



**Sample Pages from
The Bright Blue Mailbox Suicide Note**

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THE BRIGHT BLUE MAILBOX SUICIDE NOTE

A DRAMA IN ONE ACT BY
Lindsay Price



The Bright Blue Mailbox Suicide Note
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Characters

[4M+5W+2 Either]

Male	Female	Either
Jake	Karen	Mr. Arscott
Ken	Joan	Mrs. Westlake
Moe	Lisa	
Dennis	Girl	
	Beebee	

Setting Note

There are a number of locations in this play. Try to show these locations through lighting and a unit set (e.g. black boxes) rather than using blackouts to change settings. The pace of the play is very important.

Character Note

This play deals with a heavy subject. Some of the scenes involve characters dealing with this subject with a great deal of tension. PLEASE avoid having characters yell at one another. The longer people yell at each other the quicker the audience will tune out.

I have also tried to incorporate some humour into the play. Just because the play deals with a serious subject doesn't mean that the characters are completely serious from start to finish. Sometimes in life, no matter how dire the situation, you just have to laugh or make a joke. That is how some of these characters deal with this situation. Use the humour, don't try to downplay it.

The stage is dark. JAKE's voice comes out of the darkness.

JAKE: What the... Oh my God!

Lights up. All of the characters (except for JAKE) are in their own space, wandering and making patterns as they deliver their thoughts. JAKE looks on from the side.

KEN: I believe life is based on a series of situations.

KAREN: I believe in fate.

MOE: I believe I'm the master of my own destiny.

KEN: A series of roads.

MOE: You make your own choices.

BEEBEE: I believe in reincarnation.

LISA: I believe in choice.

DENNIS: Anything is possible.

BEEBEE: Life after continuing life.

JOAN: What do I believe in?

LISA: I believe in God. I think.

MOE: Anything is possible when you believe in concrete things.

JOAN: Politics? The environment?

BEEBEE: You have to believe in something, right?

JOAN: It's all psychobabble bull, I know...

DENNIS: I believe in fate.

JOAN: Sometimes I wish I could believe.

KAREN: I believe there's something out there.

LISA: I like going to church. I like believing in God.

BEEBEE: There is so much that is unexplainable.

KAREN: The unknown.

KEN: Your life is what you make it. You can't rely on some ethereal being to make your decisions for you.

KAREN: Beyond coincidence.

DENNIS: Sometimes I think I have this Guardian Angel who keeps me out of trouble.

MOE: My sister has a friend whose mother was supposed to be on this plane that blew up over the Atlantic.

BEEBEE: I believe in fate.

MOE: She was caught in traffic. Fate or what?

JOAN: I always wonder about people who are tortured in prison or raped or murdered in a back alley...

LISA: I don't think God is cruel. Someone told me once that God doesn't give you anything you can't handle.

KEN: You have to make up the rules as you go.

LISA: And I believe that.

KAREN: There has to be a margin for error. Somewhere.

DENNIS: Right?

KEN: Right.

BEEBEE: There has to be...

MOE: Something.

JOAN: Somewhere.

KAREN: Right?

JAKE comes forward as the others fade back. JAKE has a note in his hand, which he reads to the audience.

JAKE: "Dear Mom: This is a lie. This is all a lie. Everything. Now and before and forever. I can't go on and I can't go on lying so this is the only way I can think of to make things right. I've tried Mom. I've tried so hard. I know you won't understand and I know you'll be hurt but killing myself will be the one act I won't be able to lie about. I love you. Sincerely, M." (*JAKE looks up from the letter*) I found this in my mailbox yesterday. One hell of a wake up call, let me tell you. No sending address, no return address either.

I don't know what I believe in. I don't know if it was fate or God or politics that put a suicide note in my mailbox. I can't talk to my parents about it 'cause they're away on business again. Besides,

I'm pretty sure it's not for them seeing as my name is Jake and my sister's name is Allison, and she is having the time of her life contracting skin cancer on some beach in the south of France. What am I supposed to do with this? I mean, do I just toss it? Forget about it? Find out who "M" is? I don't know. Why does this stuff always happen to me? The weirdos sit next to me on the bus and send me their suicide notes in the mail. Why me?

The following happens as the lights change for the next scene and all of the characters move into place.

JAKE: I know you won't understand and I know you'll be hurt...

JOAN: But killing myself will be...

MOE: ...the one act I won't...

KEN: ...be able to lie about...

LISA: I love you...

DENNIS: Sincerely,

BEEBEE: M.

Lights up. MOE, JOAN, LISA, KEN, DENNIS, and BEEBEE are in DENNIS' living room and they are studying the note.

