LUCKY?

ALL
(SIM-COM)
CAN HE BE SO LUCKY?

WILL / ALL
(SIM-COM)
LUCKY. LUCKY.
LUCKY. LUCKY.
LUCKY. LUCKY.

LIGHTS OUT.

**41.MUSIC SEGUE:
SLIDESHOW**

2.1.1.
PHOTOGRAPHS
FROM WILL AND
CLAIRE'S
HONEYMOON AND
HOMECOMING,
INCLUDING WILL,
CLAIRE AND AN
ORIGAMI
CARDINAL

ACT TWO, SCENE 2

WEEKS LATER,
WILL'S
APARTMENT. A
FEW PACKING
BOXES AND
CLAIRE'S COMFY
CHAIR ARE
EVIDENT

CLAIRE, CASEY, and NEIL unpack.
TESSA is sitting in the comfy chair
studying the origami cardinal.
WILL approaches TESSA.

**MUSIC ENDS:
42.SLIDE SHOW**

WILL
Tessa, you know where I left my coffee?

TESSA
(ASL only: one pinky
waving.)
Microwave.

WILL
What's that?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Microwave.

WILL
(To himself,
repeating the sign.)
Ha. *Micro wave...*

(WILL retrieves his coffee mug.
HE approaches TESSA.)

WILL
Hey, Tess? The other day--

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
*We sign in our family. In our family, we still use sign
language.*

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Sure. Of course.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
So, I've been thinking about mothers and fathers.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Oh, yeah?

(TESSA sets aside the origami
cardinal.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
*Yeah. So, the--uh--equipment is different--I know that. But
what else?*

WILL
(SIM-COM)
What else, what--?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
*Like how are fathers different from mothers? What do fathers
do exactly?*

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Well...um...I'm not sure exactly.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
--Okay, generally, then. What do dads do?

(WILL shrugs sheepishly.)

*Will. That's not very reassuring from the kid's point of
view...*

WILL
(SIM-COM)
I guess not...

(THEY turn away from each other,
suddenly shy and uncertain.)

CUE MUSIC:
**43. WHO ARE
YOU?**

LIGHTS FADE ON
INTERIOR OF THE
APARTMENT

WILL
(SIM-COM, sing /signs
"Do You?")

WHO ARE YOU?
HOW AM I S'POSED TO KNOW
WHAT
YOU NEED FROM ME?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

WHO ARE YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING
IN MY FAMILY?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

I FEEL A LITTLE SHY,
IT'S TRUE.
I FEEL A LITTLE SCARED,
IT'S TRUE.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. DO YOU?

WILL
(SIM-COM)

I FEEL A LITTLE SCARED,
IT'S TRUE.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

HOW D'YOU GET HERE?

WILL
(SIM-COM)

I'M OVER MY HEAD,
IT'S TRUE.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

HOW SHOULD I FEEL?

WILL
(SIM-COM)

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.

(WILL turns to TESSA.)

DO YOU?

WILL & TESSA
(SIM-COM)

I REALLY CARE A LOT,

WILL
(SIM-COM)
*I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
DO YOU?*

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
DO YOU?

WILL
(SIM-COM)
BUT WHEN I FEEL A LITTLE SHY...

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
OR BLUE...

WILL
(SIM-COM)
WHEN I FEEL A LITTLE SCARED...

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
OR HAVE NO CLUE...

WILL
(SIM-COM)
I'VE GOT YOU.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
I'VE GOT YOU.

WILL & TESSA
(SIM-COM)
I'VE GOT YOU.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
*No matter what the future brings, we'll see it through.
I PROMISE.
DO YOU?*

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
I DO.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
I DO.

HEAR ME

90.

WILL & TESSA
(SIM-COM)

I do.

END MUSIC:
44. I DO.

LIGHTS FADE

ACT TWO, SCENE 3

WILL'S
APARTMENT,
FESTIVELY
DECORATED WITH
PAPER
SNOWFLAKES,
PAPER CHAINS,
AND BANNER:
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

CLAIRE, CASEY, NEIL, JUDE hold
champagne glasses.
WILL joins them.
THEY watch the NYE countdown on TV.

ALL
(SIM-COM)
...three...two...one...Happy New Year!

(ALL toast while...
TESSA applies lip gloss downstage.
SHE sends a brief text on her
phone.
TESSA pulls on a cute hat and
jacket.
SHE heads for the door.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM breezily)
Happy New Year, everybody!
(To CLAIRE)
*Okay. There's a bunch of people at Julie's, so I'm going
over there, okay?*

CLAIRE
No. Not okay. It's after midnight.

TESSA
(ASL only)
Mom. Seriously. It's two minutes after midnight.

CLAIRE
*Tessa. Seriously. That's right. It's after midnight, and
you're not going out.*

TESSA
(To WILL. Voice only.)
Will. I'm almost sixteen.

WILL
(SIM-COM)

Sixteen?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

Well, ye-ah. In three short years!

CLAIRE

You're not going.

TESSA
(ASL only)

Mom, everybody else's mother is letting them go!

CLAIRE

I'm not everybody else's mother.

TESSA
(ASL only)

You are so unfair, Mom! Please?

CLAIRE

No.

(TESSA throws herself into the
comfy chair, pouting.
NEIL offers a suggestion.)

NEIL
(SIM-COM, broadly, to everyone)

Ohhh, don't be grumpy, dearie. I know! How about a story?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

I am way too old for stories.
(Voice only)
Not that anybody's noticed...

JUDE
(SIM-COM)

I'm not!

NEIL
(SIM-COM)

Casey? A story, please?

CASEY

A story...let me think...Ah!

(NEIL interprets.)

(MORE)

NEIL (cont'd)

Here's a story of Princess Grim.

(TESSA rolls her eyeballs.)

TESSA

Spare me...

CUE MUSIC:
44. SPARE ME.

(CASEY acts out all parts in VV.
JUDE and NEIL sing "Princess Grim.)

CHOREOGRAPHY

CASEY & NEIL

Not so long ago--

CASEY & JUDE

Or far away--

CASEY & NEIL

A baby girl was born to a king and queen.

CASEY & JUDE

The princess had ten baby toes, ten baby fingers, rosy cheeks, a button nose--and a scowl that slashed her face like an ugly scar, so everyone called her--

CASEY & JUDE & NEIL

*PRINCESS GRIM, PRINCESS GRIM.
YES, THEY CALLED HER PRINCESS GRIM.
PRINCESS GRIM, PRINCESS GRIM.
OH YES, THEY CALLED HER PRINCESS GRIM.*

CASEY & NEIL

Now, the King loved his daughter--

JUDE

Yes, he did.

