

The Right Now

By Andrew Geha

Persual Script
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CAST OF CHARACTERS

SAICHA A senior in high school
ASHER A senior in high school

ELLIE Saicha's sister, a freshman in high school
ZOE Saicha's best friend, a senior

LT. KINNERMAN Asher's father

MS. BLAIR A new teacher

DOMINIC A senior
JACKSON A senior

Students:
TALIA
ADDY
LEXIE
ROSE
MASON
NAOMI
BRAD

Teachers:
DR. CORMAN
MS. PIERCE

Soldiers:
PRIVATE LINNELL
PRIVATE COLE

ENSEMBLE

ACT I

1 SAICHA'S HOME

1

ELLIE is sitting at the kitchen table, eating toast and texting.

An envelope with red letters is sitting on the table.

SAICHA

(From off stage)

Ellie?

(entering)

Are you ready to go?

ELLIE

We have five minutes.

SAICHA

So are you ready?

ELLIE

Good morning to you too, Saicha.

SAICHA

Who are you texting?

ELLIE

No one.

SAICHA

Uh huh.

ELLIE

I'm not going to be home after school today.

SAICHA

Why not?

ELLIE

Clarinet lesson.

SAICHA

On Monday? I thought your lesson was Thursday.

ELLIE

Yeah. We had to re-schedule.

(Pointing to an envelope on the table)

Also, that was in the pile of mail.

SAICHA

What is it?

ELLIE

I don't know. But it's addressed to Mom and it says 'second notice' in scary red.

SAICHA

Scary?

ELLIE

Well, it's not happy red. It's 'I'm warning you, you slacker' red. Like Mrs. Pencott uses on essays.

SAICHA

Crap. It's the electric bill.

ELLIE

That's no good.

SAICHA

I need to find Mom's check book.

ELLIE

Did she take it with her?

SAICHA

Why would you take a check book on a silent yoga retreat?

ELLIE

Why would you go on a silent yoga retreat?

SAICHA

To find inner peace?

ELLIE

Yeah. That oughta take forever.

SAICHA

This was due last Friday. Do you think the electric company takes cash?

ELLIE

Do you have cash?

SAICHA

No.

ELLIE

I can forge a check in art class.

SAICHA

Great.

ELLIE
Dad says hi.

SAICHA
You're texting dad?

ELLIE
No, he called again last night. He's angry we're here alone.

SAICHA
Still?

ELLIE
I guess.

SAICHA
Then tell him to move back.

ELLIE
Yeah, I think I'll do that.

SAICHA
Why's he telling you that he's angry?

ELLIE
He can't tell mom. She's taken her vow of silence.

SAICHA
Then it'll go like every other conversation they have. We need to leave.

ELLIE stands up and grabs her backpack.

ELLIE
Ready.

SAICHA
You're forgetting your clarinet.

ELLIE
Right!

ELLIE runs off to get her instrument. Lights transition.

The living room. The coffee table has remnants of last night's dinner, a small keepsake box and a few empty beer bottles.

ASHER enters, scarfing down breakfast. He goes to the table and opens the keepsake box.

LT. KINNERMAN enters.

LT. KINNERMAN

Asher!

ASHER

(closing the box quickly)

Hey.

LT. KINNERMAN

Do you need something in there?

ASHER

No. I was just...

(ASHER shrugs.)

LT. KINNERMAN

I didn't see you last night.

ASHER

I fell asleep. You got home late... and

(Indicating the bottles.)

- apparently, celebrated.

LT. KINNERMAN

Sit down for a second. We need to talk.

ASHER

I'm gonna be late to school.

LT. KINNERMAN

You're avoiding me.

ASHER

No... I'm not, dad.

LT. KINNERMAN

Then sit down.

ASHER

I just... don't have time to waste.

LT. KINNERMAN

Talking to me's a waste of time?

(ASHER stops.)

Sit.

ASHER

I already know what you're going to say.

LT. KINNERMAN

No you don't.

ASHER

You've been transferred. We're moving.

LT. KINNERMAN

How did you know?

ASHER

You left the papers out on the kitchen table.

LT. KINNERMAN

I did?

ASHER

Last Monday.

LT. KINNERMAN

You've known for a week? Why didn't you say anything?

ASHER

Why didn't you?

LT. KINNERMAN

Because you've been avoiding me.

(A pause.)

It's a good assignment.

ASHER

Yeah.

LT. KINNERMAN

As far as your mother is concerned --

ASHER

It doesn't matter.

LT. KINNERMAN

Don't say that. If things were different--

ASHER

I don't want to have this conversation, dad. It'll just turn into a fight.

LT. KINNERMAN

Fine.

LT. KINNERMAN starts to leave.

ASHER

Can't we wait until June?

LT. KINNERMAN
That's not how this works.

ASHER
In June, I could graduate, and then we could move.

LT. KINNERMAN
You'll still graduate.

ASHER
I could graduate here.

LT. KINNERMAN
I'm sorry.

ASHER
This is my home.

LT. KINNERMAN
We've been here a year and a half. It's not your home.

ASHER
It's Mom's.

LT. KINNERMAN
Don't be dramatic.

ASHER
How am I being — You know what? Forget it.

LT. KINNERMAN
Three weeks. You've got three more weeks. Start packing.
And say your good-byes.

(A pause.)
You know, I'm doing the best I can here. You could think
about doing the same.

ASHER
How should I do that?

LT. KINNERMAN
Look, this is life, Asher. Things happen. Things end.

ASHER
Things don't have to end.

LT. KINNERMAN
Yes, they do. It's called growing up, pal. You could try
it.

(ASHER laughs.)
You find that funny?

ASHER
No. Sorry.

LT. KINNERMAN
You really are your mother's child.

ASHER
What's that supposed to mean?

LT. KINNERMAN
(After a moment.)
Have a good day at school.

LT. KINNERMAN exits.

ASHER
Sure.

ASHER takes a breath. He goes back to the keepsake box, opens it and removes a dog tag necklace. He squeezes the plate in his fist as he exits.

3 A SCHOOL HALLWAY

3

Students and teachers pass through, getting ready for the first period of the day.

ASHER is sitting on the floor by his locker, doing homework.

TALIA, ADDY, and LEXIE cross through, talking.

During their conversation, SAICHA enters. ASHER doesn't notice her approach.