MOE: It's a girl.

JOAN: How do you know?

MOE: Girls write notes. Boys don't.

JOAN: And that's a scientific fact?

BEEBEE: Can I hold it?

LISA: I want to know what she's lying about.

BEEBEE: I've never held a suicide note before.

KEN: Quiet! I'm trying to watch the game.

JOAN: You have no idea that it's a girl.

BEEBEE: There's no name. Just an initial.

JOAN: It could be a boy or a girl.

BEEBEE: (*trying to hand it to DENNIS*) Here.

DENNIS: I don't want to touch it.

BEEBEE: It's just a piece of paper.

DENNIS: It's a dead person's piece of paper.

LISA: It's pretty though. I like the colour.

DENNIS: I don't want to touch anything a dead person wrote.

MOE: This is stationery.

JOAN: So.

MOE: So what?

JOAN: You lost me after "stationery."

MOE: Joannie. It's self-explanatory.

JOAN: For primates maybe.

MOE: How many guys do you know who own stationery?

JOAN: You're a pig.

DENNIS: He's right.

BEEBEE: Dennis!

DENNIS: What? Stationery does not exist in the male genes.

LISA: I think you mean the male ego.

JOAN: You are both pigs.

KEN: Jake, are we going to watch the game or what?

JAKE: I want to hear what everyone has to say.

KEN: Great.

DENNIS: (*moving to sit beside KEN*) Who's up, Ken?

BEEBEE: You know...I can almost feel the pain of this person.

MOE: Come back to earth Beeb.

LISA: You're dilating.

JAKE: I want to know why she did it.

JOAN: He did it.

KEN: Shhhh.

MOE: I want to know how she did it.

JOAN: HE did it.

DENNIS: That is morbid.

MOE: Aren't you a little curious?

KEN: No.

DENNIS: Well...

LISA: (to MOE) What do you think?

MOE: Pills. Girls always go with pills.

JOAN: You are so sexist!

LISA: I could never slit my wrists. Too much blood.

BEEBEE: Pills would be so calming. You would just drift away.

DENNIS: I would go with something dramatic. Something that would make the papers. Like...driving my dad's car off the point and ending in a fiery blaze. That would be something.

KEN: Wasn't this supposed to be about baseball?

JOAN: Not all girls use pills.

MOE: It is a scientific fact. Girls, on the average, use pills. Guys slit their wrists, or shoot themselves or whatever. These are substantiated percentages; you can't call me a pig just because I'm quoting facts.

JOAN: "Substantiated" is a big word for you Moe. I'm impressed.

JAKE: Those aren't real statistics are they?

BEEBEE: The actual statistics say...

JOAN: (to MOE) How would you know?

MOE: I'm just stating the facts.

BEEBEE: I think...

KEN: I fondly remember a time when we all got together and sat calmly watching the game.

DENNIS: You call that a strike???

KEN: Those were the days.

JAKE: Shut up Ken, we're having a important conversation here.

BEEBEE: Maybe we should just watch the game.

MOE: I thought you were having an out-of-body experience over this.

LISA: Sherry's boyfriend had a cousin – locked the garage and turned the car on.

MOE: See? Girls do it in non-violent ways.

KEN: Killing yourself isn't violent enough?!

LISA: I'm not sure what Sherry's boyfriend's cousin was...It might not have been a girl.

JAKE: Was it a guy?

JOAN: No it was a banana loaf.

LISA: It was a guy. No wait. His name was...Leslie?

MOE: It was a girl.

LISA: It was a girl.

JOAN: Leslie can be a guy's name too you know.

LISA: It was a guy.

MOE: What moron would name their son Leslie?

DENNIS: What are you bunting for!

JOAN: What's wrong with Leslie?

MOE: It's a dumb name for a guy.

LISA: Maybe it was Anne. Anne sounds familiar.

BEEBEE: Anne is a good tortured soul name.

JOAN: What do you mean dumb?

MOE: It's a dumb name, like Toby or Elliot.

JOAN: I like Elliot.

MOE: You would.

LISA: No, it was Leslie.

DENNIS: Lame name.

MOE: I'd definitely kill myself if I had a stupid name.

JOAN: What, like Moe?

MOE: There is nothing wrong with Moe!

LISA: Definitely Leslie.

JAKE: But was it a guy or a girl?

LISA: I don't remember.

JAKE: You don't remember?

KAREN enters.

KAREN: Hey everyone!

BEEBEE: Karen!

KAREN: Hi, Jake.

JAKE: Oh, hi.

KAREN: What are you guys talking about?

BEEBEE: The note.