CASEY & NEIL

With a special love only a father can give.

JUDE

He loved that kid!

CASEY & NEIL

And he cooked up all kinds of antics to make the princess laugh.

JUDE

Antics! He was frantic!

CASEY & JUDE & NEIL
PRINCESS GRIM, PRINCESS GRIM.
YES, THEY CALLED HER PRINCESS GRIM.
PRINCESS GRIM, PRINCESS GRIM.
OH YES, THEY CALLED HER PRINCESS GRIM.

CASEY & NEIL
'Til, at last, the King grew weary of the struggle.

JUDE
Very, very weary.

CASEY & NEIL
"I know just the thing! I shall throw a party!"

JUDE
Oooo, a party!

CASEY & NEIL
"Surely a party will make the Princess laugh!"

JUDE
Or so you'd think.

CASEY & NEIL
"Bring on the juggler!"

JUDE
Behold the juggler, Princess Grim!

CASEY & NEIL
But the juggler could not make the Princess laugh. "Bring out the puppets!"

JUDE
Behold the puppet, Princess Grim!

CASEY & NEIL
But the puppets could not make the Princess laugh. Finally--

CASEY & NEIL & JUDE
A menagerie!

CASEY & NEIL
A mouse...

CASEY & JUDE
Riding a rabbit...

CASEY & NEIL
Riding a goat...

Riding a llama... CASEY & JUDE

Riding an elephant! CASEY & NEIL

Princess Grim, oh, won't you crack a smile? CASEY & JUDE

Nothing! CASEY & NEIL

Nada! CASEY & JUDE

Zip! CASEY & JUDE & NEIL

Well! Exasperated, aggravated, mystified, stymified, and completely at wit's end, the king just keeled over. CASEY & NEIL

Plop! JUDE & NEIL

"Father!" CASEY & JUDE

Cried the Princess, but the King did not respond. NEIL

"Oh, Father!" CASEY & JUDE

Cried the Princess, but still the King did not respond. NEIL

"Speak to me, Father, please!" CASEY & JUDE

Just then...the King opened one eye. CASEY & NEIL

Grim's lips parted. CASEY & JUDE

The King opened the other eye. CASEY & NEIL

Grim's lips turned up at the corners. CASEY & JUDE

CASEY & NEIL

The King blinked.

CASEY & JUDE

"Ha! Ha!" cried the Princess.

CASEY & NEIL

"Ha! Ha!" cried the King. "I made you laugh! I made you laugh!"

CASEY & JUDE

"So you did. So you did!"

CASEY & NEIL

From then on, laughter pealed through the hallways of the castle, and from that day to this, the Princess has been known as--

CASEY & JUDE

The giggly--

CASEY & NEIL

The gorgeous--

CASEY & NEIL & JUDE

*The gregarious Princess Grin!
PRINCESS GRIN, PRINCESS GRIN.
YES, THEY CALLED HER PRINCESS GRIN.
PRINCESS GRIN, PRINCESS GRIN.
OH YES, THEY CALLED HER PRINCESS GRIN.*

END MUSIC:
**45. PRINCESS
GRIM**

(JUDE, CASEY, NEIL bow elaborately.
WILL and CLAIRE applaud.
TESSA remains sullen.
CASEY's feelings are obviously
hurt.)

JUDE

(SIM-COM)

Uh, what say, fellas? Time to hit the holiday trail? Pack it up, boys. I'm driving.

(A pall has fallen over the
festivities.
NEIL remains undaunted by TESSA's
pouting.
NEIL goes to the window.)

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

Oh, look! It's raining cats and dogs.

(To TESSA)

Well, as long as it doesn't reindeer! Right, lovey?

(TESSA huffs.)

NEIL continues.)

Just think! If it's raining cats and dogs, there 'll be poodles all over the road!

(TESSA doesn't react.)

Ruh-roh. Too punny, not funny? ...What's wrong?

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

What's wrong is that I'm not a little kid anymore! What's wrong is that you all treat me like a baby. What's wrong is that I've grown up--and I really wish you all would just get that!

(TESSA gets up from the comfy chair.)

I'm putting my teenage self to bed. Happy New Year.

(TESSA exits.)

ALL watch her go.)

JUDE

(SIM-COM to CLAIRE)

She's thirteen. It's her job to make you crazy.

CLAIRE

She's good at it...

(In a flurry of hugs and goodbyes, JUDE shepherds CASEY and NEIL out the door.)

(CLAIRE begins picking up party debris.)

WILL goes to her.)

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Hey. We're parents of a thirteen year old. The attitude comes with the package.

CLAIRE

You didn't sign up for this package.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Yes, I did. I signed up for the complete package. The whole enchilada.

(WILL kisses her gently.
HE continues to clean up.
CLAIRE watches him intently.)

LIGHTS DIM ON
THE APARTMENT

WILL

What?

CLAIRE

The whole enchilada...

(CLAIRE places her hands on her belly.)

WILL

(SIM-COM)

You're hungry? I could order--

(CLAIRE shakes her head, "No.")

No, you're not hungry.

(CLAIRE takes WILL's hand, kisses it and places HIS hand on HER belly.)

Wait... What? You're...we...we're gonna have a baby?

(CLAIRE smiles, nodding.)

We're gonna have a baby!

CLAIRE

Shhhh! Tessa will hear you!

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Let's tell her right now!

CLAIRE

No. Not now. We should wait a few weeks. I want to be sure everything is all right.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Okay. We'll wait. Whatever you say. Wow! A baby! When?

CLAIRE

July 4th.

WILL
(SIM-COM)

July 4th! Fireworks! Parades! That seems so right. Oh, thank you, Love.

CUE MUSIC:
**46. THANK YOU,
LOVE**

Thank you... It's crazy that you say the same two words when someone holds the door, or gives you change, or compliments your shoes... I read somewhere the Inuit people have fifty words for snow.

(WILL sings/signs
Thank You")

LIGHT SNOW, WET SNOW, FLUFFY SNOW.

It might be just a legend, but it's a good idea, don't you think?

