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## CHARACTERS

**HANNAH:** 17, playing Juliet.

**BRAD:** 17, playing Romeo.

**BRUCE:** 17, HANNAH's boyfriend.

**LUCY:** 17, BRAD's girlfriend.

## TIME

*The present.*

## SETTING

*A bare rehearsal stage.*

*A bare rehearsal stage. HANNAH is temporarily alone; then BRAD enters.*

**BRAD:** Hi. What did you want to see me about?

**HANNAH:** Brad, I really think we need to rehearse some more.

**BRAD:** You do? You mean like right now?

**HANNAH:** Don't you have time?

**BRAD:** Well yeah, I guess so. But . . .

**HANNAH:** Good. Because I'm just not happy about the way it's going. I mean we don't seem to be connecting.

**BRAD:** Was this Mr. Jordan's suggestion?

**HANNAH:** No, it's my own idea. *Coy.* Do you like it?

**BRAD:** I just thought we were doing okay, and we do have two more weeks of rehearsal, you know.

**HANNAH:** I know, but I don't think we're really getting inside these characters. You know what I mean?

**BRAD:** I'm not sure.

**HANNAH:** Well look, they're two young kids, just like us, who are deeply in love with each other. Don't you think you could get a little more into that?

**BRAD:** So you think I'm not getting into my part? Is that what you're saying?

**HANNAH:** No, I just think you're holding back a little bit. *Coy.* Couldn't you just try a little harder?

BRAD: *Sighs.* I'll try.

HANNAH: *Sarcastic.* Thanks a lot.

BRAD: *Misses or skips the sarcasm.* Well, okay, where do you want to take it from?

HANNAH: How about if we start from act 2, scene 2, line 6, okay?

*There is a long pause, during which BRAD looks confused.*

You want me to cue you?

BRAD: No. I'm okay. I've got it. *Another pause.* Cue me.

HANNAH: *Psyching herself.*

"Therefore pardon me,  
And not impute this yielding to light love,  
Which the dark night hath so discovered."

BRAD: *Thinks.* Okay, I got it!

"Lady, by yonder blessed moon I vow,  
That tips with silver all these fruit tree tops—"

HANNAH: "Oh swear not by the moon, th'inconstant moon,  
That monthly changes in her circled orb,  
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable."

BRAD: "What shall I swear by?"

HANNAH: "Do not swear at all;  
Or if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,  
Which is the god of my idolatry,  
And I'll believe thee."

BRAD: "If my heart's dear love"—

HANNAH: Cut! Hold it, Brad. Now I don't mean to criticize . . .

BRAD: But you're going to, anyway.

HANNAH: No, but I mean if I am your "heart's dear love," could you think of me like that a little more. Is it that hard to do?

BRAD: *He "psychs" himself.* "If my heart's dear love"—

HANNAH: *Really getting into it.* "Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,

I have no joy in this contract tonight:

It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden. Sweet, goodnight;

This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,  
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.

Goodnight, goodnight! As sweet repose and rest  
Come to thy heart as that within my breast."

BRAD: *A little warmer.* "O wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?"

HANNAH: *A little too suggestive.* "What satisfaction canst thou have tonight?"

BRAD: "Th'exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine."

*BRUCE appears, unnoticed by HANNAH and BRAD.*

HANNAH: Look, why don't we improvise here?

BRAD: What do you mean?

HANNAH: Well look, wouldn't you like to kiss me?

BRAD: Wouldn't that be going too far?

HANNAH: *Coy.* I think we might even go a little further.

*Pause.*

BRAD: I don't think Mr. Jordan would agree.

HANNAH: We could just try it between ourselves.

BRAD: I think we better stick to the script.

HANNAH: *She smiles.* Just think about it.

*Then, as Juliet:*

"I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:  
And yet, I wish it were to give again."

BRAD: "Wouldst thou then withdraw it? For what purpose, love?"

HANNAH: "Only to be frank and give it thee again:

And yet I wish but for the thing I have.

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,

My love is deep. The more I give to thee,

The more I have. For both are infinite.