KAREN: Not again. *(to JAKE)* Did you have to bring that out?

JAKE: Maybe people are interested.

MOE: It's kind of pathetic really. I mean think about it – you go to the trouble of ending your life, you hand deliver the letter, and I'm just guessing here, but you're so distraught that you get the wrong mailbox? That is the epitome of pathetic.

JOAN: "Epitome?" Be still my beating heart.

LISA: Was it supposed to go to someone in the building?

JAKE: I don't know.

DENNIS: I guess you can't go around to your neighbours and say, "Excuse me, have any of your relatives kicked off recently?"

JOAN: Very subtle.

LISA: Might be a bit much.

MOE: Have there been any clues? Wailing in the halls?

JAKE: Not a peep.

KAREN: And he has been listening.

LISA: If she's writing to her mother, why did she sign it "Sincerely?" I mean if you're writing to your mother...

MOE: "Excuse me I hate to be a bore but I'm off to kill myself tomorrow. Hope you don't mind the mess." Ta ta.

JAKE: It does say "I love you."

KEN: I can't believe you guys are passing around a suicide note like a piece of gossip from the fifth grade.

LISA: Aren't you the tiniest bit curious about this?

KEN: No.

JOAN: Come on, the game isn't that interesting.

DENNIS: Slide, slide!

KEN: I'm not curious.

MOE: Hey, how do you know it's real?

JAKE: Of course it's real.

MOE: But how do you know? Someone could be playing some kind of trick on you.

JOAN: That is some sick joke.

LISA: Why would anyone do that?

DENNIS: Didn't some Grandmother fake a suicide to see how much her family loved her?

KAREN: In Waterloo?

DENNIS: That's the one. She hung herself.

LISA: How do you fake a hanging?

JOAN: Hey Moe, do males hang themselves or is it strictly a female thing?

KEN: Suicide battle of the sexes. I'm gonna puke.

JAKE: This letter is for real. I know it's real. I can feel it.

KEN laughs.

JAKE: What?

KEN: You sound like an complete idiot. (*imitating JAKE*) “I can feel it...”

JAKE: Listen, if you don’t want to be a part of this conversation fine but...

KEN: What do you know about suicide?

JAKE: Huh?

KEN: What do you know about killing yourself?

BEEBEE: Ken...

KEN: Do you know anyone who’s “kicked off?”

JAKE: No.

KEN: Have you ever tried to kill yourself?

JAKE: Of course not.

KEN: Of course not. Then how can you know? How do you know your stupid little note is real?

JAKE: It’s not stupid.

KEN: How can you “feel” that it’s real?

BEEBEE: Ken...

JAKE: You wouldn’t know either, so don’t go shooting your mouth off over...

KEN: Don’t be so sure.

JOAN: What does that mean?

KEN: Exactly what you think it means.

KAREN: Hey...guys.

LISA: Maybe we should just...

KEN: Well? Come on Jake, this is right up your “conversation.” What do you have to say?

JAKE: This is a joke. I’m going to ask and you’re going to make a joke.

KEN: Ask and find out.

JAKE: I don’t want...

KEN: Fine.

JAKE: Have you...I mean, have you ever...

KEN: Yes. Feel better?

LISA: Oh Ken.

KEN: Remember the hunting accident I had last spring? I wasn't in the bush and it wasn't an accident. Oh, and the only reason I didn't use "pills" is because we were out of aspirin. OK? (*Everyone is staring at KEN*) Don't look like that. You asked. I'm gonna go home and watch the game.

The lights fade. JAKE moves forward.

JAKE: Ken has been my best friend since the second grade. I don't even remember him being all that sad last year. Maybe a little depressed but not enough to... Why didn't he tell me?

The lights change. JAKE and KAREN are walking.

KAREN: It's not your fault Jake, you didn't know.

JAKE: He never said anything about it when I showed him the note. He even made a joke.

KAREN: It's a hard thing to talk about.

JAKE: Why would he do that? Joke about somebody else's suicide and not say a damn word about his own.

KAREN: Why don't you ask him?

JAKE: The only reason I know now is because of a...

KAREN: Jake!

JAKE: He should have told me.

KAREN: And now he has.

JAKE: He didn't tell me. He made me ask. There's a difference.

KAREN: Look, it's still early, do you want to watch some TV?

JAKE: No. I...I'm gonna go home. I'll call you tomorrow Karen.

KAREN leans in for kiss but JAKE walks away distracted. She watches him for a couple of seconds and then leaves.

JAKE walks to the side of the stage. MOE, BEEBEE, and LISA come forward. They represent different books on suicide and should all be holding books.