TALIA
Did you see last night's episode?

ADDY
I know, right! The ending??

LEXIE
I couldn't believe it!

TALIA
They do this to us every time.

ADDY
What do you think's gonna happen?

SAICHA
(To ASHER)
What are you doing?

ASHER
Huh?

SAICHA
What are you --

ASHER
Homework.

SAICHA
What?

ASHER
What?

SAICHA
(Taking the papers)
You can't be serious.

ASHER
I'm always serious.

SAICHA
(Checking his work)
Liar.

ASHER
Is it so unbelievable that I might do my homework?

SAICHA
On time? Yes.

ASHER
Hey!

SAICHA
And right? Absolutely.

ASHER
Oh, come on, now.

SAICHA
And let's be honest, Asher, with your g-d awful
handwriting, Dr. Corman will barely be able to...

*SAICHA trails off, distracted by
ASHER's work.*

ASHER
Impressed?

SAICHA
Who are you?

ASHER
What?

SAICHA
Who are you and what have you done with my boyfriend?

ASHER
That's not very --

SAICHA
You got all this right.

ASHER
Yeah. I know.
(A Beat.)
Why are you so shocked by that?

SAICHA
Seriously? Because it never happens.

ASHER
Oh, come on.

SAICHA
When's the last time you even handed in homework?

ASHER
Are you kidding me? The... the remainders assignment.

SAICHA
The "remainders assignment?"

ASHER
The... the remainder theorem polynomial division--

SAICHA
THIS is the remainder theorem polynomial division assignment!

ASHER
No! I meant... You know, the other thing.

SAICHA
The other thing?

ASHER
I can't remember.

SAICHA
Really?

ASHER

It was a while ago!

SAICHA

Like never.

ASHER

Why are you giving me such a hard time??

SAICHA

Because that's what I do best.

ASHER

You should be proud of me.

SAICHA

Proud?

ASHER

I did the homework. And it's right.

SAICHA

(Getting closer to him)

So you should get points for that?

ASHER

(Getting closer to her)

Yes! It's... a rare occurrence.

SAICHA

(Putting her arms around him)

Oh, really?

ASHER

I'm smart. Just like you.

SAICHA

You're a jackass.

They kiss.

ASHER

Good morning, by the way.

SAICHA

Good morning.

(He looks at her intensely)

What?

ASHER

Nothing.

SAICHA

What's that look for?

ASHER
No, nothing. Just... this is the best part.

SAICHA
Of what?

ASHER
Of... you know... all of it.

She pushes him away.

SAICHA
Why are you acting weird?

ASHER
What do you mean?

SAICHA
You're acting--

ASHER
I'm not.

SAICHA
Uh, yeah. Finished homework - sorry - correct and finished homework. And now romance!?

ASHER
This isn't romance.

SAICHA
What is it then?

ASHER
Affection.

SAICHA
Oh, g-d.

ASHER
What?

SAICHA
Don't start with---

ASHER
(Reaching his hand towards her face)
Why can't we be affectionate?

SAICHA
(Grabbing his hand)
What is that?

What?
ASHER

Under your sleeve.
SAICHA

Oh, I scraped myself this morning.
ASHER

On your wrist?
SAICHA

SAICHA rolls up ASHER's sleeve to reveal a band-aid.

Yeah, I was grabbing something that fell and...
ASHER

Don't lie.
SAICHA

What?
ASHER

You're lying to me.
SAICHA

No I'm not. It's just a scrape. I'm fine.
ASHER

Okay.
SAICHA

I am! We need to get to class.
ASHER

Seriously?
SAICHA

It's almost eight.
ASHER

You're doing your homework and you're going to be on time for class? What is wrong with you today?
SAICHA

I'm turning over a new leaf. I'm making the best of every moment from now on.
ASHER

I'll believe that when I see it.
SAICHA

ASHER
Keep watching, baby.

SAICHA
Why am I dating you?

ASHER
Because I'm amazing and irresistible.

SAICHA
No, that's why you're dating me.

ASHER
Okay, that's true. You're dating me because I complete you.

SAICHA
Oh, not even close.

ASHER
Then why?

SAICHA
'Cause you don't completely annoy me.

ASHER
Is that the only reason?

SAICHA
It's a big one. Wait, are you being serious?
(ASHER shrugs)

Okay. I love you because you're sweet. No, that's not true. You are, but everyone's sweet. I love you because... you have a good heart, and you genuinely care about people and you're aren't afraid to show them.

ASHER
Yeah?

SAICHA
And when you see things you can do better, you work hard to do them better. You... you push yourself.
(The bell rings)
We should go.

SAICHA turns to leave. ASHER grabs her and gives her a heartfelt hug.

SAICHA (cont'd)
Hey, what--? Okay.

ASHER
I love you.

SAICHA

I love you, too.

They part.

ASHER

Now we can go. I'll see you at lunch.

SAICHA

Yeah.

They exit in opposite directions.

4 THE CAFETERIA

4

Students move about, getting lunch and finding a table.

ROSE, MASON, and NAOMI are eating together.

ZOE sits at a separate table, picking at her lunch tray.

NAOMI

I had no idea you two were together.

ROSE

For, like, six seconds.

MASON

And this was when?

ROSE

Before you. Obviously.

MASON

Mmm-hm.

NAOMI

What were you thinking?

MASON

Yes, what were you thinking?

ROSE

It was ninth grade. It wasn't big deal. But the worst part is, he still dates ninth graders.

NAOMI

As a senior? No way.

ROSE
He was bragging about it in math.

NAOMI
Should we warn them?

ZOE sees SAICHA and waves.

MASON
The ninth graders?

ROSE
I've already told the lacrosse girls.

NAOMI
You're such a good captain.

SAICHA joins ZOE.

ZOE
Hey.

SAICHA
Zoe, why aren't you eating?

ZOE
It's turkey loaf. And it's a lousy morning.

SAICHA
Why?

ZOE
Nothing. Just my mom. Dad yelled at her last night, she yelled at me this morning. Same story as always. Never changes.

SAICHA
Think about September.

ASHER enters to join them.

ZOE
I know.

SAICHA
We just have to get to September.

ASHER
Your birthday?

SAICHA
What?

ASHER
Your birthday's in September.

ZOE
We're talking about being out of here in September.

SAICHA
Which will, in fact, be a great birthday present.