*THANK YOU, THANK YOU.
TWO WORDS, TOO FEW, TOO SIMPLE
TO MEAN ALL I MEAN TO SAY.
THANK YOU, THANK YOU.
THANK YOU, THANK YOU.
TOO SHORT, TOO SMALL, A THIMBLE
TO HOLD ALL MY HEART'S TUCKED AWAY.
THANK YOU.
THANK YOU, THANK YOU.*

*TOO WEAK, TOO PALE, TOO FEEBLE--
LIKE DRIZZLE TO A HURRICANE.
THANK YOU, THANK YOU.*

*NO MATTER HOW I SAY THEM,
CAN'T MAKE MY MEANING COME OUT CLEAR.
TWO WORDS, SUCH FLIMSY PAPER BOATS.
I NEED A HYDROPLANE!*

CUE MUSICAL
47. INTERLUDE

(WILL and CLAIRE dance together.)

*"I'LL BE FOREVER IN YOUR DEBT,"
AND "MUCH OBLIGED" SOUND TOO CLICHE´.*

SO I'M STUCK WITH THESE INADEQUATE
WORDS, TWO WORDS THAT COULD NEVER CONVEY HOW--

YOU'VE CHANGED MY LIFE.
YOU'VE MADE ME WHOLE.
YOU'VE HEALED MY HEART.
YOU'VE RESCUED MY SOUL.

YOU'VE CHANGED MY LIFE.
YOU'VE MADE ME WHOLE.
YOU'VE HEALED MY HEART.
YOU'VE RESCUED MY SOUL. THANK YOU. THANK YOU.

(WILL offers CLAIRE half the sign
for "word."
CLAIRE completes the other half.)

TWO WORDS, TOO FEW TO SAY I AM
GRATEFUL FOR YOUR LOVE AND

(WILL signs the verb, "will."
HE signs the words, I love you.)

I WILL LOVE YOU.
I WILL LOVE YOU

(WILL fingerspells his name.)

I, W-I-L-L, LOVE YOU.

(CLAIRE holds his hand as
WILL signs "always.")

ALWAYS.

(WILL rests their hands on her
heart. THEY kiss.)

END MUSIC
48.ALWAYS

LIGHTS OUT

ACT TWO, SCENE 4

A FEW WEEKS
LATER. WILL'S
APARTMENT ON A
DRIZZLY, GRAY
FEBRUARY
MORNING

**2-4-1. DOOR
BUZZER SOUNDS
AND LIGHT
FLASHES.**

WILL answers the intercom.
CLAIRE excavates a basket stuffed
with papers and mail.

WILL
(Cheerfully)
Good morning... (Listening)
Yup...Tessa! Julie's--

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
(Wearing a jacket and carrying her backpack.)
--downstairs. *I know.*

(TESSA grabs a half bagel from the
counter.)

Thanks! Love you! Mean it! Bye!

CUE MUSIC:
**49. MEAN IT!
BYE!**

TESSA EXITS

(TESSA kisses CLAIRE.
THEY flash *ILY*.
TESSA exits.
CLAIRE discovers the origami
cardinal in the basket.
WILL sips coffee at his drawing
board.)

CLAIRE
Look who I found.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Oh, it's C-o-s-m-o.

CLAIRE

No, Will. It is not C-o-s-m-o. It's the cardinal I made for you on our honeymoon. Remember? He's your animal totem. Your spirit guide.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Of course, I remember.

(WILL takes the cardinal and places it in a prominent spot above his drawing board.)

Where have you been? I've been looking for you.

CLAIRE

Liar...

(CLAIRE sits on WILL's lap.)

Hey, I was thinking...it's the end of my first trimester. Want to tell Tessa tonight?

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Tell Tessa about the baby tonight? Oh, yeah!

CLAIRE

Great. Okay, tonight! ILY.

(WILL folds her ILY gently into his hand.)

WILL

I. Love. You.

(CLAIRE puts on her coat.
SHE picks up a medium size box near the door.
WILL gets his jacket.)

CLAIRE

What are you doing?

WILL

I'm going to carry that box to the bus stop for you.

CLAIRE

No, you're not. It's a light, empty box--a Valentine's Day mailbox for my students. See?

WILL
Yes. Very cute. I'll carry it.

(WILL takes the box from CLAIRE.)

CLAIRE
Thank you, but I can manage. ILY!

(CLAIRE snatches the box.
SHE kisses WILL.)

I have to go--I'm late!

(CLAIRE exits.)

END MUSIC:
**50.I LOVE YOU,
TOO.**

(WILL sits at his drawing board.)

**2-4-2.CELL
PHONE RINGS**

(WILL answers his phone.)

**2-4-3.BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

WILL
(Brightly)
Good morning, Jude! No, they both just left. What's up?
(Listening.)
Sure. That sounds good. I should be able to finish the
panels today. What time does Shelly want to meet?
(Listening.)
Okay. Two on Friday.

CUE MUSIC:
**51.TWO ON
FRIDAY THE
PASSAGE**

**2-4-4.FROM THE
STREET BELOW,
COMES THE
UNMISTAKABLE
SOUND OF METAL
CRASHING INTO
METAL**

2-4-5.

Yup. I've made all the changes we discussed. Shelly should be very happy. Gracie and the birds--

2-4-6. THE
SOUND OF AN
APPROACHING
AMBULANCE

2-4-7. WHIRRING
RED LIGHTS
REFLECT IN THE
WINDOW PANES

2-4-8.

Hey, can you hold on for a minute? I just heard--hold on--

2-4-9. END
CAPTIONS

(WILL goes to the window.)

Oh, my God--!

(WILL drops his phone.
HE bolts out the door.)

END MUSIC:
52.OH, MY GOD!

LIGHTS OUT

ACT TWO, SCENE 5

CUE MUSIC:
53. PASSAGE

CLAIRE'S
BURIAL.

A FEW DAYS
LATER. A
DRIZZLY WINTER
DAY.

ALL process upstage to the grave
site under black umbrellas.
WILL and TESSA hold hands.
WILL drops TESSA's hand.
HE moves downstage alone.
TESSA takes a step toward WILL.
WILL waves her away.
CASEY goes to TESSA.
TESSA takes CASEY's hand.

LIGHTS DIM
UPSTAGE

(WILL stands alone downstage.)

2-5-1.HUNDREDS
OF BUTTERFLIES
FLUTTER FROM
UPSTAGE TO
DOWNSTAGE

(CLAIRE emerges through the cloud
of butterflies in an altered
state.)