MOE: "The Sorrow of Silence" by Dorothy Black.

BEEBEE: "Suicide: Inside Killer" by John H. Kaufman.

LISA: The suicide rate in Japan is incredibly high. The competition begins with grades and leads to careers. There is also...

JOAN: "It's Not That Simple" by Dr. Susan Sutton.

BEEBEE: The last thing I expected was to find my daughter lying in bed with the bottle just sitting on the nightstand...

MOE: For every one person who commits suicide, it is estimated that seven to ten people are affected.

LISA: "Grief and Guilt" by Dave Fisher.

JOAN: I dreamt that she was in front of me and I was in a straight jacket and she died and died and she died.

MOE: He was sick.

BEEBEE: I should have known.

JOAN: It was my fault.

LISA: Why didn't I know?

MOE: "Suicide" by Marion Half.

LISA: "Suicide" by Andrew Never.

BEEBEE: "Suicide" by Geoffrey Clark.

JOAN: The question of trust comes up again and again...

MOE: They believe that nobody really wants to listen...

BEEBEE: The signs to look for are as follows...

LISA: I hate her for this.

JOAN: Why?

BEEBEE: I was there. I was there for him.

MOE: I don't understand. Why?

LISA: Why?

JOAN: Why?

ALL THREE: Why?

All four slam their books shut and exit.

JAKE: OK. I should have talked to Ken. As soon as he said it, I should have...but I didn't. I went home and sat in the dark and tried to think as little as possible. It's not as easy as it sounds. I didn't get to sleep until 3am.

The lights change. We are now in the Guidance Office at Jake's school. MRS. WESTLAKE is holding JAKE's note.

MRS. WESTLAKE: You look tired Jake, are you alright?

JAKE: I'm fine, I'm fine. What do you think?

MRS. WESTLAKE: I'm a little puzzled. What exactly are you looking for?

JAKE: I don't know. Do you see any clues?

MRS. WESTLAKE: Clues?

JAKE: Yeah. Anything, like, who is this person and why did they decide to commit suicide in my mailbox?

MRS. WESTLAKE: You're asking a bit much of a piece of paper aren't you?

JAKE: I don't have anything else to go on. I mean, I think about who it might be. It's not anyone that I know. I don't know anyone who...I mean...I mean my sister spent a couple of years wearing nothing but black, listened to country music all day and hated everybody in sight, but I know for a fact that she would never kill herself. At least I don't think so.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Why do you want to find out about the person in the note?

JAKE: I don't know. I've just been thinking about her that's all.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Her?

The lights begin to change very slowly. We see the shadow of "the girl" behind JAKE.

JAKE: I imagine it's a girl. I don't know why. Maybe Moe swayed me with the stationery argument.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Pardon?

JAKE: Never mind. I read this letter and I see a girl.

The shadow steps forward, we still shouldn't be able to see her clearly, as JAKE cannot see her clearly.

GIRL: Dear Mom: This is a lie. This is all a lie. Everything. Now and before and forever.

JAKE: And I wonder who she is. What she looks like, where she lives.

GIRL: I can't go on and I can't go on lying so this is the only way I can think of to make things right.

JAKE: I wonder if her mother knew.

GIRL: I've tried mom. I've tried so hard.

JAKE: I wonder if there's a body somewhere...

GIRL: I know you won't understand...

JAKE: ...and if her mother found her.

GIRL: ...and I know you'll be hurt.

JAKE: Did she expect to find her daughter this way?

GIRL: But killing myself is the one act I won't be able to lie about.

JAKE: Or did she have no idea. Not a clue.

GIRL: I love you. Sincerely. M.

The lights change back. The GIRL exits.

JAKE: I wonder how she feels now. Especially since I have the note.

MRS. WESTLAKE: How do you feel Jake?

JAKE: I'm fine. I told you...

MRS. WESTLAKE: You feel fine about all of this?

JAKE: This isn't about me. This is about some girl who...

MRS. WESTLAKE: You don't know it's a girl.

JAKE: OK, OK, I imagine it's a girl.

MRS. WESTLAKE: What do you think that means?

JAKE: I don't want to talk about me.

MRS. WESTLAKE: You're taking this note very seriously.

JAKE: I'm not...

MRS. WESTLAKE: You're not sleeping, you're creating fantasies...

JAKE: That's not what I said; you're twisting my words.

MRS. WESTLAKE: How are your parents, Jake?

JAKE: They're fine.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Karen?

JAKE: Fine.

MRS. WESTLAKE: How's Ken?

JAKE: What do you mean, "How's Ken?" Ken is fine. He's just fine.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Jake.