ZOE
Goodbye high school. Goodbye mom and dad. Hello,
university. It will be better, right?

SAICHA
Much.

ASHER
Don't say that. This isn't so bad.

ZOE
You haven't been here long enough to know.

ASHER
I've been here. And I've been lots of other places. This
school isn't bad.

SAICHA
Aren't you looking forward to graduating?

ASHER
Sure. But I like it here.
(Reaching towards SAICHA)
I like it with you.

DOMINIC approaches the table and
sits.

DOMINIC
Hey.

ZOE
That seat's taken.

DOMINIC
(to ASHER)
I have a problem.

ZOE
We know.

DOMINIC
(To ZOE)
Was I talking to you?

Can you two not? SAICHA

She started it. DOMINIC

You sat down uninvited. ZOE

Ash invited me. DOMINIC

I did? ASHER

What's the homework? DOMINIC

For... ? ASHER

Doc Corman. DOMINIC

Seriously? ASHER

Yeah. DOMINIC

He said it like three minutes ago. ZOE

When he starts talking all those numbers, I kind of zone out. DOMINIC

It's math class. ZOE

So you see my problem. What'd he say? DOMINIC

He said to... um... ASHER

You zoned too? DOMINIC

No! ASHER

ZOE

Take the functions in chapter two point three and divide them synthetically by the roots listed using the rational root theorem.

DOMINIC

That's all?

ZOE

That's a lot.

DOMINIC

Cool. Thanks.

(To ASHER in a loud whisper:)

You should write that down.

ZOE

You should probably go start working on it now.

DOMINIC

(Challenging her)

You should start it now.

ZOE

(Stepping away from the table to check her phone)

Tell me when he's gone.

SAICHA

(To DOMINIC)

Would you mind?

DOMINIC

(Noticing SAICHA)

Mind what? Hey, Ellie's your sister, right?

SAICHA

Why?

ASHER

(To DOMINIC)

No!

JACKSON walks through the cafeteria.

DOMINIC

(Taking ASHER's warning)

Nothing.

(Seeing JACKSON - loud:)

Hey Jackson! How you doing sweetie?

(JACKSON ignoring DOMINIC.)

See you later.

(MORE)

DOMINIC (cont'd)

(To the group)

He loves it when I do that.

ZOE

(Returning, angry)

You are such an ass. Why do you bother him so much?

DOMINIC

I don't know. Cause it's funny.

SAICHA

It's not funny.

DOMINIC

You're not funny.

ZOE

You know he's training to be an EMT?

DOMINIC

Should I care?

ZOE

You might. 'Cause the next time you jump off a roof at a party and they call an ambulance, Jackson could be the one patching you up.

DOMINIC

Is that a threat?

ASHER

(To DOMINIC)

Why don't you go get some food?

DOMINIC

Why don't you?

ASHER

Food. Go.

DOMINIC

Fine. I'll leave you to your threesome.

DOMINIC leaves.

ZOE

(Sitting back down)

Why do you hang out with him?

ASHER

He's my friend.

ZOE

He's awful.

ASHER

He's just... been through a lot.

ZOE

That's not an excuse to treat everybody like crap.

ASHER

I know.

ZOE

We all deal with a lot. You don't get to take it out on everyone around you.

ASHER

Fine. You're right. I'll say something to him.

SAICHA

You will?

ASHER

Do you want me to?

SAICHA

Yes.

ASHER

Then I will.

SAICHA

You're impressing me today.

ASHER

I said keep watching.

SAICHA

I am.

ASHER

Then maybe it's all worth it.

SAICHA

Maybe I'll make it worth it.

ZOE

Hi. There are three of us at this table, you know.

ASHER

Sorry. I should go.

SAICHA

No!

ASHER

I'll see you after English.

ASHER and SAICHA kiss. He leans his head on hers for a moment. Then, he exits.

SAICHA
Sorry.

ZOE
Yeah.

SAICHA
He's acting weird today.

ZOE
As opposed to every other day?

SAICHA
Do you want to stay at my place tonight? Get away from your mom and dad?

ZOE
You don't have plans?

SAICHA
Zoe. I'm serious.

ZOE
(A beat)
Thanks. Maybe. You don't know how lucky you are that your parents are divorced.

SAICHA
Oh, yeah. I'm just living the dream.

5 OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL OFFICES

5

Students hurry to class.

BRAD
Mason, wait up!

MASON
(exiting)
I don't want to be late!

BRAD
Oh, come on!

ASHER and SAICHA are walking hand in hand. SAICHA is laughing.

ASHER
I've never told you this story?

SAICHA

No! What happened next?

ASHER

Well Bobby eats the thing right off the tray. And the owner of the shop starts yelling at us - in Dutch. Or whatever. And then my dad shows up.

SAICHA

Oh, no.

ASHER

Yeah. And he's had one. Maybe two. And he starts yelling. And Bobby starts to feel sick, right - because of the food poisoning.

SAICHA

Is this gonna get gross?

MS. BLAIR enters.

ASHER

A little. But my dad is yelling at me, Bobby, and the Dutch guy in both languages! So no one understands a thing he's saying!

MS. BLAIR

Excuse me?

ASHER

It's actual word salad - literally - and --

MS. BLAIR

Excuse me!

SAICHA

Hi.

MS. BLAIR

Shouldn't you both be in class?

SAICHA

It's our free period. We're heading to the library.

ASHER

Who are you?

MS. BLAIR

Ms. Blair. I'm the new counselor.

SAICHA

I'm Saicha. Hi.

ASHER

Who are you?

SAICHA

(Hitting him)

Don't be rude! He's Asher.

MS. BLAIR

Hi. Do you have a pass?

SAICHA

We don't need one. It's our free period.

MS. BLAIR

Oh. Right. Sorry. I'm still trying to get acclimated.

SAICHA

Yeah. It's all right.

(Starting to leave)

Welcome to the school.

MS. BLAIR

Have you both been here long?

SAICHA

Sorry?

LT. KINNERMAN enters, and is finishing a discussion with MS. PIERCE. He's holding a large envelope.

LT. KINNERMAN

Thank you, Ms. Pierce.

MS. BLAIR

(To SAICHA)

Have you been at the school long?

MS. PIERCE

Of course, Lieutenant. It's a pleasure.

ASHER

(Seeing his father. To SAICHA)

We need to go.