LIGHTS ON WILL
& CLAIRE

(WILL and CLAIRE dance.)

PAS DE DEUX: An affirmation of
their love, a celebration of their
life together, and finally, an
acknowledgment that they are parted
by death.

WILL & CLAIRE

(ASL only)

*YOU'VE CHANGED MY LIFE.
YOU'VE MADE ME WHOLE.
YOU'VE HEALED MY HEART.
YOU'VE RESCUED MY SOUL.*

THANK YOU, THANK YOU.

*I WILL LOVE YOU.
I WILL LOVE YOU.
I WILL LOVE YOU, ALWAYS.*

(WILL and CLAIRE separate.)

LIGHTS CROSS
FADE ON CLAIRE

2-5-2.
BUTTERFLIES
FADE

LIGHTS COME UP
ON BEAST BESIDE
WILL

(BEAST embraces WILL, crooning
softly, comfortingly.
WILL breaks down weeping.)

**END MUSIC:
54.THE PASSAGE**

LIGHTS OUT

ACT TWO, SCENE 6

WEEKS LATER.
WILL'S
APARTMENT.

WILL sits at his drawing board. HE is handling the origami cardinal, turning it over and over in his hands.

TESSA sits in the comfy chair, watching JUDE.

JUDE is making a salad. SHE has put lasagna in the microwave.

**2-6-1. BEGIN
CAPTIONS.**

JUDE

(Rambling, trying to
be cheerful.)

Lasagna. Even I know how to make lasagna. Ya know, I really should have taken a cooking class in high school. Back in my mom's high school--I mean, this is years ago, they called it "Home Ec." Which was for the girls only. And boys took shop. Can you imagine? Home Ec. Is there such a thing anymore? Anyway, a cooking class would have been a good idea.

2-6-2.

Or at least I should have paid attention. When I was your age, my mother tried to teach me. She is actually an amazing good cook. I mean, ah-mazing. Her sauce and meatballs are legendary. Every time I visit, she makes pasta and meatballs. Or veal cutlets and a tossed salad with fresh Italian bread right out of the oven. Oh, my mouth is watering...I could eat an entire loaf right now...

2-6-3.

When I was little, and one us got sick, my mom made *pastina* with a giant pat of butter and a splash of milk. Ever since, *pastina* with butter has been my go-to comfort food. Until somebody decided to stop making *pastina* altogether.

2-6-4.

What a world! Trump--but no *pastina*! Can't find it anywhere anymore--Wait a minute...I bet my mom has a secret stash someplace. I need to ask her-

2-6-5.

Oh, shit. Sorry. I mean, shoot. Sorry. I'm sorry. How about I stop talking now.

2-6-6

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

No, don't stop. It's okay. I like hearing about your mom. Breaks up the silence around here. Which is weird, right?-- because it was always silent...

JUDE

Um--How are your uncles? Have you seen them lately?

BEGIN MUSIC:

55. SEEN THEM

LATELY?

CLAIRE'S THEME

VARIATION 2

2-6-7.

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

I see them every day. Uncle Casey picks me up from school. He's sad. Like me. So sometimes we cry. But sometimes, he tells me stories about Mom and him when they were little, and I laugh so hard, I almost pee my pants.

JUDE

They say laughter is the best medicine.

2-6-8. END

CAPTIONS

(JUDE finishes the salad.)

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Yeah, I feel better when we laugh. Even if we don't laugh, I feel better when we talk about her. And when we sign...

JUDE

(SIM-COM)

Sure. That makes sense...Hey, did you know that your mom introduced me to ASL? I love it. I signed up for another class. The teacher isn't quite as good as Casey. He's not as funny, for sure. But he is a C-O-D-A--

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Like me?

JUDE

(SIM-COM)

Yes, like you, Tessa...So he knows the culture and the
(MORE)

JUDE (cont'd)
history. He told us about an amazing signing community on M-a-r-t-h-a's V-i-n-e-y-a-r-d. Do you know about that?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Yeah. My mom told me all about it. It lasted over two hundred years, right?

JUDE
(SIM-COM)
Yes! Hey, Will? Did Claire ever tell you about that community on Martha's Vineyard?

WILL
Nope.

END MUSIC
56.NOPE

JUDE
(SIM-COM)
Well, there was this village of Deaf and hearing people from the early 1700's until 1952, and everybody signed--

**2-6-9.BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

WILL
Why are you signing, Jude? Nobody here is Deaf.

(TESSA and JUDE stare at WILL.)

Do you think that lasagna is ready?

JUDE
Oh. I don't know. I'll check.

WILL
No. I'll check.

(WILL starts toward the kitchen.)

A father should be able to heat a meal for his kid in the microwave, right?

**2-6-10.END
CAPTIONS**

(WILL stops, looks at his hand signing "microwave." WILL breaks down in tears.)

LIGHTS FADE

ACT TWO, SCENE 7

FOUR MONTHS
LATER, A
SATURDAY IN
JUNE. SIGN IN
CAFÉ & BOOKSHOP

CASEY and TESSA wear clean *Sign In*
team uniforms.
NEIL and JUDE wear team T-shirts.
WILL alone wears street clothes.
TESSA is clearly disappointed.

LIGHTS UP ON
BEAST

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Will, you're not ready for the game? You promised you'd play today.

WILL

Yeah, well, I can't. I'm busy.

JUDE

Oh, this won't take long--

WILL

I said I can't.

(CASEY notices JUDE shake her head
apologetically to TESSA.
TESSA retreats into the back room.)

(WILL turns back to JUDE.
THEY look through a sketch dummy
for Cosmo & Sid: Throw Like a Girl.
BEAST sits nearby.)

(CASEY insists that NEIL interprets
the following conversation between
WILL and JUDE.)

JUDE

(NEIL interprets)

Okay, look, Will, Gracie is adorable. Shelly loves the drawings. Your drawings are always great. They're funny. They're animated, Kids love 'em, you know that.

WILL

(NEIL interprets)

But--?

JUDE

(NEIL interprets)

But--she thinks the plot is flawed.

WILL

(NEIL interprets)

Flawed? What's flawed, Judith? It's the same formula Pete used in every other book. X happens: Cosmo and Sid are on the case. Y happens: Cosmo and Sid and the kid get thrown off track. Z happens: everybody gets back on track, order is restored, the birds ride off in their pink Corvette, young readers are happy, and Shelly sells a shit-load of books. What's flawed?