JAKE: I'm fine. Everybody's fine. I never asked you to pry into my life, I was just looking for an opinion.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Alright.

JAKE: What do you mean by that?

MRS. WESTLAKE: Nothing.

JAKE: Sure. Right. I don't think this is going to work. Can I have my note back?

MRS. WESTLAKE: We should talk about this.

JAKE: Can I have my note? (*she hands him the note*) Thanks.

The lights change. JAKE walks downstage.

JAKE: I am fine. There's nothing wrong with me. I am 100% A-OK. You got it? I don't know why she was talking to me like that. I'm not the one who tried to kill himself.

The lights change. KAREN and DENNIS come downstage.

BOTH: I don't get depressed.

DENNIS: My dad says guys don't get depressed. You can be happy, or mad, but never depressed.

KAREN: I'm a happy well-adjusted person. Everyone says so. "Karen, you're always in a good mood."

DENNIS: (*imitating his father*) "Keep your chin to the grindstone Dennis." That's what he says. "People who work hard don't get depressed."

KAREN: "Karen, you're a breath of fresh air."

DENNIS: (*imitating his father*) "Only lazy people get depressed."

KAREN: "Karen, you're a ray of sunshine."

DENNIS: So I don't get depressed.

KAREN: I'm never depressed.

DENNIS: I swim.

KAREN: According to everybody.

DENNIS: When you're underwater, you can't hear anything and you don't have to talk to anyone. You don't have to hear about what you're supposed to do and not supposed to do.

KAREN: I have a journal. I write it in everyday, sometimes twice a day. I try to get everything out and onto the paper so that no one has to look at me and say: "Karen, you don't look so good today."

DENNIS: You can even cry underwater.

KAREN: Sometimes it works. Sometimes it doesn't.

DENNIS: Not that I would. Because I don't get depressed.

KAREN: Sometimes I have to fake it. No one ever notices. (*She laughs*) I should be an actress. I'm really good at it.

DENNIS: I'm a really good swimmer.

BOTH: Depressed? Me? Never.

The lights change. MOE, LISA, DENNIS are on stage in DENNIS' living room. JOAN is entering.

JOAN: That was Beebee. She's got to work today.

LISA: Beebee works? Like at a job?

MOE: Where would a person like Beebee work?

JOAN: I don't know.

DENNIS: Probably reads tea leaves or something.

KAREN enters.

KAREN: Hi guys.

LISA: Hey Kari!

MOE: Where's Jake?

KAREN: At the library.

JOAN: Again?

KAREN: He's trying to find some book called "Suicide Notes: The Untold Story."

JOAN: Is Ken coming?

KAREN: He said he was busy. He had to visit his grandmother, or something.

MOE: He hates his grandmother.

KAREN: That's what he said.

MOE: Man, one little suicide and our Sunday ritual goes right down the toilet.

JOAN: You're not funny.

LISA: Everybody just needs a little time to readjust. It'll be OK.

KAREN: It won't be the same.

DENNIS: I liked it better the way it was.

JOAN: Afraid of a little change are we?

MOE: Joannie, this is not a little change. He tried to rearrange his insides.

JOAN: Over a year ago.

LISA: I don't know what to say to him.

KAREN: He's still Ken.

DENNIS: I'm glad he's not here.

JOAN: Come on...

DENNIS: I don't know what to say to the guy. Suicide is a cop out. I can't exactly tell Ken what I think, can I?

There is a pause.

MOE: Do you know how many famous people have committed suicide?

KAREN: Can we talk about something else? This topic is getting on my nerves.

MOE: Van Gogh, Hemingway.

LISA: Sylvia Plath.

MOE: Now her I don't get. How exactly do you kill yourself by sticking your head in an oven?

KAREN: Guys?

MOE: How do you do it?

DENNIS: Baked brains anyone?

JOAN: Nice.

LISA: Virginia Woolf drowned.

DENNIS: It's all those Literary types. Hemingway, Van Go-go, Plath...

JOAN: Van Go-go was a painter.

DENNIS: Sports is clean and simple. No football player would stick his head in an oven.

KAREN gets up and starts to exit.

LISA: Where you going Karen?

KAREN: I'm gonna go find Jake. See you guys later.

The lights change. MOE comes downstage.

MOE: Mrs. and Mrs. Coombs lived across the street in a house with a big porch and a tree fort in the backyard. I spent a lot of time in that tree fort, everyone did. The Coombs were like substitute grandparents. Mrs. Coombs died last year. Mr. Coombs was never the same. It was when the mail started piling up in the mailbox that the neighbours went over to see if he was alright. He wasn't. Maybe I'm sick, but I think he just wanted to be with his wife. They're probably waltzing on top of the clouds somewhere or doing the tango. Mr. Coombs told me once that his favourite thing to do in the world was dance the tango with his wife.