MS. PIERCE

We'll miss you and Asher terribly.

LT. KINNERMAN

I appreciate that a lot.

ASHER takes SAICHA's arm.

SAICHA

What?

ASHER

We need to get to the library.

MS. BLAIR

And I have an observation to attend. Nice meeting you both.

*MS. BLAIR exits, passing LT.
KINNERMAN and MS. PIERCE.*

MS. PIERCE

If there's any problem with the transfer, my email is on the top of the form.

SAICHA

What's your dad doing here?

MS. PIERCE

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need something.

ASHER

I don't know.

LT. KINNERMAN

Thank you, Ms. Pierce. You've all been wonderful to us here. Take care.

MS. PIERCE

You too.

MS. PIERCE exits.

SAICHA

Lt. Kinnerman?

LT. KINNERMAN

Saicha. Asher!

SAICHA

Is everything okay?

LT. KINNERMAN

Everything's fine.

ASHER

We're headed to the library, dad. I'll see you tonight.

SAICHA

Why are you at school?

LT. KINNERMAN

Sorry?

SAICHA

You just don't come to school. Very often.

LT. KINNERMAN

Oh, I was picking up Asher's transcript. I prefer to have a hard copy, in case something gets lost in the move. Call me old fashioned.

SAICHA

The... sorry? You're moving?

LT. KINNERMAN

Yes. Asher didn't tell you?

SAICHA

... No.

LT. KINNERMAN

Really?

SAICHA

Where are you going?

LT. KINNERMAN

We've... I've been transferred. To Germany. We leave in three weeks.

SAICHA

Germany?

LT. KINNERMAN

I thought I told you to say your good-byes.

ASHER

I was going to.

SAICHA

When?

A pause.

LT. KINNERMAN

Listen, I have to go. Saicha - I'm sorry you had to find out like this. I'm... very disappointed. You've been -- you're a terrific young lady, and you've had a good influence on him.

SAICHA

Thanks.

LT. KINNERMAN

Keep in touch. If you want. I think... I know Asher would appreciate that.

SAICHA
Would he?

LT. KINNERMAN
I should let you two talk. I'll see you at home.

ASHER
Yeah.
(LT. KINNERMAN exits.)
Saicha --

SAICHA
You're moving to Germany?

ASHER
No.

SAICHA
You liar.

ASHER
I'm not lying.

SAICHA
How long have you known?

ASHER
I...

SAICHA
How long?

ASHER
A while. But it doesn't matter.

SAICHA
It doesn't?

ASHER
No. I'm not leaving.
A beat.

SAICHA
Right.

ASHER
I'm not.

SAICHA
Your dad's giving you a choice?

ASHER
No, but... I'm staying here. I get to stay here forever.

SAICHA

Oh, please.

ASHER

I'm serious. I'm happy here with you. It's the first time in... I've moved around like eighteen times, and -- I'm just tired of it. And after everything, I finally found a place and people and you that make me feel... good. Normal. And I don't want to let that go.

SAICHA

What are you going to do? Run away?

ASHER

No.

SAICHA

Hide until the moving truck drives off?

ASHER

Don't worry about it.

SAICHA

No, see... no.

ASHER

What?

SAICHA

Whatever crazy plan you have - you say don't worry about it, but when you disappear, who's the first person they're gonna come to?

ASHER

I'm not disappearing.

SAICHA

Then what are you doing?

ASHER

I honestly can't explain it.

SAICHA

Then how do you know it's gonna work.

ASHER

It's working. Trust me.

SAICHA

No.

ASHER

Do you love me?

SAICHA
Not right now.

ASHER
Saicha.

SAICHA
... Yes.

ASHER
Then trust me. Just for a little while.
(He kisses her.)
Everything will be all right.

*ASHER exits, taking the dog tags
from his pocket on his way out.*

MS. BLAIR enters.

MS. BLAIR
Are you okay?

SAICHA
What? Yeah, I'm fine.

MS. BLAIR
If you need to talk about it -

*MS. BLAIR reaches out to touch
SAICHA's shoulder, shocking her
(literally - a static shock).*

SAICHA
Ow!

MS. BLAIR
Oh, I'm so sorry. Did I --

SAICHA
It's just a shock.

MS. BLAIR
I apologize. Well... if you need to talk about anything...
My office is right there.

SAICHA
I'm good. Thanks.

SAICHA exits.

6 SAICHA'S HOME

6

ELLIE is sitting at the kitchen table, eating toast and texting.

An envelope with red letters is sitting on the table.

SAICHA
(From off stage)
Ellie?
(entering)
Are you ready to go?

ELLIE
We have five minutes.

SAICHA
So are you ready?

ELLIE
Good morning to you too.

SAICHA
Who are you texting?

ELLIE
No one.

SAICHA
Uh huh.

ELLIE
I'm not going to be home after school today.

SAICHA
Yeah, I know.

ELLIE
... You know?

SAICHA
You told me. Clarinet lesson.

ELLIE
I did?

SAICHA
Yeah.

ELLIE
No, I didn't.

SAICHA
Didn't you?

ELLIE
I found out this morning.

SAICHA
Really?

ELLIE
Okay, stop.

SAICHA
Stop what?

ELLIE
Don't be like this.

SAICHA
Okay.

ELLIE
Oh come on. Do you know? Just tell me if you know. Don't play me like I'm an idiot. Because - just... do you know or don't you?

SAICHA
Yes. I know.

ELLIE
How?!? I didn't tell anyone. Did Dominic tell you?

SAICHA
Dominic? Dominic Cutler?

ELLIE
Yeah. You said you knew.

SAICHA
I lied.

ELLIE
That's not fair!

SAICHA
What are you doing with Dominic Cutler?

ELLIE
Nothing. We're getting coffee.

SAICHA
You don't drink coffee.

ELLIE
I'm gonna start.

SAICHA
You can't go out with Dominic, Ellie.

ELLIE
Why not?

SAICHA
He's a senior.

ELLIE
Yeah!

SAICHA
And he's a giant prick.

ELLIE
You say that like it's a bad thing.

SAICHA
Ellie! He's really not a good guy.

ELLIE
You can't stop me.

SAICHA
I'll tell mom.

ELLIE
Mom's not home for a week.

SAICHA
No she's not, she's home in...

SAICHA trails off. She grabs the calendar from the counter.