JUDE

(NEIL interprets)

The plot needs revision. I've been telling you this for weeks, and now we're up against the deadline. Will, Shelly has it scheduled for the fall list, and I can promise it won't be pretty if she has to move it--

WILL

(NEIL interprets)

Oh, what then? Marketing gets their thongs in a twist? So what? This isn't life and death, Jude. It's a kids' book, for chrissakes.

Hey. You know what? Screw Shelly. Screw the book. You're my agent, you deal with it. I don't give a shit anymore.

JUDE

C'mon, Will--

WILL

(NEIL interprets)

"The worm turns."

JUDE

What worm? We're talking birds here--

WILL

(NEIL interprets)

"The worm turns." Hey, Neil, didn't you teach that stuff? Where does that phrase come from?

JUDE

Will, please.

NEIL

(SIM-COM)

*"The worm turns" is from Shakespeare. "The smallest worm will turn being trodded on."
It means even a worm will fight back if it's pushed too far.*

WILL

(NEIL interprets)

See, there's my problem. My worm is a punk! Turn, you bastard. Why don't you turn?

(TESSA watches WILL.
JUDE notices TESSA.)

JUDE

Will? Did you remember that tomorrow is Father's Day? Your first Father's Day.

LIGHTS FADE ON
JUDE, CASEY &
NEIL.

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Yeah, it is Father's Day. But who cares, right? Not me.

(To Will)

And for sure--not you, right, Will?

CUE MUSIC:
57.RIGHT, WILL?

(TESSA sings/signs
"Dad n'Daughter")

*DAD 'N DAUGHTER.
THAT'S A LAUGH.
COUNT ON YOU.
THAT'S FUNNY, TOO.*

*TELL YOU WHAT, CHAMP,
JUST FORGET ABOUT ME.
YOU FORGET,
AND I'LL FORGET, TOO.*

*DON'T TELL ME YOU FEEL SAD--
DON'T YOU!
I DON'T CARE IF YOU FEEL SCARED--
POOR YOU!*

*YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO FEEL.
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO DEAL.
Screw you!*

*BAD THINGS HAPPEN.
THE WORST THAT
COULD HAPPEN
JUST DID.*

*BUT I BET YOU
NEVER THOUGHT
YOU'D GET*

STUCK WITH A KID!

*I'VE NEVER FELT SO MAD.
I'VE NEVER FELT SO SAD.*

*I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO,
ESPECIALLY
'ROUND YOU.*

*YOU PROMISED YOU'D BE THERE.
YOU SAID,
NO MATTER WHAT.*

*GUESS YOU NEVER FIGURED
ON A DOOR
THAT WOULD SLAM SHUT.*

*DAD N' DAUGHTER
WHAT A LAUGH.
YEAH, ALL THOSE PLANS
FELL THROUGH.*

*DAD N' DAUGHTER
HOW COZY THAT SOUNDS.
HOW COULD
I'VE TRUSTED YOU?*

*YOU DON'T KNOW
HOW TO FEEL.
YOU DON'T KNOW
HOW TO DEAL.
YOU DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO SAY.
YOU DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO DO.*

*WELL, GUESS WHAT?
I NEVER EXPECTED YOU TO!*

END MUSIC:
**58.I NEVER
EXPECTED YOU
TO!**

LIGHTS UP ON
JUDE, CASEY, &
NEIL

(TESSA crosses to WILL's table.
SHE rips a page from his
sketchbook.)

WILL

What are you doing?

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

I'm doing what my mother taught me to do. I'm drawing.

WILL

What are you drawing?

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

I'm drawing Sad.

(To herself)

Put it on the page.

JUDE

(SIM-COM)

You're drawing a sad picture?

TESSA

(NEIL interprets while TESSA draws furiously.)

No. I'm drawing a picture of Sad. This is what Sad looks like. It's big and blue and jagged and it spills over the edges of the paper...it spills over everything...

(TESSA finishes the drawing, weeping. SHE calms herself.)

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

I get you, Sad. I know why you're here, but I need to put you away for a while.

(TESSA folds up her drawing into a tiny square. SHE looks around.)

Put it in a box. I don't know where to put it.

(CASEY rushes to give her a To-Go box. HE holds it open. TESSA places the drawing in the box. CASEY snaps the lid.)

(TESSA bolts to the back room of the café. NEIL starts to follow her, but CASEY holds him back.)
(CASEY asks NEIL to interpret the conversation between WILL and JUDE. NEIL acquiesces.)

JUDE

(NEIL interprets)

Look, Will, you've got a bad situation here. Tessa is hurting.

(WILL doesn't answer.)

Will, are you listening? You're not the only one in pain.

WILL

(NEIL interprets)

So you've said.

JUDE

(NEIL interprets)

Then you understand that it'd be really helpful if you'd be sixty percent less of a prick about this.

CUE MUSIC:

59. PRICK ABOUT THIS

Look. Will. Bad things happen--and God knows you've had more than your share. But you still have to put one foot in front of the other. Tessa needs you. Will--

LIGHTS FADE ON
CASEY AND NEIL

2-7-1. BEGIN CAPTIONS

(JUDE & BEAST sing
"I Know You Reprise")

I KNOW YOU.
I KNOW HOW YOU WON'T DEAL
WITH FEELINGS
YOU DON'T WANT TO FEEL.

Ah, Will--WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH...

2-7-2.

BUT YOU'VE GOT A DAUGHTER NOW,
AND YOU CAN'T ALLOW
YOURSELF TO SIMMER
IN YOUR OWN TOXIC STEW.

2-7-3

BEAST
I KNOW YOU.
NO NEED TO RECONCILE.
HER ANTICS ARE
INFANTILE.

I KNOW YOU.
EXPERT AT COOL DEMEANOR--
Stick with that.

DON'T TRY TO PLAY REDEEMER.
YOU, WITH YOUR PUNY HEART.

2-7-4.

JUDE & BEAST

DON'T MIND ME,
BUT I HAVE TO SAY--

ALL HER POUTING,
AND HER GROANING,

AND HER REBELLIOUS POSING--

I HAVE TO SAY--

ALL HER POUTING,

AND HER GROANING,

2-7-5.

JUDE

FOR GODSSAKE, WILL,
SHE NEEDS YOUR LOVE.
DON'T TURN YOUR BACK ON HER NOW.
SHE'S SOMEONE SPECIAL,
SHE'S SOMEONE VERY SPECIAL.