MOE exits. The lights change. JAKE is on stage and KAREN enters.

KAREN: Hey.

JAKE: What are you doing here?

KAREN: I missed you. Is that a crime?

JAKE: No.

KAREN: I was just wondering when you'd be done. We could catch a movie or something.

JAKE: Maybe tomorrow, OK? I'll call you.

KAREN: Jake, is there something going on here?

JAKE: Huh?

KAREN: I get the feeling that you don't want to be with me anymore.

JAKE: Of course I do. Nothing's wrong. I'll see you tomorrow, alright?

KAREN: Nothing's wrong. We never go out anymore. We never talk anymore. You say that you'll see me tomorrow and you'll call me tomorrow and you never do.

JAKE: Come on,

KAREN: And it's not just me. You don't talk to anyone, you just huddle in a corner, mumbling statistics to yourself, "101 Ways to Off Yourself."

JAKE: That's not funny.

KAREN: (*she runs over the previous line*)... Suicide this and suicide that, building a shrine to little blue notes, thinking about them every single moment of the day.

JAKE: Shut up!

KAREN: I watch you Jake. I watch you in history. I can see bits of blue underneath your text book. What is going on in your head?

JAKE: I'm just trying to...

KAREN: Ken's right. It's a stupid piece of paper.

*The "GIRL" has come on during the previous scene.
She is lurking behind KAREN. Only JAKE can see her.*

GIRL & JAKE: It's not a stupid piece of paper.

JAKE: What did you say?

KAREN: You're not going to be able to find her you know — your pretty young suicide thing.

GIRL: I am not a “thing.”

JAKE: I'm not looking for anyone.

KAREN: I know you. You fantasize about everything. Do you think about her? Do you dream about her?

JAKE & GIRL: You don't know what you're talking about.

JAKE: Stop that!

KAREN: Does she have long hair? Is she tall? Taller than me?

JAKE & GIRL: Shut up!

JAKE: Leave me alone.

KAREN: I'm competing with a suicide note. Don't you see how stupid this is?

JAKE: It's not...you don't understand.

GIRL: But I do.

KAREN: Then explain it to me.

JAKE: I have to go.

KAREN: Come on, Jake. Stop walking away.

GIRL: Jake...

JAKE: You'll never get it.

KAREN: What I don't understand is why you're shutting me out.

JAKE: I have to go.

GIRL: Jake...

KAREN: It's not your note. You were never meant to read it.

JAKE: Just like I was never meant to find out about Ken? I'll call you tomorrow.

KAREN: Jake wait! Damn.

KAREN exits, as does the GIRL. JAKE comes downstage.

JAKE: She doesn't understand. She just doesn't and I can't explain it to her. She's had a perfect life. No brothers and sisters, perfect parents. She gets along with everybody. It's a fairytale. This piece of paper makes me realise what a crock that kind of life is. The real world is not about fairytales. How many times this past year have I gone out with Karen when I could have been...I don't know...making a difference, helping someone so they didn't have to write one of these notes!

The following voices come from everywhere and should overlap.

MOE: Son.

BEEBEE: Son.

KEN: My son.

DENNIS: Daughter.

LISA: My daughter

JOAN: Brother.

MOE: Brother.

KEN: Stranger.

KAREN: Neighbour.

BEEBEE: Cousin.

DENNIS: Teacher.

KEN: Mother.

LISA: My mother.

KAREN: Sister.

MOE: Aunt.

JOAN: Boyfriend.

DENNIS: Girlfriend.

KEN: Best friend.

LISA: Best friend.

BEEBEE: Best friend.

KAREN: Best friend.

JOAN: Best friend.

JAKE: SHUT UP! I just want to know her name. Or find out that this was written by a girl. Or find out that she won a spelling bee when she was ten. Anything. *(he digs out a piece of paper from his pocket)* Maybe a professional can help me out.

The lights change. We are now in a hospital-like waiting room with chairs and a reception desk at one end. JAKE is standing in the middle of the room. MR. ARSCOTT enters.

JAKE: Excuse me, is this the Crisis centre?

MR. ARSCOTT: Yes.

JAKE: Are you a Doctor?

MR. ARSCOTT: No.

JAKE: Well, maybe you could help me? Answer a few questions?

MR. ARSCOTT: I don't...

JAKE: Do you know anything about suicide?

MR. ARSCOTT: Are you trying to make fun of me?