ELLIE
It's Monday, Saicha.

SAICHA
Right. Sorry.

ELLIE
Maybe you should start drinking coffee. Also, that was in the pile of mail.

SAICHA
(Picking up the envelope)
Another one? We keep getting these. I don't know what to do.

ELLIE
Wait 'till mom gets home.

SAICHA
Yeah. We have to go.

ELLIE
Okay.

SAICHA
Don't go out with Dominic.

ELLIE
Why not?

SAICHA
He's not a good guy, Ellie.

ELLIE
Everyone says that about guys they don't like.

SAICHA
When no one likes a guy, there's usually a reason.

ELLIE
It's just coffee.

SAICHA
Well... order a large.

ELLIE
Why? I'm not gonna actually drink it.

SAICHA
No, but you'll have something to throw at him if he tries anything.

SAICHA begins to exit.

ELLIE
Dad called again.

SAICHA
(As she leaves)
He still mad?

ELLIE
(Following)
Yup.

7 A SCHOOL HALLWAY

7

Students and teachers pass through, getting ready for the first period of the day.

ASHER is sitting, doing homework.

TALIA, ADDY, and LEXIE cross through, talking.

During their conversation, SAICHA enters.

TALIA
Did you see last night's episode?

LEXIE
Seriously! I was on the edge of my seat.

ADDY
It's like they're just messing with us!

TALIA
I know. But I still love it.

ADDY
What do you think's gonna happen?

SAICHA
(To ASHER)
Wow. This is becoming a habit.

ASHER
What?

SAICHA
Homework.

ASHER
Yeah?

SAICHA
Impressive.

ASHER
I know.

SAICHA
Good morning.

They kiss.

ASHER
You don't want to check my answers?

SAICHA
Should I?

ASHER
Well, they're correct.

SAICHA
Are you sure?

ASHER
I've had lots of practice.

SAICHA
Oh, getting confident now, are we?

ASHER
Is that a bad thing?

SAICHA
I didn't say it was bad.

They stare at each other for a moment.

ASHER
This is new. I like it.

SAICHA
I like it too.

She takes his wrist, and peels down the sleeve, revealing a bandage.

ASHER
I scraped myself.

SAICHA
Yeah.

ASHER
I'm fine.

SAICHA
The bandage is bigger.

ASHER
Than what?

SAICHA
What?

ASHER

Bigger than what?

SAICHA

Last time. Are you going to tell me what happened?

ASHER

I did. I scraped myself.

(SAICHA eyes him skeptically)

I'm serious. Why do you always think I'm lying!

SAICHA

You don't have to get upset. I'm sorry.

ASHER

I'm not, I'm... No, I'm sorry. You're just acting different this morning. I don't know. It's surprising me.

SAICHA

I'm not allowed to surprise you?

ASHER

No, of course not. I mean, that's not what I mean. Surprises are good. You can surprise me any time.

SAICHA

Okay, that sounds weird.

ASHER

That's not what I was trying to say!

SAICHA

Why am I dating you?

ASHER takes a breath and smiles.

ASHER

Because I'm amazing and irresistible.

SAICHA

No, that's why you're dating me.

ASHER

Okay. True. You're dating me because I complete you.

SAICHA

Oh, not even close!

ASHER

Then why?

The bell rings.

SAICHA
We gotta go.

ASHER
Wait --

SAICHA
That was the bell.
(She kisses him.)
See you at lunch.

SAICHA exits. ASHER stands for a moment, then exits as well.

8 MATH CLASS

8

Students, [DOMINIC, ADDY, TALIA, ROSE, ZOE, JACKSON, BRAD, MASON, others] are sitting in class, waiting for the teacher to arrive, talking.

ADDY
You're disgusting.

DOMINIC
No way.

TALIA
It's a little sketchy, Dominic.

DOMINIC
Oh come on.
(To MASON)
You'd do it.

MASON
I really wouldn't.

ROSE
It's like you're desperate.

DOMINIC
You're just jealous.

ROSE
Oh, no! No, no, no!

BRAD
It is a little sketchy.

DOMINIC
You're a little sketchy.

TALIA

Do you have any other comebacks?

JACKSON *smirks.*

DOMINIC

Sorry, Jackson, do you have an opinion you wanna share?

JACKSON

What?

DOMINIC

Come on, you know you're listening.

JACKSON

I, um...

TALIA

Leave him alone, Dom.

DOMINIC

Shut up, Talia. Come on, Jackson. You think I'm doing something wrong?

JACKSON

Well... it's a little predatory.

DOMINIC

What?

JACKSON

No, she's just --

DOMINIC

(Getting to close)

You think I'm a predator?

ZOE

Dominic, knock it off.

DOMINIC

Is anyone talking to you!?

ASHER

(entering)

Hey! What's going on?

ROSE

Dominic is hitting on freshman girls. Again.

ASHER

So?

DOMINIC
See? You got to go where the action's hot.

ZOE
Or ignorant, as the case may be.

Students laugh/smile.

DOMINIC
Oh you think that's funny?
(Confronting Jackson)
What are you laughing at?

JACKSON
I... nothing.

DOMINIC
Come on. Laugh to my face.

JACKSON
I wasn't laughing.

ASHER
Dominic, knock it off.

DOMINIC
(Still to JACKSON)
Oh no? You sure about that?

DR. CORMAN enters.

DR. CORMAN
All right, everyone, take your seats!

DOMINIC backs away from JACKSON and sits down.

DR. CORMAN (cont'd)
Everything all right?

ADDY
Yeah.

BRAD
Everything's fine.

DR. CORMAN
Homework please. All of you!

DR. CORMAN begins collecting homework.

ASHER
(To JACKSON)
You okay?

JACKSON
The hell do you care?

ASHER
I just --

DR. CORMAN
Homework?

Both boys hand DR. CORMAN a paper.

DR. CORMAN (cont'd)
(To ASHER)
Really?

ASHER
Yeah. I did my homework.

DR. CORMAN
Impressive. Schrodinger's cat is finally alive.

ASHER
I don't know what that means.

DR. CORMAN
Of course you don't. All right, everybody. So we've looked at the remainder theorem through the lens of polynomial long division. Today, we're going to work with the same idea, but using synthetic division. You may want to take notes.

9 OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL OFFICES

9

Students hurry to class.

BRAD
Mason, wait up!