2-7-6.

BEAST
GIVE THIS UP.
LAY IT DOWN.
CONCEDE.

YOU KNOW I AM
EVERYTHING YOU NEED.

BEAST & JUDE

I KNOW YOU.

2-7-7.

JUDE

Will, look at me.

BEAST & JUDE

I KNOW YOU.

JUDE

Will!

BEAST & JUDE

I KNOW YOU.

END MUSIC:
60.I KNOW YOU

2-7-8.END
CAPTIONS

LIGHTS UP ON
CASEY AND NEIL

WILL

(NEIL interprets)

God! Listen to me! Look at me! What?

JUDE

(NEIL interprets)

Will. Claire is gone.

Slowly, WILL looks at JUDE as if he
is hearing this for the first time.

She's gone, darlin'. She's gone. You have to move on.

WILL

(To himself)

Move on...

(To JUDE. NEIL interprets)

Move on? How am I supposed to do that, Jude? She saw through me like I'm a plate glass window. She saw all my crap and she loved me anyway...She cracked me open with her beautiful, butterfly fingers. My God, we were so happy! But that was the problem, see?

JUDE

Will--

WILL

(NEIL interprets)

Because I've got no right to so much joy. So when the guy in charge notices the damn stuff is puddling around my feet...

(TESSA enters unnoticed from the
back room.)

Ahh, I should have carried that damn box across the street. If only I'd carried that goddamn box, I'd still have my Claire and our baby.

JUDE

Baby?

WILL

(NEIL interprets)

Yes. A baby. Claire was pregnant. With our child. Our child--and not some anonymous dick's.

(TESSA bolts from the cafe.
CASEY and NEIL go after her.
BEAST crosses to WILL.)

LIGHTS FADE ON
JUDE

SPOTLIGHT WILL
& BEAST

WILL

Ohh...What have I done...?

(BEAST lays a hand on WILL's
shoulder.)

LIGHTS FADE.

ACT TWO, SCENE 8

WILL'S
APARTMENT, LATE
AUGUST. THE WEE
HOURS OF THE
MORNING.

TESSA WEARS
SHORT-SHORTS, A
TINY TANK TOP,
LARGE DANGLING
EARRINGS.

WILL and TESSA enter.
TESSA heads straight to her
bedroom.

**2-8-1.BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

WILL
Tessa. Hold on. Are you kidding me? You do not escape to
your room. Explain to me why I was called to the police
station at two o'clock in the morning.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
I told them to call my uncles. *Not you.*

2-8-2.

WILL
Tessa, what is going on? You and boys and booze?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
God! It was *no big deal!* It was a *six-pack* and a *pint of Jack*. It's *not* like we were trying to score Oxy or something.

WILL
Oxy--Jesus! And *we*? Who is "*we*"? You and Julie?

2-8-3.
Where were her parents? You told me you were sleeping over at Julie's.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Right. Ha. So, it *wasn't me and Julie, okay? Julie is on vacation with her family*. Which you would have known if you would have checked. Which I knew you wouldn't.
(MORE)

TESSA (cont'd)
My mother would have checked. My uncles would have checked.

2-8-4.

WILL
Tessa, if Julie is away, then just where were you planning to sleep tonight?

(TESSA doesn't answer.)

Oh, Christ. Tessa, how old are those guys--and who are they, anyhow?

2-8-5.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
They're seventeen and they're my friends.

WILL
Okay, let me tell you something. No seventeen year old boy wants to be just friends with a thirteen year old girl.

2-8-6.

I can't believe this. Tessa, you lied to me! How could you lie to me?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
Oh. How could I lie? What about you, Will, huh? What about all the promises you make and don't keep?

(After a long moment of silence.
WILL takes a step toward TESSA.)

2-8-7.

WILL
(Quietly)
You're right. I'm sorry--

(CASEY bursts through the door.
NEIL is right behind him.)

CASEY
Bastard!

(CASEY goes after WILL.
NEIL intervenes.)

NEIL

Stop! Stop it!

(SIM-COM To CASEY)

Enough!

(Catching sight of TESSA)

Oh, my Lord. All right. Tessa, go pack a few things, please. You are coming home with us.

(TESSA begins to object.)

CASEY

(Voice only)

Go!

(TESSA storms off.)

(To WILL. NEIL voices)

That child lost her mother, you stupid, selfish S-O-B. And if you don't man up and be a real father to her, then I will.

(TESSA returns wearing a sweatshirt over her tank top. SHE carries a backpack.)

WILL

Tess...

(TESSA looks back at WILL as CASEY and NEIL usher her out.)

(WILL is beside himself.)

LIGHTS DIM

LIGHTS UP ON
BEAST

CUE MUSIC:
**61.HEY DON'T
BEAT YOURSELF
UP ABOUT THIS.**

**2-8-8. BEGIN
CAPTIONS**

BEAST

(sings "Soliloquy:
The Choice")

Hey, don't beat yourself up about this.

YOU'VE LIVED IT TIME AND TIME AGAIN.
IT'S A PRACTICAL POINT OF VIEW...
WHEN ONE SHOE DROPS, EXPECT THE
OTHER. BROKEN HEARTS ARE NOTHING NEW.

2-8-9.

WILL

EVERYBODY HAS A BEAST.
A DEMON, A NIGHTMARE,
A HEARTBREAK.
HOW YOU FACE THE BEAST,
OR HOW YOU DON'T,
DEFINES THE LIFE
THAT YOU MAKE.

2-8-10.

BEAST

YOU'VE TRIED IT TIME AND TIME AGAIN.
TO LOVE AND BE LOVED
IS NOT FOR YOU.
NOW JUST WATCH THOSE EXPECTATIONS
RISE LIKE STEAM
FROM A TOXIC BREW.

2-8-11.

WILL

YOU BEAT ME UP,
BLACK AND BLUE
MESS WITH MY HEAD
AND MANGLE MY HEART.

GET OUT OF MY HEAD.
GIVE ME SOME PEACE.

2-8-12.

LET ME BE.
I NEED TO MAKE
A NEW START.

LET ME BE.
I NEED TO MAKE
A NEW START.

(SIM-COM)

Put it on the page.

(WILL fumbles for paper and a
marker. He draws the Brindlebeast.)

BEAST

It's better this way, baby. You'll see.

2-8-13.

WILL

IS THERE A GRAND DESIGN?
ARE THE PARTS ASSIGNED?
WHEN THINGS GO BAD,
WHO BEARS THE BLAME?