JAKE: No, sir, really...

MR. ARSCOTT: You young people think you know everything. Well, you don't. You just don't.

BEEBEE enters.

BEEBEE: Mr. Arscott?

JAKE: Beebee?

BEEBEE: Mr. Arscott, why don't you go into the lounge? The group's waiting for you.

MR. ARSCOTT: Is there coffee?

BEEBEE: Fresh pot. I made it myself.

MR. ARSCOTT: Maybe I'll have juice.

BEEBEE: Get it there.

MR. ARSCOTT leaves. BEEBEE watches him go.

BEEBEE: He's getting his sense of humour back. That's a good sign. *(she turns to JAKE)* You should really watch what you say.

JAKE: What are you doing here?

BEEBEE: I work here. *(there is a pause as JAKE stares at BEEBEE)* What do you want Jake? I'm busy.

JAKE: You work at a crisis centre.

BEEBEE: Don't sound so surprised. *(The phone rings. BEEBEE answers it.)* Crisis centre, how may I help you? One moment please. *(she connects the call and hangs up the phone)*

JAKE: I'm not surprised... it's just that...

BEEBEE: I'm too flaky to stop people from committing suicide.

JAKE: I didn't say that.

BEEBEE: You don't have to. Don't worry, I'm only the receptionist. I make coffee. I answer phones. I type. And, on rare occasions, I read tarot cards.

JAKE: Really?

BEEBEE: The clients want to know if everything is going to be all right. *(The phone rings. BEEBEE answers it.)* Yes, Dr. Mott? Not yet, I'll let you know as soon as she comes in. *(she hangs up)*

JAKE: Beebee, why didn't you tell anyone you work here?

BEEBEE: Because.

JAKE: I mean, you sound so normal... I didn't mean that you're usually not normal, well. Oh for God's sake, Beebee! You're the weirdest person I know! You talk to spirits in the walls, your hair changes colour every second day, you're a vegetarian – what am I supposed to think?

BEEBEE: Ken knows.

JAKE: What?

BEEBEE: Ken knows I work here.

JAKE: How come he never said anything... oh. I guess he wouldn't.

BEEBEE: Don't worry. He was as surprised as you the first time he walked in here.

JAKE: You should have told me he was feeling... that he was...

BEEBEE: He didn't want you to know.

JAKE: Did he talk to you?

BEEBEE: A bit.

JAKE: Why did he come here? What did he say?

BEEBEE: I can't tell you.

JAKE: But I'm his friend.

BEEBEE: It's not my place to...

JAKE: I'm his friend, not you. Why do you get to know and I don't?!

BEEBEE: Because I am not here for you. This room holds a lot of secrets and I think it's part of my job not to spread them around. If there are things that you think you have a right to know, well, that's between you and Ken. I won't tell his secrets. Not to you. Not to anyone.

JAKE: I'm not a bad person, Beebee. But nothing is the way it used to be. It's all slipping through my fingers.

BEEBEE: Why did you come here, Jake?

JAKE: I don't know. I wanted somebody, professional...

The GIRL flits across the back of the stage. JAKE watches her.

BEEBEE: Jake?

JAKE: Did you see... do you know her?

BEEBEE: Who?

JAKE: No one I guess.

BEEBEE: Do you want to talk to someone... I can...

JAKE: No. No, I don't know why I came. Thanks anyway.

BEEBEE: Jake. He doesn't blame you, he blames himself. Don't forget that.

JAKE: But he's the greatest guy! Why would he want...

BEEBEE: *(she stops him from speaking)* You better go. Don't tell anyone you saw me here, OK?

The lights change. LISA comes downstage.

LISA: I'm lying on the floor in the bathroom. Door locked. Lights out. Tiles cold on my cheek. I can hear my parents fighting in the basement. They always go to the basement to fight. I get up, turn on the water in the sink and in the tub. Hot. I can feel the steam on my face. Still hear them... I feel for my purse. It's on the floor underneath the towel rack. The towels are clean, I can still smell the Downy. Unzip. The blades are inside the second pocket of my wallet. I dip my foot in the water. Too. Hot. Too much. Silence from downstairs. If I can just get into the tub. Knock on the door. "Lisa, what are you doing?" Nothing Mom. "Lisa, why is the door locked?" I'll be right out. I'll be out in a second. Everything is fine. It's alright. It's alright.

Lights change. They come up on DENNIS and MRS. WESTLAKE in the Guidance Office.

DENNIS: I'm not a bad person.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Alright.

DENNIS: I'm not.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Alright.

DENNIS: I just want to make that really clear.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Why?