MASON
(*exiting*)
Walk faster.

BRAD
Oh, come on!

ASHER and SAICHA are walking hand in hand. SAICHA is laughing.

SAICHA
Haven't I heard this story before?

ASHER
No! Have you?

SAICHA
I don't know. What happens?

ASHER
Well Bobby eats the thing right off the tray. And the owner of the shop starts yelling at us - in Dutch. Or whatever. And then my dad shows up.

SAICHA
Right, your dad shows up.

SAICHA stops walking.

ASHER
Yeah. And he's had one. Maybe two. And he starts yelling. And-- hey, you okay?

SAICHA
I'm... you've told me this.

ASHER
Oh. Okay. Sorry - it's a great story. Come on, let's get to the library.

SAICHA
No...

ASHER
What?

SAICHA
We don't get to the library.

ASHER
What? Yeah we do.

SAICHA
Your dad shows up.

As she says this, LT. KINNERMAN enters, finishing a discussion with MS. PIERCE. He's holding a large envelope.

ASHER
We should really go.

SAICHA watches the next exchange.

LT. KINNERMAN

Thank you, Ms. Pierce.

MS. PIERCE

Of course, Lieutenant. It's a pleasure. We'll miss you and Asher terribly.

LT. KINNERMAN

I appreciate that a lot.

MS. PIERCE

If there's any problem with the transfer, my email is on the top of the form. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need something.

LT. KINNERMAN

Thank you. You've all been wonderful to us here. Take care.

MS. PIERCE

You too.

They both exit.

SAICHA

(Like in a fog)

He didn't stop and talk to us.

ASHER

He didn't see us.

SAICHA

He did. Last time.

(Turning to him)

You're moving.

ASHER

What?

SAICHA

To Germany.

ASHER

Look, I don't know what you heard, but...

(A Pause)

I... um, okay. I've been meaning to tell you. I just...

SAICHA

(Piecing it together)

But I already know. All day, I've known. It's been like *deja vu*. But... The moment I saw your dad... I had a conversation with him. We did. On Monday. But today's Monday. Again.

ASHER

It's a weird day. You're just having a weird day.

SAICHA

What's going on?

ASHER

Nothing.

SAICHA

You're lying.

ASHER

I... How can you always tell?

SAICHA

What am I remembering?

ASHER

You're remembering... This. Today.

SAICHA

Homework. The band-aid on your wrist. Germany, but you're not leaving. How is that possible?

A pause.

ASHER

We've done this. Before.

SAICHA

What?

ASHER

You had a conversation with my dad. Last time. Usually you don't find out, but...

SAICHA

What are you talking about?

ASHER

You... last time, you found out that we were moving, and you got... really angry at me.

SAICHA

Because you never told me.

ASHER

Because I've never had to. I've never left.

A long pause as SAICHA processes.

SAICHA

What?

ASHER

It's still today.

SAICHA

But... but...

ASHER

I tried. I did. I've tried telling you a few times.

(He laughs)

But it's crazy. And why would you believe me? There's no proof. Just what I remember. You acted like I was nuts. Because... of course you would. One time you called my dad. Another time, the nurse. But every time, no matter what happened, suddenly it would be Monday morning again, and you'd forget. Everyone would.

SAICHA

I wouldn't forget this.

ASHER

Okay, not "forget." You'd.... Rewind. Like it's a loop. And it would be Monday and you'd find me sitting on the floor trying to do my homework. So it was easier not to tell you, you know? But now...

SAICHA

I'm remembering it.

ASHER

And you've never done that before. I mean, I hoped you would. But, last time was different from the other times.

SAICHA

How many?

ASHER

What?

SAICHA

How many other times?

ASHER

... a lot.

SAICHA

Asher, how long has this been happening?

ASHER

I'm not... totally sure. I couldn't figure out at first how to ... how to mark it down in a way that would keep, you know? So don't... don't freak out. It doesn't hurt that much.

ASHER unbuttons his sleeve, rolling it up. His arm is covered with hash marks, which are cut into his skin - the newest ones covered by a bandage on his wrist.

SAICHA

Holy shit.

ASHER

I tried marking a piece of paper, but it would just... um... return to being blank. Same thing with the wall in my room. Then I figured out if I made a little mark on my skin right as the transition was happening...

SAICHA

These are still fresh.

ASHER

No. Most of them... They're not. They don't really bleed. But they just don't heal, either.

SAICHA

Does it hurt?

ASHER

No. A little. It's okay.

SAICHA

We need to tell someone.

ASHER

Tell anyone. Tell everyone. It won't matter. A day later and they don't remember.

She backs away from him.

SAICHA

This is nuts.

ASHER

It doesn't have to be. Don't you see - now that you... know... we can live this together. We can--

SAICHA

No. This is impossible. There's got to be someone. There's... I'll scream. I'll shout it out. I'll ---

ASHER

Look. Do what you want. Try anything. Please. But pretty soon... it'll be Monday again. You'll remember. Or you won't. Doesn't matter. No one else will.

(A pause.)

I love you.

He moves to kiss her. She instinctively backs away. ASHER takes the dog tags from his pocket and exits, playing with them in his hand.

SAICHA crumples, her head in her hands.

MS. BLAIR enters.

MS. BLAIR

Are you okay?

SAICHA

I'm...

(Looking and seeing Ms. Blair)

MS. BLAIR

I'm Ms. Blair. The new counselor. Do you want to talk?

SAICHA quickly walks away from MS. BLAIR, exiting the opposite direction from ASHER.

10 SAICHA'S HOME

10

ELLIE is sitting at the kitchen table, eating toast and texting.

SAICHA enters. She stands and stares for a minute.

Then she sees the electrical bill on the table. She picks it up.

SAICHA

No.

ELLIE

Yeah, that was in the mail pile.

SAICHA

Again.

ELLIE

What?

(A pause.)

You okay?

SAICHA

I'm... I don't know.

ELLIE

It's addressed to mom and says "second notice." In scary --

SAICHA

I can read!

ELLIE

Okay. Also, good morning.

SAICHA

Do you remember what happened last night?

ELLIE

Yeah.

SAICHA

You do?

ELLIE

Yeah. We watched, like, six episodes of Scandal.

SAICHA

No! No. We talked about... about Mondays.

ELLIE

What about them? Are you sure you're okay?

SAICHA

I need to go.