2-8-14.

OR AT EVERY TURN,
CAN YOU MAKE A CHOICE?
Yeah.
PLAY OR DON'T, CHAMP.
LIFE IS A GAME.

(SIM-COM)

Put it in a box.

(WILL folds the drawing. HE shoves
it in the small decorative box.)

2-8-15.

I COLORED WITHIN THE LINES,
WON THE BADGE, THE PRIZE,
GOT A STAR ABOVE MY NAME.

NO ONE CAN SEE WHAT
THE PICTURE WILL BE, BUT
FAITH IS THE PICTURE FRAME.

(SIM-COM)

Deal when you're ready. I'm ready.

2-8-16.

NOTHING IN LIFE IS FOR CERTAIN.
NOTHING IN LIFE IS FOR KEEPS.
FEAR IS THE UNBEARABLE BURDEN.
AND LOVE IS THE ONLY RELEASE.

2-8-17.

Fear, you beast!

WHY DO I LET YOU
TORMENT ME LIKE YOU DO?
I'M SO TIRED
OF ALL YOUR BANTER.
I'M SO TIRED
OF HEARING YOU RAGE.
I'M TIRED
OF LIVING WITH ANGER.

HEAR ME

124.

I'M TIRED
OF BARS ON THIS CAGE.

YOU KEEP ME FROM
FEELINGS THAT MATTER.
YOU KEEP ME FROM
HEALING MY PAIN.

2-8-18.

BEAST
No, lover, it's not like that.

I'M THE STORY
YOU TELL YOURSELF.
I'M THE STORY
YOU BELIEVE.

I AM CREED.
I AM COMMANDMENT.
I AM EVERYTHING YOU NEED.

I'M YOUR SHELTER.
I'M YOUR REFUGE.

2-8-19.

WILL
Shut up.

BEAST
I'M YOUR COVER.
DON'T YOU SEE?

WILL
DO YOU HEAR ME?

BEAST
NO MATTER WHAT,

WILL
Shut up!

BEAST
YOU STILL HAVE ME.

2-8-20.

I'M YOUR SHELTER.

WILL
LEAVE ME ALONE...

HEAR ME

125.

I'M YOUR REFUGE.

BEAST

BE QUIET.

WILL

I'M YOUR COVER.
DON'T YOU SEE?

BEAST

Please!

WILL

NO MATTER WHAT,
YOU STILL HAVE ME.

BEAST

2-8-21.

Be still!

WILL

I'M YOUR SHELTER.

BEAST

Be still!

WILL

I'M YOUR REFUGE.

BEAST

Be still!

WILL

I'M YOUR COVER.

BEAST

Be still!

WILL

DON'T YOU SEE--

BEAST

2-8-22.

Be still!
Be still!
Be still!
Be still!

WILL

BE STILL.
BE STILL.

HEAR ME

126.

(WILL and BEAST dance.
WILL embraces BEAST--
HE lets BEAST go.)

LIGHTS FADE ON
BEAST

2-8-23.END
CAPTIONS

WILL
(SIM-COM)
*NOTHING IN LIFE IS FOR CERTAIN.
NOTHING IN LIFE IS FOR KEEPS.
FEAR IS THE UNBEARABLE BURDEN.
AND LOVE IS THE ONLY RELEASE.*

END MUSIC:
62.RELEASE
SOLILOQUY: THE
CHOICE

LIGHTS OUT

ACT TWO, SCENE 9

SIGN IN CAFÉ &
BOOKSHOP. A
SATURDAY
AFTERNOON IN
EARLY NOVEMBER.

WILL enters the café tentatively, a
backpack over his shoulder.
JUDE is working on her computer at
a table.
CASEY and NEIL acknowledge WILL.
TESSA is stacking mugs on a shelf
behind the counter.
ALL watch as
WILL approaches TESSA.

WILL

Hey--Tess?

(TESSA turns around. SHE glances at
her uncles.)

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

I can't hear you if you don't sign.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Right. Understood.

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

And just so you know, I'm not sorry for anything I said.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

*I'm the one who should be sorry. And I am. So sorry, Tessa.
I've been self-pitying.*

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

And selfish.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Yeah, and selfish.

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

And mean.

WILL
(SIM-COM)

And mean.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

And a total jerk.

WILL
(SIM-COM)

And a total jerk. Anything else?

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

Probably, but that's all I can think of right now.

WILL
(SIM-COM)

*Well, just pile it on. I'm sure I deserve it.
Hey, I brought something to show you.*

(WILL pulls the F&Gs [Folded & Gathered sheets: the pages of an unbound book] of Cosmo & Sid: Throw Like a Girl from his back pack. HE gives it to TESSA.)

TESSA

Wow...

(TESSA sets the F&Gs on the counter. SHE pages through the book.

(SIM-COM)

This is so cool... Hey, guys--look!

(CASEY and NEIL walk over. THEY page through the book.)

LIGHTS DIM ON
CASEY & NEIL

WILL
(SIM-COM)

And there's something else.

CUE MUSIC:
**63. THERE'S
SOMETHING ELSE.**

BEWARE THE
BRINDLEBEAST

(WILL takes a handmade dummy of the picture book, Beware the Brindlebeast from his backpack. HE gives it to TESSA.)

Remember that picture book I was working on?

PROJECTIONS:

2-9-1. FIG.1:
BIRDIE, AN OLD
WOMAN, COMES
UPON A BLACK
KETTLE ON A
COUNTRY ROAD.

About the woman who finds a pot of gold...

2-9-2. FIG.2:
BIRDIE
DISCOVERS THE
POT IS FILLED
WITH GOLD.

2-9-3. FIG.3:
PULLING THE
KETTLE BEHIND
HER, BIRDIE
CROSSES A
FOOTBRIDGE.

That turns into a barrel of apples...

2-9-4. FIG.4:
BIRDIE
DISCOVERS THE
KETTLE HAS
TURNED INTO A
BARREL OF
APPLES.

And then a pumpkin...

2-9-5. FIG.5:
BIRDIE
DISCOVERS THE
BARREL HAS
TURNED INTO A
PUMPKIN.

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

--That she carves into a jack-o'-lantern...

2-9-6. FIG.6:
BIRDIE SETS THE
JACK-O'-LANTERN
ON HER
DOORSTEP.

WILL
(SIM-COM)
Right. And then, the jack-o'-lantern morphs...