DENNIS: Why?

MRS. WESTLAKE: Yes.

DENNIS: I'm not a bad person, that's all.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Why did you come here today, Dennis?

DENNIS: I...uh...have this friend. A good friend, I trusted him. He... this friend was a guy... you know people that you can tell your worst secret to and you know that they aren't gonna blab it all over school and it doesn't matter what the secret is, they're not gonna think differently of you... Ke...this guy was like that.

MRS. WESTLAKE: You're lucky to have a friend like that.

DENNIS: Yeah, well, this guy, I found out that he tried to kill himself. I haven't seen him since...I'm not a bad person. I shouldn't even be here.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Sounds like he entrusted you with a big secret.

DENNIS: It's not like that at all! He lied. He never told anyone. He didn't tell me. He made believe that everything was fine.

MRS. WESTLAKE: Let me ask you this: What would you have done if he had told you how he was feeling?

DENNIS: I...I...don't know. I always thought he was the one who had it all together.

MRS. WESTLAKE: We all have problems.

DENNIS: Killing yourself isn't normal. It makes me sick. I don't want to get his sickness.

MRS. WESTLAKE: You can't catch suicide like a cold.

DENNIS: Then why am I here? Why can't I stop thinking about this? I'm a normal person. I got to school, I work at my dad's store, I play football... I don't understand where he... I'm not a bad person. He is.

The lights change. JAKE comes downstage.

JAKE: I saw Dennis come out of the Guidance Office today. He pretended not to see me. We're all walking around school with faces plastered to the floor so we don't have to talk. What happened? Is this all my fault?

As he holds up the note, the voices come from the dark.

GIRL: Jake...

KEN: Jake.

GIRL: Jake...

KAREN: JAKE!

DENNIS: Jake?

GIRL: Jake...

KAREN: Jake...

KEN: Jake!

JAKE: Maybe everyone is right. What am I doing? I can't sleep. Karen's mad at me. The guidance counsellors at school are following me around from class to class...

GIRL: Jake...

JAKE: And I haven't spoken to Ken since... I should speak to him. I know I should.

JAKE fades back. KEN comes downstage.

KEN: People handle death in funny ways. Particularly suicide. I think it's because you can't put the blame on a drunk driver or bad weather or a rock slide. It's one person's fault and you can't blame them, 'cause they're dead. And for those of us who aren't dead, people are afraid to blame you so there are all of these questions to see if they can pin it on a drunk driver or bad weather or a rock slide. My family... my mom never felt sorry for me. She said if I was determined to kill myself could I please not shoot another hole in the wall of her guest bathroom. My sister hid things: knives, razors, electric razors. One day last week all the power tools disappeared from the garage just in case I decide to take a buzz saw to myself. My dad stopped talking to me — for a long time. Not that he talked to me much before but... People handle death in funny ways.

KEN turns as JOAN and MOE enter.

KEN: Hi.

JOAN: Hi.

MOE: Hi.

KEN: Hi. *(there is a pause)* Well, this is the most interesting conversation I've had all week, but I gotta go.

JOAN: You have to do something.

MOE: He won't talk to anyone.

KEN: Why do I have to talk to him? What's wrong?

MOE: He's turned into a wacko.

KEN: And that's supposed to be comforting, how?

JOAN: You're his best friend.

KEN: Someone should tell him that.

MOE: But you...

JOAN: Don't you kind of, know about this kind of thing?

KEN: No. I don't.

MOE: She didn't mean...

JOAN: I don't have any other way to say it! (*she lets out a noise of frustration*) I hate this! I think it's so stupid that none of us are talking and I still like you and you are his best friend and for a lack of words which make any sense, you DO have more experience that the rest of us and I think you should talk to him! SO THERE!

KEN: (*laughing*) That was amazing.

JOAN: Amazing good, or amazing bad?

KEN: You can yell at me any time you want.

MOE: Sounds kinky.

JOAN: Why didn't you tell us?

KEN: I was going to. But then one day went by and another and another and I started to get better and then everyone reacted the way I knew they would...

JOAN: Yeah.

KEN: So.

MOE: So. Will you talk to him?

KEN: He doesn't want to talk to me.

MOE: Well, as I said, he's living in the cracker factory.

KEN: I'll think about it.

MOE: Ken, do you ever... think...again?

KEN: No.

MOE: What was it like?

JOAN hits him.

JOAN: Moe!

MOE: What? I'm asking a question.

KEN: It's alright.

JOAN: You're being nosy.

MOE: You're the one who ranted about us not talking, well, talking involves questions and answers and I am throwing my hat into the fray.



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