ELLIE

We have five minutes.

SAICHA

I need to go now.

ELLIE

Fine. Oh! I'm not coming home after school today.

SAICHA

Dominic's an asshole.

SAICHA exits.

ELLIE

Wha--- what? Umm... No, he's... Dad called!

ELLIE chases after her.

11 A SCHOOL HALLWAY

11

Students and teachers pass through, getting ready for the first period of the day.

ASHER is sitting, doing homework.

TALIA, ADDY, and LEXIE cross through, talking. ISAICHA enters. She glares at ASHER.

TALIA

Did you see last night's episode?

ADDY

Uh, I know! It's driving me crazy.

LEXIE

They do this to us every week!

TALIA

I know. But I can't wait for the next one.

ADDY

How are they gonna resolve it?

ASHER keeps working. Eventually, he looks up and sees SAICHA.

ASHER

Hey.

(No response.)

How are you?

(No response.)

Saich?

A long pause.

SAICHA

Last night, I told Ellie. I told her everything. And she freaked out. Then Zoe came over, and Ellie grabbed her because... because she thought I was crazy. Because... And Zoe listened to me carefully and... I told her and, I don't know, she humored me? She said "let's just get a good night's sleep and think about September." So I left. I got my keys, got in the car - and they both were screaming after me - Zoe and Ellie. But I didn't care. I called my father, and he didn't answer. So I drove.

ASHER

You remember.

SAICHA

(A flash of anger:)

No shit I remember.

(A pause.)

I drove. And then... I've never fallen asleep at the wheel. Right? I assume that if you do... like... you die. Right? Right?? But I must have fallen asleep, because I was driving, and then... I don't know. I woke up. In my bed. It was Monday morning.

ASHER

I know.

SAICHA

And Ellie didn't remember anything about yesterday.

ASHER

It wasn't yesterday.

SAICHA

She remembers... watching TV. And... Why can't she remember last night?

ASHER

Because it wasn't last night.

SAICHA

Shut up.

ASHER

(Getting up)

It was tonight. It's going to be tonight. Or not. It doesn't have to be.

(He approaches her slowly)

Saicha, I've been here. Right here. For a really long time. And you know what I hold onto? What's kept me sane?

SAICHA

(She laughs.)

Sane?

ASHER

You. The fact that I love you. And I'm here with you. Every day. And it's the best. I don't have to worry about anything. I don't have to think about what comes next. Or the future, or... It's just you and me.

SAICHA

That's not sane.

ASHER

Why not? Now that you remember.... We get to do this together.

SAICHA

This? What is this?

ASHER

My parents' jerked me around forever. House after house. But then, after we got here, I met you and we... we became us. And all of that. And it was... peaceful. And my dad was going to take it all away from me, and -- and... then it was Monday morning. Again and again. I love you. And every morning, you walk through that door and you see me doing my stupid homework, and you're impressed with me. And... it's the best. It's the best moment. Why can't we just enjoy it?

SAICHA

I can't stay here, Asher.

ASHER

Why not?

SAICHA

Because I have... plans. Like going to college. Like a career. Like maybe getting married and having kids someday.

ASHER

This is like married. We're together. Forever.

SAICHA

There's no such thing as forever.

The bell rings. SAICHA doesn't move.

ASHER

We have to go to class.

SAICHA

You can't be serious.

ASHER

Class starts in like --

SAICHA

So what?

ASHER

This is how the day works.

SAICHA

And that never changes?

ASHER

Does it have to?

(A beat.)

You'll see. You'll see how ... calming this can be.

SAICHA
Calm? This isn't living, Asher!

ASHER
It can be. We're here together. What else do we need?

ASHER exits.

NAOMI enters as SAICHA screams.

NAOMI
You okay?

SAICHA
I'm...

NAOMI
You just found out?

SAICHA
What?

NAOMI
I understand. If my sister was dating Dominic Cutler, I'd freak out too. Don't worry. It won't last that long. I mean, it can't, right?

NAOMI exits. SAICHA takes a moment, then exits as well.

12 MATH CLASS

12

As before.

DOMINIC is in JACKSON's face, threatening him.

ZOE
Dominic, knock it off.

DOMINIC
Is anyone talking to you!?

ASHER
(entering)
Hey! What's going on?

ROSE
Dominic is dating freshman girls. Again.

ASHER
So?

DOMINIC
See? You got to go where the action's hot.

ZOE
Or ignorant, as the case may be.

Students laugh/smile.

DOMINIC
Oh you think that's funny?
(Confronting Jackson)
What are you laughing at?

JACKSON
I... nothing.

DOMINIC
Come on. Laugh to my face.

JACKSON
I wasn't laughing.

ASHER
Dominic, knock it off.

DOMINIC
Oh no? You sure about that?

ASHER looks for DR. CORMAN, but he does not appear.

DOMINIC (cont'd)
Laugh for me. Right here.

JACKSON
Stop it.

DOMINIC
Just one little laugh, pretty boy.

ASHER looks again, worried at how the scene is escalating.

ASHER
Hey, what's so bad about dating freshman?

MASON
Are you kidding?

ASHER
No.

DOMINIC
Finally. Someone has my back.

ADDY
You can't be serious, Asher.

TALIA
He's three years older than she is.

ASHER
That's not a big deal, when you think about it.

DOMINIC
Yeah.

ADDY
I don't believe you.

ASHER
What choice does he have?

DOMINIC
What?

ASHER
No one who knows him will actually date him. You gotta find a new pool.

More laughter and smiles.

ADDY
That's true. None of us will be caught dead with you.

TALIA
Again, you mean.

ROSE
(Simultaneously with MASON)
Shut up.

MASON
(Simultaneously with ROSE)
Shut up.

DOMINIC
(Confronting JACKSON)
Oh, are you laughing now?

JACKSON
What? No!

DOMINIC
I'll show you something funny.

JACKSON
I wasn't--

ASHER

Dominic, stop it.

DOMINIC

Why? This little girl is--

ASHER grabs DOMINIC violently by the shirt and pulls him away from JACKSON.

ASHER

I said leave him alone!!

DOMINIC

Hey. Chill. I was just... I was...

ASHER

You were nothing. You were absolutely nothing, and you're never going to do it again.

Tense silence.

BRAD

I think he gets the message, Asher.

ADDY

Yeah.

ASHER

Great. So then he should sit down.