But I hear some noise within. Dear love, adieu"—

*She is about to kiss him now.*

BRAD: I think the Nurse calls now, doesn't she?

*And as if on cue, BRUCE then steps in, slightly confused and annoyed.*

BRUCE: Hi.

HANNAH: *Annoyed.* Well, well! Here's our Nurse!

BRAD: Hi, Bruce.

BRUCE: Um, what's going on?

HANNAH: *Peeved.* What does it look like?

BRUCE: I don't know. That's why I thought I'd ask.

HANNAH: Brad and I are rehearsing the play, if you couldn't tell.

BRUCE: Oh yeah? *Sarcastically.* And what's the play, *Romeo and Juliet*?

HANNAH: That's right. It is.

BRUCE: Oh.

HANNAH: And you're interrupting us.

BRAD: But that's okay, Bruce. We're about finished, I think.

HANNAH: No we're not! We have a lot more work to do.

BRUCE: I'm sorry, but—look, I thought you wanted a ride to the mall, Hannah.

HANNAH: I changed my mind. This is more important.

BRUCE: That's okay. I have time to wait.

HANNAH: Don't bother. If I still want to go when we're finished, I can always get another ride—somewhere.

*She looks expectantly at BRAD.*

BRAD: Look, Hannah, if you really need to go to the mall, we can . . .

HANNAH: Don't be silly. This is way more important than anything I was going to do at the mall.

BRUCE: *Now vainly trying to assert himself.* Now just a minute, Hannah—I've been waiting around for you for like a half an hour. You never said anything to me about rehearsing this stupid play!

HANNAH: STUPID PLAY! I guess that shows what you know about Shakespeare!

BRUCE: *Looking at BRAD.* Well, I know about things that are right in front of my nose!

BRAD: *Quickly steps behind BRUCE.* He's got a point, Hannah.

HANNAH: He sure does. It's sitting right there on top of his head!

BRUCE: If that's the way you're going to be, I don't care if you have to walk to the mall!

HANNAH: If you'll be there, I don't want to go at all!

BRUCE: *To BRAD.* Well, I guess I can take a hint.

HANNAH: You call that a hint?

BRAD: Um, look, I think we should all . . .

BRUCE: Oh, forget it! I'm out of here!

*He storms out. Pause.*

BRAD: I'm sorry. That was unfortunate.

HANNAH: No, it's him! He is sooo dumb!

BRAD: But I thought you two were, you know, sort of going together.

HANNAH: Are you kidding? Football players! What can you do with them?

BRAD: I don't know. I never dated one.

*She thinks this is hilarious.*

HANNAH: Oh wow! You are sooo funny!

BRAD: I meant it.

HANNAH: The thing is, see, I didn't want to like hurt his feelings.

BRAD: You didn't?

HANNAH: Of course not, Brad—I mean I don't want to be cruel! But you tell me. What's a girl to do? He just keeps hanging around, and I'm really getting tired of it. He won't leave me alone, for heaven's sake! You'd think he'd have some pride, wouldn't you? Or have some respect for me, at least! He doesn't think about the position he's putting me in! He should realize how I feel. The truth is I feel really awful!

*Suddenly she appears to be on the verge of tears. Pause.*

BRAD: I don't know what to say.

*And then suddenly LUCY enters, smiling breezily.*

LUCY: Hi. What's this? More rehearsing, Hannah?

HANNAH: *Icily.* Hello, Lucy.

LUCY: So, how's it going?

HANNAH: We still have a lot of work to do.

LUCY: Oh. Well, if you're hard at it, I'll leave you to it. I'll see you later.

*She starts to exit.*

BRAD: Lucy, wait! I've had enough for one day. I'd like some refreshment. How about a Coke?

LUCY: Sure. Hannah?

BRAD: Hannah has a date to go to the mall. Let's go. I'm really thirsty.

*They exit.*

HANNAH: *Rather stunned.* Huh? *Pause.* Bruce, wait! I didn't mean it, Bruce!

*She dashes off.*

END OF PLAY

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## RED SUGARY SWEET DREAMS

Daniel John Kelley

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