2-9-7. FIG.7:
JACK-O'-LANTERN
CAREENS OFF THE
DOORSTEP.

into the dreaded Brindlebeast.

2-9-8. FIG.8:
THE
BRINDLEBEAST

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
What's a Brindlebeast?

WILL
(SIM-COM)
I figured out it's fear. Fear that holds you back. Fear that keeps you from finding your life.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)
This guy is pretty scary for little kids, don't you think?

WILL
(SIM-COM)
His eyes are the scariest part. Besides, he doesn't have any teeth, so the worst he could do is gum you.

TESSA
Ha. Yeah...

2-9-9.
FIG.9:UNAFRAID,
BIRDIE POKES
THE BEAST IN
THE BELLY, AND
STEPS RIGHT
PAST HIM.

2-9-10. FIG.10:
ONCE INSIDE HER
COZY COTTAGE,
BIRDIE TURNS

BACK TO
DISCOVER A
CHEEKY LITTLE
FELLA ON HER
DOORSTEP.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

*Wait. So, in the end, the Brindlebeast is just this little
guy?*

2-9-11.
FIG.11:BRINDLE-
BEAST SHARES
TALES OF HIS
ESCAPADES WITH
BIRDIE IN FRONT
OF HER COZY
FIRE.

2-9-12. FIG.12:
BIRDIE, SNUG IN
HER COTTAGE, AS
SEEN THROUGH
HER WINDOW ON A
SNOWY NIGHT.

WILL
(SIM-COM)

Yeah. He's really not so scary when you take a good look.

2-9-13. FIG.13:
A SWIRL OF SNOW
SURROUNDING
BIRDIE'S
COTTAGE.

LOOKING
CAREFULLY, ONE
CAN SPOT THE
SILHOUETTE OF
BRINDLEBEAST.

(SIM-COM)

Read the dedication.

(TESSA flips to the dedication
page.)

2-9-14.
FIG.14:
SILHOUETTE OF
BRINDLEBEAST
LOOMING OVER

THE TINY
COTTAGE.

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

"For my girls, Claire and Tessa, who taught me a thing or two about dispatching a beast."
That's nice. Mom would have liked that.

(TESSA offers the dummy back to
WILL.)

END MUSIC:
**64. MOM WOULD
HAVE LIKED
THAT.
BEWARE THE
BRINDLEBEAST**

WILL

(SIM-COM)

*You keep it. I have a copy.
So, what about you? You doing okay?*

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Yeah. My uncles are good to me. They're my family.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

'Course, they are...

(During a silent, awkward pause,
BOTH become uncomfortable.)

Hey--?

(SIM-COM)

*Do you think we could spend some time together soon? Maybe
have a catch?*

TESSA

(SIM-COM)

Maybe...sometime...

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Okay. Whenever you want. Let me know...

TESSA

Yeah.

WILL

(SIM-COM)

Well, good to see you, Tess.

(WILL walks away as
TESSA rereads the dedication.
TESSA steps in front of the
counter.)

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

Hey, Will?

(TESSA signs "father.")

CUE MUSIC:
65. HEY, WILL?

MAKE PEACE WITH
THE BEAST

(WILL turns back eagerly.)

WILL
(SIM-COM)

That's the sign for dad.

TESSA
(SIM-COM)

*Yeah. Well...we make choices, right? You chose me to be your
daughter. I chose you to be my dad. You're still part of my
family.*

(TESSA indicates Beware the
Brindlebeast)

So, thanks...

WILL
(SIM-COM)

No, Tess. Thank you.

(WILL signs ILY.)

TESSA signs ILY back.
WILL opens his arms.
TESSA goes to him.
THEY embrace.)

LIGHTS DIM ON
WILL & TESSA

LIGHTS COME UP
ON EACH ACTOR
AS EACH ONE
SINGS/SIGNS.

BEAST & CLAIRE

*BE THE CHANGE, THE WIND TO CLOUDS.
BE THE HOPE, THE SUN TO STORM.
BE THE LOVE, THE RAIN TO THIRSTY LAND.*

JUDE

(SIM-COM)

*BE THE CHANGE, THE PLOW TO FIELD.
BE THE HOPE, THE SEED TO FLOWER.
BE THE LOVE, THE BLOOMING FIELDS IN SPRING.*

ALL

(SIM-COM)

*MAKE PEACE WITH THE BEAST.
MAKE PEACE WITH THE BEAST.
MAKE PEACE.
MAKE PEACE WITH YOUR BEAST.*

BEAST/CLAIRE; JUDE; CASEY/NEIL

(SIM-COM)

*BE THE CHANGE, THE SEA TO STONE.
BE THE HOPE, THE BOAT TO SEA.
BE THE LOVE, THE OCEAN WAVES TO SHORE.*

BEAST/CLAIRE; TESSA/JUDE; CASEY/
NEIL

(SIM-COM)

*BE THE CHANGE, THE FAN TO FLAME.
BE THE HOPE, THE LIGHT TO NIGHT.
BE THE LOVE, THE SUN AT BREAK OF DAY.*

ALL

(SIM-COM)

*MAKE PEACE WITH THE BEAST.
MAKE PEACE WITH THE BEAST.
MAKE PEACE.
MAKE PEACE WITH YOUR BEAST.*

ALL MOVE
DOWNSTAGE

BEAST/CLAIRE; TESSA/JUDE; CASEY/
NEIL

(SIM-COM)

*BE THE CHANGE, THE HAND TO PEN.
BE THE HOPE, THE PEN TO PAGE.
BE THE LOVE, THE WORDS THAT TURN THE HEART.*

BEAST/CLAIRE; TESSA/JUDE; CASEY/
NEIL

(SIM-COM)

BE THE CHANGE, THE NOTES TO SING.

*BE THE HOPE, THE VOICE TO SONG.
BE THE LOVE, THE SONG THAT FILLS THE AIR.*

WILL
(SIM-COM)
*MAKE PEACE, MAKE PEACE
WITH YOUR BEAST.*

ALL
*MAKE PEACE, MAKE PEACE
WITH YOUR BEAST.*

(ASL ONLY)
*MAKE PEACE, MAKE PEACE
WITH YOUR BEAST.*

SPOTLIGHT ON
WILL

WILL
(SIM-COM)
*MAKE PEACE, MAKE PEACE
WITH YOUR BEAST.*

BLACK OUT

THE END