Uncomfortable silence as DOMINIC moves away. Some people start murmuring to each other.

JACKSON

(To ASHER)

You didn't need to do that.

ASHER

I think I did.

JACKSON

What?

MS. BLAIR enters.

MS. BLAIR

All right, ladies and gentlemen, let's settle down.

BRAD

Who are you?

MS. BLAIR
I'm Ms. Blair.

ROSE
Where's Doc Corman?

MS. BLAIR
I'm afraid he's out sick today.

ASHER
No, he's not.

MS. BLAIR
Um... sorry?

ASHER
He's here. He was here.

MS. BLAIR
I'm afraid he isn't.

ASHER
I saw him. Earlier.

BRAD
Dude, chill out.

MS. BLAIR
Well, I don't know who you think you saw, but he's definitely out sick. His plan is still here, though, and it's a surprise test for all of you to take.

MASON
Oh, come on!

MS. BLAIR
Notebooks and gadgets away.

BRAD
So not cool.

MS. BLAIR begins handing out the test.

ASHER
That wasn't the plan.

TALIA
You wish.

ADDY
We all wish.

ASHER
It wasn't.

BRAD
What, are you like, texting Doc about lesson plans?

ROSE
This sucks.

ADDY
Yep.

MS. BLAIR
All of you be quiet.

She hands ASHER a test. He stares at her.

MS. BLAIR (cont'd)
Is everything okay?

ASHER
What are you doing here?

MS. BLAIR
I'm giving you a test, Asher.
(To everyone)
Forty minutes. Eyes on your own page, please.

13 **THE CAFETERIA**

13

Students move about, getting lunch and finding a table.

ROSE, MASON, and NAOMI are eating lunch.

ZOE sits at a separate table, picking at her lunch tray.

NAOMI
You're kidding.

ROSE
No, seriously, it was a huge fight.

MASON
It wasn't a fight.

ROSE
He grabbed him!

MASON

And that's all.

*SAICHA sees ZOE sitting at a table.
She stops.*

NAOMI

Well, it sounds like he kinda deserved it.

ROSE

I guess. I can't believe I actually dated him.

NAOMI

You and Dominic were together!

ROSE

For like six seconds.

MASON

When was that?

ZOE looks over and sees SAICHA. She waves.

ROSE

Ninth grade. It's not a big deal.

MASON

It's a bigger deal than "the fight."

SAICHA turns to leave. ZOE gets up and follows her.

ROSE

You're not freaked out by what happened?

MASON

I'm more mad about the test. It was ridiculous.

NAOMI

I have her next block. What's it on?

ZOE

Hey!

SAICHA

Hi.

ZOE

You're not going to sit down?

SAICHA

I'm... I'm not hungry.

ZOE
Me neither, but it's lunch.

SAICHA
Do you remember the last time you and I talked?

ZOE
On the phone yesterday?

SAICHA
(Disappointed)
Yeah.

ZOE
You okay?

SAICHA
I'm having... a really bad day.

ZOE
Join the club. My mom and dad ---

SAICHA
Are fighting again. And they're going to fight forever.

ZOE
Um, yeah. I guess.

SAICHA
I'm sorry.

ZOE
Uh huh.
(A pause.)
So do I, like, talk about that too much?

SAICHA
What? No!

ZOE
Because if you're sick of me talking about it --

SAICHA
Zoe, I didn't mean anything by-- I just... They fight all the time. Like it never ends, and that has to... suck.

ZOE
It does. But if I complain too much --

SAICHA
No! You don't. Honestly. I should be listening to you, not... I'm sorry. I'm really sorry.

SAICHA is on the verge of tears.

ZOE
(Reaching out)
Hey, what's going on?

ASHER runs in.

ASHER
Saicha!

SAICHA
What?

ASHER
I'm... it's noon. We have lunch together. You, me, Zoe.

ZOE
That was cool, what you did.

ASHER
What?

ZOE
It was. I mean, someone needed to tell him.

SAICHA
What did you do?

ASHER
I... It's all different.

ZOE
He stood up to Dominic. Finally.

ASHER
But then... That woman—

DOMINIC enters.

DOMINIC
Hey!

ZOE
Oh, great.

DOMINIC
What was that, man?

ASHER
Not now.

DOMINIC
(Pushing ASHER)
Not now?! You're supposed to be my friend.

ZOE

Then don't act like such an asshole, Dominic.

DOMINIC

(Finger in her face)

Who's talking to you? Huh? Who ever talks to you?

A crowd begins to gather.

SAICHA

Leave her alone!

SAICHA grabs DOMINIC to pull him away from ZOE.

In response, he yanks his arm away pushing SAICHA into a table.

ASHER grabs DOMINIC.

ASHER

Don't touch her! Don't you touch her!!!

DOMINIC

Get your hands off of me!

ASHER

Or what? What are you gonna do about it?

DOMINIC punches ASHER in the face.

There is a lot of commotion and noise among the crowd.

ASHER tries to fight, but DOMINIC is much stronger.

SAICHA tries to intervene. DOMINIC knocks her to the ground.

ASHER screams.

Everything stops.

Everyone, except ASHER and SAICHA, are frozen.

There is silence, except for their breathing.

ASHER (cont'd)

(To SAICHA)

Are you... are you okay?

SAICHA
What did you do?

ASHER
I don't know.

SAICHA
What did you do??

ASHER
(Panicking)
I gotta --- I have to....

ASHER runs off.

A beeping alarm is heard from off stage.

MS. BLAIR runs on, holding a small device - the source of the beeping.

MS. BLAIR
Holy...

SAICHA
What did he -- What's going on?

MS. BLAIR
Don't move.

MS. BLAIR presses a few buttons on the device. The device buzzes in rejection. She presses something else.

The lights flicker. Everyone comes back to life, mid-fight.

DOMINIC
Don't you ever --- don't you --- Where'd he go?

MS. BLAIR
What are you all doing?! Get to class. Now!

Everyone is confused.

MS. BLAIR (cont'd)
This is unacceptable behavior. I said get to class. Or you can come with me to the principal's office!

Everyone backs out, except SAICHA.

MS. BLAIR consults the device again. She looks up and sees SAICHA watching her.

MS. BLAIR (cont'd)
So... do you want to talk to me now?

BLACK OUT.

End of Act I

Persual Script
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